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For Immediate Release

Bill Rodgers, Frank Shorter, Joan Benoit Samuelson, and the late Ted Corbitt Head NYRR Hall of Fame Class

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 19—A triumvirate of American marathon legends, Bill Rodgers, Frank Shorter, and Joan Benoit Samuelson, and the late Ted Corbitt, a founding father of the sport in this country, will be inducted into the NYRR Hall of Fame as the Class of 2013, it was announced today by NYRR president and CEO Mary Wittenberg.

“The Class of 2013 is an extraordinary one featuring larger than life champions who defined our sport and inspired generations of New Yorkers and runners worldwide,” said Wittenberg.

“Forever linked together as pillars of our sport in this country and inspiration for generations of runners, it is only appropriate that Billy, Frank and Joanie enter the Hall of together. Their legacies as champions on the field and off will never fade away,” said Wittenberg. “Ted was our gentle giant in the sport, leading quietly and with dignity in promoting, building and improving our sport for runners of all ages and abilities. Our Jackie Robinson in breaking down the color barrier. Ted’s passion for the sport lives on every day here at NYRR, the organization he helped create.”

The quartet will be officially inducted at the Hall of Fame Ceremony on Thursday, October 31, at the ING New York City Marathon Media Center presented by Timex. Corbitt’s son, Gary, will represent his father at the ceremony, which is an annual part of race-week festivities leading up to the Marathon.

This year’s class will join members of the first two induction classes: former NYRR president Fred Lebow, nine-time New York City Marathon winner Grete Waitz of Norway, three-time winner Alberto Salazar, and two-time winners Miki Gorman and Nina Kuscsik.

Each of the inductees will be represented by a banner to be raised during race week in Central Park along the famed finishing stretch of the Marathon.

Benoit Samuelson, 56, is arguably the greatest woman marathoner of all time. She holds a special spot in the history books for her triumph at the first Olympic women’s marathon, at the 1984 Los Angeles Games. Benoit Samuelson won the Boston Marathon in 1979 and 1983, and she set her career best of 2 hours, 21 minutes, and 21 seconds in winning in Chicago in 1985.

Her passion for running has kept Benoit Samuelson running well past her competitive prime as she continues to amaze. She broke 2:50:00 at the 2008 Olympic Trials Marathon and at the 2010 Chicago and

2009 New York City marathons. In 2012, she ran the Boston Marathon with her daughter Abby. This year, on the 30th anniversary of her epic world-record Boston Marathon win, Samuelson aimed to finish within 30 minutes of her 1983 world record time of 2:22:43. She did, finishing 47th overall in the women's race in a time of 2:50:29.

Rodgers, 65, was the dominant marathoner in the world between 1975 and 1980, a period during which he won the Boston and New York City marathons four times apiece. His finest season came in 1977, when he won both of those races and the prestigious Fukuoka Marathon in Japan; he is still the only runner ever to hold the championships of these three major marathons in a single season. He was ranked No.1 in the world in the marathon by *Track and Field News* in 1975, 1977, and 1979.

"I want to thank the NYRR for inducting me, and I congratulate my fellow inductees, Frank Shorter and Joan Benoit Samuelson," Rodgers said. "I loved racing the New York City Marathon, and as I have won a marathon on all five continents and know the sport well, I recognize the NYC Marathon as one of the truly great marathons in the world. Not just a time-trial, the New York race is a superb strategy course; this is where the best marathoners race well."

Rodgers was much more than just a marathoner. He excelled at cross country—he took the bronze medal at the 1975 IAAF World Cross Country Championships—and at shorter distances. In 1978, he won 27 of the 30 road races that he entered, including the Pepsi 10,000-meter national championship and the Falmouth Road Race.

A cancer survivor, Rodgers is now an active advocate in promoting health and fitness and an athletic lifestyle.

Shorter, 65, won the 1972 Olympic Marathon in Munich, becoming the first American man to win the marathon gold medal in 64 years. Four years later, he took Olympic silver in Montreal behind Waldemar Cierpinski, who was later implicated in East Germany's doping scandal. Shorter also won the Fukuoka Marathon for four consecutive years (1971–1974) and was a four-time USA Cross Country champion. He was the runner-up at the 1976 New York City Marathon and finished seventh in 1979.

After retiring, Shorter became a persuasive and constant voice against the use of performance-enhancing drugs in the sport, helping create and lead the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency from 2000 to 2003.

"It was an honor to be invited to the 1976 New York City Marathon for the first five-borough race," said Shorter. "I grew up 60 miles to the northwest in Middletown in the Hudson River Valley. For me back then it was truly an athletic homecoming after two Olympic marathons. Being elected to the NYRR Hall of Fame 37 years later gives me the feeling of having come full circle in my running career."

The late Ted Corbitt was a towering figure in the formative years of long-distance running in this country. An African-American, he helped break the color barrier in the sport.

"The only thing small about Corbitt was his frame—5' 7", 130 pounds," wrote Frank Litsky in the *New York Times*.

Born in South Carolina but a New Yorker for most of his life, Corbitt, who passed away in 2007 at the age of 88, was a prodigious runner his entire life who excelled at the marathon and ultramarathon distances.

Corbitt ran the Olympic Marathon in Helsinki in 1952 and held American records at 25, 50, and 100 miles. He ran the Boston Marathon 21 times, and he ran the New York City Marathon 11 times and walked it nine times.

Corbitt was a founder of New York Road Runners and its first president. He was an innovator in the field of course measurement and was instrumental in the establishment of age categories in races.

“My father was part of a generation of running pioneers who built a foundation for the successes that the sport of long-distance running enjoys today,” said Gary Corbitt. “I will accept this honor on behalf of the everlasting contributions of all the ‘Founding Fathers’ of road running in the United States.”

About the ING New York City Marathon

NYRR’s premier event, the ING New York City Marathon is the most loved and most inclusive marathon in the world, attracting elite athletes and recreational runners alike for the challenge and thrill of a lifetime. The race has grown tremendously since it began in 1970 with just 127 runners racing four laps of Central Park. Now, more than 48,000 participants from all over the globe flock to New York City every November for an adrenaline-filled road tour of all five boroughs, starting on Staten Island at the foot of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge and ending in Central Park. Some run for prize money or bragging rights, others for charity or their personal best. All are cheered on by more than two million live spectators and a TV audience of 330 million.