

FRANKFURT MARATHON REPORT – BY PAMELA BRANDIE

As regards running, 2018 hasn't been my best.

I have been running with the club for more than 16 years and never had an injury .

At the end of 2017 I developed plantar fasciitis and couldn't run for 3 months.

Once I started back building up my runs and trying to get some fitness back I entered Frankfurt Marathon. Then bam I got it in my other foot and I was out for another 6 weeks.

My training for the marathon didn't go to plan and I knew I didn't have the miles in my legs or the fitness. So my decision was to run it with the aim to complete it and not worry about chasing a time, Beth was happy with this too.

On the Saturday morning we did the Breakfast Run 5km. A free sponsored event - turn up, nice easy jog, cute pretzel medal, pretzel to eat and a drink.

Then Sunday...marathon day!

30,000 runners take part along with the world's elite athletes.

There was the usual excitement at a mass start event - music, announcements, media and helicopters.

It took us just over 20 minutes to cross the start line. The first 10km takes you around central Frankfurt, lots of skyscrapers and sites. Unfortunately you go around some streets twice until you eventually cross the river into some lovely residential areas with old German buildings. Although it was a mass event you never felt hemmed in like in London or Berlin.

We were taking it easy, stopping at every energy station for refreshments. Every 5km there was water, isotonic drinks, tea and bananas. Nearer the end there were gels and alcohol-free beer. I've never eaten bananas during a marathon but I couldn't get enough of them. The isotonic drink was grapefruit-flavoured and I enjoyed that to. It felt a bit like we were running an ultra marathon, with all the stopping to eat and drink. Also, usually during a marathon I can run the distance without a Portaloo stop. But as soon as we saw one, one of us had to go.

So we were plodding on, quite happy. A lot of entertainment and support along the route - the bands were brilliant.

Did I mention it was cold? The wind was freezing, another first running with a jacket zipped up to my chin.

Around about 35km my lack of training was starting to tell. We walked for a wee bit, and passed our hotel! You are near the finish but there's still 7km to go. You see the finish but we were back on the streets we ran around twice at the start again! Around another twice!

A man said 600 metres to go but he lied! It went on and then eventually the Festival Hall. You ran on a red carpet inside the hall, music booming, flashing lights, ticker tape. It was brilliant and we were so happy to finish. 4.35.11.

Great medal, T-shirt and goodies.

Marathon number 15 done. My feet were fine and my body felt pretty good. Despite the repetitions, Frankfurt Marathon has a lot of positives. Plus it's another one from a book I have - The Worlds 50 Greatest Marathons - ticked off.

