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Der Frauenfelder — Running with Switzerland's Finest

Posted on November 20, 2012 by Christian Langenegger



For a marathon day getting up at 7am is rather late, but quite the welcomed treat. The day's mission was to run the legendary Frauenfelder. Now if you're not from Switzerland, there's a good chance you've never heard of Frauenfeld, though it does host Europe's largest hip-hop festival every summer and is also home to the well known manufacturer of the SIGG aluminum water bottle. I decided to run the Frauenfelder the Monday before, but wasn't fully dedicated, which meant that when I went to register all the Swiss numbers were gone and I ran under the Austrian flag.

Tougher than it looks

Situated in the canton of Thurgau in Switzerland's North East, Frauenfeld is surrounded by rolling countryside. The idyllic pastures, vineyards and orchards can be quite misleading though. I had heard that the Frauenfelder is quite the marathon, but really thought that more because it is also a military marathon. However, the ± 520 meters on the course are not to be underestimated by regular runners either.



Militärwettmarsch

Since 1934 the Frauenfelder has attracted military personnel from all over Switzerland and it's neighboring countries, mostly Austria and Germany. These soldiers must complete the 42.195 kilometers in military attire and with a backpack including rifle with a weight of 6.2kg. Women carry a backpack with a weight of 4.2 kilograms without a rifle. This year the Frauenfelder also attracted its greatest number of runners ever with 2029 participants.

To the start

The parading soldiers arrive on the market square of the city shortly before 10am and take their start position behind the long sawdust starting line. At 10 the canon fires to signal the start of the military run, it is impossible not to know that the race has started. Thirty minutes later the civilian marathons start on this beautiful marathon





The long and rolling course

The course starts off with a rather long and steep hill and then enters the woods. The course is along paved country roads, which are a pleasure to run on, especially wearing my Ons. Landings are soft and the push off is powerful. The air as I ran was cool, but the high fog was starting to be burned away by the November sun trying desperately to shine upon us. Ahead the road moved up and down as if it were along the humps of a camel. The landscape was magnificent with brown cows gathering in field corners, their breath clearly visible against the dewy grass and the morning cool. Many trees were still vibrant in their golden color as well.

The halfway mark

At kilometer 19 you enter Wil. Coming in on the industrial side you don't expect much from the city until you hit the old town, which built up a hill reminds on a little of both Gruyères and Fribourg. From there it's back into the rolling fields and finally some packed gravel paths. There are fewer hills to go up and down in the second half of the marathon. Hitting kilometer 24 the half marathon runners caught up to me and started to pass quickly. this year the half marathon also attracted 1416 runners.

The fast pace of the half marathoners fresh off the start have me new energy as I sought to harmonize my pace with theirs. This was in vain, but did help me to go faster.

Respect and congratulations

A few challenging hills made me work hard, but brought us into vineyards and orchards on a slope with stunning views. Approaching Frauenfeld again there were two hills with good drops before coming out of the woods for the last two kilometers. At this point I passed a soldier, who was running the Frauenfelder for his 40th time. I was simply amazed with respect and the hope that I will be doing similar runs in my seventies. In the last three kilometers, running with an Austrian number, I kept hearing people cheering me on saying things like "Well done Austria!" and "Hopp Hopp, just a little further Austria!" The final kilometer is all downhill, and downhill runners will love turning into the last 100 meter stretch with full power.

Winners:

Military Run Men:

1. Konrad von Allmen 2:57:10
2. Adrian Brennwald 2:59:32
3. Patrick Bosshard 3:05:34

Military Run Women:

1. Denise Zimmermann 3:31:58
2. Barbara Cina 3:35:03
3. Jeannette Siegenthaler 3:50:45

Civilian Run Men:

1. Daniel Hermann 2:42:58
2. Felix Schenk 2:44:45
3. Robin Hauser 2:45:42e.

Civilian Run Women:

1. Astrid Müller 2:53:05
2. Daniela Mazenauer 3:22:07
3. Melanie Altenbeck 3:22:



Basic Info:

Date: 18.11.20212

Distance: 42.195KM

Elevation: ±520 meters

Weather: foggy then sunny and cool

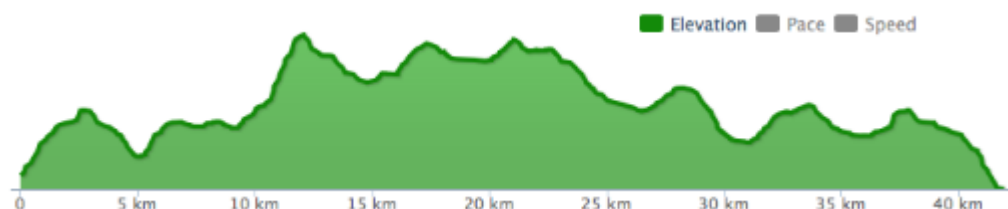
Time: 3:46:32

Shoes: On Cloudbrunners

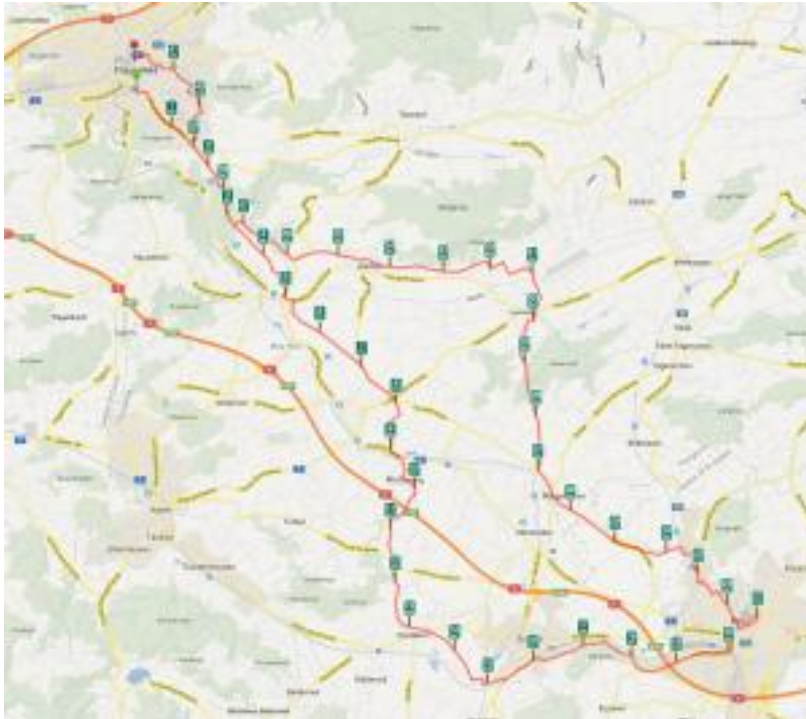
Website:

<http://www.der-frauenfelder.ch>

Course Profile:



RunKeeper Info:



This entry was posted in Race Report, Running Gear and tagged der Frauenfelder 2012, Frauenfeld, Military running, November Marathon Switzerland, Swiss Military Marathon, Switzerland, Thurgau, Wil by Christian Langenegger. Bookmark the permalink.



About Christian Langenegger

Christian Langenegger (born 1982) comes from a Swiss family that immigrated to the Canadian countryside from the rolling hills of Appenzell AR in 1987. The winters there were biting cold and the summers sweltering hot - never really comfortable for his temperate nature. After studying in Montreal, Freiburg im Breisgau, Nova Scotia and Vancouver, Christian decided to return to Switzerland for reasons of the heart and weather. In September 2009 Christian and his best friend started Marathon Sprachen, a language school in Zurich, Switzerland. The school specializes in German and English as foreign languages. When Christian isn't teaching he can usually be found running around Zurich or the mountains training for a marathon or other long distance run. All of that running means that the poor guy needs to eat a lot, which is probably one of the reasons why he also loves cooking. Or is it the other way around? Really a bit of a chicken and the egg dilemma. Christian's other interests are in economy, politics, social responsibility, marketing, wine, design and travel.

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