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Kramer, Malakwen Capture 2014 Life Time Miami Marathon Titles as International Participation Soars

MIAMI--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Mariska Kramer Postma didn't look like the typical jubilant marathon winner Sunday as she crossed the finish line at the 2014 Life Time Miami Marathon.

Kramer Postma swatted at the finish line tape in disgust because her winning time of 2:49:28 missed her target in the race by 11 minutes. When you are winning South Florida's elite distance race for the second year in a row, and overcoming a pre-race stomach flu on top of it, you have a right to be picky about your time.

"There simply was nothing in my legs, no energy," said Kramer Postma, a native of the Netherlands. "I had to talk to them like 'Hello!'"

Kramer Postma's legs serviced her well enough as she and Kenyan Samuel Malakwen, the 2012 winner who pulled away from Julius Choge in the final five miles, became the first two-time Marathon winners in an event which began with less than 4000 runners 12 years ago and sold out at 25,000 runners for the third consecutive year.

Malakwen was one of four Kenyan men to enjoy top finishes Sunday. In the Half-Marathon, Edward Tabut (1:06:45) won by nearly two minutes over countryman George Towett (1:08:30) while Cesar Cedeno (1:08:50) of Costa Rica came in third.

Shannon Miller, who lives in Bronx, NY, won the women's half marathon (1:21:08) with Yolymar Pineda (1:22:00) of Venezuela second and Miami's Angelo Brito third (1:22:38).

It was the first year the race was produced and presented by [Life Time – The Healthy Way of Life Company](#) (NYSE: [LTM](#)), which recently acquired US Road Sports.

Eighty countries and all 50 states were represented in the field, with a particularly strong contingent coming from South and Central America and the Caribbean. The event has evolved into a significant tourism boost for South Florida with an estimated \$55 million economic impact. Nearly 55% of the runners arrived for the race by air, and they also brought along an estimated 11,000 support spectators.

The race first traveled north on Downtown Miami's Biscayne Blvd before crossing the MacArthur Causeway against the scenic backdrop of Miami's cruise ship row to South Beach. Runners passed through the Venetian Islands back into Miami's Arts District, and then Marathoners continued into Coconut Grove before turning back North along the Brickell Avenue Financial District to the finish line at Bayfront Park.

Malakwen, 35, learned a valuable lesson from his 2012 photo-finish win over Teferi Bacha,

and this time created separation from fellow Kenyan and sometime-training partner Julius Choge, (2:21:42) at the 21-mile mark.

"I didn't want to run head-to-head at the end," said Malakwen. "Two years ago (Bacha) was drafting me all of the way. Then at 500 meters he started ahead of me."

It took a full sprint for Malakwen to salvage his first Miami Marathon win.

"Today we were together and I was right behind (Choge's) shoulder," said Malakwen, a father of three. "I sympathized with him because we were working as a team and I didn't want to run away from him. But he could be strong at the end so at 21 miles, I started running away so it wouldn't be easy for him to sprint."

Choge trains in the high altitude of Albuquerque, NM and says the humidity got the best of him in the second marathon he has run in the United States.

"I was trying to push," he said. "It's very different from where I was training. I tried to keep up with my friend and he just pulled away."

While Malakwen was happier with his second Miami title, the 39-year-old Kramer talked of her battle with diarrhea that hit her five hours before the race.

"I couldn't keep my pace I wanted, so I actually decided to let go of my plans and let go of my pace I wanted to run and just make it a nice, long run in Miami today," Kramer said. "I'm from the Netherlands, and I flew like a trillion miles...you can do two things: You can say, 'OK, I just quit' or you can make it a fun day in the sun in Miami."

Tabut, 30, finished second in the full marathon in Miami in 2009, but opted to run a half marathon after failing to finish the full marathon in Des Moines, Iowa the last time he ran. Despite his half-marathon win Sunday, he plans to return to the full marathon to try to qualify for the 2016 Olympic Games.

Miller, who at one time lived in Ponte Vedra Beach (FL) and ran her best time of 1:17 in Houston two weeks ago, enjoyed the course almost as much as her win. She ran with a pack that included second-place finisher Pineda before electing to pick up the pace six miles into the 13.1 mile half marathon distance.

"I love running in the heat in the hot weather," she said. "I've been training in Florida for years. I love the sunshine. I love the Sunshine State. It was absolutely great. I love the palm trees, great weather, and great atmosphere."

Sunday also marked big wins for the disabled athletes, many of them racing under the Achilles International, Achilles Florida and Achilles South Florida banners.

In the Hand Cycle marathon division, Ludovic Narce of Lyon, France, won his third career marathon in his first Miami appearance (1:14:14) while Jacqui Kapinowski of Tequesta, FL won her ninth Miami Marathon title (1:40:17) in the women's division.

"I love it. I think it's a dream," said Narce, who was competing for Achilles International. "It's the United States, it's Florida and the ambiance and organization is fantastic compared with other marathons I've been to. I used to watch Miami Vice on TV and I'm excited to be in the

real place.”

Kapinowski completed her 72nd career marathon (her 53rd as a disabled athlete), but not before falling sick at the 26-mile mark as she closed in on the finish line.

“I was right with the boys, the lead pack, for the first 21 miles,” said Kapinowski, a veteran athlete who ended up in a wheel chair after contracting bacterial meningitis 10 years ago. “That’s when I started not feeling well.”

In the men’s Half-Marathon Hand Cycle division, Tony Baltodano was excited to win after finishing second a year ago and improving his time by nearly 19 minutes (59:32).

The 46-year-old, paralyzed as a result of a mugging in New York City in 1991, has come a long way since it took him more than six hours to complete his first Hand Cycle marathon almost 20 years ago.

“It was wonderful,” said Baltodano, a Nicaragua native and recent FIU grad. “I prepared myself better and harder. I did pretty good. I prepared myself to finish first.”

The continued growth of interest among Latin American runners has race organizers considering growth for the first time in three years as they look ahead to 2015.

“Miami is the destination race for Latin America,” Race Director Javier Sanchez said.

“Miami’s diversity and proximity is welcoming to many International runners as a convenient place to visit and run,” said Miami Marathon Co-Founder Frankie Ruiz. “Some of the small countries in Latin America have had some runners place and then they are going back and talking about it. It is starting to trickle down to the masses.”

About the Miami Marathon

The Miami Marathon is Florida’s elite distance race with 25,000 runners representing all 50 states and over 105 countries converging on Miami and South Beach to experience one of the most unique courses in the world. The race has come a long way since 3,400 runners participated in the first Miami Marathon in 2003. Participants include elite runners, top age-group competitors, and many thousands who run for charity and to achieve their own personal goals. Together they enjoy the tropical views and the sounds of South Florida, with a diverse array of entertainment blended into the experience, and generate more than \$50 million in total economic impact for the city of Miami and Miami-Dade County.

About Life Time Fitness, Inc.

As The Healthy Way of Life Company, Life Time Fitness (NYSE:LTM) helps organizations, communities and individuals achieve their total health objectives, athletic aspirations and fitness goals by engaging in their areas of interest — or discovering new passions — both inside and outside of Life Time’s distinctive and large sports, professional fitness, family recreation and spa destinations, most of which operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Company’s Healthy Way of Life approach enables customers to achieve this by providing the best programs, people and places of uncompromising quality and value. As of Feb. 2, 2014, the Company operated 108 centers under the LIFE TIME FITNESS® and LIFE

TIME ATHLETIC® brands in the United States and Canada. Additional information about Life Time centers, programs and services is available at lifetimefitness.com.

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