

# Promenade des Coureurs

15th Semi-Marathon International de Nice, France. 23 April 2006



Along the front to the Mediterranean Sea in Nice runs a wide palm-lined boulevard: the famous Promenade des Anglais. It is so named because it was built by the English community as a walking route way back in 1822. Even then there was more to the international character of Nice than the wealthy English

nobility. The high-born came from all of the leading European powers of the time. Throughout the 19th century the rest of Europe discovered Nice as convenient winter quarters where a mild climate and refined manners provided an ideal setting for the good life.

Times have changed. Nice still has its exclusive aspects – the fabulous art deco façade of the hotel and casino on the Promenade des Anglais testifies to this – but there is a strong undercurrent of popular appeal. Instead of promenading expatriate princes the Promenade des Anglais is today lined with tourists walking, skating and cycling, and even renting « Segaways » - personal gyroscopic chariots - to parade up and down this choice sea frontage.

At no time is this more noticeable than during the running of the Semi-Marathon International de Nice. This year almost 8,000 runners and 35,000 spectators took part in the events, which lasted over an extended weekend, from Friday afternoon to Sunday. Nowadays Nice attracts people from far further afield than just Europe: 44 nations from all the parts of the world were represented

among contestants in the race, so that foreign runners made up 30% of the field.

They lined up in a huge mass on the Promenade des Anglais, with the Baie des Anges to one side, making a spectacular sight. The Semi Marathon de Nice is one of the most beautiful events to be seen on the French Riviera.

This was the culmination of an engaging itinerary that each participant had already experienced. This year race weekend had been organised as one big party. The running village was situated in the heart of the city. At close range all around them visitors could see fine monuments, the famous Massena place and the old part of the city. They also could ride the scenic train to save their legs – and to get about town in a fun way. There were numerous on-course entertainments and activities organised for everyone, young or old: treasure hunt, music bands, a pasta party, massage stands, souvenir shops, a poster contest and so on.

The day before the race a friendly breakfast run was staged at which runners could get technical and nutritional advice and generally make themselves ready for the big day.

On race day live music and confetti enlivened the route and the start area, cheering the runners during their race. Three races were available to satisfy the tastes of all: a 3km event, supporting the fight against Breast Cancer at 09.00, then a 10km race and the half-marathon at 09.30. Many participated in the 3km run for personal reasons, and Breast Cancer advisors provided support in both the race and the bigger fight, as well as laying on race entertainment, beauty advice, makeovers and a souvenir kiosk. The race donated 1.50 euro per entry to the association in order to help people affected by this cancer.

The runners basked in the sun before the race took off from the Promenade des Anglais. Some of them had victory in their mind, others only the desire to be part of this great sporting event. Enthusiastic onlookers urged on the leading men, where an exciting contest developed for the top-three podium places. The leading Frenchman, James Theury, gave a creditable performance in fourth place.

In the women's race the Kenyan women led the home favourite Christelle Daunay, who nevertheless took a worthy third place. There were many fast performances and massive participation of both spectators and runners in the three different events.

Several particular challenges were also organised within the races: the Corporate Challenge in partnership with the international newspaper 'Metro', the Club Challenge and the Notaries Challenge.

The course was flat and made conditions favourable for personal best times. Each runner could also benefit from the wonderful panorama, looking out past palm trees under a sunny sky towards the Mediterranean Sea. The route was marked every kilometre and numerous aid stations were located along the course and in the finish area. All participants received an official T-shirt (pink for the ladies, sand-coloured for the men) and a goody-bag. All finishers in the Half Marathon also received a finisher's medal.

The 'Metro' published a special edition for the race, and each runner got a copy of this in the goody-bag. As a novelty for this edition each runner got their time sent to them by SMS thanks to the race partner Credit Agricole. The finish line officially closed three hours after the start of the race. Next year's races are set for 22 April 2007 and promise to be bigger and better than ever. Come and join the promenade des coureurs.

## Result

### MEN:

1	Emmanuel MUTAI	KEN	1:01:24
2	Tariku JUFAR	KEN	1:02:36
3	Benson BARUS	KEN	1:02:38
4	James THEURY	FRA	1:02:40
5	Stanley LELEITO	KEN	1:03:07
6	Abdellah FAFIL	MAR	1:03:20
7	David KINROSS	KEN	1:03:36
8	Joseph MAREGU	KEN	1:03:40
9	Wilfred TARRAGON	KEN	1:04:11
10	Simon MUNYUTU	KEN	1:04:16

### WOMEN:

1	Sylvia KIBET	KEN	1:11:51
2	Joan AYABEI	KEN	1:12:19
3	Christelle DAUNAY	FRA	1:12:48
4	Martha KOMU	KEN	1:15:09
5	Nathalie GUICHOUX	FRA	1:22:30
6	Ingrid LOPERGELO	FRA	1:22:47
7	Mariana WEBER	FRA	1:24:25
8	Beatrice FANGET	FRA	1:25:40
9	Sandrine SAHUC	FRA	1:26:44
10	Marilyna BORBA	ESP	1:27:15

