

Ben Flanagan and Dayna Pidhoresky Lead Canadian Marathon Championships Fields By Paul Gains

While the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon is well known around the world as a World Athletics 'Elite Label Race' the event will again serve as the official 2025 Athletics Canada Canadian Marathon Championships.

The lure of Canadian specific prize money (\$8,000 to the national champion) and championship medals have attracted some of the country's best. Of course, Canadians are also eligible for open prize money - \$25,000 to the overall winner - in addition.

No doubt most running aficionados will have their eyes on Ben Flanagan, who is making his marathon debut in the October 19 race.

The 30-year-old from Kitchener, Ontario earned a place on Canada's 2024 Olympic team after running a personal best 5,000m time of 13:04.62. Since winning the 2018 NCAA 10,000m title for the University of Michigan, though, much of his success has been as a road racer. It is believed he can make a smoother transition to marathoning than those coming straight from the track.

A three-time winner of both the Falmouth Road Race and the Canadian 10km title he has personal best half marathon time of 61:00. That makes him the second fastest Canadian ever at the distance only surpassed by national marathon record holder Cam Levins.

With a declared goal of representing Canada in the 2028 Olympic marathon he sees this year's Toronto Waterfront as the first step to becoming world class at the distance.

Extraordinary bad luck befell Vancouver's Thomas Broatch who won this race and the Canadian title in 2023 before going on to run 2:10:35 in Houston this past January. A visit to a hospital emergency room revealed a case of appendicitis, forcing him to withdraw three weeks before the event.

Also scratched from the race was Canadian steeplechaser John Gay with an injury. He was to make his debut at Toronto Waterfront.

In Broatch and Gay's absence one wonders if Toronto's Andrew Alexander might break through. At 26 years of age, he is having a remarkable year.

It began with a new marathon personal best of 2:12:55 in Houston followed by a superb 3rd place finish at the Canadian 10k championship four months later. This will be his second Toronto Waterfront appearance. He made his marathon debut here a year ago running 2:14:13 to collect the Canadian Championship bronze medal. He finished in 10th place overall.

Phillipe Parrot-Migas might also contend for a medal. The London, Ontario resident ran a new personal best of 2:13:24 in Houston, which represented an improvement of more than two minutes over his previous best. That had been recorded in the 2014 Chicago Marathon. At 32

years of age, he also has some international experience.

Besides the city marathons he represented Canada at the 2023 World Road Racing Championships, the 2023 World Cross Country Championships, the 2022 Pan Am Cross Country Championships and the 2022 NACAC Half Marathon Championships.

The women's field is no less competitive. This year marks the fifth appearance of Dayna Pidhoresky in the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon. The long time Vancouver resident - originally from Windsor, Ontario - ran her personal best (2:29:03) here in 2019 winning the Canadian Olympic trials in the process. However, she suffered misfortune in Japan.

Because she had been seated near a Covid positive passenger en route to Japan for the Olympics she underwent two weeks quarantine in a hotel room. That's hardly the best preparation for an Olympic Games competitor.

Now 38, she won the Vancouver Marathon for the third time this past May. If she has been able to train steadily and avoid injury hiccups, she should be a strong favourite. In 2022 she ran 2:30:58 on this course. She believes she can still run a personal best.

Rachel Hannah remains a strong competitor and, alongside Pidhoresky, another fine example of how distance runners can enjoy increased longevity with the right combination of training and nutrition. The 39-year-old Port Elgin, Ontario resident set her personal best (2:32:09) at the 2016 Houston Marathon but consistently runs in the 2:34 range, which might be enough to claim a medal.

Indeed, she ran 2:34:42 in Boston in April this year. And, given that she finished 5th in the Canadian 10km championships just four weeks later and in a time of 33:38 - just thirty seconds off her personal best set a decade ago - she has reason to be optimistic.

Hannah, who works as a nutritional consultant, was also the 2015 Pan Am Games bronze medalist.

The Houston Marathon is a popular destination for Canadian marathoners and in January of this year Eliyah Brawdy, 25, turned in the best Canadian performance there finishing 9th in 2:35:33. It was also her debut at the distance.

Originally from Smithers, British Columbia (1,150 km north of Vancouver) this 'Smithereen' is a graduate of the University of British Columbia. She won the 2024 Canadian 10,000m title and was a standout cross country runner at her alma mater.

Currently she works full time as a patient care coordinator at a pediatric dentistry clinic in North Vancouver. In her spare time, she also tutors students in mathematics. She'd like nothing more than to cause an upset in this battle for her second Canadian title.

At the time of writing, the status of Salome Nyirarukundo remained uncertain. The Rwandan won the 2018 Montreal Marathon in 2:28:02 which remains her personal best. Ever since she

has lived in Ottawa where she now trains with the Ottawa Lions Track and Field Club under coach Ray Dupuis. She has long wished to obtain Canadian citizenship.

This will be her first marathon since finishing 4th in the 2019 Ottawa Marathon at 2:30:44.

Nyirarukundo, 27, still holds the Rwandan national records at 5,000m 10,000m and the half marathon. She competed in the 2016 Rio Olympics in the 10,000m. Presently she holds down two shifts as a personal social worker while running up to 130km a week.

At the 2025 Boston Marathon Kylee Raftis edged Rachel Hannah by a second running a personal best of 2:34:41. The 26-year-old Boston College graduate is showing remarkable promise.

She ran the Berlin Marathon on September 21st where she finished at 2:41:58 on what was an unseasonably warm day. Toronto race fans, and Raftis herself, will certainly learn how much that effort took out of her when she competes in these Canadian Championships.

Once again, these fine athletes will come together in Canada's biggest city to contend for prize money and to measure themselves against one another. The lure of a Canadian championship medal is again foremost in their minds.

-30-

Media accreditation has begun for the 2025 TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon. Here is the link to register: <https://www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com/media/>

ABOUT THE TCS TORONTO WATERFRONT MARATHON

The TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon is Canada's premier running event, Toronto's largest marathon 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 an Olympic qualifier. 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.

ABOUT CANADA RUNNING SERIES (CRS)

Canada Running Series (CRS) organizes the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon. CRS is the nation's premier running circuit with 6 events, 4 in Toronto & 2 in Vancouver. It annually attracts over 60,000 participants and raises more than \$6 million for some 320 mostly-local charities. The Series includes the World Athletics Elite Label TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, and the Athletics Canada National Marathon Championships. Since 1999, CRS has gained international recognition for innovation and organization. To learn more about CRS, visit <https://canadarunningseries.com/>.

ABOUT TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES (TCS)



TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon
2 Berkely St, Unit 305 | Toronto, ON | M5A 4J5
416.944.2765
torontowaterfrontmarathon.com

Tata Consultancy Services is an IT services, consulting and business solutions organization that has been partnering with many of the world's largest businesses in their transformation journeys for over 65 years. Its consulting-led, cognitive powered, portfolio of business, technology and engineering services and solutions is delivered through its unique Location Independent Agile™ delivery model, recognized as a benchmark of excellence in software development.

As part of the Tata group, India's largest multinational business group, TCS has over 601,000 of the world's best-trained consultants in 55 countries. The company generated consolidated revenues of US \$29 billion in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024, and is listed on the BSE and NSE in India. TCS' proactive stance on climate change and award-winning work with communities across the world have earned it a place in leading sustainability indices such as the mSCI Global Sustainability Index and the FTSE4Good Emerging Index. For more information, visit www.tcs.com.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Ian Cater, Canada Running Series
ian@canadarunningseries.com