

PRESS RELEASE
6 September 2014

Geoffrey Ronoh upstages Geoffrey Mutai and breaks course record in Birell Prague Grand Prix 10k, Correti Jepkoech wins women's title

Geoffrey Ronoh is fast making a reputation as the man to challenge and beat the cream of the distance running world. The Kenyan countered every move that his compatriot Geoffrey Mutai made to win the Birell Prague Grand Prix in warm, humid conditions on Saturday evening, smashing the course record with 27:28, the second fastest time in the world this year. Mutai, preparing for the defence of his New York Marathon title in early November, finished four seconds behind in 27:32 and Nicholas Bor (a member of RunCzech Racing) was third in 27:38. It was a high quality race in general with six men breaking 28 minutes.

Coretti Jepkoech also ran a course record and a personal best to win the women's title in 31:05, the second fastest time in the world this year. Her fellow Kenyan Esther Chemtai finished a distant second in 31:51 and Flomena Chepchirchir was third in 32:30, all fine runs in testing conditions. The Birell Prague Grand Prix is an IAAF Gold Label race, the highest category in road racing.

When the mayor of Prague, Tomas Hudecek, fired the starting gun at 7.30pm to set 5,500 runners on their way from Wenceslas Square, Geoffrey Mutai and Geoffrey Ronoh wasted little time in transforming the race into their own duel. Mutai, the world's fastest marathon runner, pushed the pace, looking lighter in his stride than the tall Ronoh.

The temperature gauge showed 21 degrees Celsius with humidity at 85 percent but the pair maintained the intense pace, Mutai taking the lead with Ronoh in his tracks as 5 km was passed in 13:19, inside world record pace. Mutai sensed this might take its toll. "Yes, it was good but the humidity was going up and that made it difficult so when I saw the time, I slowed a little, then we pushed again."

Ronoh, revealing perhaps inexperience in only his fourth international race, admitted he wasn't aware that they were on world record schedule. "It didn't feel tough, it was excellent pace. Yes, it was humid but I train at midday so am used to it and also to counter-attack." His cool calculation worked a treat with 22 minutes on the clock. For the first time the orange vest of Ronoh was in front by a couple of metres and the gap grew as they charged



uphill across one of Prague's many bridges. The advantage was three seconds and Mutai never looked like closing the deficit.

Ronoh slowed a fraction to celebrate in the home straight but then glanced round and realised that Mutai was still coming. A step on the accelerator and he was across the line, winning his first official 10k in a highly impressive 27:28, the second fastest time in the world this year and a course record by six seconds.

What fresh fields can Geoffrey Ronoh conquer? In response, he gave a diplomatic answer which still served as a warning to every marathon contender. "I shall talk with my manager and follow his advice. I believe that with good training I can beat anyone in any road race and the marathon."

Running 27:32 for second place was still a fine run in the light of Geoffrey Mutai's marathon ambitions in New York. Half-an-hour after crossing the line, the sweat was still dripping off his forehead as he reflected. "To run this time gives me confidence that my training is going well. It's good to have such a strong athlete to push you."

Correti Jepkoech didn't need much pressure from her rivals after she drew away from fellow Kenyan Esther Chemtai over the second half. The 20-year-old ran with impressive style, never faltering as she led the entire race to win in 31:05. "I had been training well and knew my form was good."

That brief assessment was spot on. Jepkoech finished 55 seconds inside the course record from the inaugural women's race last year, set by her stablemate Josephine Chepkoech. The latter went on to win the Usti nad Labem Half Marathon for good measure. The duo's manager recommended Correti to the elite race organiser, Jana Moberly, for this year. The next race in the RunCzech series is next weekend, September 14, so history might well be pointing to a double success if Jepkoech slips on her racing shoes next Sunday.

Results with bib numbers:

TV editors please note regarding bib numbers: name on front, number on back)

Men:

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 1. Geoffrey Ronoh | KEN / 10 | 27:28 pb, course record |
| 2. Geoffrey Mutai | KEN / 1 | 27:32 |
| 3. Nicholas Bor | KEN / 9 | 27:38 pb |
| 4. Simon Cheprot | KEN / 7 | 27:41 pb |



- | | | |
|------------------------|----------|-------|
| 5. Richard Mengich | KEN / 25 | 27:48 |
| 6. Kenneth Kipkemoi | KEN / 5 | 27:56 |
| 7. Geoffrey Kusuro | KEN / 16 | 28:13 |
| 8. Polat Kemboi Arikan | TUR / 3 | 28:30 |

Women:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1. Correti Jepkoech | KEN / F3 | 31:05 pb, course record |
| 2. Esther Chemtai | KEN / F2 | 31:51 |
| 3. Flomena Chepchirchir | KEN / F16 | 32:30 |
| 4. Helah Kiprop | KEN / F1 | 32:33 |
| 5. Lucy Liavoga | KEN / F9 | 33:12 pb |
| 6. Natalya Popkova | RUS / F5 | 33:25 |
| 7. Jen Rhines | USA / F17 | 33:31 |

More information about the Birell Prague Grand Prix can be found online: www.runczech.com

Please Note: The attached photos, which show winners Geoffrey Ronoh and Correti Jepkoech, can only be used online in conjunction with this press release and with the following caption: Birell Prague Grand Prix

Prague International Marathon, spol. s r.o. / Tempo Team Prague s.r.o.

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