

CARDIMAX-CLARK ULTRAMARATHON **For Immediate Release**

CARDIMAX-CLARK ULTRAMARATHON: TOUGH AND INSPIRATIONAL

Over 200 ultramarathoners set off to conquer the roads of the Clark Freeport Zone at the Cardimax- Clark Ultramarathon last September 5. Eighteen hours later, the finish line welcomed those battling to make the cut-off in this test of endurance and mental toughness.

Cellular tower technician Eugene Postrado took top honors among the men in the 100-kilometer race, finishing in eight hours, 58 minutes, and six seconds -- almost two hours ahead of the next finisher. For the women, call center employee Silamie Apolistar clocked in at 13 hours, 31 minutes, and nine seconds in her first ever 100K.

In the 50-kilometer race, Aresenio Uminga topped the men at three hours, 39 minutes, 49 seconds, while Melinda delos Reyes bested the women in five hours, 16 minutes, 12 seconds.

Ayala Triads and Team Soleus took home the Team Championship award for registering the fastest average time for 100K Category and 50K, respectively.

Evident in its 72% and 50.7% finish rates for the 50K and 100K respectively, even veteran ultramarathoners found the Cardimax-Clark Ultramarathon challenging. The route took the runners to the wide highway towards the main gate, along the tree-lined Airforce City which displays WW2 fighter jets and planes, taking them towards SCTEX and back to Sacobia River on their 25th kilometer. Halfway, the terrain presented some steep climbs and downhills until the turn around point that tested everyone's grit until they return to Sacobia Bridge. At the last 15 kilometers has gradual uphill along Balagtas Avenue aptly called "The Wall" and a mix of wide tree-lined and open roads.

The evening gunstart (10p.m. for the 100-kilometer race, 12 midnight for 50-kilometer race) on secure roads with plenty of support at aid stations allowed the runners to focus on putting one foot in front of the other. Cardimax representatives were also present to provide L Carnitine supplement for each runner at the Aid Stations. Timing mats and chips -- a first for road ultramarathons in the Philippines -- enabled accurate run splits and speedy verification of results.

By dawn, a view of the sunrise with the mountain ranges of Miyamit and Mount Arayat and the Sacobia River in the background awaited the runners, who had already been running for six to eight hours. The scorching morning heat saw most runners taking refuge at the aid stations spaced every five kilometers or less. Two hours before the 100K cut-off, a heavy downpour cooled down most of the runners who battled to the finish line.

The finish line was filled with spectators, family and friends as they cheer on each runner. The notable finishers included Victor Ting, who accomplished his 100th long-distance race at the Clark Ultramarathon to celebrate his 70th birthday. A finisher of 65 marathons and 35 ultramarathons, Ting was part of a two-man relay team with Pong Narciso. They each ran 50 kilometers of the 100-kilometer course and ultimately finished as third place all-male relay with an aggregate time of 13 hours, 6 minutes. He said, "*Nagpapasalamat ako sa Itaas. Kung hindi dahil sa kanya palagay ko bitin ako... tiniis ko na lang para makatapos ako.*"

Vlad and Kevin Hernandez crossed the 50K finish line in nine hours to much applause. It was a considerable feat since Vlad was pushing Kevin in a wheelchair the whole way. The tandem, known in the running community as Team Never Run Alone, have been participating in races as part of their advocacy to include and integrate developmentally challenged persons in regular activities. This was their first ultramarathon. Vlad said, "*Natutuwa din kami kasi ibig sabihin 'yung mga tao meron silang nakukuha sa ginagawa namin na nagugustuhan nila. Nag-iisip din sila, 'Uy, puede pala yun!'*"

First-time ultramarathoner Attorney Allene Pena found the Sacobia section particularly tough. "I said to myself that if I finish this, it will be the last and it will be okay if I do not finish any other marathon... Soon as I crossed the finish line, I said I will be back with a vengeance," she said, recalling how her husband Boyet crossed the finish line first and waited for her to celebrate their triumph.

Those who finished beyond the cut-off had their own inspirational stories. Ernest Carual, a runner with a prosthetic leg, crossed the 50K finish line just 47 minutes past the cut-off. He said, "If I can, you also can."

Tin Ferrera of the organizing committee said the ultramarathon had an effect even on those who were just observing. She reported, "We are happy to provide an avenue for our ultramarathoners to give their best and harness their own energy and lastly inspire others... One of our media crew mentioned that after witnessing the run, she is set to run every week already and hopefully one day be an ultramarathoner."

Race organizer Atty. Jon Lacanlale was happy to see first-time and seasoned ultramarathoners and elite runners crossing the finish line. He stated, "Celebrate your victory, and always remember that it all starts with your passion for running. Keep running."

LIST OF OFFICIAL WINNERS:

100 K Category

Male

Champion - Eugene Prostrado

First Runner Up - David Rivera

Second Runner Up - Jade Arevalo

Female

Champion - Silamie Apolistar Gutang

First Runner Up - Daphne Codilla

Second Runner Up - Gia Estrella

50 K Category

Male

Champion - Arsenio Uminga

First Runner Up - Jojie Dugaas

Second Runner Up - Andrico Mahilum

Female

Champion - Melinda Delos Reyes

First Runner up - Maria Josephine Liao

Second Runner up - Rashel Pena

100 K Relay

All Male – Anthony Nerza and Nelson Eligiran

All Female – Lany Cardona and Cecille Jaro

Mix – Rogelio Puzon and Jennifer Cabbab

Age Group Champion – 100 K

29 and Below – Mark Andrew Melgar (M) and Anna Carmela Lim (F)

30-39 – Siegred Amanca (M) and Kathleen Fresnido (F)

40-49 – Alfred delos Reyes(M) and Tess Leono (F)

Age Group Champion – 50 K

29 and Below – Jerome Bautista (M) and Nina Suzette Lim (F)

30-39 – James Tellias (M) and Emily Nillusquin (F)

40-49 – Roberto Banawon ann Rhina Sison (F)

50 and above Rogelio Reyes (M) and Lorna Verano