

## Ethiopians hailed as favourites to win the Volkswagen Prague Marathon

*This year's Volkswagen Prague Marathon is set to play host to a number of elite African long-distance runners on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May. The hot favourites to win the twenty-third event year of this legendary race include runners from Ethiopia and Kenya. A total of 10 600 runners will appear at the start line along with a further 5 800 participants taking part in Saturday's accompanying programme. A whopping 16 400 active athletes are thus expected to take part in the Volkswagen Marathon Weekend. Czech runners and fans can also look forward to watching the Czech Marathon Championships.*

In keeping with RunCzech Running League standards, there will no short supply of world-class long-distance runners at the Volkswagen Prague Marathon. *"According to estimations, African runners are set to dominate with the strongest hailing from Ethiopia. I'm however looking forward to seeing performances by Czech runners and, above all, the thousands of recreational runners who devote huge amounts of free time and energy to marathon training,* President of the Organising Committee Carlo Capalbo reveals.

The main favourites to win this IAAF Gold Label race are all men with a track record for completing the race within 2 hours and 7 minutes. The trio of Kenyans comprising Lani Rutto, Frankline Chepkwony and Stephen Chemlany will be challenging three Ethiopians - Bazu Worku and Gebretsadik Abraha. *"With plans to launch an assault on his personal best in Prague and run in under 2:08, the renowned Japanese marathon runner Yuki Kawauchi also promises to add something to the mix,"* Jana Moberly who manages the elite runners adds.

In terms of the women, representatives from Ethiopia are likely to dominate including four runners with personal bests under 2:24 led by Feyse Tadese and Amane Beriso. *"Their battle will open up the chance for a race record of 2:22:34, achieved by Lydia Cheromei here in 2011,"* Capalbo reveals speaking of the Ethiopian racers. European favourites include Mulu Seboko and Tadelech Bekele. The Kenyans will also be keen to leave their mark, however especially Valary Aiyabey, winner of the Valencia marathon who enhanced her personal best at this year's Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon (1:07:50) in preparation for the full course which is her main discipline.

The Volkswagen Prague Marathon is traditionally one of the last occasions for runners to meet the standards set by their athletics federations for the forthcoming world championships. The event will be held in London this year and Prague can expect to welcome elite runners from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Brazil, New Zealand, Ecuador, Venezuela, Uruguay and Greece.

Czech fans can look forward to the traditional Czech Marathon Championships to be held as part of the marathon. Defender of last year's victory Petr Pechek will also be taking part along with Vít Pavlišta, plus Radka Churáňová and Dagmar Rychnovská among the women. We can, above all, expect to see a gripping duel play out between Pechek and Pavlišta. The second of these scooped up the national half marathon championship title last weekend in Pardubice and he's keen to deliver a similar result in double that distance. *"I'd like to smash my personal best and launch an attack on the national championship title. Petr is most definitely a tough contender and won't want to make it easy for me. My main goal is to run a decent time,"* reflects Pavlišta.



The twenty-third year of the Volkswagen Prague Marathon kicks off at nine o'clock from Old Town Square on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May. A total of 10 600 marathon runners from 85 countries around the world will join the start line and the event broadcast live by Česká televize.

## MAJOR NAMES ON THE START LIST

### MEN

|           |                   |     |         |
|-----------|-------------------|-----|---------|
| RUTTO     | Lani Kiplagat     | KEN | 2:06:34 |
| CHEPKWONY | Frankline         | KEN | 2:06:11 |
| WORKU     | Bazu              | ETH | 2:05:25 |
| CHEMLANY  | Stephen Kwelio    | KEN | 2:06:24 |
| ABRAHA    | Gebretsadik       | ETH | 2:07:06 |
| CHOGE     | Raymond Kipchumba | KEN | 2:08:39 |
| PAVLIŠTA  | Vít               | CZE | 2:17:51 |
| PECHEK    | Petr              | CZE | 2:18:28 |
| VABROUŠEK | PETR              | CZE | 2:31:36 |

### WOMEN

|            |               |     |         |
|------------|---------------|-----|---------|
| TADESE     | Feyse         | ETH | 2:20:27 |
| BERISO     | Amane         | ETH | 2:20:48 |
| SEBOKA     | Mulu          | ETH | 2:21:56 |
| BEKELE     | Tadelech      | ETH | 2:22:51 |
| AIYABEI    | Valary Jemeli | KEN | 2:24:48 |
| TIBEBU     | Hirut         | ETH | 2:25:12 |
| JEBET      | Sarah         | KEN | 2:27:07 |
| CHURÁŇOVÁ  | Radka         | CZE | 2:45:00 |
| RYCHNOVSKÁ | Dagmar        | CZE | 2:56:53 |

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Should you need any further information or photographs in print quality, please get in touch with:

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Notes for editors: <http://www.runczech.com/cs/pro-media/poznamky-pro-editory/index.shtml>



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