



Shoe Review: Nike Zoom Victory+



The first reaction when I put on the black and white pair of Zoom Victory was “Whoa!” Then I asked Wong, “Are you sure this weighs 10 ounces?” I’d laced it up after returning to the car park following a 19K Saturday morning run and was eager to try on the hot looking shoes. It certainly felt lighter than 10 oz and several Internet searches later on the online shoe retailers site such as [Holabird](#) to RoadRunnerSports had the weight pegged from 9.3 to 10 oz. Personally it felt like 8 oz.

<< 2 colors are presently available in the market

The next feeling that ran through my mind was the low profile ride. It’s almost like your soles are in direct contact with the ground. This immediately gives the shoes a go-fast feel. The next impression I had was that the shoe very nearly completely moulds itself to your feet. The strategically positioned strands of Flywire cinch the uppers together and wraps the entire shoe around your foot. Every part of its construction is aimed at giving you what the designers call “The Naked Ride”. They want you to forget the shoe and concentrate on the task at hand – running fast. You can watch the video where the designers talk about the process of conceptualizing this shoe [here](#).



The Zoom Victory+ is of course Nike Plus enabled and the watchword that comes with the shoe is “Flywire”, a technology that’s positioned to propelled athletes during the Beijing Olympics. Flywire is present in many shoes designed for Olympians, although for now in Malaysia, only in the Zoom Victory+, the Hyperdunk (basketball) and the soon-to-be-released (or should I say unleashed) Lunar Trainer and Lunar Racer? Thin and light yet as strong as Kevlar – yes the same material which body armor is made of – serves to provide support and unmatched fit. If you take a look at the photos, you’ll see how the strands are “pulled” to connect the entire bottom section of the shoe to the upper. Some sections are crissed-crossed to provide strength to the highly stressed parts of the shoe. Coupled with Nike’s Natural Motion



Engineering, Flywire is supposed to give you a natural ride as your feet flexes through the gait cycle. It may not mean much to the wearer but have a look at the outsole. See the flex grooves that run across and lengthwise of the shoe? That’s part of Natural Motion Engineering. And the next time you’re in the Nike boutiques, pick up the technical running shoes and check the outsoles out. You’ll see that different models have different configuration according to the shoe type.



What to do then than to take the pair for a spin. I ran a fartlek on the Carcosa – Deer Park – National Mosque route to get a feel of the shoe. I've to be frank here by saying that the shoes look cushier than they felt. Despite the Cushlon midsole, the ride was firm and a little on the hard side. But that gave the shoe a very responsive feel. I believe this was due to the outsole material used which negates Cushlon's softness. The outsole material is certainly not Duralon, Nike's blown rubber.

<< *The sculpted look is apparent from this angle*

My feet also slid around a bit around the bottom of the heel. This was largely due to the shoe's insoles which were quite unstated. The insoles were unlike the contoured versions found in other Nike models. It's so pliable you could actually roll up the latex-like piece. The problem disappeared when back at the car park, I replaced the stock insole with the Zoom Elite's Fitsole. The ride improved tremendously. My second "Whoa" of the morning.



Because of the Flywire construction, it's easy to lace the shoe up too tightly in the midfoot. I suggest experimenting with a few lacing options and I think the parallel lacing method would be quite suitable to make the fit just nice.

Despite the close mesh upper, my feet didn't feel warm at all after the run. The only niggling discomfort was the heel tab which constantly rubbed against my Achilles. This rules out the option of wearing a "no-show" sock. The heel tab has no superfluous padding, only a thin layer of sponge between 2 sheets. I hope the 2nd generation Victory will address this issue.

That said, I think the Victory+ make a good 10K racer and a good "weapon" for interval sessions be they on the road or track. One thing's for sure, it's the shoe I'll be wearing to the August 31st Human Race 10K in Singapore.

The flex grooves run across and along the length of the shoe>>



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