TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon
2 Berkely St, Unit 305 | Toronto, ON | M5A 4J5
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Strong International and Domestic Competition at TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon
By Paul Gains

Although the strong international women's field missed the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon course record this morning it was one of the most exciting athletics contests ever fought on Canadian soil.

Kenya's Leah Jeruto ran away from her rivals in the final five kilometres to win in 2:21:19, a time only two women have beaten on this course.

It was a massive personal best performance knocking three minutes off the time she recorded at this year's Cape Town Marathon in May where she finished 4th (2:24:31).

Nigsti Haftu of Ethiopia followed her home fifteen seconds later (2:21:34) while Ayinadis Teshome took third place in 2:22:51. The target had been Ethiopian Waganesh Mekasha's 2024 time of 2:20:44.

On a cool morning with a cold westerly wind off Lake Ontario to contend with the leading women passed halfway in 1:10:58. There were ten runners following two designated pacers. As the race continued one pacer dropped out with the other continuing to 40km. The pack split up with three women in contention thereafter. But only Jeruto could stick with that pacer who took her another kilometre.

"I feel very happy with my personal best; to go from 2:24 to 2:21," Jeruto said at the finish adding with a smile, "I like Toronto. I was very excited because I was not expecting a personal best."

Leonard Langat of Kenya successfully defended his 2025 Toronto Waterfront title finishing in 2:06:51 to claim the CAD$25,000 prize. The 30-year-old was content to remain buried in the pack of twelve men who passed half way in 63:30 but around 35km he emerged to push the pace. His surge split the contenders and the race was on.

Checking his watch periodically, no doubt thinking how much longer he must endure the effort, he continued opening the gap until the finish. His countryman Fanny Kiprotich, who had won both his previous two marathons, finished second 2:07:21. For the third year running Noah Kipkemboi made the podium finishing 3rd in 2:07:25. Kipkemboi was second in 2025 and third in 2024.

"This has been a little bit cold and a very competitive and strong field," Langat admitted. "I tried my best and I managed to break the group. [Toronto] is like home. I will be very happy to come back next year and forever."

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Along with TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon being a World Athletics Elite Label race it also serves as the Athletics Canada Canadian Marathon Championships.

Dayna Pidhoresky led the Canadian women's field from the beginning forging a gap that at one point had observers wondering if she might fold. Indeed her pursuers closed to within a few seconds before she pushed on again. She passed the halfway point in 1:13:16 with fifteen to twenty seconds between her and her rivals.

A month shy of her 40th birthday, she was rewarded with a huge personal best crossing the line in 2:26:02, more than three minutes faster than her sole previous Canadian marathon victory in 2019. On that occasion her 2:29:03 earned her an automatic place on Canada's Tokyo-bound Olympic team.

Her winning time today makes her the third fastest Canadian of all time. It could have been faster still had she not had stomach issues which forced an unscheduled pit stop.

"Coming into this race I was confident," she said. "I think today was maybe a good day. I had some stomach problems that distracted me. But my body felt very strong. The confidence of having a really good build and setting PB's in the 10k and the half marathon; I felt ready for another PB because most of my training has been geared towards the marathon."

She praised Canadian women's record holder Natasha Wodak for pacing her early on and in particular, the designated pacer, Philip Parrot-Migas.

"Phil was amazing. I feel so lucky to have had him as my pacer through and past 40k which was great on a windy day," she explained.

The 2026 Canadian 10k and 10,000m champion, Florence Caron, made her marathon debut here and went out conservatively with the intent of laying a mark to shoot at in her next one. Her strategy paid off as the 25-year-old from La Malbaie, Quebec claimed the silver medal in 2:29:37.

"I had multiple goals being my first time and not knowing what to expect the last part," she said with a smile. "I was on a faster pace early in the race and really got hit (at 35km). I was trying to finish and enjoy the crowd and my family."

The bronze medal went to Lindsay Lamrock (2:30:49), a sometime training partner of 2025 Canadian champion, Rachel Hannah, who endured stomach distress and finished well back. Lamrock's time was a personal best by nine minutes.

The Canadian men's field included several athletes who were making their debuts at the distance as well as two men with personal bests of under 2:11, one of them, Thomas Broatch,

who was the 2023 Canadian champion in his debut. So it was surprising to see the unsponsored debutant Andrew Davies in the thick of it as the leaders passed halfway in 64:46.

The Vancouver based runner showed his inexperience when around 24km he missed a bottle station and went back for it. Undeterred, he quickly rejoined the group before pushing on alone for the final ten kilometres. In doing so he not only won the Canadian title but finished 10th place overall.

The fastest marathon debut by a Canadian man until today was 2:09:25 which Cam Levins recorded when beating Jerome Drayton's 43-year-old Canadian record in 2018 on the Toronto Waterfront course. Davies crossed the line in 2:08:48. He was delighted with his victory but also respectful to the Canadians who are ranked ahead of him -- Cam Levins, the national record holder (2:05:36) and Rory Linkletter (2:06:49).

"I have looked up to Cam and Rory, especially, the top two," he revealed. "And Thomas Nobbs (2:08:35) and I have been racing when I started university and, seeing what they could accomplish in the marathon, it made me think I could do that one day.

"I definitely thought there is no reason I couldn't run 2:08 one day. We had great weather today today and an incredible pacer."

John Gay a 2021 Tokyo Olympic finalist in the 3,000m steeplechase had intended to make his marathon debut in Toronto a year ago but a back injury forced him to withdraw. Instead he ran in Ottawa (2:14:16) this past May. Today he was the last of the Davies' challengers to fall away but hung on for the silver medal with a new personal best of 2:13:01.

The bronze medal went to Perry MacKinnon who also achieved a personal best with his 2:13:35 performance.

Another notable performance was turned in by Jennifer MacDonell who set a new W70-4 World record with a time of 3:23.54. The old record was 3:27:00.

Meanwhile Kristian Jamieson lowered his personal best to 2:27:31 moving closer to his target of beating his great, great grandfather, Tom Longboat's best of 2:24:24. Longboat, a Six Nations resident, ran that time while winning the 1907 Boston Marathon.

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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

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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/.