



# For Immediate Release

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## Misplaced Turn-around Nullifies Record Times at 2019 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile

*Race organizers will pay \$13,500 to elite athletes who otherwise would have qualified for time bonuses*

**April 12, 2019, Washington, DC:** Organizers of the 2019 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, run last Sunday, April 7 in our Nation's Capital, announced today that a semi-circle of cones on the revised course marking the turn-around point on Ohio Drive on an out-and-back segment between miles three and four had been misplaced. The net effect of that was to shorten the 10-mile course by 240 feet, negating the apparent American record time run of 46:00 run by **Stanley Kebenei**.

Despite the shortened route taken by the runners, race organizers will go ahead and pay Kebenei the \$10,000 record bonus for posting a time faster than **Greg Meyer's** American record of 46:13, set here in 1983. The Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run also pays \$1,000 and \$750 each year to the first two men and women who run times better than 46:00 and 52:00 minutes, respectively. Race winners **Jemal Yimer** (45:36) and **Rosemary Wanjiru**, (50:42) and second place finishers **Josphat Tanui** (45:38) and **Gotyotm Gebreslase** (50:47) will be paid those time bonuses; their times were well under the established time bonus benchmarks.

Event Director Phil Stewart said, "The organizers profoundly regret this unfortunate error in an event which for 47 years has prided itself on organizational excellence and support for elite athletes as well as the masses of runners who follow them. We have taken every step possible to make our bonus winners whole again. Clearly this is not the ending we wanted to an outstanding weekend with perfect running conditions, nearly \$100,000 in prize money and bonuses paid out, and \$400,000 raised for Children's Miracle Network."

Due to road construction, the course for this year's race had to be adjusted just a few weeks before the date of the event. The revised course was then measured and certified in accordance with international course measurement standards, and record times would have been valid if the course was run as measured. Unfortunately, that was not the case. Later analysis showed that the turn-around on Ohio Drive in West Potomac Park had been misplaced on race morning. Sadly, an application for recognition of Kebenei's effort being an American record will not be submitted to USATF. Rosemary Wanjiru also ran an apparent record - fastest U.S. all-comers time in a women's only race - which will also go unrecognized, even though she finished one minute and two seconds faster than the time of 51:44, set here in 2007 by **Tebya Erkesso**. Race organizers do not offer a bonus for U.S. all-comers records.\* Wanjuri's time will not be considered as an event record either, leaving intact Colleen de Reuck's women's event record of 51:16.

As they did in 2015 when a traffic accident necessitated re-routing the race route at the last minute, which resulted in runners running a shorter course, race organizers will adjust all runners' pace per mile in official race results to reflect the fact that they only ran 9.96 miles this year. There were 17,656 finishers in this year's 10 mile.

*\* All-comers records are defined as the fastest time run by an individual of any nationality on U.S. soil.*

**About the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile:**

The 2019 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run marked the 18th year of title sponsorship by Credit Union Miracle Day. Since 2002, over \$9.5 million has been raised for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals including \$400,000 this year.

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, organized by Cherry Blossom, Inc., a 501c(3) chapter of the Road Runners Club of America, is known as "The Runner's Rite of Spring®" in the Nation's Capital. The staging area for the event is on the Washington Monument Grounds Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc., a consortium of credit unions and credit union suppliers in partnership with CUNA Mutual Group and PSCU, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run, 5K Run-Walk and Kids' Run. Other sponsors include Garmin, the presenting technology sponsor; and supporting sponsors E-Trade, Gatorade, Gold's Gym, Honey Stinger, Mamma Lucia, MedStar Sports Medicine, ParkMobile, Peet's Coffee, Potomac River Running, Suburban Solutions, Under Armour and UPS.

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