

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Thousands Choose a Running Start to the New Year at the 35th Annual NYRR Midnight Run Presented by Emerald Nuts

Professional athletes Timothy Ritchie and Neely Spence Gracey look to capture their first wins of the new year

New York, December 19, 2013—2014 is on the horizon, and thousands of health-minded New Yorkers and runners from across the country will get a running start to the New Year at the 35th annual NYRR Midnight Run Presented by Emerald Nuts in Central Park on December 31. A small field of professional athletes will lead the four-mile celebration, it was announced today by NYRR president and CEO Mary Wittenberg.

Reveling runners will vie for a prize purse of \$2,000, including \$500 apiece to the male and female winners. Top contenders include Timothy Ritchie, 26, of Brighton, MA, who was the runner-up at the 2012 NYRR Midnight Run Presented by Emerald Nuts in a time of 18:54, and Neely Spence Gracey, 23, of Lake Orion, MI, a six-time NCAA Division II champion. Spence is running the race with (and against!) her husband, Dillon. They will celebrate their one-year wedding anniversary by running the race.

A Central Park tradition since 1979, the event offers runners, their families, and spectators alike the chance to ring in the new year in a healthy and high-energy way. Featuring the only fireworks display in Manhattan on New Year's Eve, the NYRR Midnight Run makes a bold statement in a city filled with countless New Year's celebrations and festivities.

The festivities will kick off at 10:00 p.m. with a dance party featuring a DJ and live performers. The costume contest will begin at 11:00 p.m. with the top three places (and prizes) going to the individual runner or group of runners who dress in the "nuttiest" attire. Runners and spectators can take their commemorative photos, complete with New Year's party favors, at the red-carpet photo tent in the festival area. At the stroke of midnight, runners will take off on a four-mile loop through Central Park while the night sky sparkles with a 15-minute fireworks show—and the celebration wouldn't be complete without a sparkling cider toast near mile two!

Additional Athlete Backgrounds and Notable Performances:

- Cole Atkins, 28, of Blowing Rock, NC, finished fourth in the 3000 meters at the 2013 USA Indoor Track & Field Championships
- Tyler McCandless, 27, of Boulder, CO, is a two-time Kauai Marathon champion with a 5000-meter personal best of 14:21.50
- Amanda Winslow, 23, of Highland Park, NJ, won this year's ACC 5000-meter championship in a personal-best time of 15:54.66. She is coached by Frank Gagliano of the NJ–NY Track Club.

- Genna Hartung, 22, of Highland Park, NJ, was the 2012 ECAC steeplechase champion and has a 5000-meter personal best of 16:38.32. She is a teammate of Winslow on the NJ–NY Track Club.

Top Professional Men

Name	Personal Best 5K, Location, Year	Twitter Handle
Timothy Ritchie	13:53.55, Raleigh, 2011	@TimRitchieWTD
Cole Atkins	14:17.66i, Seattle, 2010	@cole_atkins
Tyler McCandless	14:21.50, Big Ten, 2010	@TrackTy

Top Professional Women

Name	Personal Best 5K, Location, Year	Twitter Handle
Neely Spence Gracey	15:26.51, Mt. SAC, 2013	@neelyspenceG
Amanda Winslow	15:54.66, Raleigh, 2013	@awin250
Genna Hartung	16:38.32, Boston, 2012	@GennaHartung

Quotes

Neely Spence Gracey

“Joining Hanson’s Brooks ODP has allowed Dillon and me the unique opportunity to train full-time together. The NYRR Midnight Run Presented by Emerald Nuts is our first head-on race, and well, let’s just say I’m a little competitive. Running is what brought Dillon and me together and has provided many adventures. We look forward to all that is yet to come as we share our love of running and love for each other by celebrating our one-year anniversary racing on the streets of NYC!”

Mary Wittenberg

“There isn’t a better way to ring in a happy and healthy New Year than with a four-mile celebration in Central Park with friends and family. It’s an extravaganza of fun whether you’re running the race or celebrating the night by dancing and watching the fireworks show. The race is a festive and safe way for all to celebrate the successes of 2013.”

Emerald Nuts

“Emerald Nuts is a proud sponsor of the NYRR Midnight Run in NYC. Emerald Nuts will be elevating this year’s experience by sampling its latest new product. Show up and be the first to try it!”

About NYRR

Founded in 1958, New York Road Runners has grown from a local running club to the world’s premier community running organization, whose mission is to help and inspire people through running. NYRR’s commitment to New York City’s five boroughs features races, community events, youth initiatives, school programs, and training resources that provide hundreds of thousands of people each year, from children to seniors, with the motivation, know-how, and opportunity to run for life. NYRR’s premier event, the TCS New York City Marathon, features 50,000 participants, from the world’s elite athletes to a wide range of recreational and charity runners, and is part of the World Marathon Majors, an alliance of the world’s six biggest marathons that determines each year’s top male and top female marathoner. To learn more, visit www.nyrr.org.