

NEWS

Lauren Loeb 212.423.2271 | lloeb@nyrr.org
Emily Gallagher 212.423.2287 | egallagher@nyrr.org
Media Relations Department, New York Road Runners

For Immediate Release

Kenya's Olympic Bronze Medalist Wilson Kipsang and Three-time Olympian Kim Smith of New Zealand to Challenge the World at NYC Half on March 17

World Championships bronze medalist Bob Tahri of France to make half-marathon debut

Portugal's newly crowned European Indoor Championships gold medalist Sara Moreira to make U.S. debut

New York, March 6, 2013—Olympic bronze medalist Wilson Kipsang of Kenya and three-time Olympian Kim Smith of New Zealand will headline the international fields for the NYC Half on March 17; World Championships bronze medalist Bob Tahri of France will make his half-marathon debut; and Portugal's newly crowned European Indoor Championships gold medalist Sara Moreira will run the NYC Half as her U.S. debut, it was announced today by New York Road Runners president and CEO Mary Wittenberg.

Previously announced runners for the NYC Half men's professional field include U.S. Olympians Meb Keflezighi, Abdi Abdirahman, Dathan Ritzenhein, and Bernard Lagat. Additional U.S. competitors include Jason Hartmann, the top American in the 2012 Boston Marathon; and Guor Marial, who ran the London Olympic Marathon under the flag of the IOC and will be running his first race as a U.S. citizen.

In the women's race, previously announced runners include Janet Bawcom, a 2012 U.S. Olympian at 10,000 meters, along with Americans Adriana Nelson, Maegan Krifchin, Molly Pritz, Stephanie Rothstein Bruce, and Serena Burla.

"We are privileged to host Wilson Kipsang and Kim Smith here in New York again, and welcome every opportunity for them to run through the streets of the City," said Wittenberg. "The diversity of this field is similar to the diversity of New York. Just like the runners who travel across the country for this event share their stories with friends and families back home, these decorated international athletes bring a piece of NYC back to their countries."

Arguably the world's best marathoner, Kipsang, 30, of Kenya, has a half-marathon best of 58:59. His marathon best of 2:03:42, set at the 2011 Frankfurt Marathon, makes him the second-fastest marathoner of all time on a record-standard course. Kipsang took bronze in the 2012 Olympic Games men's marathon, and he won the 2012 Virgin London Marathon champion by more than two minutes.

"I'm glad to come back to New York," said Kipsang, who was scheduled to run the ING New York City Marathon before its cancellation in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. "At the moment, I train a few times a week with Geoffrey Mutai, and my preparation is going well for my spring marathon in April. My preparation for the half-marathon in New York is okay, and I hope I can run a time below 60 minutes—that's my goal."

Smith, 31, a native of Auckland who now lives in Providence, RI, placed fifth at the ING New York City Marathon in both 2010 and 2011. She finished second at the NYC Half 2012 in a time of 1:08:43 after leading nearly the entire race. She broke her own record for the fastest-ever half-marathon by a woman on U.S. soil when she won the 2011 Rock 'n' Roll Philadelphia Half-Marathon in 1:07:11. Smith holds 12 New Zealand records at distances from the mile to the marathon.

"I'm really looking forward to racing my favorite distance at the NYC Half again this year," said Smith. "After coming close to winning last year, I want to come back and get the top spot on the podium. I hope that doing half-marathons early in the year will set me up for some fast times at the shorter distance of five and 10 kilometers this summer."

Tahri, 34, of France, is a three-time Olympian and was the 2009 World Championships bronze medalist in the 3000-meter steeplechase. He is also a four-time European Championships medalist in the 3000 meters and 3000-meter steeplechase.

Moreira, 27, of Portugal, recently became the European Indoor Champion at 3000 meters; she and her Portuguese teammates have won three European Cross Country team championships.

Additional top international contenders for the NYC Half 2013 include:

- Daniele Meucci, 27, of Italy, the 2012 European Championships 10,000-meter silver medalist and winner of the 2012 UAE Healthy Kidney 10K in Central Park
- Deressa Chimsa, 36, of Ethiopia, the 2012 IAAF World Half-Marathon Championships silver medalist, with a personal best half-marathon time of 1:00:51
- Juan Luis Barrios, 29, of Mexico, a three-time Pan American Games medalist
- Madaí Pérez, 33, of Mexico, the winner of the 2011 Rock 'n' Roll Arizona Half Marathon in 1:11:49, who will be running her sixth NYC Half, including a second-place finish in 2008 and third in 2010
- Sabrina Mockenhaupt, 32, of Germany, a three-time Olympian who holds 29 national titles and has a personal best half-marathon of 1:08:45
- Valeria Straneo, 36, of Italy, the Italian marathon record-holder (2:23:44), who finished eighth at both the 2012 London Olympic Marathon (2:25:27) and the 2011 BMW Berlin Marathon (2:26:33)
- Adriana Da Silva, 31, of Brazil, the 2011 Pan American Games Marathon gold medalist

NYRR's flagship half-marathon, in its eighth running, will air live locally on WABC-TV from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. and online at 7online.com. It will also stream live nationally on ESPN3.com. NYRR's *On the Run* broadcast will air on www.nyrr.org at 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 15 and 16, with a post-race recap Sunday evening.

The NYC Half will offer 15,000 runners a spectacular 13.1 mile tour of Manhattan as they race through Central Park to Times Square and along the Hudson River waterfront to finish in lower Manhattan. The race continues to attract prominent professional athletes and thousands of recreational runners from around the world. This year's race is "More than a Run," offering runners and their family, friends, and fans ways to get involved, give back, and have fun.

About NYRR

New York Road Runners was founded in 1958 when a small group of passionate runners vowed to bring running to the people. Over the past 55 years, NYRR has grown from a local running club to the world's premier community running organization. NYRR's mission is to empower everyone, of all ages and abilities—beginners and competitive athletes, the young and the elderly, adult professionals and underserved schoolchildren—to improve their health and well-being through the power of running and fitness.

NYRR's races, community events, instruction and training resources, and youth programs give hundreds of thousands of people each year the motivation, know-how, and opportunity to start running and keep running for life. NYRR's premier event, the famed ING New York City Marathon, attracts the world's top pro runners and committed amateurs alike while also raising millions of dollars annually for charity and driving economic impact for the City. But NYRR is equally committed to the runners of tomorrow, passionately providing youth fitness programs that educate and inspire more than 150,000 kids in underserved communities in New York City, all 50 states, and around the world.

Headquartered in New York City, NYRR implements a unique nonprofit model that teams contributed and earned income to make all its efforts possible. To learn more, please visit www.nyrr.org.