



PRESS RELEASE

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Daniel Wanjiru wins as three run sub one hour

Daniel Wanjiru stormed to a first major career win, when he took the Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon. The 22 year-old Kenyan clocked a personal best of 59:51 with two other runners achieving times inside the hour mark. Wilfred Murgor took second in 59:57, just edging out fellow-Kenyan Leonard Komon who was given the same time. There was an Ethiopian double triumph in the women's event: Worknesh Degefa clocked a fine personal best of 67:14 in slightly windy conditions, winning from Yebrgual Melese who crossed the line in 68:21. Diane Nukuri of Burundi was third in 69:33. There was great depth in both the men's and the women's races. Ten men ran times faster than 61 minutes and five women finished inside 70 minutes. 12,500 runners entered the Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon, which is an IAAF Road Race Gold Label.

A very fast half marathon developed as soon as Czech's football legend Pavel Nedved started the race. While he later joined in to run a section of a relay event staged parallel to the half marathon the pacemakers led a big group of almost 20 athletes to a 10 km split time of 28:08. The leading group was on course for a 59 minute finish and even the course record of 58:47 seemed not out of reach. However the windy conditions finally started to show on the split times. At 15 km (42:44) the projected finishing time was suddenly slightly over the hour mark.

It was between 16 and 17 km when Nicholas Bor, a Kenyan runner who competes for the RunCzech Racing team, pushed the pace. The leading group broke up and among those, who could no longer follow were two prominent names: defending champion Peter Kirui and Geoffrey Ronoh, who won last year's Mattoni Olomouc Half Marathon.

Wanjiru and Murgor, who had only arrived in Prague on Friday afternoon after an arduous two day-trip from Kenya, were following Bor while Komon trailed briefly. But the world record holder at 10 and 15 km managed to close the gap. However when Wanjiru pushed again Komon was beaten and only Murgor could hold on for another kilometer. But shortly after the 20 km mark Wanjiru's relentless pressure finally steered him clear.

"The line-up here in Prague today was so strong that it felt like a championship race, it was really tough. I learned a lot in this race," said Daniel Wanjiru, who was third in Prague a year ago with 59:59 and then impressed with a second place earlier this year in Ras Al Khaimah (UAE). "This victory gives me great motivation for the future."

After regaining second place with a few hundred metres to go, Komon then just missed out on the runner-up spot, beaten by Murgor. But he was not disappointed with his race: "This was an interesting race and a great competition. Everyone was really in good form. It is my first time in Prague and coming in third is fine for me."



The women's race was also fast with five women forming an initial leading group. Three of them then passed the 10 km point in 31:56. Ethiopians Worknesh Degefa, Yebrgual Melese and Afera Godfay had already dropped Lucy Kabuu. The Kenyan, the fastest in the field with a PB of 66:09, had indicated before that she might not be in top shape after the loss of her fater. Kabuu finally finished in sixth place with 70:25.

Godfay was the next one who could not hold on to Degefa while Melese struggled. Shortly before the 15 km mark 24 year-old Degefa, who had won last year's Lisbon half marathon, was all on her own. Despite improving her personal best by 35 seconds and achieving the fifth fastest time in the world this year Worknesh Degefa had hoped for more. "My goal was to run a time between 66 and 67 minutes. But it was a hard race," said the Ethiopian. "It was not only the tough competition but also the wind. And then there were sections of cobblestones which I found difficult to run on."

Results (TV editors, please note that front bib shows names):

Men:

1. Daniel Wanjiru	KEN	59:51
2. Wilfred Murgor	KEN	59:57
3. Leonard Komon	KEN	59:57
4. Nicholas Bor	KEN	60:09
5. Adugna Takele	ETH	60:26
6. Amanuel Mesel	ERI	60:26
7. Teshome Mekonen	ETH	60:27
8. Geoffrey Ronoh	KEN	60:28
9. Felix Kandie	KEN	60:42
10. Bernard Bett	KEN	60:43
11. Peter Kirui	KEN	61:17

Women:

1. Worknesh Degefa	ETH	67:14
2. Yebrgual Melese	ETH	68:21
3. Diane Nukuri	BDI	69:33
4. Viola Jelagat	KEN	69:42
5. Afera Godfay	ETH	69:51
6. Lucy Kabuu	KEN	70:25
7. Lisa Nemec	CRO	70:39
8. Lineth Chepkurui	KEN	72:08

Please Note: You may use the attached photos, which show winners Daniel Wanjiru and Worknesh Degefa, online only in conjunction with this press release and with the following credit: www.photorun.net





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Further information can be found online: www.runczech.com

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