



## **First ultramarathon experience**

*Paul Aarts*

**Endurance Day Hamme 100 km 11:33:09**

***The primary objective was to finish my first “barefootstyle” 100 km ultra***

After a failed 12-hour debut during the Langste Nacht in 2016 at Santpoort Noord I found another ultrarunning race in the neighbourhood within a week time. I entered a flat asphalted 100 km in Belgium. Endurance Day Hamme 2017. The primary objective was to finish my first “barefootstyle” 100 km ultra. And if it’s possible in a time of 9 hour 59 minutes and 59 seconds, so I can qualify for other goals.

***Before the start I was lucky that the experienced Endymion Kasanardjo entered the race last minute and that he had analysed the race track thoroughly***

To be honest I wasn’t sure if I could follow the race track because of the many loops and the chances to run in the wrong direction, but if you start last it’s a question of following the predecessors, then it goes by itself. Before the start I was lucky that the experienced Endymion Kasanardjo entered the race last minute and that he had analysed the race track thoroughly. Together with Mo Idrissi I started slowly. The first rounds together went smoothly. In retrospect the signaling was fine. At every exit of the race track you saw signaling and knew how to run. After the first big loop there was a moment of confusion (way back point) but Endymion was sure and clear. Here we must go back for lap 2, 3 and so forth. He was right.

***The ultra toppers flew. It worked beautifully inspiring***

On a given moment we started running solo. This is done by itself when you have to go to the dixi to defecate. Halfway I symbolically tossed the towel in the ring, reaching my target was no longer possible due to the warm weather. Still I enjoyed the warm weather and my second goal remained. Finishing the 100 kilometer. More and more humble I continued my journey.

The variety of this race track is really nice. The dike was busy with walkers, cyclists and runners but the loops were still and quiet. Along the way you frequently came across the 100 kilometer runners. The ultra toppers flew. It worked beautifully inspiring.

## ***After 70 kilometer my body started screaming that this wasn't nice anymore***

After 70 kilometer (my longest distance ever) my body started screaming that this wasn't nice anymore. The unknown presented itself.. 20 kilometer before I had put on thicker shoes. The vivo's were a bit too minimalistic for the cutting 'dike asphalt', so the thicker VFF V-run came at just the right time.

## ***Still I'm not giving up. I never ran this far and long***

We are at the turning point of the last lap and the left knee gets heavily overloaded. Because we walked often on the way my pace got disrupted. But besides the left knee everything else was still functioning properly. We had enough energy and some muscle pain, but that's common. The last lap was a real torture. Still I'm not giving up. I never ran this far and long. I clearly feel the difference between an injury and the overloading of an attachment. My feet are fine so we carry on. On this spot I gave Ans a kudo and I'm very grateful to her. She cycled at my side for over 10 hours. Enjoying the sun with Chrissie, who also ran 30 kilometer in stages.

## ***Will we do it again in 2018? Hell yes***

Will we do it again in 2018? Hell yes. If it fits into my schedule. I like Endurance Day Hamme, it's not too crowded and I met a lot of new runners. Men and women who do this already for some time.

The organisation was in good hands, lots of lovely and friendly volunteers at the supply zones and intersections where eg. Heidi took a picture of you when you passed her.

Endurance Day Hamme – a beautiful and fun running event - is worth repeating.

***Endurance Day Hamme – a beautiful and fun running event - is worth repeating***