



PRESS RELEASE
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European athletics stars to compete at Mattoni Karlovy Vary Half Marathon. Vrabcová-Nývltová is the hot favourite to win

The sixth Mattoni Karlovy Vary Half Marathon has drawn top runners from all over Europe to the spa town. Designed to promote the development of athletics on the Old Continent, new RunCzech initiative (in cooperation with European Athletics) EuroHeroes will get underway in Karlovy Vary. Eva Vrabcová-Nývltová is the hot favourite to win the women's race.

Where as in previous years African winners have typically secured the top podium spots at the Mattoni Karlovy Vary Half Marathon (IAAF Gold Label race), this year the organisers are keen to give European and above all Czech athletes a chance to take to the limelight here. *"To make European and Czech athletics competitive on an international level, we feel the need to offer these athletes greater space to grow at our races. We hope this step will be a new motivation for the runners and that they run new personal records in Karlovy Vary, "* RunCzech race coordinator Tomáš Mirovský reveals.

Headed by multiple European cross-country running champion Sergej Lebid from Ukraine, a total of six runners all with personal bests under one hour and four minutes will be taking part in the race. Young Spanish talent Houssam Benabbou, who ran a new personal best of 1:03:35 is also expected to deliver a high calibre performance.

Ondřej Fejfar will likely reign supreme among the Czech men appearing in the spa town. *"Karlovy Vary is close to my heart. I was here for the first event year back in 2013 and have enjoyed coming back to the city ever since. It's just a wonderful race and the great fans always spur me on to put on a decent performance,"* said the runner who scooped up first place among the Czechs in 2013 and 2014 and finished second in 2016. Other Czech top athletes taking part include Jiří Petr, Tomáš Navrátil, plus locals Jan Sokol and Pavel Procházka

The clear favourite among the women is Eva Vrabcová Nývltová who managed to smash the longstanding Czech half marathon record with her time of 1:11:01 at this year's Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon. *"Competing at the European Championships is the main highlight for me this year, but I'm also really looking forward to running in Karlovy Vary. I want to soak up the atmosphere and give it my best,"* revealed Vrabcová, who is expected to launch an assault on the Czech event record of 1:17:31 held by Ivana Sekyrová since 2013.

She's likely to face high calibre competition however including from Lithuanian Olympian Vaida Zusinaite. The aforementioned local racer Ivana Sekyrová will also be keen to leave her mark as will Petra Kamínková from

ALL RUNNERS ARE BEAUTIFUL

RUNCZECH



MATTONI KARLOVY VARY HALF MARATHON

#KVHALF

Olomouc who has claimed victory among the Czech women for the past three years in a row. Medicine student Kristýna Dvořáková and outstanding cyclist Tereza Korvasová are also in great shape and may just have a few surprises up their sleeves.

For the first time this year awards will also be handed out for the fastest man and woman of the Karlovy Vary Region who will pick up regional king and queen trophies respectively.

The Mattoni Karlovy Vary Half Marathon kicks off at 17:30 on Saturday 19th May. You can also tune in to the live broadcast on ČT sport, which gets underway at 18:00.

EuroHeroes is a new initiative by RunCzech to celebrate European running stars and promote active lifestyles in Europe. The initiative aims to find new sporting heroes and motivate the public to exercise. *"We want to devote our top quality event in Karlovy Vary to discover new heroes and to create local legends that will inspire others to take up sport and lead an active lifestyle,"* says Carlo Capalbo, President of the RunCzech Organising Committee and Chairman of the IAAF Road Running Commission.

This new initiative of RunCzech joins the efforts of the European Athletics. *"All the RunCzech races are five-star quality road races as awarded by European Athletics' Running for All platform along with them being IAAF gold label races, for which RunCzech should be very proud. It is very important that European athletes get more opportunities to race at the top level in road races across Europe and EuroHeroes is a fantastic initiative to encourage and promote our road race stars on the continent,"* said Svein Arne Hansen, European Athletics President.

ELITE ATHLETES

MEN

LEBID	Sergii	UKR	1:01:49
YUKHYMCHUK	Mikyla	UKR	1:02:28
ROMANENKO	Roman	UKR	1:03:22
OLEFIRENKO	Ihor	UKR	1:03:49
BENABBOU	Houssame	ESP	1:03:45
FEJFAR	Ondřej	CZE	1:07:13
PETR	Jiří	CZE	1:10:09
NAVRÁTIL	Tomáš	CZE	1:10:39

WOMEN

VRABCOVÁ-NÝVLTOVÁ	Eva	CZE	1:11:01
KOTOVSKA	Olha	UKR	1:12:19
ZUSINAITE	Vaida	LTH	1:15:51
SPINK	Jenny	GBR	1:13:02
KAMÍNKOVÁ	Petra	CZE	1:12:12

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SEKYROVÁ	Ivana	CZE	1:14:06
DVOŘÁKOVÁ	Kristýna	CZE	1:16:55
KORVASOVÁ	Tereza	CZE	1:17:45

Should you be interested in further information or print quality photographs, please get in touch with:

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Note: The attached photographs may only be used in connection with this press release by citing RunCzech as the source.

Notes for editors: <http://www.runczech.com/cs/pro-media/poznamky-pro-editory/index.shtml>

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