

PRESS RELEASE

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Winners Andrea Mayr and Gilbert Kirwa meet Austria's President Heinz Fischer

"There is no race in Austria, which you can compare with the Vienna City Marathon. So it will be an easy decision for me," said Andrea Mayr, when asked if she would come back to the race next year as the defending champion. The 29 year-old set a highlight at what is regarded as the best ever Vienna City Marathon. At the 26th edition of the race Andrea Mayr won her marathon debut with an Austrian record of 2:30:43. Despite the fact that there were only debutants in this year's elite fields a record number of four sub 2:10 times were achieved in the men's race. Kenya's Gilbert Kirwa was the winner with a fine 2:08:21 debut. While altogether 29,054 runners from 100 nations had entered the event, a record number of 350,000 spectators lined the streets in the Austrian capital.

Austrian President Fischer: "So I could have joined in on Sunday as well!"

As in the past few years the winners of the Vienna City Marathon received the honour of being invited by the President of Austria, Mr Heinz Fischer. Gilbert Kirwa and Andrea Mayr were accompanied by Günther Weidlinger (Austria), who had finished ninth in his debut race on Sunday with 2:12:39, and Race Director Wolfgang Konrad when they met the President for the reception in the famous Wiener Hofburg which is next to the finish line of the race. Mr Heinz Fischer is a runner himself and regarding this year's debutants only elite race he commented with a sense of humour: "So I could have joined in on Sunday as well!"

Kirwa thinking about next steps and 2:04

"My leg muscles still hurt, but that is something normal," said Gilbert Kirwa on the morning after his biggest win so far. He confirmed his future time goal of 2:04 in the marathon: "I have to do it step by step. I think it is possible for me some time in the future if I am able to train really well." The 23 year-old is likely to chose the Berlin Marathon on 20th September as his next race.

Mayr looking to World Championships, but surgery comes first

Andrea Mayr has not yet decided about her next marathon, because she will have to undergo surgery on her left foot. "There was a certain risk running with the injury, but the foot was very well taped. And I knew before that I would have to have surgery anyway," said Andrea Mayr, who suffered of various problems (stress fracture, torn tendon and Achilles problem) in the past few months. "I got used to running with the injury," said the 29 year-old, who has completed her medical studies in Vienna. "If a patient would come to me and ask me if he could run a marathon with such foot injuries I would have advised him not to do it."

Because the race went so well despite the injury Andrea Mayr is desperate to continue her career, which she almost ended a year ago after missing the Beijing qualifying standard in the Steeplechase. "I now have to wait how I will recover after the operation. But I will not write off a start at the World Championships in Berlin either at the marathon or at the Steeplechase," said Andrea Mayr. But one date is already reserved in her calendar: Next year's Vienna City Marathon will be staged on 18th April 2010.

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