

Press Release  
Prague, September 17, 2022

***A thrilling atmosphere among raindrops and several records.  
This was Mattoni Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon***

Sebastian Hendel was the best athlete among the men, the Ukrainian Valeriia Zinenko dominated the women. The flat, fast course brought records to both winners, despite the cold weather and wind. Hendel ran the course in Ústí nad Labem with the European course record time, while Zinenko achieved her personal best. *"I was hoping for the victory and I ran really well, it was a great race with amazing fans, and even the weather ended up being better than it looked in the morning,"* Stefan Hendel celebrated after crossing the finish line. *"I want to run the Munich Marathon in three weeks, and today I confirmed that I'm prepared,"* the happy champion added. Valeriia Zinenko also rejoiced at her new personal best: *"I am grateful for the personal one. I gave my best, and I am exhausted but happy."* The two record holders and all the other runners along the course were loudly cheered on by the enthusiastic crowd.

The 12th Mattoni Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon started from Mírové náměstí at 3 pm., and almost 2,200 runners set off on the 21-kilometre course leading, among others, through the local chemical plant and along the Elbe River with a view of Střekov Castle. The winner Hendel, who crossed the finish line in the best time of 1:02:52, was challenged by the second Vitaliy Shafar from Ukraine. *"It was an amazing race, the weather suited me, the course was pleasant, the spectators were great,"* the silver medalist smiled, adding: *"I plan to run a marathon in Korea in November and today I ran really well, this half marathon was not only a great training for the next races but also an amazing experience."* The third place went to Romanian Stefan Iulius Gavril (1:04:17).

Jakub Zemaník was the first Czech crossing the finish line, having coped with the flat course in 1:06.41. *"I ran quite well, it was a stable performance, but the wind disturbed me, I believe that without it the result would have been even better,"* Zemaník said, followed by another big favourite Vít Pavlišta (1:08:16). Petr Pechek completed the top three Czechs in 1:08:38.



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One of the biggest stars among the women, together with the winning Zinenko, was the Czech Olympian Kristiina Mäki. She completed her first ever half marathon and finished as the best Czech woman in 1:13:57, second only to the winner Zinenkova (1:10:55). *"The fans were incredible and the race had a fantastic atmosphere. It was a wonderful experience, the only thing that bothered me was the headwind, but I still managed a time more than a minute better than I had hoped for,"* the famous Czech athlete said. Gabriela Veigertová (1:16:10) took the third place among the women.

A traditional part of the sports festival in Ústí nad Labem was also the Spolchemie Czech Cup in para cycling which is held under the Czech Cycling Federation and which started from Mírové náměstí at 1 pm. This year for the first time, there was also a new category on the programme - tricycling. All handbikers and tricyclists took to the half-marathon course and were able to enjoy the same atmosphere of the race as the elite athletes.

In addition to the main race, runners had also the chance to participate in the dm family run which started at 11 am., and there was also the afternoon dm Bambini run for the youngest kids and maybe future hopes of the Czech athletics. Approximately 3,500 runners took part in the Saturday's RunCzech races in Ústí nad Labem. *"We want our events to attract not only the best athletes from all over the world, but also beginners, recreational runners and children, and to make running a natural part of the broader public,"* said Carlo Capalbo, the President of the RunCzech organizing Committee.



## 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>



# RUNCZECH

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