



KOTH Sai Kung Mountain Marathon

2 December 2018. Mostly sunny, 21-25 degrees, and 80% plus humidity.

(Sai Kung, New Territories, Hong Kong)

The Beauty of the Beast

The weather felt gloriously cool in Sai Kung as we set up this morning for the beginning of new season of KOTH. However, by the time of the pre-race briefing it was clear that this beautiful day was likely to turn into a roaster. And sure enough, by mid-morning it was 25 degrees in the sun and this combined with unusually high grass made the climb out of Hoi Ha particularly arduous, effecting both half and full marathon times.

Full Marathon – Dumont in Ascendance

The one person least effected by the conditions was Clement Dumont. Clement was quick enough to be second across the half marathon line and cruised to victory in 3:48:52, a victory made even more impressive given that he competes in the M40 category. Clement's time was not far off the course record for this course so I feel safe saying that any combination of better weather and/or a clearer Hoi Ha trail probably would have led to a record setting performance.

Male open Guy Connell (4:01:17) held off Mat Leng (4:01:54) for second overall and first in the open category. M40 Andrew Graham 4:09:06 was next in, followed by William Davies (4:11:40) in a good showing for the just over 40s.

George Major (4:19:08) would eventually round out the top 3 in the open category, but not before M45 Ezra Emerson (4:17:01) would dazzle his watching girlfriend with a tremendously steady performance to claim a senior category victory. Matthew Kennedy was the second M45 across the line (4:28:49) followed by Lam Shing Yip (4:39:46).

M50 proved to be a very competitive bracket with Michal McComb (4:36:03) holding off William Hayward (4:37:23) and world top-4 ranked M50 triathlete Thomas Hardcastle (4:39:05).

M55 was far more spread out with Wong Hon Wing (5:22:03) winning over KK Choi (5:41:14) and Lam Wa (6:48:58).

M60 saw Christopher Gunns pick up where he left off last season, winning again in 5:23:13. Chris made the mistake of also handily beating his wife so his may yet prove a Pyrrhic victory... Chan Wai Lam (5:47:48) was second, followed by Chan Chi Kin (6:02:21).



The ladies' race was a bit of an Oxfam Trailwalker reunion with several members of the winning team now running against each other. Janice Cheung Chiu Man was supreme on the day, finishing in 4:57:40 and showing early Queen of the Hills intention. The race director was happy to give her a sweaty congratulatory hug.

Hui Wing Yan (5:05:10) was second across the line and looked by far the least hot and bothered runner on the course, which is surprising given that Flora Ching (5:06:39) was not far behind to round out the top three for both the race and the female open category. Newbie Eleanor Batterham was 4th in an impressive (5:10:05)

F40 Chris Kwen Yee Ting has stepped up from winning the half marathons to winning her category (5:10:45) in the full marathon. The race director was also happy to give her a sweaty congratulatory hug. KOTH regulars Leung Woon Ping (5:23:20) and Tsang Woon Ming (5:28:50) finished second and third in the category respectively.

F50 Eva Lo (6:30:06) out battled Tammy Mak (6:37:19) and Cheng Wai Cheung (6:41:26) in a competitive senior race.

Full marathon results: <http://www.racetecresults.com/Results.aspx?CId=16387&RIId=6223>

Half Marathon – Ryan Whelan in Command

In-form Ryan Whelan improved by nearly 3 minutes upon his second-place last time this race was held to win handily (1:42:50). This reversed the order of the previous finish as it was Kevin Fs who had to settle for second (1:48:42) as he recovers from injury.

Before the third open runner could finish, M50 Mo Devlin crashed the party (1:51:13) in a brilliant run for the senior set. Mo's motivation was friends holding a seat for him at the bar to watch his favorite football team play and he dared not be late.

Thomas Kitwood (1:51:48) was fourth overall in third in the open category, which saw several open runners, including Sam Guinness, Charlie Stewart, Paul Byrne, Phil Wright and Fraser Wilkie all break 2 hours on the day.

Tucked into the middle of this pack was M40 Mark Redfearn (1:57:16) in his strongest KOTH run ever. Mark's girlfriend has also become very fast of late so perhaps there is something to their high carb diets. Olivier Jacquot (2:02:55) was second in the category, followed by Franck Fayard (2:09:58).



The M45 category saw Roland Riedel (2:10:13) cruising to victory over Chow Kai Yan (2:18:28) and Stephane Maitre (2:23:33).

Back in the M50 race, Olivier Streun, who won the category last season, finished second to Mo in 2:00:08 and ahead of Michael Galligan (2:02:52).

Back from a year of sabbatical (no doubt spent running), Jon Gilchrist won the M55 race (2:04:44) to record his first ever KOTH category victory. Eric To (2:07:32) placed second, followed by Steve Wong (2:08:26).

Back from injury and enjoying a new category, Leung Ping cruised to victory in the M60 category (2:23:10), followed by Tsui Pak Long (2:27:52) and Wong Peter Chun Tong (2:36:34). At age 75, Frank Pilkington was the oldest race finisher (3:04:30).

F40 Vivian Lee (2:05:46) surged to victory in the ladies' race, with female open runner Wendy Porterfield (2:06:12) hot on her heels. Vivian has notched up a number of victories in various races this season and is supremely fit and motivated at this point. Wendy is new to KOTH and was greeted at the finish by a beautiful young baby, suggesting that she could just be getting started on her KOTH career.

Suzanne Gifford (she of the high carb diet) finished third overall (2:09:15) and second in the open category, followed by Stephanie Mak (2:11:34) who is tapering for TNF 50 in a couple of weeks.

Natalie Webster (2:25:13) was second in the female vet category, followed by Catherine Chow (2:37:10).

Camilia Fernstrom (2;19:24) made it look easy in F50 victory, with Ada Chan (2:32:47) and Kate Martin (2:34:22) finishing in second and third respectively.

Half marathon results: <http://www.racetecresults.com/Results.aspx?CIId=16387&RIId=6223&EId=2>



Once again KOTH thanks GigaSports and Swire Coca-cola, without whom we could not hold these races. The entire community also contributes to their success, from the Kin Hang Hiking Club marking the courses to the fore runners and sweepers and registration and checkpoint marshals who volunteer their time. It is, as always, a pleasure to put on races when working with such a great team. I must also give a shout out to my 9-year old daughter Luka, who helped at the checkpoints most of the day and swept the last section of the course with me. She is sound asleep as I type this report.

Keith Noyes
Race Director