

Press Release

Prague, May 7

Will the prisoners Jirka, Marián, Oldřich and Libor complete the Prague marathon? Come and cheer them on: give a second chance to ex-offenders.

On the 7th of May, Jirka, Marián, Oldřich and Libor, inmates of four Czech prisons, will run a marathon together with up to 50 fellow runners. All of them will wear t-shirts decorated with a yellow ribbon aiming to draw attention to the problem of difficult employability of inmates released from prison. The sport event from the Yellow Ribbon Prison Run series 2017 is held as part of Volkswagen Prague Marathon. Additional 24 athletes will do their best to complete 2RUN race runs, with two runners sharing a marathon distance of 20 and 22 kilometers. Both prestigious sport events are organized by RunCzech.

"When we started running around the prison court, the other convicts shouted at us and laughed at us. I did not care, I was rather sorry for them. The most important thing for me is my mother, who is my greatest fan and supporter," says Jirka, the young runner, who is currently serving his sentence in the Vinařice Prison in the central Bohemia. *"I am going to be released soon and what I know for sure today is that I will take running with me to forget all the crap and dangerous thoughts I might have. I want to continue to do what I enjoy, and at the same time to prove to myself and to my mother that I can live differently than I used to live,"* he adds.

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. Moreover, 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.

"The upcoming Yellow Ribbon race is the most challenging one – it's marathon, a royal discipline. I firmly believe that if the convicts succeed in fulfilling all the tasks, working and adhering to the strict regime in the prison, they have a great chance to manage the situation after the release," says Gabriela Slováková, the director of the women's Prison Světlá nad Sázavou and initiator of the run. *"The fact that with the strong support of my colleagues, they trained for the marathon while serving their sentence perhaps proves their honest will to start again and better. Let's give them a chance and let's cheer them on together,"* she adds.

"I'm so glad that the Yellow Ribbon Prison Run is getting so much popularity. It's not just about the number of runners - although fifty marathon runners is a wonderful number, but it's also about those who learn about this meritorious project. The more people will get to know the Yellow Ribbon Run project, the more people can really help. Our slogan for this year races is All Runners Are Beautiful meaning that running is a great thing for everyone. And it is true especially in this case - everybody deserves a second chance," says RunCzech President of the Organizing Committee, Carlo Capalbo.

The Yellow Ribbon Prison Run project 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 relays – are being held under the auspices of three RunCzech races, and will be attended altogether by 900 runners. The 2017 edition of the prison run is co-organized with the 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 the 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 a non-profit organization Helping Hands. 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.

Essential Facts on Volkswagen Marathon

- Edition: 23rd (first held 4 June 1995)
- Title partner: Volkswagen
- Capacity: 10 600 runners
- IAAF label: IAAF Road Race Gold Label
- Did you know that...: The Volkswagen Prague Marathon with the event record of 2:05:39 is fastest marathon held in May in history?
- Event record men: Eliud Kiptanui/KEN/ 2:05:39, 2010
- Event record women: Lydia Cheromei /KEN/ 2:22:34, 2011

Highlights of the Yellow Ribbon Run Marathon Weekend

- 24 people will be running 2RUNS (of which 5 foreigners (Dubai, USA, France, Brazil)
 - o 2 representatives of 1 corporate partner
- 47 people will run a marathon (of which 10 foreigners (Denmark, Norway, Spain, Great Britain, Kazakhstan, Israel, France, Belgium, Germany, Thailand)
 - o 4 inmates will be running
 - o 1 ex-convict
 - o 11 representatives of 5 corporate partners

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Yellow
Ribbon
Run



Generální partner:

Zlatý partner:



Stříbrný partner:



Bronzový partner:



Hlavní mediální partner:

Mediální partner:



Partneři, kteří podpořili běžce z řad (bývalých) odsouzených:



Individuální běžci z organizací:



Materiální dary věnovali:

