

**Copenhagen half-marathon (Denmark) took place in
Copenhagen on Sunday 18 september 2016
1:27:26**



Short race = Short update... Although finishing another clear(er) sub90 and setting a new PR on the 5K required definitely a bit longer than that ☹

Copenhagen half-marathon (Denmark) took place in Copenhagen on Sunday 18 september 2016. Bringing it to be the fifth half-marathon and fourth sub90 for this season. Definitely the main objective race on the half-marathon distance for this year. The form felt fine :-)

1:27:26 – well, have run this race in 2014 during the World championships, but the course has been changed... does it make a new PB then?... Aimed for sub90, got even better, even though a definite new half-marathon PB was (almost) at reach. The race was completed with a 57^h place among women, 6th in my age category and 682 of all 19.077 finisher-runners! 5th Swedish female (the 2 first have a sub80.... Definitely a well-spent Sunday morning in the City of the Beautiful Towers!

The objectives for this particular race were quite simple (aren't they always? :-)): having a PR on this route, there should be a way to get a fast time. So sub90 definitely but this time, aiming (for real) for the 85-87 minutes range (the lower, the better...): Flat and fast course, 14 males runners starting with a time under one hour, 9 ladies under 70 minutes... Best ever elite-field for a half-marathon...and 22,000 runners to start...Wonderful!

In brief: the race started pretty strong with a new PR on 5K (well controlled), a low 40 first 10K and still quite well-positioned at km15, despite stomach cramps which came around this time as well. Did not let them take charge however and kept a decent marathon-pace up to the final 1.1km which went down to nice 4:31. A nice and decent finish for the second best time on half-marathon ever! :-)

No need to get back much in time. Copenhagen was on the list since the start of this year. Got a nice and easy week after Hulstfred with nice volume though and then a short but intense last week leading to the race. Final two runs with fast pace showed the body felt recovered from the last race. All good!

Saturday was a long day with train trip to Copenhagen. Walk from the train station to my host ("only" 3km...), bike to the expo to get my BIB and bike back home. Nap at 2pm. Late lunch at 3pm and easy afternoon run in the streets of Copenhagen, with a bit of recon for the race as the km7 was pretty close to the place I was staying at. So...a few km later and that was it for the day. Prepared my gear for the race, prepared my breakfast, finally found a shop having sport-drink (had gone into several shops where could be found 30+ types of beer but none had a single sport-drink. And no, RedBull ain't a sport-drink...). In bed early enough. All fine. Awaken every second hour from 3am...for sleeping again deeper. 7am and the sleep-in was stopped. Light breakfast and...back to bed for nap until 8:10am when my host came in already ready for running (he was a pacesetter for 6min-group). Got myself ready. Weather outside was definitely looking windy. And sunny. 9:15am and we were on our bike for a nice 5km-ride with so.much.wind...and some sun. Left my host to his pacesetter-activities and got myself to the start area. Waited laying on the grass under the sun (and still in the wind...) until 10:30am to drop my bag and got myself a bit of warm-up. Definitely freeeezing with the wind (and yes, I know I should learn to have extra clothes on during the warm-up for not freeeezing...I'll eventually learn...). Met the crazy fast elites field during my warm-up. I held a decent slow pace when they also did...although their slow pace was probably a tempo-pace of mine! Cool and so nice to see them running anyhow. Went finally to my start-group (sub90), spotted a couple of ladies and some Swedes who kindly commented on my Swedish outfit and my Swedish-painted nails :-). A bit of wait under the sun...aaaaand...

BAM! From nowhere came the start. Nice and calm jog for the few meters to the starting mat and that was it. No music in the ears, only me, myself and the asphalt (and 22.000 other runners...). Got a nice gear from start. Had a couple of gals right before me and the trick was to not run too fast but still keep up with them. Passing the first km in 3:48... Eeeeeeh...what? OK, this is the excitement and enthusiasm of the start...Will slow down eventually. Keeping a good pace though and noted barely reaching km5. Noticing however that it was under 20minutes.... Eeeeeeh...what? Never mind. Have still a couple of gals right before me. Feeling fine, but reaching km7 is a bit odd. I know where it is, but from km5 to km7 I kind of slow down. Don't know why because the wind ain't there during these km. Turning left towards km7. Aaaaaand the wind arrives. Of course – or "as usual"? - nobody really run the same pace as me and it is quite few runners all around. So no wind-shield possibility. Making this km to km8 pretty tough to run on my own. Still passing it with a sub4-pace. But the advance from km5 has seriously reduced. Calculating at km9 that the pace is still sub4 but barely (?). We are now in the Frederiksberg Allé. In 2014, this one was at km17 or so. With tons of people on each side. With flags of all countries as well. Really felt the World Championships spirit! Today, it was "only" Danish flags. A little less people on the side too. But ok. Reaching the abrupt right turn and.here.it.comes! Km10! Yooohooo.. Passing it slightly above 40 minutes. Which is quite decent (even if it means I dropped in pace quite a lot). Passing half-way in 42:12 means I am approximately 2 minutes faster than previous sub90-races of this year... Just have to keep the pace up then!

OK, after that this is new territory. Have no clue how the course looks like as it was not part of the 2014-race. And indeed,... the wind is catching up and I am slowing down. Nothing dramatic, marathon-pace probably, which is easily caught up by km14. The guys holding the 1:25-balloons have now reached me. Hummm.... I had them behind me last time I ran here. All the way to the end. And now they got me here?... Holding up and hanging along is the first thought. Until stomach cramps arrive. Again?!?! Suspecting now that the bare stomach might not like too much the combination speed + wind (although I have trained in similar outfit and with way more wind at home... Any suggestion?!?!?). Decide to skip the fight for 1:25 and “just” make the best with what the stomach allows. It feels like side-hole but ain't. I feel the pace dropping. From km15 however this is back to the “original” route of 2014. My mind starts actually counting...up! Km1, km2, km3... instead of km15, 16... Hearing myself screaming to a guy running by my side “Bara sex kvar! Kom igen!” and receiving a large smile. For sure I meant “Only SIX km left! Come on!”. And nothing else!!! Catching up with an older Asian runner by km17. Have met him since km6 or 7. We ran side-by-side, but I felt that he was then slowing down and each time I accelerated, he did too. I left him passing by when the cramps started and lost him. And here he is. But now I don't want to be dragged back. Tacking my final gel at km18, getting a bit of water to it. And VROOOOOM! The next 2km are down to a sub3-marathon pace, which is nice. The legs feel indecently strong. The stomach ain't complaining any longer. I liked this stretch in 2014 and like it even more today as this is the final km! Progressively accelerating to km20 and from there it is just back to me, myself and the asphalt! Not many runners side-by-side on this final stretch. Still catching up a few places on men. Having at the last 100s a little gal passing me on the right side...NOT.A.CHANCE! Passing the next gear (there is ALWAYS a next gear...) and passing her back. Seeing the clock ticking. I know it is over 1:27, but how much over. 1:23...24...25... and finally see the 1:27:30 when I pass the finish line. Pressing stop on my watch. No need to look at it. I.AM.HAPPY!

Official time: 1:27:26. A bit scared at first when reaching home and seeing no result were registered after passing km20 in 1:22:55... WHAT?!?! Don't make me run again! (or yes, sure, I can :-). Missing the top50, but very satisfied with the time results (which arrived over 1hour after I passed the finish line...). Getting energy bars, well-deserved medal, a few pics on the runners field, a nice calve massage and that's it! Not too bad for this race. Strong start, strong finish. Just have to figure out what start those cramps around km14... Not yet in Heaven, but almost! A very great day.

What after? Well, trying to find my bike (this is Copenhagen...everyone is actually using a bike here...or almost everyone...). Then bike back home, loosing a bit the way and getting a km extra along the channel. Shower, packing all my stuff, dropping the room keys...and back to the train station... of course by foot! It's “only” 3km :-P

On the way back home, had quite some stops, 2 changes of trains, 3 police controls and happily reaching home receiving a kind suggestion for celebrating with a nice dinner between runners. What a nice way to complete this already nice day! Sun shining still in Copenhagen when I left... Definitely got to the objectives set. Surely missed the sub85 (done once...) but there is potential :-) Keep the sun shining!

>> Thanks for the support during training (especially the past two weeks and specific fast training) and for the listening of training (you asked...I just answered :-)
) So extremely worth it to have travel to the Danish capital for a bit of sunshine, crazy winds and a new fast race. Still no rest for the warrior... a bit more running to do, the warming up continues...

Have a wonderful week!

//Kind regards from a little-grey-but-warm place on Earth (aka Gothenburg!)

Karima

>justrunningaround<