



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

Canadian Championship Preview

By Paul Gains

Once again the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon (October 18, 2026), a World Athletics Elite Label race, will serve as the official Athletics Canada Canadian Marathon Championship.

Not only are Canadian marathoners drawn to the \$8,000 CDN winners' prize but precious World Athletics points are up for grabs which can help when it comes to qualification for next year's World Athletics Championships in Beijing.

Rachel Hannah is the defending Canadian women's champion having finished 6th overall a year ago at Toronto Waterfront Marathon in 2:33:47, her fastest time in a decade. She recorded her personal best 2:32:09 at the 2016 Houston Marathon and claimed the Pan Am Games bronze medal later that same year.

At the age of 40 the Port Elgin, Ontario resident provides inspiration to younger women as she continues to manage training volumes of up to 180km a week and remains competitive. Eight months ago she finished 4th at the Vancouver Half Marathon finishing a little over a minute behind Dayna Pidhoresky in a race won by Natasha Wodak, the Canadian marathon record holder.

Pidhoresky, of Vancouver, returns to Toronto Waterfront. It was here that she secured a place on Canada's 2020 Tokyo Olympic team when she won in 2019 recording a personal best of 2:29:03 on the day. A month away from her 40th birthday she believes she is still capable of a personal best but winning another title is of paramount importance.

The winner of the 2022, 2023 and 2024 Vancouver Marathon earlier this year she also won the McKirdy MicroOTQ Marathon in Congers New York Marathon in 2:31:24. Her consistency makes her a favourite.

Making their debuts in the Toronto Waterfront Marathon are a pair of women deserving attention. Cleo Boyd, 33, a former standout at the University of Virginia finished 3rd in the 2026 Canadian 10k championships then finished 4th at the Pittsburgh Half Marathon just three weeks later. Her time in the latter race was 1:12:26, a personal best and a good indicator this Kingston, Ontario native will be in the hunt for the medals.

The youngest of these challengers is Florence Caron, 25, who hails from the town of La Malbaie, Quebec. A year ago she graduated from Penn State University after finishing a credible 14th in the 2025 NCAA cross country championships for the Nittany Lions. Now she has signed with HOKA and training with Northern Arizona Elite in Flagstaff, Arizona. The move has paid dividends already.



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Caron won the 2026 Canadian 10k championships in Ottawa by 44 seconds and represented Canada at the World Road Running Championships where she ran a personal best half marathon of 1:11:03. She will be accompanied by her husband Olivier Desmeules, also a Penn State graduate, one of the official pacers.

The men's championship race is expected to be an equally competitive battle. On paper Thomas Broatch (2:10:35) and Tristan Woodfine (2:10:39) ranked 10th and 11th respectively on the list of Canadian all-time performers are favourites. Both had planned to run in Toronto Waterfront a year ago but serious health issues forced them to withdraw.

Broatch, was crowned 2023 Canadian champion at Toronto Waterfront while finishing a credible 6th place overall. That race was his marathon debut. The native Vancouverite had a suspected case of appendicitis two weeks before the 2025 Toronto Waterfront which landed him in hospital for four days. Now, in good health, a podium finish is his goal as the 27-year-old has successfully fought to regain prime fitness.

In the summer of 2025 Woodfine suffered a tick bite and was diagnosed with Lyme disease. Fortunately, he was quickly diagnosed but it still meant taking a few weeks off which cost him a place at Toronto Waterfront. In August of this year he and his wife welcomed their daughter, Wren, into the world and it took him a couple of weeks to get back into a consistent training schedule. But he is confident of being competitive with the top Canadians.

Lee Wesseliuss, a full-time large animal veterinarian in Eastern Ontario, recorded his best time of 2:13:52 while finishing 9th overall in the 2024 TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon. He claimed the Canadian championship silver medal on that day. A year ago he finished second at the Vancouver Half Marathon in 64:28 just eleven seconds off his personal best showing he can successfully balance a full-time work schedule with marathon training. He is expected to be a medal contender.

Another medical scratch from a year ago was John Gay who had planned to make his marathon debut here in Toronto. A 2021 Olympic finalist in the 3,000m steeplechase he ran 2:14:16 in the Ottawa Marathon this past May. Now he says he wants to 'swing for the fences' and produce a great performance. A native of Kelowna, BC. He raised his mileage to roughly 200 kilometres a week in preparation for Toronto.

Among several debutants Vancouver's 25-year-old Andrew Davies is most deserving of attention. A year ago he beat Lee Wesseliuss by more than a minute to win the Vancouver Half Marathon in 63:05. He also won the 2024 Royal Victoria Half Marathon in 63:19 which was his debut at that distance. His move to the roads is fairly recent. In fact he competed in the 1,500m at the 2024 Canadian Athletics Championships.



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The two Canadian Championship elite fields will prove compelling viewing within this World Athletics Elite Label race.

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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/>.