

Race Records in Napoli City Half Marathon

Records fell by the wayside in the fourth edition of the Napoli City half Marathon, held under Napoli Running partnership.

The number of participants, over 4200 runners, has increased over 50% in comparison to the previous edition, the men's event record was bettered by more than three minutes, set by Philip Kibungei Tarbei – a RunCzech Racing representative (KEN) – 1:01:21, and the women's by five plus – set by Eva Vrabcova (CZE), another RunCzech Racing member – 1:11:54.

The morning dawned overcast and cool with a temperature of 10 degrees celsius at the 8:30 start time, excellent conditions except for a wind from the sea which was in the face of the runners in the latter stages of the race.

The course passes through many historic and scenic areas of the city, but there are three uphill areas on the course including a 900 meter tunnel near the end which make it a challenge for the runners.

Four Kenyans and one Italian separated from the pack within a few hundred meters, and shortly after that the pack was reduced to the four Kenyans; Paul Mwangi, Philip Tarbei, Michael Kipkemboi Chelule, and Eliud Mwangi Macharia.

By six kilometres the group was reduced to three and only a few seconds later there were only Eliud (KEN) and Philip (KEN) running well under race record pace. The two went through 10K in an unofficial time of 28:35 a pace that if continued would have brought them home under 1:01, but the uphills and the wind slowed them over the second half. They battled right to the finish and both were given the same time of 1:01:21. Philip Kibungei, the youngest athlete in the starting field, was given the nod as the winner in what was his debut in Europe.

Paul Mwangi and Michael Chelule were left to in no man's land between the leaders and a third group with Bernard Dematteis of Italy and Roman Prodius from Moldava. Michael Chelule eventually dropped out and Mwangi finished third over four minutes behind the leaders - 1:05:37. Dematteis and Prodius worked together to earn fourth and fifth place respectively.

The women's race was much more of a dominating performance as Eva Vrabcova (CZE), who participated in the marathon at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, set off at a record pace from the gun. Laila Soufyane (ITA) the top Italian who was hoping to stay with her in order to challenge for the win was left in her wake from the start.

Vrabcova ran at a personal best pace for the first 10K (0:32:38) but she also was slowed by the hills in the second half of the race finishing in 1:11:54 while Soufyane also came well under the old record with a 1:14:11. As third came Deborah Toniolo (ITA), three minutes after the first two women, clocking at 1:16:59.

With this result Eva Vrabcova has qualified to run in the World Championships Marathon in London in August this year.

Carlo Capalbo, the President of the Organising Committee of the Napoli Running was very pleased with the results of this first joint effort and he expressed his thanks to all the partners and team for a successful event.

Napoli Running was created by Carlo Capalbo, Benny Scarpellino, Maurizio Marino, Antonio Esposito and combines two events in the south of Italy – Coast to Coast Sorrento Positano Marathon & Half (held in December) and Napoli City Half Marathon (held in February).

RESULTS

MEN

1. Philip Kibungei Tarbei	KEN	1:01:21
2. Eliud Mwangi Macharia	KEN	1:01:21
3. Paul Kariuki Mwangi	KEN	1:05:37

4. Barnard Dematteis	ITA	1:07:36
5. Roman Prodius	MDA	1:08:03
6. Ismail Adim	MAR	1:08:52
7. Antonello Landi	ITA	1:09:50
8. Luca Tassarotti	ITA	1:10:05
9. Raffaele Giovannelli	ITA	1:10:12
10. Giuseppe Soprano	ITA	1:10:30

WOMEN

1. Eva Vrabcova	CZE	1:11:54
2. Laila Soufyane	ITA	1:14:11
3. Deborah Toniolo	ITA	1:16:59
4. Gloria Rita Anto Giudici	ITA	1:21:21
5. Barbara Bani	ITA	1:22:00
6. Samantha Galassi	ITA	1:22:06
7. Stefania Leondiadis	ITA	1:22:43
8. Anna Pedevilla	ITA	1:25:10
9. Loredana Brusciano	ITA	1:26:08
10. Carla Mazza	ITA	1:27:25

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