The Angkor Empire Marathon took place this year in the ancient city of Angkor and attracted more than 2200 runners from 42 countries.

Runners who participated in the race enjoyed a unique experience, being enveloped both by the ancient atmosphere – the Angkor Empire dates from the 12th century – and natural scenery. The race is held on roads through the forest and rice fields, and passes through traditional villages and past temples dating from the height of the Angkor Era (12th–16th Centuries).

Although it is the rainy season in August on the race date the sun shone and temperatures reached as high as 33°C. All runners reached the finish line safely even though the last runners took until 12.30 to do so – the race had started at 04.30. It seemed that they drew their perseverance and strong sporting spirit, which saw them through to the end, from the ancient surroundings through which the race passes.

Half Marathon, 10km and a family 3km fun run are offered as well as the Marathon and each comprises a single loop. All races start and finish in front of the central sanctuary of Angkor Wat. The name means 'Temple City' and it was established at first as a Hindu and later a Buddhist complex and is the largest religious monument in the world.

The temple was built by the Khmer King Suryavarman II in the early 12th century as his state temple and eventual mausoleum. As the best-preserved temple at the site, it is the only one to have remained a significant religious centre since its foundation. The temple is in the high classical style of Khmer architecture and has become a national symbol, appearing on the Cambodian flag.

The complex is surrounded by a moat and an outer wall 3600m long, within which three rectangular galleries are raised, each above the next. At its centre five towers stand in a cruciform formation. Angkor Wat was never completely abandoned, partly because the moat provided some protection from encroachment by the jungle.

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澳門銀河娛樂
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www.macaumarathon.com  www.sport.gov.mo
Angkor was sacked in 1177 by the traditional enemies of the Khmer, the Chams. Jayavarman VII established a new capital and state temple, Angkor Thom and the Bayon Temple, which lie a few kilometres to the north. Runners pass by these in the later stages of the race.

The course first heads south and passes the Royal Palace of Siem Reap after 6km before crossing the Siem Reap River and turning north along its east bank. Runners pass in turn through the villages of Prasat Kravan, Prasat Bat Chun, Banteay Kdey and Sra Srong. Halfway is reached, after passing the rice fields, at Pre Rup. From 22km runners turn right, eastward, for a 5km out-back section to a turnaround point at Banteay Samre Temple. At 30km runners cross back to the west bank of the river and continue to head west until reaching 37km at which point they turn south to enter the North Gate of Angkor Thom, the “Great City” which was the last and most enduring capital of the Khmer Empire.

It covers an area of nine square kilometres. At its centre is Jayavarman VII’s state temple, the Bayon, but just before reaching it runners pass by the 350m-long Terrace of the Elephants. This was used by Jayavarman VII as a platform from which to view his victorious returning army. What remains are the foundation platforms of the complex, with the elephant carvings on its eastern face.

Runners exit Angkor Thom’s South Gate with about 1500 m left to run until they reach the finish line back in front of the Central Sanctuary of Angkor Wat.

Alastair Slade who finished eighth in the Marathon said “the course was good: it was relatively flat, wide and well-marshaled. It was easy to follow. It was also great, as a leading runner, to have a bicycle escort for the entire run. The out-and-back section of the course to the turnaround, through the villages towards Banteay Samre temple, was really well supported. The villagers created a great atmosphere. The volunteers did a great job in providing water and food along the route, and I would like to give my thanks both to them and to those bike riders who kept me company along the way.”

This was the first full marathon in Cambodia and attracted 1,237 runners from overseas. As the numbers grow in the future, as they look set to do, the organisers hope to welcome some elite runners who may be able to set records on this fast course. Runners coming from other countries appreciated the sincerity of the welcome they received and the organisers’ gratitude and thanks for sharing their experiences and friendship with the Cambodian people through their participation in this event: All entrants, through their participation, helped to support poor children in Cambodia through charitable funds raise by the event for Angkor Children’s Hospital, Kantha Bopha Children’s Hospital and the Cambodian Red Cross.

We are waiting to welcome all runners around the world to be present next year for the second edition, to be held on 9 August 2015.
Distance Running | 2014 Edition 4

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