

Press Release
Prague, May 7, 2023

Czech Republic President Pavel: The proud starter and supporter of the Prague International Marathon 2023

The starting shot at the Prague International Marathon was taken by the most esteemed guest. More than seven thousand runners were set on their way from Wenceslas Square onto the 42-kilometre course by President Petr Pavel. He did not want to miss one of the most prestigious races in the world, although he only just returned to the Czech Republic after two busy days in London, where he and his wife Eva attended the coronation of King Charles III. *"The marathon is an amazing discipline. Sporting events of this kind are a huge opportunity to show our country to the world and in this case in the best light. All the competitors have my great respect,"* said President Pavel, who also met the chairman of the RunCzech organizing committee, Carlo Capalbo, at the start. *"It is a great honour for us that President Pavel started the marathon and with his participation supported not only our race but the sport as a whole,"* Carlo Capalbo added.

President Pavel has been active in sport since he was young, and this is evident when hearing him speak. *"Sport has been part of my whole life. I started my military service in the paratroopers, and lazy people don't enjoy much success there. Whenever I had the chance, I tried to do at least something, either exercise or go for a run. Now it's a little more difficult with the security, but I still try,"* Pavel explained.

The Czech President is well aware of the problems of growing rates in childhood obesity, which is alarming even according to expert data. That is not the only reason why he wants to continue to promote sport and physical activity. *"It is one of the things I have been focusing on for a long time. During my presidential campaign, I was talking to Dr. Sebek, who is a promoter of healthy lifestyle, about the fact that we as people should do something for ourselves. And sport is inseparable from that. We will continue to work together to find ways to connect the dots and show children and young people that sport is a wonderful thing that helps prevent all sorts of health problems,"* he pointed out.



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"The more we can do to prevent, the better. Running in particular is one of the cheapest and most effective ways to do something for yourself. And we can all do it. I've always found sporting activities to be something enjoyable, but also important to keep fit, not just physically but mentally. Whether we will be happy in life also depends a lot on whether we keep moving throughout our lives. All statistics and surveys show that if someone moves at least a little, they are healthier than others. There are many civilization diseases."

The President also praised the accompanying events, such as the dm family mile, which took place as part of the Prague International Marathon. *"I am convinced that such runs like the ones held yesterday in Stromovka can encourage families with children to move and sport. These races build on the racing atmosphere and attract children to exercise in a beautiful and innocent way. Plus, the kids get to see the better ones do it the next day in the main marathon race. And maybe they will also want to be better and maybe one day they will also stand at the start of a marathon,"* Pavel highlighted.



Františka Křížka 11, 170 00 Praha 7, Czech Republic
Email: info@runczech.com

Tel: +420 224 919 209
Fax: +420 224 923 355

www.runningmall.cz
www.runczech.com

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](#)



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Contact

For more information, please get in touch with:

- Soňa Barabášová at barabasova@runczech.com or +420 603 455 830
- Or reach the office at pr@pim.cz or +420 224 919 209

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

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

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



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