

United Airlines NYC Half

Sunday March 19, 2017

Feyisa Lelisa Callum Hawkins Chris Derrick

Post-Race Presser

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Feyisa Lileasa, Callum Hawkins and Chris Derrick. I'll start it off with a question for Feyisa. What was it like here running in New York City and being able to take the win?

FEYISA LELISA: After I came back from Rio, my body was not fit, and I didn't think I was going to win. After that, I lost two races. I am very happy, and I'm getting very good feelings from winning the New York Half Marathon.

THE MODERATOR: Callum, a big run. You guys were head-to-head for a long time. What were you thinking, and how did it feel in today's run?

CALLUM HAWKINS: I was just thinking, like, why won't he leave me alone. But yeah, it was really fun running through Manhattan. I mean, such an exciting race, but overall it was just really tough, and I was throwing everything I could just to get rid of Feyisa, but he was just too strong in the end.

THE MODERATOR: Chris, top finish for an American. I know you've talked about earlier this week, you really didn't know what to expect, so how did it turn out without knowing what to expect?

CHRIS DERRICK: Yeah, it didn't necessarily go as I thought. You know, it was pretty cold, and I think most years it's pretty slow through the park, but Kenta Murayama, he kind of went from the gun, and I was kind of happy to find myself in that pack of guys who were really experienced, really good road racers, and I was kind of just having fun being up there, and then Callum had to go and ruin it coming out of the park and put in a big surge, and I was by myself for -- I ran with Kenta for a little bit. Actually it was pretty windy going down 42nd Street, and we kind of traded leads there.

I think I might have helped him more than he helped me because I'm 6'2" and he's about 5'4", but yeah, and then it was just kind of a long, lonely road down the West Side Highway by myself, and I lost a little bit of focus, but overall I can't be too disappointed with the time and the place.



Q. Feyisa, this was the first race that your family has gotten to see since you reunited with them last month; what was that like, and also, what did your daughter say to you when she ran out to you at the finish line?

FEYISA LELISA: When I was running I wasn't thinking about my family at all because this is a very tough road. I wasn't thinking about them while I was running, but I was very, very happy when I saw them at the end of the finish line, especially since I won, I am extremely happy that they were there.

Q. Callum, can you expand upon the battle with Feyisa? Looked like you were literally giving everything you've got coming down the West Side Highway. Can you talk about that?

CALLUM HAWKINS: Yeah, first of all, I knew coming out of the park could be quite crucial, because it's a slight dig and then a downhill, so I made a move at the very top of the hill where some people like to relax, and then tried to bust up the group, and then just tried to keep the pressure on, and then coming on West Highway with the switchback, I knew I was slightly better in the corners than most of the people, so I put another dig in, and I just put my foot to the floor and tried everything I could. I even tried a small surge in those spreads, but nothing. I couldn't get rid of him. Yeah, it was quite painful the whole way.

Q. Did you think there was a chance you could catch him or did you know he had that last gear?

CALLUM HAWKINS: Yeah, it's tough to say. I was sort of trying to gear up for a sprint finish because I didn't have any more to go from that far out. Yeah, and I know we both suffered under Lenny's sprint finish. But unfortunately he got the better of me coming off the corner. I just didn't have it, didn't have any kick on me at all.

Q. Chris, I know you talked early in the week that your first half marathon didn't really go as you had hoped and this was your rebound race. Are you happy with today's result, and what did you learn from today that you can take forward?

CHRIS DERRICK: Yeah, I mean, my first half was kind of in a strange period to try to get the standard for the Olympic Trials. I also just didn't feel very good during it at the time, but today was a lot more fun. I felt like just

overall my body is in a better place than it was.

I kind of knew it was going -- I don't think I necessarily learned too much. Like I kind of knew what was going on when it was happening. I just didn't quite have the legs. Callum, he came over the top of a couple of those hills, and that's the way -- I like to run cross country, and I was just like, man, that's really smart. But I was just -- because I'm tired. But you know, I couldn't quite get on it. If I could go back, maybe I'd just really put in everything I had to try to get on those guys coming down 7th Ave because I think just having people to run with would have made a bit of difference. But I think that, and I just kind of -- with the wind at our back a little bit coming down the West Side Highway, I ended up just kind of throwing my legs out in front of me there for a little bit. I kind of stopped running tall, and that's when I lost some seconds to -- where I probably should have broke 61 minutes.

Q. Feyisa, I know you crossed your wrists again at the finish line. Can you talk about that, and do you hope this win will help further your message of political peace?

FEYISA LELISA: Even if it doesn't help my goal, it is a good reminder for me. When I left my country, the feeling of my people was, we want freedom. We want to have our share of the pie. We want to be equal like everybody else. We don't want to be killed. This protest included the university students. What I brought was a message of the university students, and this protest will continue, and when we get our freedom, I will make sure that there will be a memorial for the people that were massacred.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations again, everybody, and Feyisa on the win.