



PRESS RELEASE

5th September 2017

A World Record Holder in the 2017 Birell Prague Grand Prix. Japanese will chase national record

Kenyan Joyciline Jepkosgei and Viola Jepchumba, who is now running for Bahrain, have raised eyebrows and created headlines with their previous duels on the streets of Prague. Jepkosgei of *RunCzech Racing* proved the stronger of the two as she set four World Records on her way to victory over Jepchumba in the 2017 Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon, but Viola is the defending Champion and course record holder of the IAAF Gold Label Road Race Birell Prague Grand Prix.

On a beautiful Spring morning in Prague Jepkosgei and Jepchumba went through the 10K checkpoint in 30:04 and 30:05 respectively making them the two fastest 10K women in history. Joyciline went on to set additional World Records at 15K, 20K, and the half marathon becoming the first woman to run under one hour and five minutes with a time of 1:04:52. Joyciline and Viola were joined on the podium that day by the 22 year old Fancy Chemutai who was making her debut at the half marathon distance.

That trio will be challenged by the experienced Japanese star Kayoko Fukushi, who's 10k personal best of 30:52 was produced in 2006 as a split time during the Marugame half marathon. It is the current Japanese national record for 10K. Although, in recent years Fukushi has focused primarily on the marathon, she is still able to surprise with a fast 10k performance given strong competition. She was twice in the Top 10 in the Olympic Games and twice in the World Championships at 10,000m. After a long running career she finally succeeded to grab a marathon bronze medal in the World Championships in Moscow four years ago.

The men's field will be highlighted by the 21 year old Ethiopian, Jemal Yimer (Mekonnen), who surprised the athletics world with an outstanding performance in the IAAF World Championships in London this year. He finished fifth with a personal best of 26:56.11, which is also the fifth fastest 10,000m for this year.

The defending Champion, Abraham Kipyatich, who currently trains with the Asahi Kasei Athletics Team in Japan has a difficult task this year. In 2016 Kipyatich celebrated a victory in the Birell Prague Grand Prix, delivering World leading time of 27:40. This year, in addition to Yimer, he will be challenged by his fellow *RunCzech Racing* compatriot Benard Kimeli who ran 27:18 in Padeborn this year and the 19 year old *RunCzech Racing* alumnus Mathew Kimeli who finished second to Mo Farah in Ostrava in June. Benard and Mathew are currently the two fastest 10K runners in the World this year.

The Japanese team lines up with the strong trio of Kenta Murayama, Tetsuya Yoroizaka and Yuta Shitara. All three have fast times on the track over 10,000m, headed by Yoroizaka whose personal record of 27:29.74 is less than one second outside the national record. Though none of them have much experience in 10k on the road, this should still be a serious attempt to break the national record of 28:05.

Watch the live stream of the 2017 Birell Prague Grand Prix at 19:20 CET on www.runczech.com

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