



**PRESS RELEASE
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JUNIOR MARATHON RUNS ALL THE WAY TO BRUSSELS

Karlovy Vary, Prague/ Junior Marathon – the 16th anniversary of Running for Europe, a unique running competition got underway this week in Karlovy Vary and Ústí nad Labem. By the end of April the event will have covered the whole republic. The lucky winners will get to go all the way to Brussels.

More than 1800 high school students are competing in the regional semi-finals for a place in the final. Victory is not the only factor here but with luck also playing a part in who gets picked in a prize draw to go to Brussels.

"Running is a remedy for both body and mind. For each and every one of us regardless of age. And because so many children stop doing sport when they are at high school, we took it upon ourselves to support their activities in this way", said Miroslav Jiřík, Marketing Manager from the organising company, Prague International Marathon. In last year's Junior Marathon, members from 133 teams ran a total 5611 km. So far this year 90 teams have signed up. *"I run myself so am aware of the benefits of the sport and will always be committed to promoting it",* said to students.

The event taking place in front of the Spa Hotel also gained the support of three-time Olympic medallist in running on skis, Lukáš Bauer who was made an event patron. *"For me running is the best preparation out there for skiing, I love it. The only thing is I think I am a little past it now to race in a marathon"* he said, smiling.

Everyone followed the winning team from a Grammar School in Ostrov bringing home a fantastic time of 2:33:27 followed closely behind by the Cheb Grammar School at 2:34:18. One day later, students from a Grammar School in Teplice were able to celebrate with a time of 2:35:01 supported by Filip Žižka and Jan Štochl, young representatives in cross country skiing. Due to the larger number of starting teams, a second Grammar School from Losovice also qualified.

Already for the six year running the gym teacher, Jaroslav Tomeš from the Jan Neruda school in Prague's Malá Strana district will also be taking part. *"To begin with we faced the problem of putting together one team. Now we have four, and on top of that have also managed to put together a band who will be playing along the marathon course. Some of the older students have even gone for the half-marathon course with plans to take on the full marathon. We are off to the half-marathon in Budějovice as well as Ústí. And*

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everywhere we go, the students have a huge desire to beat their teacher" he recalls, smiling.

"Running is easily accessible, a cheap form of medicine and preventative for obesity as well as cardio-vascular diseases. It also helps build self-confidence and personal discipline. Which are important prerequisites for a long and successful life" says Professor Jan Pirk, world famous the work-renowned physician and himself an avid runner, skier and triathlon participant.

The semi-final round which receives backing from the European Commission and its Youth in Action initiatives, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Physical Education, regions, cities as well as business parties, will come to a close on 26th April in Prague. However the best teams will run in the starting positions at the Volkswagen Prague Marathon on 13th May for whom transport and accommodation will be paid. And for these participants there will also be the chance to win a trip to Brussels in a prize draw.

The sporting trip will take place between 25th and 27th June. *"Aside from taking pupils on a tour around European Institutions, our guide will also accompany them to see the cultural sights Brussels has to offer. We promote competitiveness but also the idea of sharing a common running experience",* stated Viktor Vagner from the Czech European Commission Representation.

What rules do you have to meet in order to sign up? *"The team must comprise ten high school students, of which there must be at least three girls. Each school is able to put together more than one team",* explains Tomáš Vrzák from Prague International Marathon. Nine members will run 4 km, the tenth 6,195 km – which, when added up, makes a marathon relay. According to athletics regulations, nobody under the age of 18 is able to complete this distance.

The idea for the competition was created by Olympic Marathon winner, Gelindo Bordin during a trip he made to Prague back in 1997. Since that time over ten thousand students have run the course. Could this also be possible where you are?

More info on www.pim.cz/jmc

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Notes for editors:

Prague International Marathon spol. s r.o.

Prague International Marathon spol. s r.o. ("PIM") was set up in 1995 by Carlo Capalbo, President of the Company with the aim of organising a large-scale international marathon on the streets of Prague. A total of 958 runners made it to the start line of that first race. Since then PIM's activities have burgeoned into a whole series of running events referred to as the PIM Running series. In 2011 over 60 000 competing runners from all over the world participated in races as part of the PIM Running Series. The Volkswagen Marathon ranks among the top 10 marathons in the world held in one of the most beautiful settings and becoming the 7th fastest in the world in 2010 (with Eliud Kiptanui completing it in 2:05:39). As of 1999, PIM also organises the Prague half-marathon along with races over shorter courses, the Grand Prix.

Races organised by PIM are sponsored by some of the largest investors in the Czech Republic, Volkswagen, adidas, Hervis and Mattoni. The whole organisation and atmosphere of the races has drawn a crowd of resounding names in the athlete world to the Czech Republic (Haile Gebrselassie, Stefano Baldini, Paul Tergat, Moses Tanui and Antonio Pinto) not to mention thousands of visitors.

PIM also stands as one of the few race organisers in the world to hold a collection of 3 IAAF awards: the IAAF Road Race Silver Label for the Men's 10 km METRO Run as well as the IAAF Road Race Gold Label for the Hervis 1/2Marathon Prague and the Volkswagen Marathon Prague.

tempo team prague s.r.o.

The term "tempo" is an acronym for "The European Marathon Promotion Organization", which focuses on developing marathon races along with other running events in Europe. The tempo team company was set up in 2000 by a group of experts and sporting enthusiasts.

tempo team's activities entail concept creation, brand building, marketing as well as the actual organisation of sporting events. Right from the start, tempo team has played a key role in organising the Prague marathon as well as developing the PIM Running series. For the purpose of holding the Volkswagen Olomouc 1/2Marathon, tempo put together a special team of experts furnished with fifteen years experience in the area of organising running events. The first ever Volkswagen Olomouc 1/2Marathon was held in 2010 and signified the first race the tempo team organised outside of Prague. In 2011 a further race was added to the series, the Volkswagen Ustí 1/2Marathon taking place last September.

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