

Battling with emotions

By Mauro Ferraro
(translated by Chiara Crosato)

Marathons are unfailingly impressive, but some of them are simply unforgettable.

A 42-kilometre journey through emotions that imprints itself in runners' memories, and becomes a collective experience: "I was there - were you?"

Ninety years ago, in the area by the Piave River, people were running for other reasons. They struggled for survival, not for a race against the clock or a competition against others. Between 1917 and 1918, the Treviso area was destroyed by one of the most cruel conflicts of the First World War. Such distant epic events live on in place names like Nervesa della Battaglia, Sernaglia della Battaglia, Moriago della Battaglia...

Among these places, in an area only 30km from Venice that has become

Three years ago a ray of light accompanied Denis Curzi on the way to his first victory in the Treviso Marathon, and the good weather framed a repeat win. It is an exceptional event to see an Italian athlete ascend to the highest place on the podium in such an important marathon. The 32-year old carabinieri from the region of the Marches, with the dream of participating at the Olympic Games in Beijing, overcame the challenge of four Kenyan athletes.

Curzi won the race after a long duel with the Kenyan Peter Esakete Lomuria, who he eventually outdistanced by 100m. Outside the medieval walls of Treviso, at the finish line in viale Nino Bixio, the winner was awaited by his wife Veronica and his baby son Nicolò. Third-placed Samson Kosgei, had been the pre-race favourite due to his 2:11:27 credentials gained when winning the Florence Marathon in 2005.

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of great tourist interest, someone was moved to tears when they heard that a marathon was to be run on three different courses starting from Vidor, Vittorio Veneto and Ponte di Piave, to mark the 90th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

The 5th Treviso Marathon was an event like no other, a great celebration of sport, where the athletes, the 150,000 spectators along the course and the 3000 volunteers were the real protagonists. Among them, many War veterans' associations collaborated with the organisers.

After previous cold, rainy and snowy editions, a wonderful sunny day assisted the race and the participants and heightened the celebratory mood. A riot of flags and tumultuous crowds gathered at the head of the Piave River, shortly after the junction at which the three race courses converged. There, a faithful reproduction of Francesco Baracca's airplane, the Spad XIII flew above the runners. The original, belonging to the First World War hero, had been shot down by the Austrians in the Montello area. As they passed by some runners bore smiles on their faces and others were moved to tears.

little more than 2km to run, shortly before they entered the city centre of Treviso. Curzi, who had been observing Lomuria's resistance in the previous few kilometres, suddenly changed pace and gained some distance. From there to the finish it was a long triumphal drive for the runner coached by the Roman Romano Tordelli.

"It is a pity about the time" said Curzi. "I was in a good enough shape to run 2:10 but it was too hot for me. After a certain point I never looked at the time: I was focused only on the victory".

Among the women victory went to 42-year old Helena Javornik, from neighbouring Slovenia, in the 17th win of her career. Paced by her fellow countryman Mitja Kosovelj, she dropped all opposition at an early stage of the race and went on to record the third fastest ever time in Treviso, just 33 seconds short of the race record held by the Ethiopian Shitaye Gemechu. Second-placed Laura Giordano was running the second marathon in her career and improved her time by four minutes over her performance in Milan six months before. She is an international duathlete, combining running and cycling, but the marathon could represent her





RESULT

MEN:			
1	Denis CURZI	ITA	2:13:27
2	Peter Esakete IOMURIA	KEN	2:13:47
3	Samson KOSGEI	KEN	2:15:10
4	Kenneth KIPTOO	KEN	2:15:39
5	Joshua Kipchumba ROP	KEN	2:16:41
6	Said BOUDALIA	ITA	2:17:14
7	Clint VERRAN	USA	2:17:51
8	Hermann ACHMULLER	ITA	2:19:50
9	Jason MAYEROFF	USA	2:23:39
10	Filippo Lo PICCOLO	ITA	2:24:24
WOMEN:			
1	Helena JAVORNIK	SLO	2:28:36
2	Laura GIORDANO	ITA	2:37:36
3	Sisay MEASO	ETH	2:42:26
4	Monica CARLIN	ITA	2:44:44
5	Marinella CURRELI	ITA	2:48:03
6	Marina ZANARDI	ITA	2:50:43
7	Greta VARCHI	ITA	2:53:55
8	Ulrike RAICH	ITA	2:54:42
9	Sonia DONNINI	ITA	3:01:11
10	Rosanna SARAN	ITA	3:05:26

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future. The Italian athlete Rosaria Console, back in the marathon five months after giving birth to her baby, withdrew at 30km.

Altogether 4716 runners finished within the six-hour time limit (including 55 disabled athletes headed by the champion Francesca Porcellato). Participation was 27% up on the previous year and it is this kind of progress that has brought the Treviso Marathon to the front rank of Italian Marathons in its short history.

In the debut running on 14 March 2004 a total of 3,136 runners

signed up for all events. In the four years since this has exactly doubled, to reach 6,271 in 2008. Treviso is a fast race (the race records stand at 2:10:18 and 2:28:03 for men and women respectively), but its gentle course appeals equally to ordinary

runners, and again proved to be one of the most eagerly-anticipated races of the season.

The marathon of emotions does not stop here: the sixth edition will be held on 29 March 2009.

RACE CONTACT DETAILS

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Full race contact listings start on page ??