

Press Release
Olomouc, June 17, 2023

Mattoni Olomouc Half Marathon offered its EuroHeroes ideal weather. Hendel and Verbruggen won

The oldest regional half marathon of the RunCzech series in Olomouc ran its thirteenth edition, this year again as part of the EuroHeroes series, supporting European runners. The winners Sebastian Hendel from Germany (1:03:55) and Tokyo Olympic marathon participant Hanne Verbruggen from Belgium (1:12:44) received the biggest applause in a really great field of elite athletes. The best Czech runners were Patrik Vebr (1:08:17), ninth overall, and Tereza Hrochova (1:13:33), second overall.

A total of 6,600 runners from 25 countries and 45 nationalities took part in the dm family mile and then the half marathon in the historic centre of the Haná metropolis. The weather was almost perfect, the sun could not heat up the temperature to more than 20 degrees, and the wind calmed down in the evening.

Hendel had already won the half marathon in Ústí last year and was now the main favorite. He soon broke away from the leading group of six and went on to another Czech victory. *"I am very satisfied and happy. I'm back to training now after the Vienna Marathon a few weeks ago and I didn't know how I would feel. But it looked good from the beginning. The finish was just between me and David and I had to work hard,"* he said. *"Olomouc is a very beautiful city and I enjoyed it, even though the route was tough."*

The second place went to Swedish champion and also World and European champion David Nilsson (1:04:07). *"I couldn't keep up his (Sebastian's) pace at the end, but I'm not dissatisfied,"* said the man who has already competed in the Prague Half Marathon and is now going to use a few days to visit the Czech Republic with his girlfriend. The third place went to Dutch Olympian Khalid Choukoud (1:04:27), already a regular participant of RunCzech races, last time third in České Budějovice Half two weeks ago.



In the women's field, Hanne Verbruggen of Belgium, who has already set her limit for the 2024 Olympics in Paris, confirmed her assumptions. Viktoriia Kaluzhina (1:13:35) held on to her for about six kilometres, but she finally couldn't resist the pressure of Tereza Hrochova (1:13:33) in the finish on the Upper Square. *"I was very sick in March and this was my first half marathon,"* said the Ukrainian runner, who now lives and trains in Poznan, Poland. Tereza Hrochova, on the other hand, was thrilled. *"The result was beyond my expectations. It's a week after the World Mountain Running Championships and I wanted to run my legs up that hill because I have the European Cup in a week. But the way the race was going, I wanted to try and keep it up with the girls and I did. It was warm, plus the cobbles and kerbs, but I'm very happy, the great spectators helped me get through the crunches,"* she said.

Patrik Vebr confirmed his position as this year's Czech leader in the half marathon, he had already won in Prague and Karlovy Vary. He was not very happy with his time although he beat Vit Pavlista, Czech marathon champion. As in any of the previous years, Olomouc running legend Petra Kamínková, 42 times Czech champion in various distances, was not missing. *"It was very nice again, although the times are not what they used to be,"* she evaluated.

[Race results](#)



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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