

In The Picture

June 2016

Gerry Vermeylen

Organiser Klavertjevier marathon and ultra

Organiser 6-hour Langdorp



Gerry Vermeylen started running at 20, after cycling. Soon he got bitten by the marathon bug and he ran 19 marathons. He ran his marathon PR at Antwerp in 1994, within 3 hours 28 minutes and 7 seconds. Due to injuries, he doesn't run that often anymore. Thanks to his own jogging club, de Demerdijklopers, and the organisations of various ultra's and marathons he has found a new occupation.

This year you organise the Klavertjevier marathon and ultra and next year the 6 hours of Langdorp. Can we say that you are focusing yourself, as an organizer, towards the ultrarunners?

Indeed, I'm addressing the ultrarunners.

Did it originate given the demand or from a personal interest for ultrarunning?

Since the 1990s I entered the world of marathons. I trained the long distance runs, LSD's, together with ultrarunner Dirk Ballon. Dirk came to live at Scherpenheuvel and was seen as an elite ultrarunner on the 100 km and the 24-hours. That's how I got bitten by the bug and entered the small ultrarunning world. Eventually it took until 2010 before I ran my first ultra. Given the fact that there aren't many ultraruns in Belgium, it seemed a challenge to organise a 6-hour race on a unique race track.

You've waited a long time to run your first ultra. Was it because there weren't that many ultraruns in Belgium, or did it have other reasons?

I was afraid to take the plunge. Ultrarunners train a lot of kilometres. The number of training mileage was surely one of the points responsible for my hesitation. On top of that I also had to think about the family life.

For several years you were active in the world of ultrarunning, yet you waited till 2016 to organise an ultra. Is there a specific reason or did you organise ultra's in the past?

Yes. The reason was that I was still running myself at a competitive level. Combined with my family life organising an ultrarunning event wasn't possible.

You only allow 100 entries at your races. Does it have organisational reasons or is it imposed?

It's imposed by the local police force.

Do you pay attention to save costs?

No.

Do you have any other organisational ambition?

I'm still breeding plans, but they need to be worked out first.

Thank you for the interview Gerry.

We wish you good luck in organising running events. We look forward to your participation at Aalter!

Kevin Simons