

Asian 20K Walking Championship 2013, Nomi, Japan



Japanese duo Suzuki and Otoshi clinched Asian Race Walking titles

Nomi City, Japan – 10 March 2013 : It was indeed a proud moment for the local organisers, whom for the past several years successfully conducted the Asian 20km Race Walking championships here, as the Japanese duo of Yusuke Suzuki and Kumi Otoshi clinched the top prizes.

Suzuki, bronze medallist in both World youth and junior championships in the past, was a pre-race favourite here.

Having turned to 25 in the beginning of last month, Suzuki had won the Asian title earlier at the same venue three years ago.

Otoshi, like her teammate Suzuki, also was an Asian champion in Nomi during 2011 after having finished second in the earlier two years. The women's race started at 9:45 in the morning, about two hours before the men's event, when a shivering cold of 5 degrees Celsius put things difficult for the competitors. The heavy downpour prior to the start made the roads wet and slippery.



The 27-years-old Otoshi overcome the challenging weather and was more than two minutes faster than her nearest rivals right from the first half of the race. Nguyen Thi Thanh Phuc from Vietnam, the reigning South East Asian Games champion and a bronze medallist here last year, along with Korean Yeon Geun-Jeon tried their best to challenge Otoshi. However the Japanese walker, a Worlds finalist in 2011, increased her pace at each kilometre and clocked a modest 1:33:49 to win the Asian title for the second time. It was four minutes slower than her personal best 1:29:11 registered in this city during the Nationals two years ago.

Thi Thanh Phuc (1:35:26) and Geun-Jeon (1:35:49) claimed the silver and bronze medals respectively. The Indian record-holder Khushbir Kaur (19) finished fourth in 1:37:32, just four seconds slower than her national mark.



Suzuki improves national record

Things have been better when the men's race commenced at 11:40. As expected Yusuke Suzuki led the race from the start. Chinese junior Li Tianlei (18) and India's Gurmeet Singh were his nearest rivals.

Gurmeet, the former Indian record-holder, was a silver medallist here last year. He was trying to improve his position this time, but was lagging behind the Chinese walker in the second and third 5k segments. Singh made a desperate effort to catch-up with him in the final moments of the race but finished 10 secs behind Tianlei at the finish.

Suzuki bettered his personal best and Japanese national record by clocking 1:18:34. Tianlei (1:21:28) and Gurmeet (1:21:38) took the next two spots on the podium. (Ram. Murali Krishnan for the AAA)

Results

Men 20km walk : 1. Yusuke SUZUKI (JPN) 1:18:34; 2. Tianlei Li (CHN) 1:21:28; 3. Gurmeet Singh (IND) 1:21:38; 4. Ebrahim RAHIMIAN KHANGHAH (IRI) 1:24:08; 5. Thanh Ngung NGUYEN (VIE) 1:27:30; 6. Choon Sieng LO (MAS) 1:28:07; 7. Chun Hung TSE (HKG) 1:36:54; 8. Po-Ying LO (TPE) 1:40:13

Women 20km walk: 1. KUMI OTOSHI (JPN) 1:33:49; 2. Thi Thanh Phuc NGUYEN (VIE) 1:35:26; 3. Yeon Geun JEON (KOR) 1:35:49; 4. Khushbir KAUR (IND) 1:37:32; 5. Chia-Feng CHANG (TPE) 1:40:46; 7. Siu Nga CHING (HKG) 1:41:45; 8. Elena GOH (MAS) 1:51:24 .