

Marathon man runs 506 kilometers

Weissbach Can you imagine run twelve marathons in twelve different European cities in twelve days? Heiko Stribl from Künzelsau had two reasons for doing this.

By our editor Thomas Zimmermann



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Having an excellent climate was no exception: In the ninth stage going from Teplice (Czech Republic) to Linz (Austria) Heiko Stribl enjoyed the sun. Photos: Dennis Brandt

On the one hand, as a runner he was looking for a sporting challenge. On the other hand, being the interior decoration sales director of Konrad Hornschuch AG, he wanted to help Syrian and Lebanese refugee children who have been living in the Jordanian refugee camp in Zaatari for years.

"Because of my work, I frequently travel to the Middle East and seeing the shortcomings of these children, I wanted to help," says Heiko Stribl. After Hornschuch told me that he would support the campaign, the idea of living "12 crazy days" was born. "It had to be something special, after all, I also want to make a mark," says Heiko Stribl.

The Route

Tour routes through the twelve European countries were quickly created through the use of apps. Hornschuch's sales staff supported with logistics and hotel reservations and with Dennis Brandt being the right partner who not only played almost every role,

but also took over the next stage transportation, updated the page on Facebook and also took pics.



Some friends came along with Heiko Stribl during his tours and provided him with motivation and distraction.

Heiko Stribl discovered his passion for running when he was 15 years old, 1.93 meters tall and weighing 74 kilograms in South Africa, where this son of German parents grew up. Running is a very popular sport there and participating in the Comrades' marathon between the cities of Durban and Pietermaritzburg in the month of May is a must.

The Dream

The 45-year dream of running the 90-kilometer ultramarathon, particularly difficult because of its slopes, came true until 2015. Heiko Stribl, who had lived in Germany for 13 years, completed his first ultramarathon in Sonthofen in 2004, running a distance of 70 kilometers and an altitude of 3500 meters. Since then, he has been training almost every day, regardless everywhere he is for work reasons. Excellent preparation habits for twelve marathons in twelve days.

"Training is important, but the mind is even more so," says Stribl. Well prepared physically and mentally, father of two daughters, he departs from the Dover Coast on December 21st. The first races were good, setting the best time in the Netherlands with 3:45 hours. He faces a huge rain in Copenhagen. "That was my worst race, but I never thought about giving up," Stribl emphasized. In the ninth stage in the Czech Republic, the 45-year-old runner twisted an ankle and could barely finish the last few races in pain.



We headed to the next

starting point at night.

"At the end I think we were able to do much more than we thought," was the conclusion of the marathoner after 506 kilometers. Heiko Stribl's Facebook followers grew from 20 to more than 300 friends. There are more than 8,300 euros in the donation account.

Heiko Stribl is still a bit off target to raise € 20,000. But he hopes there is much more to come. He wants to use the money to buy a container for the refugee children, "a library where they could read undisturbed," he explains. Stribl does not yet know if he will launch a similar campaign in the next few years. But what is certain is that he will compete again in the Marathon of Comrades this year. "This time I'll only need nine hours," he says. In 2015, it took from Stribl more than ten hours to finish the race.