

A Year Full of Success

Jan Simon Hamann runs to triumph

Just two years of intensive training resulted in several appearances on the winner's rostrum already this year. It is pretty clear that Jan Simon Hamann has exceptional talent for running. After the titles of German University Champion on 10km and 5,000m in spring, the 26-year-old student of philosophy reached the biggest success of his young career in Munich on October 14th: winning the German Marathon Championships 2012.

A new name in the athletics-scene

Hamann's endurance talent is in his genes. Being swimmer during his youth, Hamann's father found his way to the marathon later. For the son, however, the 42,195km were completely new territory. After improving his personal bests from 3,000m up to 10,000m in the first half of the year, he was looking for a "new challenge" during the autumn season 2012: "Marathon – that would be great!," is the charming answer of the normally shy athlete to the question of how he ended up competing in the royal discipline of running. And his decision to participate in the German Championships was a great success, as he won with a time of 02:19:46 hours (2 minutes and 11 seconds before the Vice Champion Sven Weyer) in a competitive field of athletes last weekend; thereby, establishing himself as new name in the German athletics-scene.

42 kilometres – So what?

Seemingly unimpressed by the huge distance and his strong competitors, Jan Simon Hamann confidently contested the race on Sunday, and summarised his tactics at the press conference after the run in a rather unconventional way: "The first half of the race, I was just running in the middle of the field with more experienced runners and waited for the moment when it would be really hard for me. But it didn't come then. At kilometre 20 suddenly, I could see a gap in the field, and I spontaneously decided to attack, as you would do in a 10,000m-race." But on the following kilometres, he noticed that this attack came a little bit

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too early, because the runners behind him could catch up; Hamann was now second. The spectators saw a great race with Hamann, Weyer, and (in the end third place) Hoffmann up in front. At kilometre 35, Hamann conquered back the leadership, and he could put some space between him and the others already at kilometre 37. "I realised that I had attacked too early between kilometre 20 and 25, when I couldn't keep up with the pace of Sven Weyer, who was before me. At first I thought that one after the other would overtake me. But I just continued running in my own pace. When I finally got the chance to overtake Sven Weyer, I attacked again. I didn't want to let the chance for the title go by without trying," Hamann said about his "second" attack.

Still more reserves

During the final phase of the race, between kilometre 40 and 42, it seemed that Hamann could even raise his pace another time – a performance which was also topic in the press conference. But Hamann was modest, and even a little bit amused. Where those strength reserves came from? – "I just ran in a steady pace. The others simply were slower. That's why, it just looked like this..." answered the new Marathon Champion in his final statement at Munich.

As German Marathon Champion 2012, the fast Hamann receives not only prize money of 2,000 Euro, but also a trip to South Africa including a starting place at the Comrades Marathon in June 2013. A cult run over 89 kilometres with 20,000 participants from all around the world – maybe the next challenge in the career of the young endurance athlete.

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Who is:

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