



PRESS RELEASE

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The Hervis Prague Half Marathon smashes the women's race record, also surpassing the maximum capacity of runners

Not even the cold weather was able to get in the way of the fantastic performances recorded at this year's Hervis Prague Half Marathon. Kenyan female runner, Gladys Cherono set a new race record with a time of 1:06:48. Among the men, the Eritrean runner Zersenay Tadese emerged as the winner with a time of 1:00:10 - making this the race's third best winning time on record.

Today's race witnessed a total of twelve elite runners from all over the world breaking their personal records. And as if this weren't enough to boast about, the organisers also managed to surpass the number of registered participants with the ground-breaking statistic of 12,500 runners, making history as the largest running event ever held in the Czech Republic. The best local runners were Jiří Homoláč who recorded his best performance yet (1:05:41 in 19th place), and amongst the women, the Olympian Ivana Sekyrová emerged as the strongest performer (finishing in 17th place with a time of 1:15:58).

Prior to the race, Tadese wasn't shy about sharing his designs on thrashing his own world record time of 58:23 from Lisbon in 2010. The Czech 800 meter world record holder, Jarmila Kratochvílová, was given the responsibility of starting the race, acting as a kind of human talisman for Tedese plus an impressive list of other elite runners who set off on the course followed by Deputy Mayor of Prague, Pavel Richter.

In the second half of the race, however, it became apparent from the split times of the leaders that all hope of breaking the record was lost. "Already yesterday I realized I wasn't feeling great, and that I was coming down with a cold. On top of that, it was cold, and so I'm really pleased and appreciative about being able to win despite these factors," commented 31-year old Zersensay Tadese who was shadowed by his training partner, Amanuel Mesel right up until the last stretch. For Mesel it was touch and go as to whether he would take part right up until three days before the race when he was issued his Czech visa at the embassy in Cairo!

"I wanted to stay with the group for as long as possible, only speeding up towards the end," said the winner. It's not possible to say how much faster I would have been, had it been warmer. I think I could have run it in under one hour," he added. "But I really liked it here, both the city as well as the race organization. And I hope that next time I'm here I'll be able to run even better."

John Kipsang who finished in third place had the following to say: "It was a huge motivation for me to be able to run along with the record holder, Tadese. I felt great and the course really suited me." As regards the race star among women, the race could literally be described as a dream: "The night



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before, I saw the whole race in my head apart from the finish, so I had no idea how I would do," the 28- year old athlete and winner of last year's African Championships in the 5,000 and 10,000 meters, said laughing. I didn't expect to come out with the best time and I'm really happy to have succeeded. I wasn't even following the information along the course. I only saw it at the finish line."

In second the favorite, the young Worknesh Degefa from Ethiopia had the following to say: "I'm pleased with my position, but not with the time. It was cold and we didn't have any warmer clothes."

Both of the best Czech runners were really satisfied. "Up until Wednesday I was worried as to whether I would be able to complete the race at all. But I was confident that if I let myself relax it would be OK," said Jiří Homoláč who ran most of the course alone. "The atmosphere along the course was amazing, especially on the bridges, the spectators really helped me put in my best performance," the runner said offering words of praise for the general public. Homoláč is now qualified for the A-limit at the Universiade Games.

Ivana Sekyrová began preparing for the race recreantly having spent lots of time during the winter months on cross-country skis. "This was more of a kind of training practice for me but it goes to show that I'm heading in the right direction. My trainers weren't keen on me pushing it too much. I ran by following my heart rate frequency and also had time to wave at the spectators. It wasn't until the last six hundred meters that I started thinking about finish times. At the half marathon coming up in Pardubice in two weeks, I want to finish one and a half minutes faster," she said.

In terms of interesting personalities spotted at the start line, the former football player and Golden Ball winner from the European Championships in 2003, Pavel Nedvěd drew attention from the crowds in his third ever half marathon performance. "It was harder work than last time because right now I'm spending a lot of time on the pitch which doesn't leave much time for training. But even so, we got through it," claimed the star who is currently one of the managers for Juventus. Professional racing driver ,Josef Král also took part in the race as did Olympic Silver medallist in white water racing from the London games, Vavřinec Hradilek. Also competing were the former Czech defense minister and member of the renowned aristocratic family, Michal Lobkowitz and the actor/presenter, Dalibor Gondík.

You can check out the full results on www.runczech.com

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Notes for editors:

The RunCzech running league

The RunCzech running league brings together all the prestigious Prague races organized under the Prague International Marathon heading, along with races in selected regions of the Czech Republic organized by tempo team prague, and collectively known as the RunCzech races. This series of races spanning the whole Czech Republic allows all those involved to combine their passion for running with a love for travel.

During the course of 2012, 64,043 runners from all over the world took part in the RunCzech running league. This created a prestigious running ranking system for the 34,346 people participating in competitive runs allowing them to measure their results against other runners in categories according to sex, age, and the new grouping by professions.

In 2013 the RunCzech running league includes the following races:

- Hervis Prague Half Marathon (April 6th)
- Volkswagen Prague Marathon (May 12th)
- Mattoni Karlovy Vary Half Marathon (May 25th) – a new race in 2013
- Mattoni České Budějovice Half Marathon (June 8th)
- Mattoni Olomouc Half Marathon (June 22nd)
- Prague Grand Prix (September 7th)
- Mattoni Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon (September 15th)
- And the host race the Košice International Peace Marathon (October 6th)

An eighth race will be added to the RunCzech running league in 2014, at which point capacity is expected to reach 81 000 runners, completing the project.

Boasting a total of five IAAF Road Race Label awards, organizers of the RunCzech running league have received more of these accolades than any other group in the world which attests to the first-rate standards of the organization.

These awards include:

- The IAAF Road Race Gold Label for the Hervis Prague Half Marathon
- The IAAF Road Race Gold Label for the Volkswagen Prague Marathon
- The IAAF Road Race Silver Label for the 10 km Run featured as part of the Prague Grand Prix
- The IAAF Road Race Silver Label for the Olomouc Half Marathon – new in 2013
- The IAAF Road Race Silver Label for the Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon - new in 2013

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 organizing 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 RunCzech running league.

The Volkswagen Prague Marathon ranks among the top 10 world marathons taking place in one of the most beautiful locations. The 2012 race attracted 9 057 competing runners from all over the world. Since 1999 we have also been organizing the Prague Half Marathon along with the the Prague Grand Prix races over shorter courses. In 2012 the Hervis Prague Half Marathon became the year's fastest half-marathon in the world! The Ethiopian runner, Atsedu Tsegay completed it in the event record time of 58:47.

Races organised by PIM are sponsored by some of the largest companies in the Czech Republic; Volkswagen, adidas, Hervis and Mattoni. The whole organization and atmosphere of the races has drawn a number of renowned names in the athletic world to the Czech Republic (the likes of Haile Gebrselassie, Stefano Baldini, Paul Tergat, Moses Tanui, Antonio Pinto and Patrick Makau), as well as thousands of visitors.

In addition to the above events, PIM also organizes the Junior Marathon for high school students. A relay race comprised of ten member teams which initially participate in regional rounds, the winners will proceed to the





final as part of the Volkswagen Prague Marathon, scheduled for Sunday May 12th 2013.

tempo team prague s.r.o.

tempo team is dedicated to developing marathon races along with other running events held in Europe. It was established in 2000 by a group of experts and sporting enthusiasts. The term “tempo” is derived from the name of the organization “The European Marathon Promotion Organization”.

tempo team’s activities entail concept creation, brand building, and marketing as well as the actual organization of sporting events. Right from the start, tempo team has played a key role in organizing the Prague marathon as well as developing the RunCzech Running series.

tempo team is the name of the main organizer of races taking place in various regions under the RunCzech running league heading comprising the České Budějovice Half Marathon, the Olomouc Half Marathon, the Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon and most recently the Karlovy Vary Half Marathon.

