

# TCS NYC Marathon

Sunday, November 5, 2023

New York, New York, USA

**Kellyn Taylor**

**Futsum Zienasellassie**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're going to talk to the top American finishers in today's TCS New York City Marathon. Top American in the women's field with a time of 2:29:48, Kellyn Taylor. And the top American in the men's field with a time of 2:12:09, her teammate in Flagstaff, Futsum Zienasellassie.

Kellyn, let's start with you. You got a lot of TV time today. You were up front for a large portion of the race. Did you want to take the lead? Were you up there hoping somebody would take control of that race?

KELLYN TAYLOR: You know, it was a super weird race. I think you guys could all kind of see that. New York traditionally starts off a little bit slow, and then it picks up the second half. This year it just seemed to kind of lag, and I just found myself in front quite a bit.

Then started to fall back a little bit because it seemed like we were just kind of playing a game. I was like, I can play games. We can do this.

So, yeah, I found myself at the front, but then was just trying to key off the big players, the ones that I knew were going to be making the moves later on in the race, and they were the ones that did.

Unfortunately, I wasn't able to hang with them that last 10K, but put myself in it.

THE MODERATOR: First race back for you since having a child. How was the experience? Did it meet your expectations?

KELLYN TAYLOR: I mean, New York always meets my expectations. It's a fantastic course, fantastic race. Then, yeah, to be able to come back here and have it be my first postpartum marathon and to be Top American, which I haven't been in my three other appearances, is kind of special.

I always want more, but I think that it's a good start, and

there's only going up from here.

THE MODERATOR: Futsum, we saw you come across the line and collapse. Obviously you put it all out there today. Talk us through those last couple miles for you.

FUTSUM ZIENASELLASSIE: Yeah, from 35 to the finish was probably some of the hardest miles I ran on this course. I'm just very, very happy I was able to stay strong and to be able to finish the race.

THE MODERATOR: You guys are teammates in Flagstaff, Arizona. You're both up here, Top Americans. What does that say about your training group?

KELLYN TAYLOR: We're awesome.

FUTSUM ZIENASELLASSIE: It just says a lot about what we have going and the culture of the team and how we fit with each other.

Got to give a shout out to Jenna, who has been leading us the last four or five months of the training, so just very grateful for her and for what we have going on at Northern Arizona Elite.

THE MODERATOR: I'll open up the floor for questions to Top American finishers.

**Q. Kellyn, could you just talk about how weird that race was. Going through your mind of what you thought this race would be like today, did you think it would be as tactical as it was? The time was the slowest in about 13 years. Were you thinking in any of your thoughts, hey, this is what the race is going to unfold like today?**

KELLYN TAYLOR: That's what I thought for the first 20 miles. I was wondering what the heck we're doing. It was super weird. It was probably one of the weirdest races that I've ever ran, especially with the caliber of talent that was in the field and talks of breaking the course record and doing all the things.

Then after a bit, it was like, well, that's definitely not going



to happen because we're running a 6-minute pace for no good reason other than just to do it.

But sometimes that's how races play out, and you just have to jump on board and either do that or do your own thing. Today just decided to jump on board and do what they're doing and try and hang on.

**Q. Futsum, congratulations. How did New York meet or not meet your expectations, your first time running what is probably the toughest marathon amongst the big marathons?**

FUTSUM ZIENASELLASSIE: What New York provides in terms of the course terrain and just those bridges, I went out at a pace that I haven't done in my past two marathons, so today I think I really learned what 26 miles, what a marathon is.

I'm glad that I was able to experience that here and still be able to come -- finish strong and then be first American. So I'm very, very proud of myself today.

**Q. I was wondering if you could both talk about how you feel your performances today set you up for the Olympic Trials in just a few months.**

FUTSUM ZIENASELLASSIE: For me, at the beginning of the training block for this race, when I sat down and talked with my agents and then my coaches was that to get another marathon, to really have an experience of actually racing with the field, and that's what New York provided.

Looking at the field, I knew there was going to be a group of guys that I can compete and be able to race with, and that's what I actually did for the first 35K until it actually became just an all out race from there.

So I think what I've gained is to be able to -- this wasn't a marathon where you actually run a certain pace. There was running up those bridges and pace change, all those things. I mean, there's no pacers.

At one point I was with three other guys, and we were actually talking about working together earlier in the race, where one person leads for a K and then the other one leads. I can assume that's what the trial is going to be like until toward the end of the race, where everyone, they run for their own self.

KELLYN TAYLOR: For me, it was kind of just about getting some marathon work under my belt for the first time in a couple of years. Then after having my child, before going into the trial segment, I didn't want to go into the trial segment not having done this for 2 1/2 years and have my

body kind of feel like it feels now, pretty beat up.

So for me it was just getting that race stimuli in and being able to use the strength that we took from this segment and carry it on over into the trial segment.

**Q. Question for Kellyn. Do you think the way the race played out benefited you or hurt you, with it being so slow up front?**

KELLYN TAYLOR: I think that's hard to say, right? The field was super talented. So I would like to say that it kind of hurt me, but we'll never know.

I think that, like I had said in my interview with you guys before, I think that I could run 2:23 on this course, and I think those other women could run much faster than 2:23. But I think that I would have maybe a little bit more fair of a shot doing something a little bit more special than 8th place if it had went out a little more honestly.

THE MODERATOR: Futsum Zienasellassie, Kellyn Taylor, your top two American finishers in the TCS New York City Marathon.

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