



RUNCZECH

PRESS RELEASE

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RunCzech sets the Republic on the move:

Emil Zátopek would have been proud

Sunday's Volkswagen Prague Marathon saw a record number of 9,500 runners and a high-class elite field. However, due to warm weather, the winning times were slower than expected with Nicholas Kemboi (Qatar) running 2:08:51 and Caroline Rotich (Kenya) clocking 2:27:00. But overall Czech's premier running event, which was staged little more than one month after the Hervis Prague Half Marathon, was another success. And with the Prague Grand Prix – a 10K race and adidas Women's Race on 7th September – there is a third major road running event coming up in the Czech capital. But Prague is by no means the end of the road for the organisers.

Just two weeks after the Volkswagen Prague Marathon the busy team led by chairman Carlo Capalbo stage their next event, a half marathon in Karlovy Vary. In total there are now seven races organised across the Czech Republic by Capalbo's team. Five of them already have an IAAF gold or silver label. The RunCzech Running League', as the series is officially called, has become a notable success with events usually sold-out weeks before the start. And this year a record total of 48,000 runners are expected to take part in these races.

It all started back in 1994, when Italians Carlo Capalbo and Olympic Marathon Champion Gelindo Bordin were having a beer in a Prague Restaurant. After the idea of staging a marathon in the Czech capital came up, they called Emil Zátopek. The all-time great later became a race patron together with Gelindo Bordin. When the first marathon was staged on 4th June 1995 there were 985 runners but adding other events the total was around 15,000.

"I would never have expected us creating something as big and as successful as we have today," said Carlo Capalbo, who admits that "at the beginning we were not so professional. But in 18 years we have built high standards. And I was always thinking big." Major marathon races in New York, London and Berlin were inspirational for developing the Prague Marathon and later the RunCzech series. Carlo Capalbo often travelled to the London or Berlin Marathons where Race Directors Dave Bedford and Horst Milde set international standards. "I always watched my friends and still today I try to learn from other events. There were a lot of good ideas and I implemented some of them into our race."

The aim for Carlo Capalbo and his team was to become a major player in the global running community. "But for obvious reasons we knew it is impossible to get 40,000 marathon runners in Prague. The Czech Republic only has a population of around 10 million people. So we are a small country and our marathon theoretically is already too big compared to the population of our nation. But we get a lot of foreign runners," said Carlo Capalbo, who had an amazing foreign entry of 48 percent in the Volkswagen Prague Marathon 2013.

"We wanted to create one platform so that in total we would be as big as the races of the World Marathon Majors. We have now succeeded with this by creating the RunCzech



Záhořanského 3, 120 00 Praha 2, Czech Republic
Email: info@runczech.com

Tel: +420 224 919 209
Fax: +420 224 923 355

www.runczech.com



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Running League,” explained the 55 year-old chairman. “We make sure that all events have got the same high standards in all aspects. There are the same sponsors and the same suppliers. The organising team is the same as well as the whole set-up, for example the construction of the start and finish areas.” The elite fields are also very strong and all races are shown live on Czech TV.

While the Grand Prix and the half marathon in the capital were established as long ago as 1996 and 1999, the Olomouc Half Marathon became the first race outside Prague in 2010. A year later another half marathon followed: this time in the northern city of Usti nad Labem, while the Ceske Budejovice Half Marathon was added in 2012. The event in Karlovy Vary will be staged for the first time on May 25.

“Geographically it is simple to organise various events in different regions of the Czech Republic,” said Carlo Capalbo. What made it easier to implement major races into other cities was the fact that no other big road running events existed in these cities. To avoid possible conflicts with other organisers RunCzech cooperates and helps other smaller races in the Republic. “We all benefit from this. The more people start running the better for all of us.” RunCzech has seen a strong increase of entries in recent years. “Within five years we more than doubled our total number of participants,” explained Carlo Capalbo.

RunCzech also introduced a new competition format, where runners are ranked according to their profession and age group. For example teachers compete against each other on an annual basis within the RunCzech Running League. They can collect points at each of their races. Their three best performances are added together at the end of the season. Each age category also has a winner.

RunCzech is an achievement which surely would have made Emil Zátopek glow with pride at the continuing passion for running in his country.

More information about the Volkswagen Prague Marathon and the RunCzech Running League is available online at: www.runczech.com

Please note: You may use the attached photos, showing the start and runners crossing Charles Bridge during the Volkswagen Prague Marathon, for online purposes. Credit essential: Volkswagen Prague Marathon

Jörg Wenig

Freelance Sports Journalist and Editor



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Tel: +420 224 919 209
Fax: +420 224 923 355

www.runczech.com



Prague International Marathon spol. s r.o. / tempo team prague s.r.o.

Veronika Honsová

PR & marketing manager

Záhořanského 3, 120 00 Prague 2

tel: +420 777 486 801

email: pr@pim.cz

Notes for editors:

The RunCzech running league

The RunCzech running league brings together all the prestigious Prague races organized under the Prague International Marathon heading, along with races in selected regions of the Czech Republic organized by tempo team prague, and collectively known as the RunCzech races. This series of races spanning the whole Czech Republic allows all those involved to combine their passion for running with a love for travel.

During the course of 2012, 64,043 runners from all over the world took part in the RunCzech running league. This created a prestigious running ranking system for the 34,346 people participating in competitive runs allowing them to measure their results against other runners in categories according to sex, age, and the new grouping by professions.

In 2013 the RunCzech running league includes the following races:

- Hervis Prague Half Marathon (April 6th)
 - Volkswagen Prague Marathon (May 12th)
 - Mattoni Karlovy Vary Half Marathon (May 25th) – a new race in 2013
 - Mattoni České Budějovice Half Marathon (June 8th)
 - Mattoni Olomouc Half Marathon (June 22nd)
 - Prague Grand Prix (September 7th)
 - Mattoni Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon (September 15th)
- And the host race the Košice International Peace Marathon (October 6th)

An eighth race will be added to the RunCzech running league in 2014, at which point capacity is expected to reach 81 000 runners, completing the project.

Boasting a total of five IAAF Road Race Label awards, organizers of the RunCzech running league have received more of these accolades than any other group in the world which attests to the first-rate standards of the organization.

These awards include:

- The IAAF Road Race Gold Label for the Hervis Prague Half Marathon
- The IAAF Road Race Gold Label for the Volkswagen Prague Marathon
- The IAAF Road Race Silver Label for the 10 km Run featured as part of the Prague Grand Prix
- The IAAF Road Race Silver Label for the Olomouc Half Marathon – new in 2013
- The IAAF Road Race Silver Label for the Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon - new in 2013

Prague International Marathon, spol. s r.o.

Prague International Marathon spol. s.r.o. ("PIM") was set up in 1995 by Carlo Capalbo, President of the Company with the aim of organizing a large-scale international marathon on the streets of Prague. A total of



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Fax: +420 224 923 355

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958 runners made it to the start line of that first race. Since then, PIM's activities have burgeoned into a whole series of running events referred to as the RunCzech running league.

The Volkswagen Prague Marathon ranks among the top 10 world marathons taking place in one of the most beautiful locations. The 2012 race attracted 9 057 competing runners from all over the world. Since 1999 we have also been organizing the Prague Half Marathon along with the the Prague Grand Prix races over shorter courses. In 2012 the Hervis Prague Half Marathon became the year's fastest half-marathon in the world! The Ethiopian runner, Atsedu Tsegay completed it in the event record time of 58:47.

Races organised by PIM are sponsored by some of the largest companies in the Czech Republic; Volkswagen, adidas, Hervis and Mattoni. The whole organization and atmosphere of the races has drawn a number of renowned names in the athletic world to the Czech Republic (the likes of Haile Gebrselassie, Stefano Baldini, Paul Tergat, Moses Tanui, Antonio Pinto and Patrick Makau), as well as thousands of visitors.

In addition to the above events, PIM also organizes the Junior Marathon for high school students. A relay race comprised of ten member teams which initially participate in regional rounds, the winners will proceed to the final as part of the Volkswagen Prague Marathon, scheduled for Sunday May 12th 2013.

tempo team prague s.r.o.

tempo team is dedicated to developing marathon races along with other running events held in Europe. It was established in 2000 by a group of experts and sporting enthusiasts. The term "tempo" is derived from the name of the organization "The European Marathon Promotion Organization".

tempo team's activities entail concept creation, brand building, and marketing as well as the actual organization of sporting events. Right from the start, tempo team has played a key role in organizing the Prague marathon as well as developing the RunCzech Running series.

tempo team is the name of the main organizer of races taking place in various regions under the RunCzech running league heading comprising the České Budějovice Half Marathon, the Olomouc Half Marathon, the Ústí nad Labem Half Marathon and most recently the Karlovy Vary Half Marathon.

