

STORIES OF NINE DECADES
WHAT HAPPENED AT THE MARATHON IN KOŠICE 50
YEARS AGO



Experienced runner Gyula Tóth (No. 14) at the head of the leading group
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A second winner's laurel from Košice for a Hungarian Olympian.

In October 1971, six weeks after the European Championships in Helsinki, the organizers tried to attract the best possible competition to Košice. Even then, it was clear that the regular August continental and later world championships, supplemented every four years by the Olympics, were becoming a significant obstacle in the effort to get the best to come to Košice.

All the more so given that the flood of new strong city marathons was gradually intensifying. And so among the competitors in Košice in 1971 were runners without extensive experience, but as it turned out later, with an interesting future.

*Among them was the barely 20 years old **Hans-Joachim Truppel**, who in his premiere at the KPM dipped just below 2:30 and who later became one of the leading runners on the old continent. The fact that he eventually achieved a personal best of 2:11:56 as well as interesting placings at later championships speaks for itself.*

But the tone of the race in Košice in 1971 was set by the older runners. The fast pace, which at the 5 km mark signalled a final time below 2:14, was maintained by up to 23 runners, although it was to be expected that the group would gradually disintegrate.

*Even the already mentioned young Truppel tried to take the lead at the 15 km mark, but one of the most experienced competitors in the field clearly paced himself better. This was the Hungarian champion **Gyula Tóth**, now 34 years old, who finally claimed his **second***

victory in Košice following up on his 1966 triumph. Along with his two starts at the Olympics in Mexico and Munich and a tenth place at the aforementioned European From the homegrown runners of the time, **Václav Mládek**, starting for the club Sechez Lovosice, achieved the highest overall place, as the 12th to reach the finish line. If you start looking for Košice natives, then 1971 was not a very successful year. In the end, only a few locals stepped up to the starting line, so the honour of 72nd place went to **Vincent Juhás** with a finishing time just 12 seconds above the three hour mark. He was among the last of the finishers, since out of the 99 runners at the start, only 85 ultimately found the finish line.

RESULTS

Košice Peace Marathon, 3 October 1971

Men

1.	Gyula Tóth	HUN	2:21:43,6
2.	Kalle Hakkarainen	FIN	2:22:04,4
3.	Desmond McGann	IRL	2:22:59,8