12th Feb 2017 was a rather cold morning in HKG and I have set my alarm at the usual 0530am as I would wake up just like any other weekend MR runs with my buddies at 0645. There are always jitters and butterflies in my stomach just like any other race especially the one I had most was the MR time trial on 5th Feb just a week before the Standard Chartered Marathon Hong Kong.

One week of excitement was really cooking up to the next as I made this promise to my buddy, Jack Cheng that I will don MR25 colors for this race and all future races if I pass my time trial. I narrowly cleared with a time of 23.54 to become part of the MR25 family with much encouragement from Steven Lee as well.

I have been running half marathon races since 2003 and returning to HKG many times since I last stayed here from 2009 to 2012 and never have I felt more excited to don MR25 colors this time round. Although I am not an elite but I felt this sense of honor amongst the best running club around in Asia. I was alone at the starting pan and all around me were big running communities around Asia very well represented and I suddenly echoed this idea that I would like MR to be here next year.

The race started off well and as usual I always kept reminding myself to go easy to enjoy the atmosphere, the weather and the run but somehow unknowing I am always running faster than the normal, clocking my fastest at 3.47min/km. Slow down bro!

Once I felt the ground and breathing well with the cold air, I settle down clocking 43.20mins for my first 9km. Not too bad, I guess with lots of people cheering and I was awed with determination to keep going. One have to put on your smile at times for many photographers clicking away with their zoom lens but deep down you are pushing hard to stay in front.

The water points were sufficiently placed along the route with the volunteers offering them with words of encouragement every time I grab a sip. These words may be short however it booster your will power more than anything else.

Banners and hand-made neon signs with fancy lights were equally common sight for Hong Kongers as everyone is taking advantage of the good weather to cheer on their team mates and love ones. You just have to reciprocate with your wave and your victory sign to make them go wild. Awesome atmosphere indeed.

Once I cleared the West Tunnel, it was all uphill and one have to endure the slightly steep climb reminiscent of our beauty slope at SICC. Slightly more than 5K to go and your mind is trying to call you to push but you can feel your legs are a little tight at the calves. Go easy is the decision in order to prevent cramps from occurring. Slow down a little to 5.50min/km pace at the 16th km mark. The training experience I gathered with the boys really helped back at MR conserving your energy and relax your landing from a different step help eliminate the cramps from hitting you.

Overly zealous, I tried pushing a little more, hoping to go a little quicker however staying focus and completing the race is more important at this point as I do not wish to encounter a DNF here with cramps.

Coming round the bend at Causeway Bay is always exciting as the cheers grow even louder here as we are around our final 1km to the finishing point. You intention is to speed up and gain ground as what my friend Jack always say, no point saving your breath now and give it all you have got. Flashing pass the crowd and capturing this moment is what most participants fail to do. Looking around, putting on your smile for the cameras before you cross the finishing line is so memorable for me in all races and before you know it, your finger just click onto the Garmin with a time of 1:45:45 to complete the half marathon.