



TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon  
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## Rory Linkletter Takes Aim at a Podium Finish at the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon by Paul Gains

After representing Canada at the 2022 World Championships in July, Rory Linkletter is brimming with newfound confidence and ready for even greater success. The 26-year-old Calgarian has now set his sights on the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, taking place on October 16, 2022.

Linkletter raced to a personal best marathon of 2:10:24 in Eugene, Oregon, which earned him a credible 20th place in those World Championships. Apart from chasing a faster time, he is aiming for a Canadian Championship gold medal in Toronto.

The TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon has earned a World Athletics Elite Label and serves as the official Athletics Canada National Marathon Championships.

“That is one of the main reasons I chose Toronto over New York or some other fall marathon,” Linkletter revealed. “I liked a couple of things about it. Number one, I think the course is pretty quick. I have run it once before obviously. There is no part of it that I feel is really going to slow you down a ton.

“The weather is more predictable than Chicago just because it’s a week later and it’s just a touch different climate. I want to try and win a national championship as well. I think I can run faster in Toronto and I think it’s a good setup to do so.”

The three months between the World Championships and the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon don’t present a problem, he said, because he didn’t have a full marathon buildup prior to running that 2:10:24.

Linkletter and his coach, Ryan Hall, the retired American half marathon record holder, had started preparations for racing on the track when Athletics Canada informed the athlete he had been selected to run in Eugene. Although he hadn’t run the qualifying standard (2:11:30), his world ranking earned him a last-minute place. That was a mere 45 days before the big day.

“I was going to run the 5000m at the Harry Jerome Track Classic, but then the week of the meet I got an email from Athletics Canada saying I had made the team,” he explained. “So I was like, ‘Well I don’t want to turn down such an opportunity.’ I didn’t know what a six-week build would look like for a marathon, but Ryan and I decided this is a good opportunity. I was obviously pleased with how the race went and it gave me a lot of confidence that with a three-month build, I can get fitter and be a little more prepared.”

Linkletter has been training with Hall since December 2021. He had formerly been a member of the Northern Arizona Elite group. Despite running a 2:12:54 personal best at the California International Marathon, however, he sought a change in coaching.

“To be blunt, I just wasn’t running well and wanted to change some things up. I lost some confidence in myself,” he admitted. “In the US running scene, it’s a lot of group-based training. A lot of these groups are popping up like crazy and they are successful for many people. I definitely think there are a lot of pros to the group setting but I felt I needed to have a more individualized training.

“I wanted to feel like I hired a coach, not ran for a team and was just a cog in the wheel. I wanted a little more say. That relationship with Ryan just made sense to me. I wanted somebody who was an athlete. I liked that a lot with my [Brigham Young University] coach, Ed Eyestone. I needed them to be in Flagstaff. I didn’t want to leave Flagstaff because I love it here.”

Recently, Linkletter and his wife Jill, both student athletes at BYU, marked their third year living in the northern Arizona town. But a change in coaches wasn’t the only seismic shift in Linkletter’s recent past.

In May 2022, Linkletter signed a sponsorship agreement with Puma Running. On July 31, 2021, the couple welcomed their son Jason into the world. He is named for Linkletter’s father who sadly passed away shortly before meeting his grandson.

Although neither Jill nor Linkletter are Mormons—about 99% of BYU students are—they are Christians. This was another factor in choosing Hall to be his coach.

“I have always been a huge fan of Ryan,” he continued, “because he was such an amazing athlete himself. It doesn’t hurt that we have similar personalities: very type A, very driven, very strong Christian belief system. There were a lot of things in my mind where I thought this makes sense.”

Returning to Toronto, where in 2019 he finished 16th in 2:16:42, he is a much more experienced athlete. Seven months ago, he set a new Canadian half marathon record in Houston (1:01:08) and in May he also finished third at the Canadian 10,000m Championships (28:26.27). He is only too aware that precious few Canadians have made the podium at the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, such is the quality of the field.

Reid Coolsaet finished third in 2011. Cam Levins set his first Canadian marathon record of 2:09:25 while finishing fourth in 2018, while Trevor Hofbauer ran his personal best 2:09:51 to come home seventh in 2019. Hofbauer will be on the start line with Linkletter on October 16.

“I haven’t seen the field, but I know from years past what kind of fitness we are going to be trying to get into,” Linkletter declared. “I think when Cam [Levins] ran 2:09:25, he was fourth, right? Just based on years past and what the race usually produces, I think I will be in that range.

“You never know who is going show up and what kind of day it’s going to be. All you can do is be as good as you can. But I would like to believe that on the best day, I am not only competing for a Canadian title but also an overall podium finish.”

## **About the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon**

One of only two World Athletics Elite Label races in Canada, the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon is Canada's premier running event and the grand finale of the Canada Running Series (CRS). Since 2017, the race has served as the Athletics Canada Canadian Marathon Championship and has doubled as the Olympic trials. During the 2021 event, participants raised over \$3.08 million for 151 community charities. Using innovation and organization as guiding principles, Canada Running Series stages great experiences for runners of all levels, from Canadian Olympians to recreational and charity runners. With a mission of "building community through the sport of running," CRS is committed to making sport part of sustainable communities and the city-building process.

To learn more about the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, please visit [www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com](http://www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com).

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