

Press Release

March, 29, 2017

Yellow ribbons in the streets of spring Prague? Athletes will run a half marathon to promote better employability of ex-convicts

On Saturday, April 1st, 35 athletes will run a half marathon - the first race of Yellow Ribbon Prison Run series 2017. All of them will wear t-shirts decorated with a yellow ribbon aiming to draw attention to the problem of difficult employability of people released from prison. The sport event is held as part of the Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon organized by RunCzech, the organizer of the most prestigious runs in the Czech Republic. Altogether 11,500 runners from 57 countries are looking forward to fast track and fantastic atmosphere of the Saturday's 19th edition of the Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon.

The specific aim of the Yellow Ribbon Run project is to encourage employers in fighting prejudice, and to give ex-convicts a chance to work. But why do we want to show support to them?

The motto of the Yellow Ribbon Runs is, „Run from prejudices!“ and “Let’s give ex-offenders a second chance”. It is very often a mere prejudice that ruins ex-convicts’ prospect of getting a job. Last year, 10,271 people were released from Czech prisons. And according to surveys, more than two-thirds of Czech companies require background checks when recruiting. Moreover, 55 percent of employers never employ people with a criminal record. The numbers say only a third of ex-offenders that are motivated to work actually succeed in securing a job.

“Our goal is to encourage employers to at least think about the fact that even a released ex-offender can be a grateful and reliable employee. I believe that work with ex-convicts makes sense. The more we help them to return to normal life and solve often complicated life problems, the less victims of crime,” said Gabriela Slováková, director of the Women’s Prison in Světlá nad Sázavou and initiator of the prison run.

According to Carlo Capalbo, the president of the RunCzech Organizing Committee, the average finishing time for female runners in Sportisimo Half Marathon Prague is 2:05:22 and 1:49:12 for men. *“But finishing time is not the most vital to the runners with a yellow ribbon. These athletes have a more important goal, they want to inspire their loved ones, friends and even complete strangers to giving second chances,”* said Capalbo.

The Yellow Ribbon Run is held under the auspices of the Czech Minister of Justice, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Public Defender of Rights.

Races with a yellow ribbon – half marathon, marathon and popular relays – will be held in April, May and June 2017 under the auspices of three RunCzech races, and will be attended by 900 runners.

The 2017 edition of the prison run is co-organized with help from the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, the Business Leaders Forum platform, which associates socially responsible firms, the nonprofit organization RUBIKON Centre, the Czech Probation and Mediation Service and RunCzech.

The project was made possible thanks to our partners. The company D.A.S. Ltd. is our general partner. Kostelec Sausages, Inc. is our golden partner. We also thank to our silver partners: LMC Ltd., Czech Forests Czech Republic and United Bakeries Inc. Bronze partners - Arriva Transport Czech Republic Inc., Hamerník Ltd., Schindler CZ, DP Work Ltd., Lion Products Ltd. and marketing agency Wunderman. We have also partners supporting individual runners like Haryservis, Jevišovice Agro Inc., Froněk Ltd., Jipocar and IP System Inc. The project is also supported by individual runners from A-Giga Ltd., Microsoft, Axocom Ltd. and by Helping Hands o. p. s. Material support provided Dermacol Ltd. and Papei Ltd. Our main media partner is the Czech Television and Pro Fair Play is our other partner for media.

Highlights of the Yellow Ribbon Run

- In 2017 Yellow Ribbon Run celebrates its second anniversary.
- This year the Yellow Ribbon Run will be included in two races of the RunCzech Running League. Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon, held on April 1st and Volkswagen Prague Marathon, held on May 7th. Most of the runners will be a part of the charity running event named O2 Prague Relay 4x5, held on June 14th, which is also organized by RunCzech.
- In 2017, the project will be supported by 900 runners, 480 of them will run in the O2 Prague Relay 4x5 and over 100 will run in the full marathon distance. Currently there are participants registered from 19 countries, such as France, Sweden, Denmark, Brazil, Thailand, Belarus, Israel or Kazakhstan.

Essential Facts on Sportisimo Prague Half Marathon

- **Edition:** 19th
- **Title partner:** Sportisimo
- **Capacity:** 11 500 runners
- **IAAF label:** IAAF Road Race Gold Label

- **Accompanying program:** Running Expo Praha, Marathon Music Festival
- **Did you know, that...:** the result of the year 2012 (Atsedu Tsegay, ETH, 58:47) is the 5th fastest half marathon in the history
- **Event record - male:** Atsedu Tsegay /ETH/ 0:58:47, 2012
- **Event record - female :** Viola Jepchumba /KEN/ 1:05:51, 2016

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Yellow
Ribbon
Run



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