

Press Release  
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## The Prague International Marathon provides additional excitement in 2024, as athletes target Olympic qualification.

This year's Prague International Marathon will be even more full of stories than usual. In addition to the group of elite runners who are looking to attack the race records of 2:05:09 (men) and 2:19:46 (women) the marathon in Prague has also become the last chance for runners to qualify for the Olympic Games in Paris 2024. The IOC moved the qualification deadline by a few days so that Olympic hopefuls could have a last chance to make the standard at this traditional event in the calendar. So, in addition to Ethiopian or Kenyan endurance runners, we will see elite competitors from China, Brazil, Mexico, Mongolia, Peru, Ecuador and India, as well as from Portugal and Bulgaria. In total, over 8,000 participants will take to the streets of Prague, and half of them will be from overseas. The 29th edition of this famous RunCzech event will start on Sunday at the Old Town Square from 9:00 a.m. Participants can also join the popular Battle of the Teams competition and be part of a team with elite runners.

The Prague International Marathon race record is a tough one to beat. Alexander Mutiso's 2:05:09 from last year has set a high standard. However, there will be four runners at the start who have already run under 2:05:00. The fastest in the race is Herpasa Negasa Kitesa with a personal best of 2:03:40 from 2019 and also a great time from Seoul 2022 of 2:04:49. Having then been hit by injury, Prague is the venue for his big comeback. Hot on his heels will be Lemi Berhanu Hayle, this year's Mumbai Marathon winner, with a personal best from Dubai of 2:04:33. He recently learned that he is not in the Ethiopian team for the Olympic Games. "I'm very disappointed that I didn't get a chance for Paris, but I want to win here. I'm very ready and I'd like to break the race record," Hayle said at the press conference.

Favourites also include Abebe Negewo Degefa (2:04:51) and Abayneh Degu Tsehay (2:04:53). "This year we had a record performance at the Prague 1/2 Marathon. If the weather is good, Prague has a chance to see a race with a time under 2:05:00 for the first time," says Carlo Capalbo, president of the RunCzech organizing committee.



Among the women, the African competitors should also dominate the racing. Kenyan Dorcas Jepchirchir Tuitoek, winner of the marathon in Hamburg and Amsterdam (2:20:02), is the favourite. She has chosen Prague as the event to try to break the 2:20:00 barrier. The Ethiopian Buzunesh Getachew Gudeta has already done that with 2:19:27. The race between these two endurance women could both break the 2:20 mark and also the course record. Israel's Lonah Salpeter's record run in 2019 (2:19:46) is so far the only sub 2:20 performance in Prague.

Because the Prague International Marathon is the last place to be able to make the Olympic standard, there are a host of athletes who have made the journey from around the world. One runner has come from China, specifically with the qualification in mind, and the athletes who have come from Brazil also have great hopes. The well-known Brazilian runner Paulo Paula was nominated for the Rio Olympics after running in Prague in 2016. Wendell Souza or Grazielle Zari will look to do the same. Will they manage to reach the Olympic dream? Runners from Ecuador Paola Bonilla and Peruvian Ferdinand Cereceda will also arrive with great ambitions. Most of these countries have a set standard of 2:08:10 for men and 2:26:50 for women, which is also the Olympic qualifying standard. One of the athletes already close to this is Portugal's Jesus Solange "I'm optimistic, my goal is to get to Paris. I feel good," she added. Of course, it also depends on how many free places are left in individual countries, the quota is a maximum of three runners from one country.

Czech athletes Tereza Hrochová and Moira Stewartová, on the other hand, have met the standard, and will not participate in the race due to preparation for the Olympics. Among the Czech men at the start will be the defender of the victory from last year Vít Pavlišta, the experienced Jiří Homoláč or Ondřej Fejfar. Patrik Vebr, winner of the 1/2 Marathon Prague 2024 and a member of the RunCzech Racing team, will make his marathon debut here. "The goal is to win the Czech title, but I have respect for this distance and would like to gain experience. For me, the 5 and 10 km races are still a priority," added Vebr.

## Showers and refreshment stations

RunCzech have increased the on-course facilities for runners even further this year. A total of 16 refreshment stations will be available, at 6 of them it will also be possible to cool down with a shower. The organisers will be assisted by the Prague 1 fire department's sprinkling car and the Komwag car. These sprinklers will be located at the crossing of the course at Staroměstské náměstí, just before the 13km mark, and then again just after the finish line. In the technical zone, the organisers will add one more



large-capacity sink with eight drinking water taps. In total, Run Czech will provide 30,000 litres of Mattoni water and over 16,000 litres of isotonic drinks. Along the course there will be 34 first aid medical patrols, and 4 bike patrols with defibrillators.

In order for everyone to have a good time, in addition to the support of the spectators, the participants will also have rich musical accompaniment. There will be a total of 23 musical groups along the route as part of the Marathon Music Festival, which RunCzech organizes in cooperation with the United Islands of Prague festival Radiožurnál. The Prague International Marathon also includes an accompanying programme which includes the Marathon Expo and Sports Equipment Fair at the Holešovice Exhibition Centre. Popular family runs will take place on Saturday at the Exhibition Center and Stromovka Park - dm family mile and dm Bambini run.

Runners can also participate in the popular Battle of the Teams concept, where they become part of four teams together with professional athletes. Everyone has a stake in the outcome of the race and the position. This year, it is possible to be part of the Mattoni, Prague Airport, Volkswagen Financial Services and Turkish Airlines teams who each have associated supporting charities Nadace Partnerství, K srdci klíč, Centrum Paraple and Pink Bubble. The elite of each team, carefully selected for balance, can receive a number of prizes and benefits.

## Note for editors

- Each of the five races are certified by AIMS, have been awarded a 5 Star Road Race standard by European Athletics or have hosted the IAAF (World Athletics) Half Marathon Championships.
- RunCzech races are awarded the quality mark by World Athletic and the Prague International Marathon, Prague Half Marathon and Birell 10k Race received the World Athletics Elite Label Road Race award.
- SuperHalves races have played host to World Record performances (2 in Lisbon, 2 in Prague, 1 in Copenhagen and 3 in Valencia).
- RunCzech organizes running events in cities across the Czech Republic and in Italy, with Napoli Running, and in Japan and China supported by local entities.
- Prague International Marathon spol. s.r.o. ("PIM")/RunCzech was established in 1995 by Carlo Capalbo, President of the Organizing Committee, with the aim of staging a world-class international marathon in Prague.



- Nearly 1.2 million runners have participated in RunCzech events since its inception. In 2019, we welcomed over 120 000 finishers from 101 different countries.
- ALL RUNNERS ARE BEAUTIFUL is our way of welcoming everyone to the world of running.
- Initiatives like RunCzech Running League and SuperHalves were created to motivate casual runners. To support elite European athletes, we created the EuroHeroes Challenge.
- RunCzech Racing is dedicated to the development of young athletes, community ties, and sporting excellence. Eight World records so far and over 150 podium finishes for our team!
- In 2021, RunCzech introduced the unique running invention called The Battle of the Teams. "Professional marathoners competing in teams, strategically drafted based on their collective personal bests, giving each team a serious chance to win gold".
- We host other events such as our Bambini Runs, Family Runs and Junior Marathon Championship to encourage youth participation.
- Our FreeRun courses form a network of running trails across the Czech Republic.
- Our Running Mall serves as the epicenter of the running world in Prague.
- All accompanying information regarding RunCzech can be found at this link: [Notes for editors](#)

## Contact

For more information, please get in touch with:

- reach the office at [pr@pim.cz](mailto:pr@pim.cz)

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/runczech>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/runczech/>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/RunCzech>

