



PRESS RELEASE
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The O₂ Prague Grand Prix evening run taking place this Saturday already

A number of enhancements have been put together for the traditional September race taking runners through the illuminated evening-time city. The O₂ Prague Grand Prix boasts a single-lap course starting and finishing at the bottom of Wenceslas Square. Not only can we look forward to checking out performances by top male athletes on the 10 km course, but for the first time this year, elite women athletes will also be taking part including two-times Cross Country Champion, Emily Chebet from Kenya.

A total of 6,500 runners will be taking part in the race, 24 % of whom are running for the first time. "It's an honour for us to watch it develop and to continue to work with such a top quality event," said 1st deputy Mayor of Prague, Jiří Vávra who also played a role in organising the first ever Prague International Marathon events.

"It's a wonderful occasion to meet such fantastic athletes on the course. Not just for leading Czech runners but also the wider public – these people serve as inspiration to all of us," claims General Secretary of the Czech Athletics Federation, František Fojt.

The O₂ Prague Grand Prix kicks off at 6 p.m. with the adidas Women's Race 5 km, followed by the METRO 10k Race at 7:30 p.m. "We hope to offer an interesting as well as fast course ensuring we achieve even better times," Race Director, Václav Skřivánek revealed. The ten kilometre course starts off from Na Příkopě Street on Můstek, leading runners across Revoluční to the other side of the Vltava River. Runners subsequently continue to Holešovice making a turn on Argentinská, along Edvard Beneš Embankment all the way to Malostranská. After crossing Štefánik Bridge and Revoluční Street, they head back to Můstek.

Coordinator of elite athletes, Jana Moberly had the following to say: "For the first time we'll be seeing elite women runners taking part in the ten k race and right away we've got a wonderful set of athletes."

With two world cross country championship titles under her belt already as well as fourth place in the 10,000 m track race at the recently held Moscow World Championships and a further fourth place at the 5,000 metres from Weltklasse in Zurich, Emily Chebet is in fine form. She managed to boost her personal records at both of these races. "I still got a few energy reserves left. I've been in Prague for over a week and really like it here. I've been running in the parks with ordinary runners and we had a chat," the runner said speaking of a joint training session held at the Running Mall.

British runner Gemma Steel boasts a personal record of 31:35 and will be proudly giving the African ladies a run for their money. "Running in the dark will be a new experience for me but I'm feeling positive and really looking forward to it," she said.

In traditional style we can also expect to see Czech Marathon Hopes project member, Anežka Drahotová take part who scooped up seventh place in the 20 km walking race at the Moscow World Championships. Speaking



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of her plans she had the following to say: “I don’t see any difference between running and walking. I want to improve my personal best and to keep up with the best Czech ladies.” We can look forward to checking out her sister Eliška at the adidas Women’s Race 5 km.

In terms of the men, the number one favourite is Kenyan runner, Daniel Chebii who is no stranger to the Czech Republic having finished as the eighth fastest man at this year’s Hervis Prague Half Marathon and broken the race record at the Mattoni České Budějovice Half Marathon. He’s capable of running the ten kilometre course in 27:36!

“I want to be the best Czech, to finish in under thirty minutes and measure myself against the Africans,” claims Milan Kocourek with a tinge of humour. He has held on to the national title in the 10,000 m for several years and will also be taking on his first half marathon next week in Ústí nad Labem.

Aside from top athletes, a number of noteworthy personalities will be taking part in the race. These include the Karanja brothers. Francis was blinded at eight years of age due to a bout of malaria yet this didn’t stop him on his tracks to becoming a fantastic runner. Together with his brother James as pacemaker, they scooped up the world record at the Blind Half Marathon race. “Sometimes it’s hard to keep him on the course,” James says, laughing. “I want to run in under twenty six minutes”, Francis adds.

Vice-Captain of the national team from the 1996 European Champions in England and former player for Slavia as well as Atlétika Madrid, Radek Bejbl will also be participating and keen to prove he’s still got what it takes.

“The IAAF commissioners will be coming along since we are trying to qualify the race for the Gold Label. We’re confident that the whole of Prague will turn into gold,” the Director of the Organising Committee, Carlo Capalbo added. Volkswagen Prague Marathon and Hervis Prague Half Marathon already boast this most prestigious quality label while RunCzech is one of only two organisers of running races in the world to pride itself on a total of five quality labels.

“We’re convinced that sport and mobile applications will continue to develop in unison. And this adds further logic to our partnership,” said Dana Dvořáková who works as Director of Communications for the new title race partner, O₂. Thanks to the O₂ Extra programme, its customers were able to pick up start numbers even once the race registration process had closed.

The Grand Prix Expo will be held for the first time this year at the Running Mall in Letná where participating runners can go to collect their start packs right up until 3 p.m. on Saturday.

A total of 10,000 Euros (almost 260,000 CZK) is up for grabs for the best runner with a further 2,000 Euros for anyone capable of smashing the men’s race record. A sum of 38,000 CZK is available for the best Czech runner.

The adidas Women’s Race 5 km kicks off at 6 p.m. followed by the Metro 10k Race. The awards ceremony will take place at 8:10 p.m. at Můstek.

More information on www.runczech.com.

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