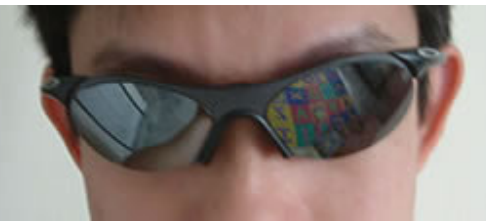


you've just stepped ^{into} jamie's loft



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[SINGAPORE MARATHON RACE REPORT](#) by Jamie Pang

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RACE ANALYSES

(as extracted from runpix.com)

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Back in Singapore!

I can't believe it's been a year since my maiden marathon in Singapore. On Saturday 2 buses departed the Bukit Aman car park for the Island Republic at 8:15am with close to 90 [Pacesetters](#) members. By early afternoon nearly 150 members would have stepped foot on the island. This perhaps would be the largest contingent travelling to the marathon.

Note to marathon organizers in Malaysia: This proves that if you get your act right, you'll get more runners doing your event than any sum of marketing dollars would. This phenomenon is called "word-of-mouth".

Expo & Checking In

Everyone in the buses were looking forward to the collection of bibs and the expo. Some naturally had their eyes on shopping along Orchard Road but that's another story. This year's expo was moved to the [Suntec Convention Centre](#). I found that the bib collection process has been made even more efficient. Runners are guided into their respective queues according to their categories. The bib, timing chip and event T-Shirt and Handbook were deposited into a large [New Balance](#) shoebag. Absolutely no delays here and with plenty of volunteers standing by, I cleared the collection within 5 minutes.

The expo area was slightly narrow and crowded. Notable booths were the Polar and [PowerBar](#) (where I collected a complimentary PowerGel). The [KLIM](#) and [Gold Coast Marathons](#) booths were quiet with most runners contented just to get the next day's task over with first. With some time to kill before pushing off for the hotel at 4pm, I hit the New Balance booth. By far the most crowded exhibitors, NB certainly had some good wares on sale. I grabbed 5 pairs of technical running socks (2 pairs were for Newton in case you're wondering) and 2 pairs of T-Shirts. The shoes weren't really appealing, with only the racing models unseen in Malaysia.

After that I met up with [Ronnie](#) and Yaziz who were loitering the area and we sat down to listen to one of the talks (each got ourselves a complimentary tube of foot cream for our "troubles"). I ought to have lined up at the Polar booth for the free fitness checkup. I had thought that you'll only receive your HR measurements but apparently they were measuring your MaxVO2 as well. I'm not sure how the MaxVO2 could be measured by strapping on a watch and lying motionless on a mat though, as MaxVO2 is nearly always measured in a lab while the athlete is put through a thorough workout.

Whilst not spectacular, this year's expo was an improvement over 2003's. An hour later I was checked into my hotel room. I didn't have enough time to do much except to unpack. Also got the race gear ready - pinned the bib, tied the baggage strip and laced the timing chip. My gel packs were already pinned to my shorts and I've read through the event handbook while back in KL, so I saved myself some time there. Finally I downed 2 bananas I bought from the Yong Peng rest area, washed down with Performance.

Chow Time

Staying at the [Peninsular-Excelsior](#) was perhaps the best idea as I would discover. Location-wise it's unbeatable. A mere 500m to the Padang, 300m to Raffles City, 150m around the corner to [Funan](#) and across to the [City Hall MRT](#) station, this is the hotel to stay should you choose to run the [Singapore Marathon](#).

More on Singapore Marathon training:

[18](#) | [17](#) | [16](#) | [15](#) | [14](#) | [13](#) | [12](#) | [11](#) | [10](#) | [9](#) | [8](#) | [7](#) | [6](#) | [5](#) | [4](#) | [3](#) | [2](#) | [D-Minus 22hrs](#) | [Race Report](#)

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[Gavin](#) | [Penguin](#) | [Alex](#)

Half Marathon Race Reports

[Jason Lim](#) | [Rohaizad](#)



Mouse over the images for descriptions!





My average race speed



Left row (from top): Alex, JP, Kevin, Justin, Bernice
Right row: Alex's friend, Rohaizad, Jason, Ronnie, Andrew and friend



I had a plate of pasta, a bowl of soup, 3 pieces of garlic bread and 2 slices of pizza



As with last year, I thought [Pastamania](#) at Funan Mall would be a central location for most of us. As I mentioned I knew it was close to the hotel but I didn't realize how close it was! When I got there, Alex and his friend were already there. Some tables were joined in 2 rows for us. Alex was quietly confident of his first marathon and I could see that he'll be able to make it. While he handed me the [ClimaFIT](#) cap I asked him to buy for me, Kevin arrived. Soon afterwards it was [Rohaizad](#) followed by Jason. Then Andrew, Bernice and their friend, Ronnie and Tey's gang. Kenneth, Yen Nee (who had done some shopping), Justin and [Julian](#) joined us later. Julian was lugging his sax. Handshakes and stories were exchanged and it was much fun - a nice diversion to reduce the worries of tomorrow's heavy task. Many of those there were acquaintances on the Internet and had not met in person. So I was glad to have brought this large group together. Not to be left behind, the [Penguins](#) popped by. Penguins 1 and 2 looked seriously in the mood to lock horns on race day.

By the time we were through with dinner and chitchats it was close to 7:30pm and I decided against making a trip to Orchard Road. In hindsight it was a good decision as I would need the rest. Back at the hotel, after a soak in the tub, I channel surfed and was surprised to hit a French movie with some nude scenes. No diversions now, I thought to myself. To cap off a nice day, I received a call from Ronnie and Yaziz wishing me good luck for the race. After re-checking my 3 alarm clocks, it was lights out.

Race Morning and Plan

I woke up at 3:50am, quickly freshened up, taped/lubed all the spots and had a breakfast of 1 bun, 1 PowerBar and 1 banana, all washed down with a cup of coffee and Performance. Kevin arrived at about 5am to drop off his bag and soon after we were walking to the starting line. Again we didn't have to go far, it was just after the Adelphi. While the Padang was still relatively quiet the bright lights beyond the Padang were already booming with noise. I deposited my bag - still well organized by bib range. We were directed by placed volunteers to the pathway that led to the [Esplanade Theatres On The Bay](#) where the start would be. We took it easy, stretched and sat down observing the gathering crowd. With 15 minutes to go, we shuffled down to the starting pens and located the time-zones we were running. My race plans were simple. Take 1 minute walks breaks at every water station which were spaced 2K apart. 1st goal for this race was to finish, 2nd goal was to PR, 3rd goal was to break 5 hours. Target pace to do sub-5 was a consistent 7 minute pace. Sounded like a simple plan and I felt strong and confident.

Look At The Crowd!

The number of runners for the full marathon was amazing - nearly doubled that of last year at 4,000 plus. Where Kevin and I stood we were at least 300m to the starting line and there were many more runners behind us! We couldn't hear the MCs shouting away and music were blasting to the *n*th decibels but there was no mistaking the electrifying energy. More importantly I was enjoying myself and grinning from ear to ear. Time and again we were clapping (for what reason I didn't know, as I couldn't hear a thing) and I made some last minute mental reminders:

- Let me have the strength to carry me through the difficult miles. However should I find the going tough in the



later miles, let me at least have the energy to mutter expletives

- I've trained as best as my schedule allowed me to. Now's the time to just do my best and reward myself for the months of waking up early on Sunday mornings and running the risks of being knocked down by crazy drivers. No time for self-doubts now!
- Let me have the discipline to stick to race plans, maintain a conservative pace and not chase after that attractive girl in a sports bra
- In the final 500m, let me smile and wave to the cheering crowd, and finish strongly
- And finally let this shorts of mine not drop from the weight of the gel packs pinned to it!

After the MCs blasted "Simply the Best" and "Who Let the Dogs Out", we were let off! I immediately spotted 1 runner with a laden [Camelbak](#), another with a fully loaded backpack, many women in skimpy outfits, a large boisterous group from the Army (in their team vest that said "Honour & Glory - Army Marathoners"), StandChart runners, runners who were doing it for charity

Early Stages

The early miles were really comfortable. Kevin and I were pacing and we were crowd watching. The humidity were very high and I was already sweating heavily 1K into the race. Foolishly at that time, I didn't heed this early warning of this to come.

We spent most of our attention crowd watching - and enjoyed this diversion. A row of men were lined up on the field presenting their "arms" for a "gun salute". It was quite a funny sight. Then the returning elites passed the 10K mark opposite - bloody hell 28 minutes split! This time around the elite field was deep with Kenyans and Tanzanians, and it was not surprising to see the bunch of them in full flight chasing after the leader 150m ahead. This amazing sight generated applause, "oohs" and "ahhhs" from us mid-packers.

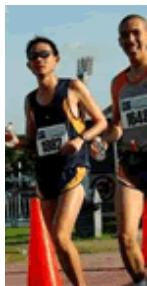
Certain sections of the route converged, therefore we at some stages we were running with the faster 10K and 21K runners. Spotted John, Li Sar, Bernice, [Gavin](#), and Penguin-2 (who was on the opposite side, hammering the marathon). However there wasn't any problems with traffic as the marshalls were doing an amazing job with the hailers. We spotted a few girls running in Santarina's hats complete with bells. This time around there weren't many costume dressers but still plenty of sights to check out. I made the 10K mark in 1:08.16, on target pace. Ominously the sun was already up. I pulled down my shades and kept at it.

Decision Time

Through every K, Kevin and I made sure in our steady but comfortable pace that we keep within our target pace. Kevin would "Roger that" each time I gave headsup on the refreshment breaks while he kept my pace in check. Averagely we were achieving that, though we noticed that some markers may have been out of place. For instance, we hit certain Ks in sub-6 and some over-7. It wasn't a major concern but it did put off accurate pacing a bit.

I was feeling so strong and energized from absorbing the atmosphere that I found myself surging pretty often - held back only by Kevin's warning. However I thought maybe it time I gamble a bit. Adopting the breaks at every 2K water station mark is a new strategy for me, and so was feeling this strong. I felt that to PR and break 5 hours, some risks would need to be taken. Who knows? Maybe I was really up to it? If I kept a too conservative race plan perhaps I couldn't meet my time goal?

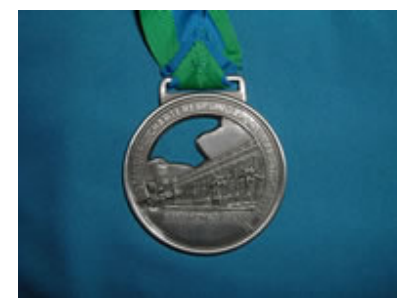
So I made a decision to run with my gut feel, and using the watch only as a secondary guide. If I didn't try pushing the envelope, I wouldn't have known, right?



Middle Miles

We passed the Esplanade area again somewhere between the 12 to 13K marks. The 3 Santarinas' hat bells weren't jingling anymore. But Kevin and I were still strong. The sun was beginning to make its presence felt but everything was still good. I had passed Terence (Penguin-6) around the exit of Marina South and was in cruise mode.

I remembered getting impatient of still not reaching the ECP. If I reached the ECP with some juice left, I knew that I'd go sub-5. So the ECP was a performance marker for me. It was getting hot now and while my legs were just mildly tight, the stomach was already making its discomfort felt. I had relieved myself in the porta-toilet in front of the Kallang Stadium and I thought I'd got the congestion there out of the way. The feeling was like the stomach had collapsed into itself.



I'd been drinking the Excel and water well and had sucked on 2 gummies. Nevertheless we reached 21K in 2:21.38, still very much in the fight and more importantly on target pace.

Smell Something Burning?

By 24K, it was getting really hot. I spotted Don Khor running strongly on the returning side. He would eventually be the 2nd Malaysian finisher in the Men's Category with a time of 3:02. Then Gavin ran by and we all exchanged shouts. He made a finger across the throat sign - was he suffering from the heat too? Didn't seem to me as he finished well within his goal time in 3:22.

I thought I smelled something burning. Then I realized that it was the smell of the sun burning my skin generating a mixed odour of sweat and sunblock. I was being cooked in the hot sun. I could feel the heat radiating from the corrugated metal sheets on a construction site we passed. I felt one side of my face burning up and poured some water on my head, careful not to get my shoes wet.

I finally sought some shade in the ECP and took the chance to stretch a bit. Kevin was always close by. The ECP meandered and at the 26K point I was energized by the strong beat of music and crowd support. I was handed a banana which I tore into ravenously. It wasn't quite ripe but I didn't care. I picked up the pace a little and looked forward to the U-turn. After some cursing, I got to the U-turn point and gingerly made my way to the 30K milestone. The legs were getting heavy and tight and I took every chance I had to stop and stretch them. Many were doing the same and most were suffering from the heat. I finally reached the 30K mark in 3:36.54 - 5 minutes off target pace.

Is Oslo in Finland or Sweden?

At the 31K mark I made another decision to still force a sub-5 but to do that I had to drop Kevin. He was running some ways behind and in my hazy state of mind, I didn't realize that he wasn't there anymore. I had to push ahead. The sun was having a go at us big time but I wasn't hallucinating when I spotted a very large birthday cake on the opposite side. There was a man walking in a large birthday cake, surrounded by a crew of helpers. The poor fellow was part of some company's 50th anniversary do and he still had some 16K to go.

If that wasn't bad enough I passed an elderly man (I found out later that he was 80) walking on the opposite side with all the support vehicles behind him. He had just passed the halfway mark. He definitely was the last person in the race and I felt thankful that I wasn't still at the 21K point.

Barbossa's March



Nearing the 41K mark. Scanned photo courtesy of Tey. It's actually blazing hot but you can't see it in this photo

Then I spotted Tey running just in front. I ran up to him and gave him a pat. Turning around he brandished his camera and loosed a few shots in my direction. Then he ran ahead and snapped some more. He told me he was waiting for his



If you had watched "Pirates of The Carribean" you would remember the underwater scene where the zombie pirates walked on the ocean bed. That was how I was walking - not really in slo-mo but approaching it. The arms were swinging all right but the legs just weren't following. With just 5K (4 laps of KLCC park) to go, I was once again fighting myself. I was wrestling with negative thoughts, and cursing at the muscle fibres in my legs and stomach.

Alex Leong had passed me some ways back and was looking good while I had passed Abot Narus somewhere near the Waterfront. I spotted Francis Toh up ahead clearly struggling and I pictured him in a pirate's get-up. With some words of encouragement I went past him. I had given up on sub-5 some distance back. To run it, I'd need to do 5-minute pace for the rest of the course. And I was averaging 8 plus. Abot passed me again and I didn't see him again. The distances passed slowly at the Promenade stretch. Again the route meandered and curved and I couldn't see the "durian". Where is it???

running partners. You can't meet a friendlier face in the final miles than Tey's.

The Finish

With a couple of Ks to go, I gave it a go again. In the run-in, I spotted Li Sar who was shouting encouragements and the hitting the runway, I squeezed the remaining juices out of my legs and motored home passing Chan Wing Kai who, hopefully had snapped some nice shots of me, past Rohaizad and the gang and hundreds of cheering supporters. Again I was alone - no one was within 35m of me, so I lapped up the cheers and powered past 2 runners in the last 15m. The videoman after the finish line gestured to me to lift up my hands which I complied. I had no energy left to object. I would've stripped naked if you'd asked me then. I walked over to the oranges booth and grabbed a bottle of water and a few slices of oranges. Hordes of people were in the area. The kids were jamming the carnival too.



Let me through!



C'mon, get there!



Phew! Finally!

Post-Race

Quality runs will get one faster but to last the distance, it's still down to mileage. I started well, held pace up to 30K and crashed. I ended strongly but it was too late. I'd missed the goal time and PR attempt. My chip timing of 5:15.16 meant that I was about a minute slower than in Ipoh but I had no regrets as I had to try out a new race strategy. The prelim results put me in position 1624 out of 3230 runners. Many DNF'd and I saw 3 runners crashed to the sidewalk after the 25K mark. Conditions were downright brutal with the heat easily reaching 34C. But this suited the Kenyans just fine. Philip Tanui (brother of the illustrious Moses) won with a record time of 2:17.02. I finished the race with no blisters yet again and I seemed to have recovered even faster than my previous 2 marathons. Even after 3, there's still much to be learnt but it's OK - I've got time. Read the news coverage on the marathon here: [1](#), [2](#).

Looking Forward

I've registered for the KLIM full, so training will commence in 2 week's time. The course for KLIM will be more undulating with a treacherous final 5K with a steep uphill and long downhill that's guaranteed to buckle all but very strong legs. Training for the heat and hills are a must plus sustaining 60-70K weeks. Also, I'd need a replacement for my Wave Rider. I won't be able to use it for another marathon. Perhaps I'll get the [Rider 7](#) or [Creation 5](#). Any sale coming?

Overall Review

What worked

1. Expo. While not stupendous, it was a move in the right direction
2. Number collection was very efficient. Liked the NB shoebag - practical and more durable than last year's sling bag
3. The hotel. Loved the location. Period
4. Baggage handling was also first class. Didn't have to wait long to deposit and collect
5. Running Marina South first. This part was always difficult

6. Bananas and PowerGels at ECP
7. Drink stations. All delivered except for 1. The Excel iso drink were, surprisingly, not very gassy
8. Medal and Finisher T-Shirt were better organized this year
9. Runners' Tent were larger and airy
10. The small water bottles were great. Just nice and minimal wastage. Easy to carry too
11. Pinning the gels on the shorts

Needs Improvement

1. Weather. Downright brutal
2. Start time. The organizers need to re-consider moving the start time earlier. More casualties and DNFs this year. Unless of course it's the organizers intention to position this race as a tough race
3. Massage services were unavailable for above 5-hours finishers. Need to have more volunteers staffed here
4. The number of cheer teams seemed to have reduced
5. Some drink stations were not placed every 2K. Some were closer to each other than the others
6. Loudspeakers at the start. Needs to have more down the starting



Entrant	Jamie Pang Kuan Yu
Event	Marathon
Date	5 December 2004
Country / Race Number	MY / 1982
Clock/Chip	5h:17m:45s / 5h:15m:16s