

Report Card — Six-Week Half Marathon Block

Vikram · plan written 5 September 2026 · block run 6 September to 18 October 2026 · assessed 24 October 2026 · all figures from Garmin Connect, none estimated

Goal achieved, inside the predicted window

Predicted 2:50–3:20 · delivered **3:02:14** · first half marathon, negative split, no injury, no missed long run

A—

87 / 100

SUBJECT GRADES

SUBJECT	WEIGHT	WHAT THE PLAN ASKED	WHAT YOU DELIVERED	GRADE
Long runs	25%	Six progressive long runs, 9→11→13→15→17→8 km, all 9:1 run/walk	All six completed, every one at or beyond target. 73 km planned, 77.2 km delivered . Not one missed, not one cut short.	A+
Easy-run discipline	20%	138–150 bpm. "Easy means easy, and it will feel insultingly slow."	22 easy runs, mean heart rate 139.8 , only one above 150. Your previous 16 weeks sat at 145–165. This was the hardest behavioural change in the plan and you made it completely.	A+
Race execution	20%	9:1 from km 1, non-negotiable. Do not skip breaks because you feel good.	All 18 walk breaks taken from the clock. Opened at 8:29/km and held it. Negative split — first half 516 s/km, second 503. Closed with 7:47 and 7:16.	A+
Volume & consistency	10%	136 km across six weeks, 4 runs/week	28 runs, 156.4 km — 115% of plan . Every single week came in over. Consistency flawless; the overage is a small mark against, given the plan named ramp rate as a fired risk.	A—
Strength training	10%	Two 20-minute sessions a week, Monday and Thursday, through to 7 October	3 sessions out of roughly 10 . All three in the first nine days, then nothing for five weeks. The one element of the plan that was simply abandoned.	D
Sleep	15%	The risk flag that fired hardest — "and it is the cheapest one to fix"	Averaged 6.02 h across 41 nights — down from the 6.44 h baseline that was already flagged. 19 nights under 6 h, 6 nights under 5 h, one of 2.82 h four days before the race. It got worse, not better.	D

WEEK BY WEEK					THE HEADLINE RESULT
WEEK	PLAN	ACTUAL	LONG	AVG HR	Aerobic decoupling — eliminated. The 5 September assessment called it "the primary constraint on race day": 9.9%, 16.9% and 10.1% against a 5% threshold, with the verdict that "at 21 km that is not a slower second half — it is a wall." On race day you ran a negative split over 21.31 km. The wall never arrived. Of everything in this block, that is the number that changed most.
W1 · 6-12 Sep	19	21.3	9.63	146	
W2 · 13-19 Sep	22	24.6	11.34	145	
W3 · 20-26 Sep	25	27.6	13.59	147	
W4 · 27 Sep-3 Oct	27	31.6	16.37	148	
W5 · 4-10 Oct	28	30.6	17.61	148	
W6 · 11-17 Oct	15	20.7	8.63	145	

WHERE YOU LOST MARKS

- Strength, and the reason matters.** Three sessions in six weeks. You did them for nine days and then stopped. Nothing bad came of it this time — but the circuit was in the plan to protect calves and Achilles, and you are about to start faster running, which is exactly when that protection earns its place. The gym block starting 26 October is the retake.
- Sleep, which is the one that actually cost you.** The plan named it the cheapest fix available and you went backwards. The consequences are traceable: HRV turned Unbalanced on 14 October and you arrived at the start line already in deficit. 2.82 hours on 15 October, four days out. A rested version of you probably runs this race a little faster than 3:02:14.
- One mark that is mine, not yours.** VO2max fell from 44.7 to 41.4 across the block. That happened because the plan removed all fast running for six weeks — a deliberate trade to build the aerobic base you needed, and the right call for this race. You followed the instruction correctly. The cost was real and the next block repays it.

TEACHER'S REMARKS

On the work that decided the outcome, this is close to a model performance. Six long runs from a starting point of 7.87 km, every one delivered, every one run to the structure asked for. Twenty-two easy runs held at a heart rate you had never trained at before, when the entire previous sixteen weeks of your history says you should have drifted upward within a fortnight. That discipline is rarer than the finish time, and it is the reason the finish time happened.

The two D grades sit in the same place: the things that happen when you are not running. Strength work and sleep are both unglamorous, both easy to drop when work is busy, and both were dropped. Neither broke this block. Over a longer horizon — faster running, barbell loading, a man of 47 — they are what decides whether you keep training or spend February injured.

Grade: A—. Outstanding on execution, weak on the supporting habits. You hit a goal you were told, in writing on 5 September, you were at the bottom of the band for.