

Prague  
April 1, 2022

## Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon starts on Saturday. Cold weather won't bother Kenyan athletes.

Thousands of runners are returning to Prague! The popular Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon will start already on Saturday with many participants and pro-athletes. The event starts after the two difficult years, when it wasn't possible to organize this important sports event due to pandemic. "We need a restart and this whole event can wake up not only Prague. When we move, there is more positive energy and joy. That is why we will also run for peace," said Carlo Capalbo, president of RunCzech. The event will start with the sound of the symphonic poem Vltava, from Rudolfinum at 10:00 am. The biggest favorites are athletes from Kenya. From the Czech competitors, Jiří Homoláč is the best Czech long-distance runner and has high hopes for the race.

Last weekend, the weather was above twenty degrees, now the conditions are completely different. However, frostier temperatures will not be a significant obstacle for the best runners. "The weather is good, but we'll see what happens tomorrow. But whatever it is, we will try to run as best we can. I'm not very used to cold temperatures, but it's better than if it was very hot. So I don't really mind," said Kenyan Benard Kimeli, who ran the 2019 Prague Half Marathon in 59:07.

Another front-runner is Philomenon Kiplimo from Kenya, winner of the half marathon in Boston and Bahrain. A member of the RunCzech Racing team has a best time of 58:11. "I have a bit of an advantage over some of my opponents that I'm used to the winter. I know Kenyans who ran in minus two degrees and managed it well," said Jiří Homoláč, who specially trained at the Sportisimo 1/2 Marathon Prague. His best time is 1:03:23, he would like to beat his personal best on Saturday. "The worst thing would be if it would rain on Saturday. The snow is still good, the feeling temperature can also be worsened by the wind. I would advise amateurs to take something that can be thrown away along the way, such as a jacket at the beginning."

Among the women at the Prague Half Marathon, Kenyan Brenda Jepleting, the future star of long distance running, should be in front. "When I was here for the first time in 2020, I was a pacemaker and I finished second. I am very grateful that I was able to return to Prague, there is an absolutely great atmosphere and everything on a professional level," Jepleting added. Sofia Yaremchuk, a Ukrainian-born Italian starter for Italy, is also thinking high.



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This year's Sportisimo 1/2Marathon will also start a unique superHalves series connecting five of Europe's most prestigious half marathons. "This is an important European and world event. RunCzech managed to survive this time, which was not easy for running. Now we have an elite starting field, thousands of amateur runners and great organization. It is a small miracle that has been created in our small country of ten million," said Libor Varhaník, Chairman of the Czech Athletic Association.

### Place from "No War"

This year's RunCzech series is dedicated to the legendary Emil Zátopek, who was born a hundred years ago. The organizers planned to use the letter Z, which, however, at the end of February became a symbol of Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. At the press conference, the organizers turned Zetko around and made him N at the beginning of the slogan No War. "It's great how the organizers have dealt with it and how they are able to turn everything into a positive. I've been observing this in them for a long time. I want to thank RunCzech and Carl Capalbo for organizing an important event again and for doing a good advertisement for our country," said Filip Neusser, Chairman of the National Sports Agency.

According to Vít Šimral, a councillor of the capital city of Prague, the Sportisimo 1/2Marathon is not just a sports event: "It is also a social event that is of interest. Thank you to RunCzech for the tireless work that has helped them promote Prague all over the world." The race will be run with a message of peace, runners will be able to take symbolic bracelets in Ukrainian colors before the start. "Several spare starting numbers are still available, mainly from the ranks of runners who signed up before the pandemic," added Tomáš Mirovský, RunCzech race coordinator.



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## 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>

