



Nike Zoom Elite 3 Review

My only experience with the Elite was the previous Elite 1 and 2, both of which were not only lighter than the 3 but featured less forefoot cushioning. The first and second versions, while widely liked, had durability issues.

To solve it, Nike increased the outsole thickness and as a result the weight went up by half an ounce. Naturally you can't please everyone but the opinions are quite evenly distributed in the online forums. There were many who panned the increased weight of the shoe, but many liked the upgrade too. The Elite 3 were worn in training by Nike elites like Dathan Ritzenhein and Adam Goucher.

Having retired 2 pairs of Pegasus 2005, I was on the lookout for a lighter pair of go-fast training shoes that will double up as my marathon racing shoes. Choices were limited if you're in the market for a lightweight yet stable (with a small medial post) shoe that's cushioned enough for the longer distances. I found the asics DS Trainer too firm and flat for the marathon while I didn't quite adapt to my Brooks Axiom 2. I found the Elite 3 on a big discount and since then it has become my favorite racing shoe for longer distances of 30K and above.



The Zoom Elite 2

In terms of weight, the 10.6 oz Elite 3 is parked nicely between the DS Trainer (9.6 oz) and the Axiom 2 (11.1 oz). Don't let its dual density medial posts put you off as they're small enough to be unobtrusive. This added stability comes in handy in the course of longer runs when one tires and loses a bit of running form. What that means is even runners with a neutral gait can wear these babies.

The forefoot width is slightly wider – a major factor for me – than the usual Nikes, although a little wider would've been nice. The forefoot

waffle outsole is a combination of Nike's blown rubber Duralon for a softer ride, and BRS1000 on the high wearing areas. The heel outsole is BRS1000. I've had no problems with traction in the many conditions I've worn the shoes under. Breathability has never been an issue even though the mesh upper appears to be particularly ventilated. The visibility rating for this shoe is above average with large strips of reflective tape all round.

US10 fits just nice but I still ended up with a toe blister or two after a marathon. Cushioning duties fall on a full length Zoom Air. I've grown to like the more responsive Zoom Air more than the traditional Nike Air bags. I'm not sure of this but you'll see that the Elite is combination lasted. The small board should be able to accommodate orthotics and Nike claims that the Elite's exclusive FitSole sockliner is comparable to many aftermarket replacement inserts out there.



I've logged 354KM in my pair which included 1 half marathon (2008 RMAF), 8 30Ks (including the GE 30K), and 2 marathons (the 2008 KL Marathon and the recent Sundown) and broke 3 PRs in them this year. The wear and tear is average and I believe they still have the legs to take another 300KM.

This is one shoe I really like. I'm saving it up for key training runs and at least another half marathon race. I don't look forward to the day I'm retiring this shoe so I hope its replacement model, the Elite 4+, will just be as equally awesome. The Elite 3 is a near perfect shoe to me – it has everything I needed in a lightweight yet supportive package. Not only is it a solid performance trainer/racer, it could easily withstand the rigors of a daily trainer as well. If only its forefoot was just a bit wider...

Pleasure to meet you: The Elite 3 (left) and the 4

My happy relationship with the Elite is set to continue as I've just received the 4th version which will most likely be my racing shoe for New York. So look out for the review of the 4!

RRP: RM399

Purchased Price: RM230

Lineage: Zoom Elite, Zoom Elite 2, Zoom Elite 3

Durability: 4/5

Ride: 4/5

Ventilation: 4/5

Forefoot and Heel Cushioning: 4/5

Wet Traction: 4/5

Value For Money: 4/5

Overall: 4/5

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