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**KL MARATHON RACE REPORT** by Jamie Pang

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I think this will be one of the shortest race reports I've written. It's basically down to not having the luxury of time which compels me to just log down memorable bits. So here goes!

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With my training capacity reduced to half or even less than what's ideal for a marathon program, I had no choice but remain nonchalant about my chances of doing a good time for my 2nd KL Marathon (6th marathon overall). But as always I intend not to throw in the towel and was more than game for a fight to the end. What better way that to accomplish this marathon without walking - there were plenty of pent-up frustration in me you see!



To the finish line! Photo by [Ronnie](#)

So began my ritual of carboloading the Monday before Sunday stuffing (sometimes forcing) plates of pasta down my throat. Everyone at home had pasta. I alone must have consumed 1 full pack of pasta myself over the 4 days of loading. How's that for you low-carb devotees? I ensured I hydrated and loaded up on bananas on the eve of the race. the night before I slept in a separate room as I didn't want to wake up the wife and kid with my 2 alarms.

I was out of the house by 2:45am and got to the car park behind the court house at 3:30am. The car park was mostly empty and I picked the sweetest spot and proceeded to close my eyes. With about an hour to go, I gagged down 2 Powerbars, 2 bananas, 1 bottle of Endurox (carried one as well to avoid getting stuck at the stations) and walked to the field. There was quite a crowd gathering and even though there was no music (organizers probably didn't want to pay royalties for public broadcast), there was still some energy coursing through the place.

After helping the Pacesetters set up a corner in the Powerbar booth, I went on my way to mingle with the usual faces. The OX group ladies were pretty confident (and they indeed did very well) and since there wasn't much entertainment around we went about bantering about nonsensical stuff like the hairstyle dujour, carrying a comb in the pocket and race expectations. The newbies and oldies were all there and because I had no personal expectations other than knowing the scale of the battle that was to come, I was subdued.

After the flag off, we were entertained by Kelvin's usual voice for the first K. Then I was running alone. The battle's started. I was on a quicker than usual pace and hit the checkpoints between 6:00 to 6:20 pace. As with last year, the water/sponging stations were all adequately stocked throughout the race. A good touch were the split readouts at the checkpoints. Also noteworthy were many medical staff with ample supplies of muscle ointment. I had them rub a little on my calves and quads twice.

Refueling strategy followed my tested approach but I did experimented with 2 things: **1)** I carried a packet of endurox for mixing and **2)** In my shorts pocket was a Snickers bar to quell the hunger. Experiment 1 ended disastrously and I chucked the packet away after wasting some energy trying to empty the contents into the small bottle opening. Before that I did attempt to just pour the content into my mouth. The Snickers were a great and I think it gave me some much needed energy after 30K to fight it out.



This is for you, Carbokid and Carbowoman!



Photo courtesy of [KC Leong](#)

By the end of the race, I found out that other than walking the few steps to collect the sponges and water, I hadn't walk at all along the course. Summoning mental strength I never thought I had, I went over the climbs and running alone with considerable success. Pain is indeed temporary. After downing Tey's amino drink (thanks buddy!) and passing Rohaizad who was snapping photos, just after the 40K mark, I muttered "Tempo Time" and just kicked all the way home.

I found the final 2K to be most enjoyable where mental prevailed over physical tiredness. The feeling to still be able to kick at the closing stages brought about immediate confidence. You just knew then that no matter where the muscle twitches were you were just going to give it all and not care about the consequences of the legs completely seizing up. There are times when you just can't allow yourself be stifled by caution. The feeling of friends cheering me into the chute were fantastic and crossing the line in a 13-minute PR and a bonus sub 4:30 was quite simply unbelievable.

5K - 31:23 > 31:23  
10K - 29:18 > 1:00.42  
15K - 33:30 > 1:34.12  
20K - 29:58.27 > 2:04.10  
25K - 29:59 > 2:34.10  
30K - 32:49 > 3:07.00  
35K - 35:05 > 3:42.05  
40K - 32:18 > 4:14.24  
41K - 5:17 > 4:19.42  
42.2K - 6:33 > **4:26.16**

**What worked:**

1. The Snickers and 2 Powerbars
2. Hydration and fueling plan the week before
3. Running the 30s and 33s at close to tempo pace
4. Good show by the organizers on the refreshment stations (though the slower half marathoners had it bad)

5. No walking ensured that I passed many more runners than being passed
6. The medal was not too bad - unusual snowflake design which was a departure from the round, golden ones we've been getting
7. The ice pools - too bad I didn't even know they were there. An excellent idea to aid recovery

**Could be better (definitely!):**

1. The Jalan Cheras, Loke Yew and Tun Razak stretches - very dusty and many bikers attempting to sneak past the road block. 1 car nearly knocked a Finnish guy down
2. The event guide (a repeat of last year's with the use of arrogant-sounding and unfriendly words), bib collection (messed up) and the now-infamous rag of a T-Shirt
3. No event expo - I guess having none is better than putting up a half-baked one
4. Increase in entry fees but no noticeable increase in perks. I hope the organizers don't have funny ideas from their "Lawatan Sambil Belajar" to Singapore. The Singapore Marathon justifiably had increased prices as they've achieved world-class standards. The KL race has some ways to go before achieving that.

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*Jamie*  
*Mar 7th, 2006*