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TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon
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Kenya's Sharon Kemboi Looking To Prove Herself at TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon by Paul Gains

TORONTO, ON (*August 29, 2023*) - Sharon Kemboi might not be well known on the world athletics stage at the moment but there's a solid chance the Kenyan will have a major impact on the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon October 15.

For a start, the 30-year-old Asics athlete from the town of Iten raced only in Kenya until 2022. And she has only one marathon race to her credit winning the 2022 Kobe Marathon in Japan last November in a time of 2:29:13. That saw her end the year as the 241st fastest woman of the year, hardly a world beater. Yet, to dismiss her as a contender in this World Athletics Elite Label race would be foolish.

Last year Kemboi ran two world class half marathons in Spain finishing second both times. Her personal best of 1:07:28 in Madrid followed by a strong 1:08:08 clocking two weeks later in Malaga indicates a time on Toronto Waterfront's fast course nearer 2:22 is possible. The course record remains 2:22:16 by Magdalyne Masai - also from Kenya - set in 2019.

"The Kobe marathon course was a hard course, it is not easy. The course is so hard," Kemboi says during a video call from her home in Iten. "I will try to run 2:25 or faster in Toronto. I want to run my personal best.

"I am training with Antonina Kwambai. She won last year in Toronto (2:23:20). She told me about Toronto and also I used to watch the Toronto races on YouTube. She told me the course is not so hard and she said she really enjoyed it."

A few hours prior to her overseas video call Kemboi and Kwambai along with their training partners, Immaculate Chemuta, who is a Ugandan training in Kenya, and Gladys Chepkurui, had run a 30 kilometres time trail paced by three male pacemakers and under the watchful eye of coach Thomas Portzinger. The Austrian native has worked with Kemboi for close to three years now and with Kwambai for nearer seven. Pacemakers are often employed for special sessions. Training for Toronto Waterfront is progressing well.

Clearly, she is taking her running seriously now after showing promise as a high school runner at Chepkongony Church of Christ Secondary School near Eldoret.

"When I ran in high school I ran at the national level in the 5,000m and 10,000m. And then I got married and had two kids. Then I started training again," she offers.

"I wanted to be like (2016 Olympic 5000m champion) Vivian Cheruiyot when I was in high school. I did not meet her but I used to watch the races she ran. I watched her Olympic races on YouTube."

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It was during her time at high school that she met her husband Lawrence Kemboi Kipsang who attended a boy's school in Marakwet which is very close to her home village of Kendur.

A world class 3,000m steeplechaser, he has a best time of 8:11.26 in the event. In 2022 he was a much sought after pacemaker on the European circuit and helped Ethiopia's Lamecha Girma beat the world 3,000m steeplechase record at the Paris Diamond League meet. The husband and wife will occasionally run together.

"We have a house helper who watches our children when we go training," she reveals. "They are 7 and 4 and their names are Adele Jelegat and Adriana Jerop."

Unlike many other Kenyan distance runners, she does not stay in a training camp but instead meets up for training sessions in Iten with her mates. The town of Iten is well known as a haven for distance runners from many nations. With a balance in training and family life Kemboi is very content with her fortunes.

Once again TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon is a World Athletics Elite Label race meaning the competition she will face is sure to be of the highest standard. Kemboi welcomes the challenge. This, after all, will be her opportunity to continue her successful transition from the half marathon to the marathon, and shine on the world stage.

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About the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon

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 national marathon championship race and has doubled as the Olympic trials. 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, visit www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com

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A part of the Tata group, India's largest multinational business group, TCS has over 614,000 of the world's best-trained consultants in 55 countries. The company generated consolidated revenues of US \$27.9 billion in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2023, and is listed on the BSE

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