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PACSETTERS 30K KLIM PRACTICE RUN 1 by Jamie Pang

For the KL International (full) Marathon participants, the countdown begins. For the others there's no better time to get a long run in.

The Event

I've read and heard quite a bit on this annual [Pacesetters](#) preparatory event for the [KL International Marathon](#) (KLIM) and was looking forward to this year's even though the KLIM is not part of my marathon agenda (I've registered myself for the 10K only).

Reason for its popularity are due to the sponsorship of Nestle (for [PowerBar](#) and PowerGel) and also the prospect of meeting up with runners in the last phase of marathon training. While this event is officially called a 30K Practice Run, runners have the flexibility of doing 20, 25, or 30K distances.

I had made plans to meet up with my runner friends ([Azwar](#), Ronnie, [Terence](#) and the Penguin Clan) to meet up at the Bukit Aman car park early (a large crowd is expected) for a photo shoot but it was not to be. While I managed to hook up with Terence and Penguins 1 and 2, Azwar arrived late and I only caught him, Ronnie and Chen too close to the flag off time. In any case, I was already at the car park at 5am and there were already over 50 people gathered there. We were soon issued a run ribbon and a PowerBar each (after paying a registration fee of RM3). Most of those gathered there looked good going into the last 7 weeks before race day on Feb 29th. On a personal note, I had managed to shake off the post-marathon blues and resumed my training, though I've yet to move my mileage up, so this was to be my first *REAL* run.

And We're Off!

By this time, the crowd had swelled to nearly 500-strong. The President gave a short welcome note, a walk-through of the routes and then the club's top runner, Yew Chee Choong led us on a good stretching routine. Then we were off! Needless to say Ronnie and Azwar were nowhere to be seen from the start and so were Penguins 1 and 2. Terence ran near me and Chen was beside me. I was comfortable at the start and took the chance to check out the surrounding runners. Reaching the 2.5K mark, Chen had to stop to tie his laces and I continued on and caught Terence who had started strongly. Having run the Bukit Tunku Hills just the day before, my pacing was consistent and reasonably comfortable.

Some of the runners around me at the 5K (Lawrence and Jimmy Tong were among the volunteers at this water station) mark were still the same ones, so I made a mental note to latch on to them and should they surge, which 3 of them did, to try to hang on and catch them on the downhills or on the way back. True to norm, Ken greeted me from behind and we ran a few yards together (that was all I can managed!). A couple of good looking women runners - 1 wearing a Grey T-Shirt (GTS) and another Pacesetters vest (PV) - who surged past me around the 7K point and I thought they were quite fast. Nevertheless I maintained visual on all these folks. At this time the competitive nature set in and I quickened my pace a little and near the 10K point, I saw, among others, Yew Chee Choong, Ronnie, then Azwar already on their way back. A quick estimate probably put me 2.5K behind them.

Halfway Mark

It was with a bit of relief for me to have reached the Hartamas Petronas Station. Just before that I had downed my PowerGel and at the 10K station, I downed 2 cups of water and 1 cup of 100Plus which set me burping for the next 5 minutes. I also maintained my ritual of dousing me head with water from the station tap. Refreshed, I took off again. My legs were a little tight but not to the point of discomfort. I spotted the 3 runners who ran off from me some 800 metres ahead and that renewed my resolve. Then I spotted Terence approaching the station I just left and cheered him. He looked good. Another K and the PowerGel kicked in. My strides quickened more and my downhills were

exhilarating. I dropped many runners on the downhills. Then I caught and held off the GTS girl just before the Duta Roundabout.

Home Run

I took another cup of water and 100 Plus at the 15K mark and set about finishing the business. To me this was and still is the most challenging part of the course, due to the 1.5K of uphill. So I wasn't surprised to find myself walking a bit and deep down I was disappointed to see GTS go past me again. A short while later, I arrived at the downhills and I surged and caught GTS (who was tiring at the BNM hill) and she never passed me again. After which I saw one of the three runners who overtook me at the 17K mark with the PV girl. I gae chase and overtook them at the BNM junction. After which it was a slow run up the incline to reach the Lake Gardens traffic lights. Chen was there waiting for me - he must have restarted from the 10K water station sooner than I. He said that he thought I was ahead of him (which I was up to the 10K mark) and so wanted to give chase.

Hopes Renewed

Making our way back to the car park, I met Lay and we spent some time chatting about our Singapore experience and he too experienced the post-marathon blues and was disappointed with the results of Singapore. It's a common and natural condition, probably to allow the body and mind can recover. Lay was not sure whether to do the 42 or 10 in the KLIM. As for me, this run has been a good one. It has been a long long time since I managed a sub-2 hour 20K, and added to the fact that I have not had any runs exceeding 7K the last 1 month increases the satisfaction. Perhaps this marks a return to some serious training?

Splits: 10K: 1:00, 20K: 57.41. Total: 1:57.41

Learnings:

- 1) Listen to the body. In hindsight, not running far for the last 1 month proved to be a blessing for me as it probably allowed for healing to take place.
- 2) Running 5 days a week has its merits provided I don't overdo them
- 3) The need to maintain the weights sessions as my running form has improved a little
- 4) Next step is to bring back the long runs with tempos to improve the speed-endurance factor.
- 5) Incorporating faster-paced runs and hill running in a week's program seem to be paying off

*Jamie
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