

TCS NYC Marathon

Sunday, November 7, 2021

New York, New York, USA

Albert Korir

Mohamed El Aaraby

Eyob Faniel

Ben True

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Up next we'll have the top three men in the open division. We're also going to bring up our second American. We'll introduce him first.

In his marathon debut, time of 2:12:53, new to the Marathon, no stranger to New York, Ben True.

First Italian on the podium in the men's race since 1997, with a time of 2:09:52, Eyob Faniel. In second place, first Moroccan on the podium since 2009, with a time of 2:09:06, Mohamed El Aaraby. And runner-up 2019, runner-up last time we were here, winner today, with a time of 2:08:22 from Kenya, Albert Korir, the winner.

Albert, you've been here before. In 2019, you raced a really fast half marathoner, and in 2021 you raced a really fast half marathoner, but you did very different strategies. Was that part of your plan today?

ALBERT KORIR: Yeah. It was -- I didn't imagine that I would win today, but this is not today. It begins from like three months before, when I knew that I will be part of the New York City Marathon. So this was all my training going in, and this is the result, yes.

THE MODERATOR: Eyob and Mohamed, you made a move very early in the race and were able to battle back. Can you talk about that early move, running around 2:07 pace in the early miles?

MOHAMED EL AARABY: Hi, everyone. We start to push with my friend here, and we just saw behind us nobody follow us, and we tried to push. The pace, it was not crazy. Then we say, let's go. Let's try to arrive at the end. Yeah, I think it was a good timing.

THE MODERATOR: Ben, as we said, you've been here a lot, first marathon. Talk about the debut and how you're



feeling right now.

BEN TRUE: Yeah, it was fun. I'm tired now. I think it was interesting. I didn't know what to expect coming in. I may have gone a little conservative at the beginning, a little too much. I had a lot of ground to try to make up at the end, but got the first one under the belt. Hopefully, I can learn a lot from it and come back.

Q. Ben, you just said you were maybe too conservative early on. You were off the front pack like by four miles, even though it was a little bit under five-minute pace. What was your thinking in doing so? What was your reason for doing that?

BEN TRUE: Because I didn't know what to expect later on in the race. So I knew going out conservatively would make it a little bit easier for the debut to be able to keep moving forward throughout the whole race.

I just didn't know how hard I should be pushing at the early stages. Talking with my coach, we really wanted to be running 4:55s at the most to five-minute pace for the first half and then try to pick it up and try not to run solo ever, but try to group up with people.

They were going a little bit faster than that, so I kind of let them go. Probably looking back it may have been better to hang on them. Yeah, I didn't know what to expect.

Q. This is the first race after coming out of the pandemic for the city, for New York City. What did you guys think of the response you were getting from the spectators and from the crowds who were out there to watch you run? Did you feel welcome? Did you feel like it was a good turnout?

MOHAMED EL AARABY: Yeah, it was nice to see when we were running, and they write Welcome to New York. It was beautiful, you know. We start, and I hope that we'd be this would be the start for a lot of things, the normality.

THE MODERATOR: Can anyone else comment on the crowds today, and what it was like to be back out there on



the streets of New York City?

ALBERT KORIR: It was fantastic. All the way when we are running, they cheer for us. So that was good. I enjoyed it.

Q. Albert, you were second here two years ago. Now you've won today. What did you do? You didn't race much in the two years between then. What were you doing the last two years?

ALBERT KORIR: I think 2020 we didn't even have our training. But 2021 we had some training. Some races were cancelled, but we keep on training.

But when I had a chance to race in New York, to know that you are racing in New York, I put more effort. My training, I put it on, 100 percent was good.

Q. You had a terrible trip to New York. Tell us what happened. Where did it start? And how long did it take?

MOHAMED EL AARABY: Yes, my flight was -- I leave Kenya on Monday, was in the evening from Kapsabet because I was training there for one month. From Kenya to New York, I spent like 56 hours. That was crazy, but at the end I came here, and I said, okay, there is some reason if I am here because I skip a lot of things from Kenya to Dubai.

I lost the first flight just because my Visa was not perfect. There was some problem. Then when they told me to come back to the embassy of U.S. in Nairobi, I go there, and then told me, no, you have just to go because we have processed the Visa. I came back again in the airport, and they told me, no, you cannot fly because there's another problem, and it was crazy.

Here I would like to say thank you to Sam because he helped me a lot. At the end, we did it. That was nice, yeah.

Q. Albert, you were in the chase pack that was 51 seconds behind at halfway. Were you aware of that gap being that big, and was there a discussion in the pack about chasing down those two?

ALBERT KORIR: The pack was getting big, but we tried to push with Kandie. At a certain point, we see that we can close, and we closed it. Our pace was somewhat high from those guys.

At that point, we know that we can close to win or come in No. 2, but at a certain point Kandie dropped, and I kept

going. The result was I won at the end.

THE MODERATOR: We will wrap up. We want to say congratulations to Eyob Faniel, Mohammed El Aaraby, Albert Korir, and Ben True, four of our top seven here at TCS New York City Marathon.

Albert, you've got to stay on stage because we've got something extra for you today. With today's victory. With your victory today and second place in 2019, you are the winner of Series XIII of the World Marathon Majors. I want to call up Tim Hadzima from the Abbott World Marathon Majors and Chris Miller from Abbott to present you with your award.

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