



Kenyan storms to victory with new Shanghai Marathon mark

Some 38,000 runners set off from the Bund for the Shanghai Marathon on November 26. — All photos by Dong Jun

Ma Yue

Fine weather helped Kenya's Philimon Kiptoo Kipchumba to set a new record of 2 hours, 5 minutes and 35 seconds for the Shanghai Marathon.

Some 38,000 runners set off from the Bund for the race on November 26.

The previous record was created by Kipchumba's compatriot Paul Lonyangata in 2015, when he completed the 42-kilometer race in 2:07.14. This is also the best men's record among all marathon events in China.

"This is my first visit to Shanghai," said the 25-year-old Kenyan. "The course is beautiful and the weather is just perfect, helping me to create a new record."

He won the US\$55,000 top prize, and an extra US\$20,000 for the record.

Second-placed Alphonse Felix Simbu from Tanzania finished just four seconds behind (2:05.39). He was followed by another Kenyan Solomon Kirwa Yego (2:05.42).

Wu Xiangdong became the first Chinese runner to finish the race, clocking 2:11.53.

He was followed by 2020 Shanghai Marathon winner Jia E'renjia (2:11.58).



Philimon Kiptoo Kipchumba at the finish line



Runners in unique outfits.

Wu and Jia placed 9th and 10th, respectively, among the men.

The women's crown went to Ethiopia's Siranesh Yirga Dagne, who finished in 2:21.28, followed by Kenya's Selly Chepyego Kaptich (2:21.55) and Bahrain's Eunice Chebichii Chumba (2:22.20).

The finish line of this year's marathon made a return to the renovated Shanghai Stadium. Runners crossed the finish line at the torch square before entering the stadium.

About 12 percent of the runners were from abroad. Among the Chinese, more than 10,000 were from out of Shanghai,

organizers said.

Dane Tor Ronnow was among the six overseas runners who took part in the marathon under a new International Tourism Partner project. It combines tourism and marathon, providing accommodation, pre-race route inspection, and city tour services for overseas runners.

ITP is a mature project in some overseas marathons, contributing over 30 percent of participants to these events. The overseas runners can also help boost the tourism industry in related cities.

Ronnow is an IT director, who developed an interest for marathon 20 years ago.

He had registered for the 2019 edition of the Shanghai race, but missed the payment deadline. The ITP helped him to make up for the regret.

"This is my first visit to Shanghai and China," the 57-year-old told Shanghai Daily. "I saw the skyline of Shanghai in pictures, and immediately fell in love with it."

Before coming to Shanghai, Ronnow took part in four marathon events within six days in the four Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The Shanghai Marathon was his 21st marathon race this year.

The event also welcomed a group of special spectators.

Twenty students from Guizhou's Pingqiao Primary School were invited under the support of the marathon's charity foundation. They visited city landmarks, including the Oriental Pearl TV Tower, and cheered for marathon runners near the finish line.

"They are here to experience the superb phenomenon of a big sports event," according to Xu Zixiong, the only sports teacher of the school which has some 300 students.