

Prague
May 6, 2022

World-class performance and a unique team race are being expected at the Volkswagen Prague Marathon

The most expected sport event of the season is here. The 26th Volkswagen Prague Marathon, a World Athletic Elite Label Race, starts this Sunday at 9:00. Thousands of runners will fill the streets of the Czech capital city, the race record is expected to be attacked. However, the race will not only be about the victory among individuals. A new concept, the Battle of the Teams, is going to thrill until the last seconds of the race. *"We are delighted that after a three year break due to Covid restrictions, this wonderful event, for which people from all over the world travel to Prague, is coming back to the capital city,"* said Carlo Capalbo, President of the RunCzech Organising Committee. *"I'm really looking forward to Sunday. I have a lot of goals I want to achieve. I want to be the best Czech, to win the Battle of the Teams with my team and to meet the limit for the European Championships,"* the Czech pro-athlete Jiří Homoláč stated at the pre-race press conference.

Nearly ten thousand runners will be standing at the start line at the Old Town Square, including some of the best pro-athletes on the planet. Among the favourites for victory, where will definitely be Emmanuel Saina, the 2018 Buenos Aires Marathon winner, and a top-5 finisher in Dubai (2019) and Rotterdam (2019, 2021). *"I'm ready for Sunday. This race is also unique because I will also be running for the team. I will do everything I can to help my team,"* the Kenyan athlete says. He has already achieved a time of 2:05:02 which would be enough to break the current maximum of Prague (2:05:39).

Among the women, his compatriot Nancy Meto, the queen of last year's Valencia Marathon, was a top candidate to win. However, she had to cancel her participation at the last minute due to illness. After her withdrawal, the Ethiopian pro-athlete Azmera Hagos, who made the Top 5 finish in Amsterdam (2018 and 2019) and Paris (2019), is one of the contender for victory, together with Purity Changwony, second in Siena last year. *"I hope I am in an even better shape now,"* as the Kenyan star believes.



Czech fans will keep their fingers crossed for Marcela Joglová and Jiří Homoláč. After the withdrawal of the injured Vít Pavlišťa, Homoláč is now the top contender for gold at the Czech Republic's Marathon Championship which is a part of the Volkswagen Prague Marathon. "It should be easier because Vít is my big rival, but we are also friends. However, there will be other runners wanting to win the title. That's why I have to give my best," the Czech favourite says. "I believe that the Czech pro-athletes will show good performances. It is a great *chance for them to improve the final result*," Pavel Sluka, the head coach of the athletics team, adds.

There is a prize money amount of almost 60,000 USD intended for the individual categories and 100,000 USD for breaking the world record. However, another interesting bonus for professionals can also be a triumph in the Battle of the Teams. Volkswagen Prague Marathon will offer a unique team concept of the race where every runner can improve the final result. Each of the six teams (Volkswagen, Mattoni, ČEZ Group, Birell, adidas Runners and Generali Česká pojišťovna) will have four scoring pro-athletes, supplemented by thousands of enthusiasts. A prize of USD 30,000 has been prepared for the winning team, this sum will be divided equally among all the professionals within a team.

RunCzech has been organizing marathon runs in Prague for more than a quarter of a century. Due to this fact, the Czech capital has become one of the world's top 10 cities in terms of race quality and popularity among the people. The economic, social and environmental benefits of the race for the city are priceless. According to an independent study, RunCzech races bring 28 million Euro in direct economic benefits to Prague.

Thanks to the traditional marathon race, the global visibility of Prague is enormous. An incredible 718 million viewers in 131 countries can watch the Volkswagen Prague Marathon during its broadcast. Spectacular footage of the Old Town Square, Charles Bridge and other landmarks in the context of a major sport event has been regularly broadcasted around the world on channels like BBC, ESPN or Sky TV. In addition to this, the Marathon generates up to 3,000 positive Prague-related stories in the world media each year. It also attracts more than 107 thousand tourists yearly among runners, families, and friends. "*The marathon may become one of the first big tourism drivers for Prague now. The Coronavirus pandemic has significantly disrupted this, and we were not able to invite thousands of runners from abroad last year*," said Carlo Capalbo.



RUNCZECH

ALL RUNNERS
ARE BEAUTIFUL

Contact

For more information, please get in touch with:

- Saso Belovski (belovski@runczech.com, or +420 777 746 807)
- Soňa Barabášová (barabasova@runczech.com, +420 603 455 830)

Or reach the office at pr@runczech.com or +420 224 919 209



Note for editors

- All five events hold World Athletics Elite Road Race Labels.
- 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.
- 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: <https://bit.ly/2X83DLD>

