

Wins for Kenya and Belarus

KOSICE (SVK, Oct 2): Unseasonal warm weather (more than 20 degrees) damaged the hopes of the organizers of the oldest marathon in Europe to register new course records (2:08:33 and 2:30:50). Kenyan Elijah Kemboi with late surge after 35 km won the 88th International Peace Marathon in Kosice, his second win out of four marathons (in spring Antverps) in 2:11:15 and equalled his personal best.

"I could have run faster but had problems with my leg. Fortunately I managed to come back after 35 km," said Kemboi who was hoping for a sub 2:10 but looked after 30 km as lost being behind the leading trio of two Ethiopians and one Kenyan. At the end he beat them clearly. Second Ebisa Merga Ejigu improved by more than two minutes in his third marathon to 2:12:10 ahead of his team-mate Gebo Burka 2:12:30. Peter Some of Kenya who was pushing the pace between 30-35 km was fourth in 2:13:56 and best on the paper in the field Olympic Beijing 7th placer and former Paris winner Gashaw Asfaw ended fifth (2:15:11). Ethiopian pace-makers Atalay Yirsaw and Birhanu Bekele were exactly on pace with 1:04:30 half. 2007 winner and first sub 2:10 runner in Kosice Williams Biama of Kenya was unable to finish after 25 km. Male pacer for women Chala Bayessa completed due to injury only 15 km and the half at 1:17:07 level was not very promising due to increasing hot weather (17 at the start and more than 20 degrees in finish). Then Ethiopians tried to rule, but Belarus mother of 4 years old daughter Maryna Damantsevich finished strongly and after 35 km took the lead and won in new personal best of 2:33:53 (before 2:35:22 in Krakow in spring). She won three out of her four career marathons (also Riga 2010 and Lodz 2011). "I wanted to run faster but it was not possible. This was my toughest win so far. My main aim is to qualify for London Olympics," said the winner. Second junior Halima Hassen of Ethiopia clocked 2:35:47 ahead of another Ethiopian Seada Kadir Adilo in personal best 2:36:28. Fourth place for Kenyan Naomi Jepngnetich 2:37:17 PB and fifth Slovakian Katarina Beresova debuting with 2:43:42. She missed the olympic B standard only by 42 seconds and is now fourth best ever Slovak performer in women marathon. In total 6600 runners from 38 countries competed in different races supported by enthusiastic 35 000 people around the city center. Slovak foreign minister and keen marathon runner Mikulas Dzurinda (56) ended his 27th marathon in 3:30:35 (overall 198 in men category). Male winning mark is the seventh best in the history of the race (and 5th best winning) and female winner is fourth best ever in the history of the race. This years edition was devoted to 50 years since the win of legendary Abebe Bikila in Kosice in 1961.

Results

Men

1. Elijah Kemboi, KEN, 2:11:15 PB eq
2. Ebisa Merga Ejigu, ETH, 2:12:10 PB
3. Gebo Burka, ETH, 2:12:30
4. Peter Some, KEN, 2:13:56
5. Gashaw Asfaw, KEN, 2:15:11

SVK Champion: 8. Imrich Magyar 2:39:42

Women

1. Maryna Damantsevich, BLR, 2:33:53 PB
2. Halima Hassen, ETH, 2:35:47
3. Seada Kadir, ETH, 2:36:28 PB

4. Naomi Jepngnetich, KEN, 2:37:17 PB
5. Katarina Beresova, SVK, 2:43:42 debut, also SVK Champion