

Press Release
Prague, March 27, 2023

The 25th Junior Marathon is here. RunCzech fights childhood obesity with running.

The 25th edition of the Junior Marathon is just around the corner. The largest running race for high school students from all over the Czech Republic starts with semi-final rounds on 4 April in Pardubice, and will be run in all regional cities including the capital. The fastest schools will then advance to the international finals which will take place on May 7, the day of the famous Prague International Marathon. The non-profit project aims to promote a healthy lifestyle and to motivate students to exercise and to participate in sports, activities which also motivate teens to refrain from alcohol, cigarettes and drugs. *"Data on the increase in the number of children who are overweight or obese is alarming, with more than a quarter of children struggling with the problem. We are convinced that programs like the Junior Marathon can energize Czech youth, and raise more interest in sports, running and leading a healthy lifestyle. All of which has a positive effect on children's mental health,"* says Carlo Capalbo, President of the RunCzech organizing committee.

The Junior Marathon is a relay race designed for high school students, with a team of ten students working together to complete the marathon course (42.125 km). At least three members of each team must be girls. And each student runs one leg of the race (4.2 km). It's free to participate. And every high school team in the Czech Republic can register up to one day before the race by visiting www.runczech.com/jmc.

Last year alone, 179 teams (1790 students) as well as 15 teacher relays, participated in the semi-final rounds of the Junior Marathon. More than 34,000 young runners have taken part in the previous 24 editions of the nationwide event, whose format is unique in the world.

The accompanying program of the Junior Marathon also includes a "Psycho Lounge," where the non-profit organization, Do What You Enjoy, has prepared a special chillout zone.



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Students can recharge physically and mentally there. At the same time, they can get information and useful contacts about where to turn in the event of a difficult life situation such as stress, depression and bullying. *"Running and sport help to generate positive thoughts and clear one's head. They can play an important role in maintaining one's mental hygiene. In addition, physical activity fosters a communal lifestyle that allows people of all ages to share the joy of exercise. The European Union has long supported sport and in the last year has also focused on promoting mental health,"* says Monika Ladmanová, Head of the Representation of the European Commission in the Czech Republic, the title patron of the event.



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Note for editors

- 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.
- RunCzech races are awarded the quality mark by World Athletic and the Prague International Marathon, Prague Half Marathon and Birell 10k Race received the World Athletics Elite Label Road Race award.
- 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: [Notes for editors](#)



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