

TCS NYC Marathon

Sunday, November 6, 2022

New York, New York, USA

Susannah Scaroni

Marcel Hug

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning still everybody. We're going to start our press conferences today with the winners, historic winners of the pro men's and women's wheelchair division.

Two new event records today, and that means both athletes on this stage are leaving with \$50,000 in prize money on top of the prize money for winning the race.

The women's winner with a new record time of 1:42:43 from the United States, Susannah Scaroni. And the men's winner with a new record time of 1:25:26 from Switzerland, Marcel Hug.

Marcel, this is your fifth victory here, putting you in territory with Kurt Fearnley, the great Kurt Fearnley, but you raced six minutes faster than you've ever run here today. What happened? What's different?

MARCEL HUG: It's really incredible. Very fast time. I'm surprised too about this very fast time.

Yeah, the conditions, the weather conditions were great for us. It was warm. Not too much wind, a lot of tailwind as well the first half.

So, yeah, it was very good conditions, and of course in good shape as well. So I think that's the reason.

THE MODERATOR: Susannah, you've had an incredible year, won your first Abbott World Marathon Major in Chicago last month. You've set course records across the country, a world record in the 5,000 meters. Can you just talk about the year you've had?

SUSANNAH SCARONI: Yeah, I'm with you there. It's been incredible. I love this sport. Through multiple setbacks, I just enjoy pushing my racing chair.

So I think the combination of having an amazing training group, coach, and innate love of it, I've been able to really do well this year.

THE MODERATOR: Even today you could kind of come into a race and be a little bit of the underdog. You came in today against Manuela, who's won here three times, and Madison, who's the defending champion. I don't think you can do that anymore. How is that going to change your approach to being on the start line?

SUSANNAH SCARONI: I don't think it will change my approach at all. I have so much respect for both of these women. All of the women in the field today were so strong. Every race, you never know what can happen. Every course is different. New York, I didn't know what to expect. I haven't done a hilly course for a while.

I will always give it my all, so you can expect that's my strategy on the start line regardless of who's in the field. But I have so much respect for everyone I raced against today.

THE MODERATOR: Marcel, you've also had a dominant season. You won your Series XIV Abbott World Marathon Major series, as did Susannah. Can you talk about the consistency you've had all year and how you've been able to be so consistent race after race? Your consistency throughout the year and how you've been able to remain so consistent race after race?

MARCEL HUG: Yeah, it's incredible. This fall was good again. Yeah, at the moment everything is great.

Of course my confidence is good. I have a lot of support at home. Good environment. And the material, the racing chair, the gloves, everything is great at the moment.

So that really helps to bring my performances from race to race. I think also my experience since so many years now helps to bring good performances.

Q. Susannah, how aware were you of the time during the race today? And how much did it hurt those last three to five kilometers before you got to the finish?

SUSANNAH SCARONI: So I heard the second part of that question, how much it hurt at the end. What was the first

part again?

Q. How aware were you of the time throughout the race?

SUSANNAH SCARONI: For me, I knew my speeds were really high, and I was trying so hard to maintain as high of a pace as I could knowing how strong of a field I had behind me. And I didn't know if they were working together, but I always assume they are.

So I knew that tailwind was really helping me out today, and I tried to just take advantage of that as long as I could. That being said, when you hit the headwind at mile about 21, especially at Fifth Avenue today, it's always hard, and I knew it would be hard.

I had to kind of -- like I had the song Amazing Grace going through my mind as I went up Fifth Ave today and into the park, in order to help me mentally get through those last five miles.

THE MODERATOR: Marcel, how about you? How aware of the time were you throughout the race?

MARCEL HUG: No, I didn't know the time. I didn't have it in my mind. But my goal was to go as fast as possible and did not focus on the time. Just go as fast. Yeah, see the time in the finish.

Q. How did you get through the last three to five miles?

MARCEL HUG: Difficult question. I just saw on my speed I'm coming closer to the finish. So mile by mile, that really helps. Of course, there is a lot of energy from the crowd, and there's a lot of energy when you feel that you can probably win the race, probably break the course record. It puts all the pain away.

Q. Susannah, you've now won your first and second World Marathon Major this fall. What do you attribute this new level of success to? What's been different? What's made the difference for you?

SUSANNAH SCARONI: I have to attribute a lot of my success throughout the last year, I think, in Tokyo Paralympic Games last year, for the first time I really saw that my speed had increased quite a bit.

And I really attribute a lot of that to the training I had over the pandemic. I was one of those athletes who thrived being able to focus, not on competing, but on any sort of weaknesses I knew I had. I really focused on those during the pandemic. That's the one key part.

And the second is just experience. I think this sport is more of an art. So you get better as you get older, at least to a level. And I've been learning from amazingly fast women who have been in front of me for all of these years, and I think it's just come together to help me be a more well rounded athlete.

Q. It might not be the main reason you race, but I've got to think that the \$50,000 bonus for the new course records helps. How important is it that marathon has given that to the wheelchair racers?

SUSANNAH SCARONI: I'm really glad you brought that up. Having elite sport is important for all levels of human endeavors. I think we can all agree that being physically active is an essential part of our society and our world.

So to have elite level sport in adaptive sports is just as important, if not more, to help encourage everyone to be more active and to be physically fit. I think, by having elite sport, you just become more able to represent what people of all abilities can do.

For me, that's my favorite role as a professional athlete is to be representative, and having the sport actually seen as elite, which comes with those equal prize money bonuses and things like that, will only help increase the ability of us to be better representatives.

THE MODERATOR: Same question for Marcel. Marcel, the \$50,000, how much was that influencing your efforts today?

MARCEL HUG: Yeah, it's very important, and I totally agree with Susannah. It's great for us as professional athletes. It means a lot to have some support, financial support.

When I started as a young kid, it was a dream to be treated like equally, like other athletes. And now, yeah, this dream has come true, and it's really, really important for us. I just can't thank to the people who make this possible, to the organizers, and really, really appreciate this situation.

THE MODERATOR: We just saw Kurt Fearnley come into the room. You broke his record today. You tied his number of wins here. Have you had a chance to talk to Kurt?

MARCEL HUG: Not yet, but I probably have to say sorry (laughter). We were just joking yesterday, and he said probably today is the day the course record will be broken. Indeed, the conditions were just phenomenal.

So it's not only the shape or the material, it's definitely also good of luck that we had today with the weather conditions.

THE MODERATOR: Before I let you go, this is the end of a very long season for you. What do you do to celebrate the end of such a successful year?

SUSANNAH SCARONI: In all honesty, I'm very fortunate to have an amazing training group in Illinois, in Champaign, and we will continue to train together to be ready for next year, to keep learning from every race. That's my plan.

MARCEL HUG: Yeah, first I will do some holidays after my season, three weeks of no training. And of course I need some time to look back at this season and realize what really happened because we always were so focused on the next competition and the next competition.

Yeah, but I definitely will enjoy some time, day off.

THE MODERATOR: And besides the prize money, besides the medals around your neck, you're both going to receive today a limited edition Wild ONE TCS New York City Marathon watch from Norqain, the official timekeeping partner of the TCS New York City Marathon.

I want to welcome Emmanuel Butler, the U.S. brand president, up onto the stage to present you with this amazing watch with Stein elements inspired by today's race. The course map is on the watch face. The race logo is on the back. It's an incredible gift to go along with all the accolades you're receiving today. So congratulations.

A big thank you and congratulations to Susannah Scaroni and Marcel Hug, the 2022 TCS New York City Marathon champions.

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