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# Performance of Kenyan athletes in mountain versus flat marathon running - An example in Switzerland

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to compare running performance of Kenyans in a flat city marathon and a mountain marathon in Switzerland. Running times of top three overall Kenyan runners were compared with running times of top three overall runners of other nations in a mountain and a flat marathon held in Switzerland between 2003 and 2011. In the mountain marathon top three male Kenyans achieved with  $199 \pm$

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23min the 11<sup>th</sup> fastest running time behind athletes from Italy ( $177 \pm 1$ min), Switzerland ( $179 \pm 0$ min), France ( $186 \pm 5$ min), Great Britain ( $189 \pm 3$ min), Mexico ( $189 \pm 3$ min), Germany ( $192 \pm 5$ min), Czech Republic ( $195 \pm 13$ min), Morocco ( $195 \pm 7$ min), USA ( $196 \pm 6$ min) and Hungary ( $198 \pm 8$ min). Female Kenyan athletes did not even participate in the mountain marathon.

In the city marathon top three male Kenyan athletes achieved the second fastest running time ( $130 \pm 1$ min) behind Swiss athletes ( $129 \pm 1$ min), Kenyan female runners had the fifth fastest running time ( $158 \pm 4$ min) behind athletes from Russia ( $153 \pm 2$ min), Ethiopia ( $154 \pm 2$ min), Switzerland ( $155 \pm 2$ min) and Poland ( $155 \pm 4$ min). To summarize, Switzerland, Kenyans achieved not the fastest running times in a mountain marathon while they attained the second fastest running times in flat marathon.

Key words: EAST AFRICA,  
ALTITUDE, MOUNTAIN, LONG-  
DISTANCE RUN

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