

On the waterfront

The marathon offers contrasting views of the city. The common thread is the waterfront, along which the route was planned, but from the financial district to a narrow spur of land jutting out into Lake Ontario, marathon runners experience a constantly changing backdrop to their efforts.

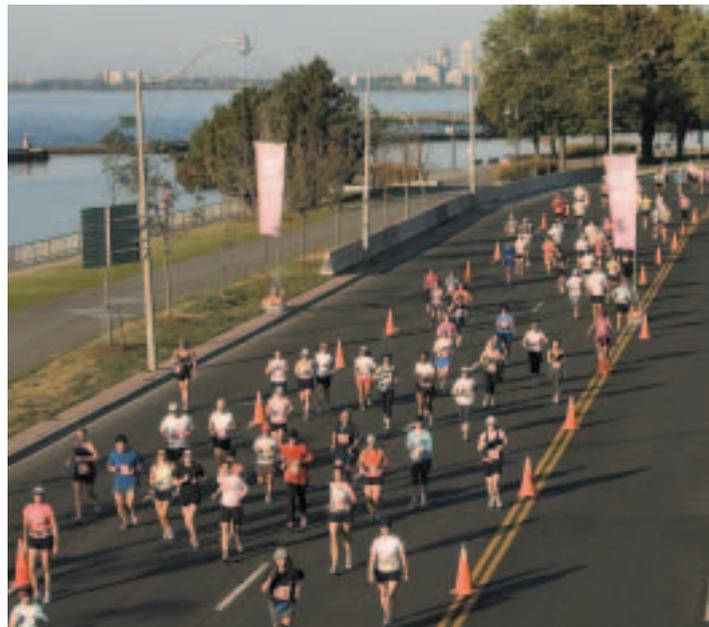
With a population of over 5.5 million Toronto is the fifth largest city in North America and has been designated "the world's most multicultural city" by the UN (49% of residents born outside Canada). Not "New York run by the Swiss" anymore, as Peter Ustinov once described it - it's still clean, safe, and things run on time - but it is now an amazing, small 'world city'.... vibrant, multicultural, with restaurants and music to suit.

The race takes full advantage of the city's ethnic diversity, offering 10 "Oases" where neighbourhoods gather together to cheer on the runners and entertain runners, spectators and themselves. Runners pass each of these locations twice, as the course comprises three main out and back sections from the city

centre. The centres capture Toronto's multiculturalism and vibrancy: from Bloor West/Ukrainina on the west End, to Parkdale's Little Poland, to Little Italy, Little Asia, Caribbean, and Little India, complete with samosas, bhangra, and wonderful costumed dancers. Little Asia usually has more than 15 bands, fan dancers and lion dancers performing.

The event has grown in size and ambition alongside the city. Started as a half marathon and 5km run back in 1990 when, alongside Philadelphia, it was one of the first big-city half marathons in North America. Inaugural Olympic Women's Marathon Champion Joan Benoit won the first two editions, and male winners included US Olympian Ed Eyestone and Mexico's Alejandro Cruz. The event adopted its now trademark route along the waterfront back in 1999. The flat, fast course proved so popular that a full marathon option was added the following year.

In 2003, when local Ed Whitlock ran 2:59:10 at age 72, the race rally took off. Whitlock remains the only



person over 70 to run under three hours, and has done this three times - twice on the Toronto course and once in the Rotterdam Marathon. In the same year, at age 92, Fauja Singh ran 5:40:04 to the wild acclamation of the local South Indian community and to the rewarding appreciation of adidas, who made him the star of a sustained worldwide poster campaign. Numbers doubled for 2004, among whom was "The Joggler", who has since simultaneously jogged and juggled his way around the course, winning back his Guinness world best for the feat this year with a time of 2:50:09.

This year 12,500 people participated in the 18th edition of the Half Marathon and 5km and the 8th edition of the marathon, coming from 34 countries, more than 40 US states and all Canadian provinces. Half and full marathon runners start at 07:00 in the city centre, heading west along Lakeshore Boulevard to the first turnaround point. On reaching 18km the 6400 half marathoners

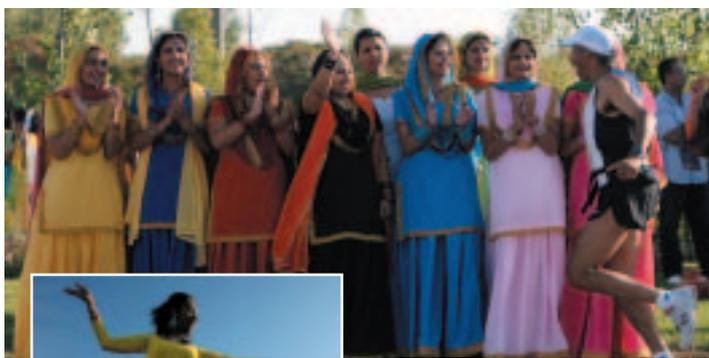
branched off to head towards the finish, while 2700 marathon runners continued through the city centre before turning south on to a second out-and-back section along a narrow spit that juts out into Lake Ontario, accommodating a single road and parkland wilderness. Looking across the water runners get wonderful views of the city, featuring the 553.3m tall CN Tower, second tallest building in the world.

Clear skies, low humidity, little or no wind, and a temperature around 12°C at the start presented near-perfect conditions. Carefully-drilled pacemakers escorted the lead pack of seven to halfway in 65:00. During this time, as the elite competition shaped up, the 5km run was started at 07:45 with another 2400 adults alongside 1000 Scotiabank Marathon KIDS, who had previously run a total of 37km: 1km or 2km a day since going back to school. Mayor David Miller gave out medals and the Mayor's Certificate of Fitness to the children.

By 30km, as the mass runners were enjoying the view from offshore, the lead group was down to five, and shaping up for a thrilling duel over the final stages. The turn at the eastern end of the course in The Beaches neighbourhood comes at 33km and runners then head back towards the finish. Over these final kilometres the leaders finally parted ways until only John Kelai and last year's winner Daniel Rono were left.

Rono surged just before 41km and opened up a gap of some 30m. Television commentators "called it" — Rono had won. Then Kelai

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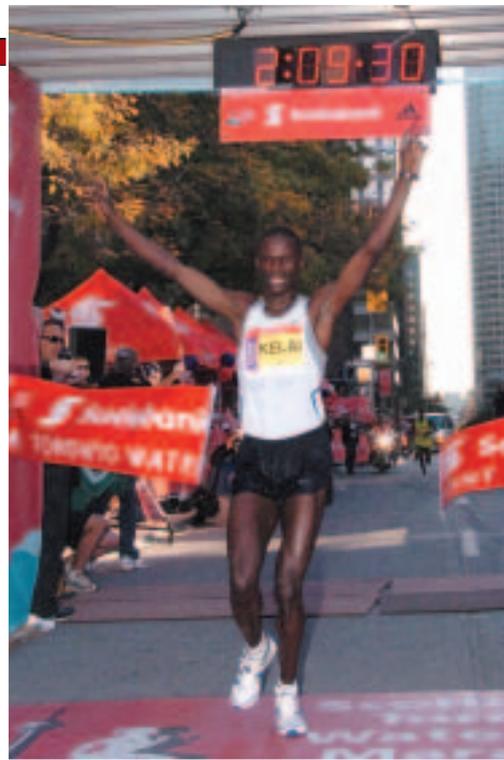


made his move. As they turned onto Wellington Street with 600m to go, he was closing. At 300m to go he blew by Rono for the victory. Both Kelai and Rono finally surpassed the long-standing Canadian all-comers record of 2:09:55 set way back in 1976 by the Montreal Olympic Champion Waldemar Cierpinski.

There are 45,000 Ethiopians in Toronto, and a weekly Ethiopian newspaper (there are also daily newspapers in Italian and Chinese). Practically everyone in the world has a relative or friend in Toronto, and on 30 September most of the Ethiopians were celebrating Haile Gebrselassie's new world record of 2:04:26, set in Berlin earlier in the day.

Perhaps over-enthusied by it, Aisha Gigi went through 10km in 33:35, and halfway in 72:13. She faded badly in the later stages but still set a new women's course record. In marked contrast, veteran Malgorzata Sobanska of Poland ran a very even, controlled race, but just ran out of waterfront in closing the gap on Gigi.

Over the past five years winning times have been consistently lowered and have now made the event one of the few sub-2:10 races in North America. That's why elite



runners come to the race, but for those seeking other experiences Niagara Falls is only 90 minutes away. It is and two hours to Algonquin Park where Canada's legendary outdoors and autumnal colours are on display. A perfect time to visit for both running in the morning (10C) and sightseeing in the afternoon (20-22C).

RESULT

MEN:			
1	John KELAI	KEN	2:09:30
2	Daniel RONO	KEN	2:09:36
3	Kasime ADILO	ETH	2:10:20
4	Simon WANGAI	KEN	2:10:53
5	Henry KAPYAI	KEN	2:13:51
6	Edilberto M HERNANDEZ	MEX	2:15:02
7	Joseph MUTISO	KEN	2:15:28
8	Feyissa TUSSE	ETH	2:17:11
9	Scott WINTON	NZL	2:17:15
10	Danny KASSAP	CAN	2:17:21

WOMEN:			
1	Asha GIGI	ETH	2:33:16
2	Malgorzata SOBANSKA	POL	2:34:21
3	Alevtina BIKTMIROVA	RUS	2:34:54
4	Alice BRAHAM	GBR	2:41:08
5	Alicia RODRIGUEZ	MEX	2:43:43
6	Jenny CLAGUE	GBR	2:44:07
7	Melissa GACEK	CAN	2:45:06
8	Lisa HARVEY	CAN	2:48:48
9	Janelle MORRISON	CAN	2:49:39
10	Ariana Q SALAZAR	MEX	2:55:05

HALF MARATHON:			
MEN:			
1	Pius KORIR	CAN	1:05:10
2	Giitah MACHARIA	CAN	1:05:15
3	Joseph NSENGIYUMVA	CAN	1:05:20

WOMEN:			
1	Pauline GITHUKA	CAN	1:18:10
2	Sarah DILLABAUGH	CAN	1:19:21
3	Paula WILTSE	CAN	1:20:03

RACE CONTACT DETAILS

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Full race contact listings start on page 70

ferrara marathon INTERNATIONAL

km. 42,195 km. 21,097

30

Sunday 9th March 2008

Ferrara - Italy

MARATONA KM. 42,195

HALFMARATHON KM. 21,097

200 ATHLETES WILL BE AWARDED PRIZES.

INFO: ferraramarathon

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