

# CENIT CARES



OUR CURRENT CENIT CARES PROJECT



## 24-HOUR RUN FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

On 6th and 7th of July 2019 this year's "24-hour run for children's rights in Stuttgart" took place. This time at a new location, the university's sports grounds.

The principle remains the same: a team or individual runner looks for a sponsor who donates an amount for each round run. The sum of all donations goes to various projects of the Stuttgart children's and youth work. For the first time, a children's jury was also allowed to vote on which projects to consider.

As in the previous year, CENIT supported my idea with 500 Euro, which makes me very happy!

This additionally motivated me to set up my tent on the sports ground, which would be my home for the next 24 hours. At 2 p.m. the start finally took place. A colorful troop, from small to large, all with a balloon in their hands, started to move. As this was a charity event, every age group could be seen; and, no matter if one or hundreds of laps, as a walk or race, everyone was having fun.



My plan was to start the first few hours moderately, not only because of the heat, but also for tactical reasons. And indeed, the thermometer soon reached the 30 degree mark. The tartan track flickered, the drinking place was well frequented. It was my wish to reach the distance of the previous year and ideally to put an extra distance on it; but in 24 hours a lot can happen... So I controlled my laps, watched the action, made sure I had enough drinking and energy. But the heat was causing me noticeable problems. And so my first and fortunately only crisis began in the late afternoon. The combination of the warmth and something I had eaten caused

some nausea and weakness. A little break didn't seem to help, so I decided to listen to my body and gave myself half an hour of rest. Prepared for this, I drank some tea and carefully ate some food.



With the certainty that I had lost time, but that I had taken care of my health, I started again.

Round after round it resumed, the dawn began slowly. It was still warm, but now there was a black cloud front in the sky that didn't promise anything good. In the meantime there were less people on the track, when suddenly the first lightnings lit up the night sky. Around 11 p.m. finally the race control had to intervene and caused an interruption of the race, because the thunderstorm was now directly above us. I quickly finished my lap and "secretly" put another one on, but then I definitely had to leave the place and ran to the tent. Only a few minutes later a call came that everything would be evacuated and we had to leave the tents. Meeting point was a covered area at the changing rooms. I preferred to stay protected, but in the fresh air. The thunderstorm raged over us, just it didn't want to leave. Meanwhile midnight was long over. Such a long break is not good for the running rhythm, also not for the race tactics and certainly not for the own ambitions. But the necessity was confirmed by every lightning bolt.

After about 90 minutes the race could finally be continued. It was now wet and much cooler. Then the night stood before us with a partly illuminated track. In the race planning this phase played a big role for me, because I wanted to do a lot of laps in that time. And it's simply nice to be out in the dark, to enjoy the silence on the circuit, the colorful lights reflected on the wet track, the confrontation with yourself, the mysteriously waving trees and their shadows. But also to observe what happens beyond the track, who celebrates, sleeps or observes. It went according to the schedule for me, and I can still remember the bird that tweets its first song around 4:30 a.m.

With the sunrise there was also more life in the stadium. Some had walked through the night, some looked skeptically from their tents. A not inconsiderable part still slept or was at home. At 6 a. m. it finally began to smell deliciously of coffee. The temptation was huge, but I remained strong. It was still much cooler than the day before. It remained damp, partly it also rained. In the morning, after 110 kilometers, I dared to take a look at the current intermediate result. And I became aware that a top 5 position was possible; even better, it was about 2nd place, and it would be exciting; very exciting! Although I was still on this place at the moment, the third-placed competitor who had disappeared overnight seemed to be catching up again. That spurred me on and I kept looking back at him to see how he was, when he was taking a break, and tried my best myself. A real fight broke out, even if only with blunt weapons after such a long time. I denied it to me to look again at the intermediate score, trusted instead on my feeling and tried it simply further.

The last hours are always the finest folk festival on the track. More and more small and big legs join in again! Most of the participants walk, talk, laugh, but some don't look so fresh anymore. For me it was a mixture of walking, running, drinking, taking short breaks, watching the other runners, making sure that nothing happens on the track. I wanted to get a few more kilometers out, but unfortunately my left knee started to send first signals. So only a few fast laps were possible in between, before I had to slow down again. A very intense, but also touching time.

And so it happened that these 24 hours also came to an end sometime. Another very beautiful, exciting, thrilling, adventurous, but also exhausting time with ups and downs. I would like to thank

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CENIT very much for having made this possible for me and for once again supporting important projects for children! And yes, for me the plan had also worked out, 136km (340 laps) and 2nd place in the individual classification, even with a break in the night.

But the most important thing: a total of 1800 committed people on the track, numerous other helpers, a total of 55500 laps that is 22200 kilometers! A great support for the wonderful projects and all the children and young people who will now benefit from this help.

CENIT Cares says thank a lot to Steffen Wittmann!