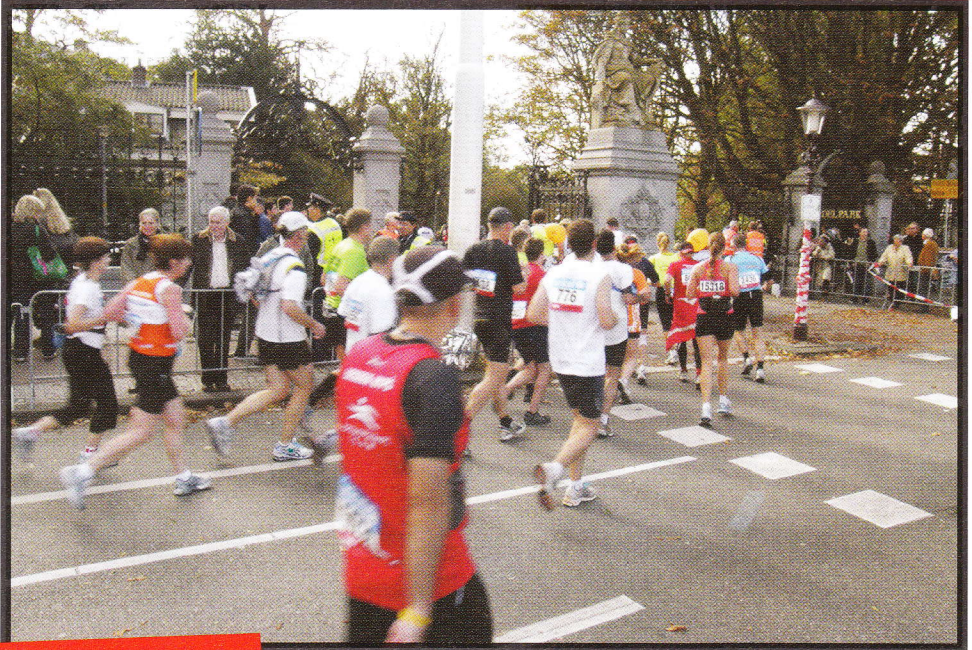


## While you were out



## Race fever

Last month saw two major running events take place with the Eindhoven Marathon on 12th October and the Amsterdam Marathon a week later.

A new track record was set at the Eindhoven event when Geoffrey Mutai from Kenya completed the race route in an impressive two hours and seven minutes. Repeating her victory from 2007, Lydia Kurgat, also from Kenya, was the first female to finish and achieved a time of two hours 33 minutes – knocking six minutes off her record from last year.

The Dutch Championships 2008 were won by Greg van Hest (two hours and 15 minutes) and Nadja Wijenberg (two hours and 42 minutes).

Some 24,000 people took part in the Amsterdam Marathon, marking the 33rd year of the event. Again, Kenya blew everyone else out of the water. Men's first and third places were taken respectively, by Paul Kirui and Robert Cheboror, with Ethiopian Chala

Dechase in second – all within two minutes of each other and barely two hours and 10 minutes after they started. The women's race was won by Kenyan Lydia Cheromei in an impressive two hours and 25 minutes.

The marathon route took runners from the Olympic Stadium through the city's historic streets, into the Vondelpark – which was looking particularly picturesque as autumn swept through – almost all the way to Amstelveen and back.

Fortunately, the temperature was perfect for marathon running, although some runners complained about the wind. It was also a fine day for spectating.

The Amsterdam Marathon is considered The Netherlands' second biggest, after Rotterdam, but both are among the world's Top Ten marathons, according to sports magazine *Runner's World*. Not bad for such a small place, although there is something to be said for having no hills!