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Press Release
Naples, 22nd February 2022

Complete start list of the Napoli City Half Marathon, race to break the 1-hour wall

The Napoli City Half Marathon on Sunday, February 27. All the names of the participants, a cast of athletes geared to break the 1-hour barrier.

NAPLES, 22nd February 2022 – One hour - actually, 59 minutes - to run the whole 21,097 km distance. In other words, the athletes in pole position will have to run very fast to win. An average of about 2'50" per kilometer, a pace that only very few champions in the world can manage. The Neapolitan race will offer great spectacle with these stellar athletes, standing in the front of thousands of amateur runners, all of whom can't wait to run and have fun on the Neapolitan roads. Two sides of the same coin, great male and female champions, in search of the best possible performance, as well as the Italian amateur athletes joined with many foreign visitors who will enjoy Napoli and experience the event, giving the best of themselves, having fun, sharing intense emotions and celebrating physical well-being.

Napoli Running, the sports club chaired by **Carlo Capalbo**, has gone big for this edition, which marks the return of the in-person race after last year's digital edition, due to Covid-19 pandemic. In addition to bettering the men's Italian national record (1:00:07, Eyob Faniel, Siena 2021), the goal is to stop the clock under one hour and to beat the course record of 1:00:04, set by Kenyan **Henry Rono** in 2020. There is also a great anticipation for the women's race, an equally electrifying and balanced challenge that will see several European athletes as the protagonists. For all participating, the goal is to have their name written in the roll of honour and get close, if not better, the female course record of 1:06:47, set by Kenyan Viola Cheptoo, also in 2020.

MEN - The selection of athletes that collectively shape the Napoli City Half Marathon has been partially revealed in recent days. For the Italians there will be **Yemaneberhan 'Yeman' Crippa** (Fiamme Oro), former Italian record holder of the 3000 m, 5000 m, both outdoor and indoor, 5 km on the road and in search of the Italian record, in his second experience over the half marathon distance after a DNF a year ago in his debut in Siena. Further on the start list stands out the name of Swiss **Julien Wanders**, holder of the European half marathon record since 2019, when in Ras Al Khaimah he crossed the finish line in 59:13.

The top contenders to break the 1-hour mark make up a veritable "African train". At the top of the list is the Ethiopian **Solomon Berihu Weldeslassie**, capable of running the distance in 59:17, followed by three Kenyans, all with personal bests under the hour: multiple medalist of the cross





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country **Augustine Kiprono Choge** (59:26), **Amos Kurgat Kibiwot** (59:34 in 2021) and **Wisley Kibichii** (RunCzech Racing, 59:57 in 2021 on a challenging course in Madrid). The group will be tailed by the Eritrean **Afewerki Berhane Hidru** with a personal best of 1:01:17, backed by the Ethiopian **Mogos Tuemay Abirha**, whose best time, set in 2021, is 1:01:43; and the three debutants from Kenya: **Stanley Kurgat Rono** (RunCzech Racing), **Josphat Kiprotich** and **Dennis Kibet Kitiyo** (RunCzech Racing).

MORE ON ITALIAN PROSPECTS – Apart from Crippa, the other notable Italians are **Iliass Aouani** (Fiamme Azzurre), reigning Italian Cross Country, 10km, 10,000m and half marathon champion (1:02:58 in 2021); and **Yohanes "Yoghi" Chiappinelli**, an expert middle-distance runner who boasts a large collection of medals in the 3,000 m at the European Championships and World Continental Cup 2018, making his debut in the half marathon distance. Trailing just behind them is **Badr Jaafari** (Atl. Casone Noceto), who will try to improve his PB of 1:03:37, recorded in 2021.

THE REST OF EUROPE – The old continent, leading the charge with the aforementioned Wanders, also boasts the Swiss National Champion in 10,000 m; **Morgan Le Guen**, who recently achieved 1:02:22 on the distance, followed by the Polish **Arkadiusz Gardzielewski** who achieved in Italy his PB of 1:03:17. The Germans, **Tobias Josef Blum** and **Filimon Abraham** with 1:03:19 and 1:03:39, respectively, and Poland's **Adam Nowicki** with 1:03:57 should also be strongly considered.

THE WOMEN - Eyes on the Ethiopian **Ftaw Zeray Bezabh**, who leads the women's pack with her most recent time of 1:08:30. The Italian **Sofiia Yaremchuk**, with a personal best of 1:10:33 follows right after, but she will have to contend with the German 10,000 m national champion **Rabea Schonebörn** who, with her 2021 time trial, is only two seconds behind. The Norwegian **Pernilla Eugenie Epland** (1:13:12) will try to catch up to them, and closing this cast of elite runners is the Kenyan **Gladys Chepkirui** (1:13:31), who in Valencia recently completed the 10 km in 30:48 and, according to the scuttlebutt, could achieve an extraordinary result.

REGISTRATION – The online registrations are open until 23rd February, however the runners will be able to register on the day of the race in person, with about 400 registrations to spare. Napoli City Half Marathon taking place on Sunday 27th February, starting at 9am from Viale Kennedy. The interested runners can still [register here](#).

To access the Napoli City Half Marathon event guide [click here](#).





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Note for editors:

- 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”) 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: <https://bit.ly/2X83DLD>

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