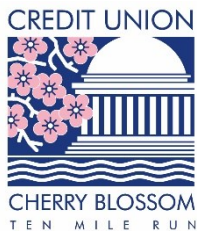


[Contact Keith Peters](#) for race-day media credentials. Space on media trucks (one for the men's race and one for the women's race) is extremely limited; please call 307-690-6803 prior to race day to ensure seating. TV crews should also call 307-690-6803 in advance to secure parking for vehicles on Jefferson Drive SW on race morning.

Please note: There will be very limited space on the finish line for photographers. Access to this area will require a special credential and will be determined by the Media Coordinator. Please be respectful of race officials and volunteers as they try to keep the area clear and safe for all involved.

All of the latest race information is available at [www.CherryBlossom.org](http://www.CherryBlossom.org), including an extensive [media guide](#), which is available for download as a PDF. A schedule of race weekend activities is attached at the end of this release.



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Elite Runners Lead Mass Celebration Of The Runners' Rite Of Spring At The 2022 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile

***Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland to welcome runners to Washington Monument Grounds, then run in the 10-mile race herself on Sunday, April 3.***

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**March 30, 2022, Washington, DC:** Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run (CUCB) organizers are looking forward to welcoming a full field of runners back to the Washington Monument Grounds this coming Sunday, April 3, for the 49<sup>th</sup> running of the classic 10-mile race and its younger sibling, the 5K Run-Walk. With \$92,500 in prize money and potential bonuses on offer, race officials are looking forward to fireworks up front of both the men's and women's races. (The elite women will start first, at 7:18 am, followed by the men and the masses at 7:30 am.)

Event Director Phil Stewart said, “It just feels so right to be running the event again in the spring time where it belongs for the first time since 2019. We are excited to welcome back our full field of runners at last, and are looking forward to some exciting performances by our competition- starved elite athletes.”

The last time runners gathered to celebrate *The Runners’ Rite of Spring*® in our Nation’s Capitol was April 7, 2019. Covid conspired against holding in-person events in April 2020 and 2021, but race organizers were able to hold a Covid-safe event on September 12, 2021, calling it *The Runners’ Delight of Fall*. That day a combined total of 7565 runners finished the Ten Mile and 5K Run-Walk; typically the combined total number of finishers is around 20,000.

One eager runner will do double duty on Sunday: Secretary of the Interior **Deb Haaland**, a long-time runner, will address runners in a ceremony at 7:11 a.m., just prior to the presentation of the colors and advanced start for elite and seeded women. Following her remarks, Haaland, a finisher of numerous marathons, including the 2021 Boston Marathon, will join fellow runners on a 10-mile tour of many of the major Washington, DC Memorials ultimately under her purview.

A predominantly American group of elite women will be first off the starting line on Sunday, with Great Britain’s **Stephanie Twell** being the lone foreigner. Twell has the fastest marathon and half marathon personal bests among the women (2:26:40 in Frankfurt in 2019 and 1:08:55 in Houston in 2020), and she placed 8<sup>th</sup> in the 2019 CUCB Ten Mile in an adjusted time of 53:10 (the 2019 course ended up being only 9.96 miles long; Twell’s time for that distance was 52:58).

The woman with the fastest CUCB personal best is **Carrie Verdon**, who ran 52:51 to finish 7<sup>th</sup> overall and 5<sup>th</sup> American at last September’s USATF 10 Mile Championships, held in conjunction with CUCB 2021. Verdon then went on to run her marathon personal best of 2:31:51 to place 8<sup>th</sup> four weeks later at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon. She set another personal best of 1:10:11 at the April 2021 Valley O.NE half marathon in Valley, Nebraska, with half marathon times being the most common point of comparison among both the top women and men in this year’s CUCB Ten Mile.

Indeed, the other favorite among the women, **Sarah Pagano**, has a faster half marathon personal best of 1:09:41, which she set in 2021 at the Las Vegas Gold Half Marathon while placing 2<sup>nd</sup>. Pagano has been running well this year, setting a personal best for 15K of 49:41 at the Gate River Run 15K in Jacksonville, Florida, which was good for 4<sup>th</sup> place. She also ran 1:10:57 at this year’s NYC Half Marathon just a couple of weeks ago.

Four other women come into the race with sub-1:11 half marathon personal bests: **Kim Conley** set hers (1:09:44) when she won the 2015 Aramco Houston Half Marathon; **Paige Stoner** ran 1:10:34 to place 11<sup>th</sup> at the 2022 Aramco

Houston Half Marathon; **Elaina Tabb** ran 1:10:44 at the 2019 Aramco Houston Half Marathon; and **Susanna Sullivan** set her personal best of 1:10:50 at the 2021 Trials of Miles Project 13.1 in Chandler, Arizona.

Susanna Sullivan, however, has something none of the other women have — six CUCB Ten Mile finishes between 2013-21. In fact, Sullivan has more CUCB finishers than all the other elite women do in total. Her highest finish was achieved in 2014 when she placed 8<sup>th</sup> overall and 4<sup>th</sup> American; Sullivan finished 12<sup>th</sup> overall and 8<sup>th</sup> American last fall.

### **Tuttle Taylor, Julia**

**Griffey, Lexi Zeis, Molly Bookmyer, Katja Goldring and Bridget Belyeu** round out the elite women's field.

One interesting note about the predominantly American field: assuming Stephanie Twell, the lone foreigner among the women, places somewhere in the top-10, nine women will double-dip — meaning they'll take home prize money for placing in the top 10 in both the international race, which offers a prize purse of \$40,000, and the U.S.-only race, which offers a prize purse of \$25,000. With only five foreign runners in the men's field, double-dipping will be the order of the day for American men as well.

In addition to the international and U.S.-only prize money, bonuses on offer include \$10,000 for a World Record (44:23 men/51:23 women), another \$10,000 for an American Record (46:13 men/51:23 women) — either of which will be split evenly among any men and women record breakers — as well as time bonuses of \$1,000 and \$750 for the first two runners to break 46:00 for men or 52:00 for women. Finally, there is a special prize pool of \$1500/\$1000/\$500 for both men and women who have taken part in the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) [RunPro Camp](#) or [Roads Scholar](#) programs.

As mentioned previously, half marathon times may be the best point of comparison and conjecture for the men's field, just as they were for the women.

Among the Kenyan men entered, **Nicholas Kosimbei** has run the fastest half marathon this year, running 1:00:36 at the Publix Atlanta Half Marathon in February. He has yet to break 60 minutes for the distance, however, which two of his compatriots have. **Wilfred Kimetei** ran 59:40 at the 2018 RAK Half Marathon, and he also ran a quick 1:00:44 at the 2022 Aramco Houston Half Marathon for 5<sup>th</sup> place. While **Shadrack Kimining** boasts a slightly quicker personal best of 59:27 from the 2020 Aramco Houston Half Marathon, he was two places and nine seconds behind Kimetei in Houston this year.

Also deserving mention and a lot of respect is Kenyan **Stephen Sambu**. He's not quite as fast over the half marathon distance, with a personal best of 1:00:41 from the 2019 Aramco Houston Half Marathon, but he is a two-time winner of the

CUCB Ten Mile in 2014 and 2015, and finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the race in 2019. Sambu's 10-mile personal best of 45:29, set in his 2014 CUCB victory, is the second fastest time ever run on the full Ten Mile course.

Other notable international runners include Kenyan **Charles Wanjiku**, who has spent a lot of his career racing on the road and track in Japan, and Libyan **Mohamed Hrezi**, who set his personal best for 10 miles of 46:58 at CUCB 2018 while placing 7<sup>th</sup>.

Among the American men, **Diego Estrada** boasts the fastest half marathon best of 1:00:51, but that dates all the way back to the USATF Half Marathon Championships in 2015. His most recent performance was a personal best of 45:08 for 15K at the Gate River Run 15K. **Futsum Zienasellassie** set his personal best of 1:01:21 at the 2021 USATF Half Marathon Championships in Hardeeville, South Carolina, and showed great early season form with his recent 6<sup>th</sup> place finish in a personal best time of 43:29 at the Gate River Run 15K. And Zienasellassie is no stranger to the CUCB Ten Mile, having finished 6<sup>th</sup> overall, 2<sup>nd</sup> American in 2019. His 10-mile personal best of 47:01 was set last fall at the Broad Street Run in Philadelphia.

**Reid Buchanan** ran his personal best of 1:01:45 at the 2020 Aramco Houston Half Marathon, and recently ran 27:52.74 for a track 10,000-meter personal best at The Ten in San Juan Capistrano, California. (Buchanan does not have a recorded best for 10 miles.)

**Brogan Austin** and **Joel Reichow** round out the field of American men, with both having set their half marathon personal bests of 1:01:52 and 1:02:38 respectively at the 2020 Aramco Houston Half Marathon. Reichow's best time for 10 miles was set at CUCB 2021 (47:36), while Austin's 10 mile best dates back to the 2018 USATF 10 Mile Championships in St. Paul, Minnesota (47:57).

Elite athlete bios may be found on the event website [here](#), the comprehensive media guide can be viewed [here](#), and copies of all press releases relevant to the 2022 event are [here](#).

The flat, fast course makes the event popular among runners of all ages chasing after age group records. One of them is ninety-year-old George Yannakakis of Towson, Maryland, who hopes to challenge the American age 90-94 age group record of 2:35:52, set by James Ramsey at the Crim 10 Mile in Flint, Michigan, back in 1998. Yannakakis, who has completed the race 28 times since 1984, winning his age group 12 times during that span, topped the 85-89 age group in 2019 with a time of 1:50:01. [Click here](#) to view all of Yannakakis' performances.

A detailed timeline of race related activities follows information about the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run and its title sponsor below. Here are a couple of key events on the time line to note:

- The kick-off press conference for the Capitol Hill Competition will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, April 1, at the National Building Museum. There are 62 teams entered in this competition, with 39 teams representing the Senate, 20 teams from the House of Representatives, and two teams from federal agencies. Two-time 5000-meter U.S. Olympian Kim Conley will be the featured guest at the press conference before running the race on Sunday.
- The Health and Fitness Expo Presented by Wegmans also takes place at the National Building Museum from 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on Friday and 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. The expo fills the floor with a cornucopia of vendors providing every type of product imaginable to runners after they pick-up their race bibs and t-shirts.
- After an extended Covid-caused hiatus, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Kids Run returns on Saturday, April 2, at the National Building Museum. The ½ mile run for kids 5-10 years old will see the first wave of kids start at 9:30 am. Registration is still open and can be found [here](#), along with general information about the Kids Run.
- The Credit Union Cherry Blossom Virtual Run presented by Medstar, an official partner event of the National Cherry Blossom Festival, is running throughout the festival. Registration for the Virtual Run closes on Sunday, April 10, with complete information and the registration link [here](#). Virtual Runs must be completed by Sunday, April 17, and results uploaded by April 30.

Thanks to credit union title sponsorship since 2002, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has raised over \$10 million for the Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, including \$180,059 in 2021.

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

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 and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, DC Memorials. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, a consortium of 170 premier children’s hospitals across North America. About one-third of the funds raised support Washington, DC’s own Children’s National (“Children’s Hospital”). The event also funds the Road Runners Club of America’s “Roads Scholar” program designed to support up-and-coming U.S. distance running talent.

Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc., a consortium of credit unions and credit union suppliers, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run, 5K Run-Walk and Kids’ Run. Presenting sponsors include ASICS, Discovery, Garmin, MedStar Health and Wegmans; supporting sponsors include CO-OP Financial Service, CUNA Mutual Group, PCSU, Potomac River Running, Gatorade Endurance, Suburban Solutions and UPS.

The event is a proud member of the PRRO Circuit ([PRRO.org](http://PRRO.org)), a series of major non-marathon prize money road races in Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; and Utica, NY. The circuit is committed to a drug-free sport and funds drug testing at all circuit events in compliance with the standards of international and U.S. drug testing authorities.

In addition to being sanctioned by USA Track & Field and the Road Runners Club of America, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has earned Gold Level Inspire Certification from the Council for Responsible Sport in recognition of its legacy of commitment to sustainability and thoughtful resource management.

To learn more, visit [www.cherryblossom.org](http://www.cherryblossom.org) and follow the event on social media @CUCB and #CUCB2022.

### ***About Credit Union Miracle Day:***

Credit Union Miracle Day is a partnership of over 100 credit unions, CUSOs and partner organizations united to sponsor the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run promoting awareness of the credit union difference and benefitting Children's Miracle Network Hospitals nationwide.

### ***About America's Credit Unions:***

Credit unions are financial cooperatives that provide consumers choices for financial services such as checking accounts, investments and loans of all kinds including mortgages. Funds are federally insured, but unlike banks, there are no stockholders at credit unions. Earnings are returned to member-owners in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates, low or no-fee products and services. The credit union philosophy of placing members' needs first is why more than 115 million Americans do their banking at a credit union.

## **RACE WEEKEND SCHEDULE:**

### **Friday, April 1, 2022**

#### **National Building Museum**

**2:30 P.M.** Capitol Hill Competition press conference at National Building Museum

**3:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.** Expo open at National Building Museum (packet pickup for Ten Mile Run, 5K Run-Walk closes at 7:45 P.M.)

### **Saturday, April 2, 2022**

#### **National Building Museum**

**9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.** Expo open at National Building Museum (packet pickup for Ten Mile Run and 5K Run-Walk closes at 4:45 P.M.)

**9:15 A.M.** Opening ceremony for Credit Union Cherry Blossom Kids Run on west lawn of National Building Museum

**9:30 A.M.** First wave of five-year-old runners start

### **Sunday, April 3, 2022**

#### **Washington Monument Grounds**

**5:00 A.M.** Metro Service opens for 10 Mile and 5K runners, spectators and volunteers

**7:11 A.M.** Welcoming remarks by Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland

**7:15 A.M.** Presentation of the colors and singing of the National Anthem by Jonny Hartwell

**7:18 A.M. Advance start for elite and seeded women**  
**7:22 A.M.** Charity check presentation at start line  
**7:30 A.M. 10 Mile start for elite international and U.S. men** as part of the first mass start wave (five additional waves will depart every 3-5 minutes)  
**7:53 A.M.** Final wave of 10 mile starts  
**8:00 A.M.** Starting line sealed; no late starters allowed  
**8:09 A.M. Expected arrival time of female winner**  
**8:15 A.M. Expected arrival time of male winner**  
**9:00 A.M. 5K Run-Walk starts:** Independence Ave., near Sylvan Theater  
**9:10 A.M.** 10 mile course closes at 5 miles for entrants moving slower than 14-minute-per-mile pace  
**10:00 A.M.** Random awards begin at stage  
**10:05 A.M.** 5K Run-Walk course closes  
**10:15 A.M.** Formal awards ceremony begins (no age group and team awards given out on race day due to number switching)  
**10:18 A.M.** 10 mile course closes – All runners must be off the 10 mile course. Access to finish line will be sealed at 15th and Independence Ave., SW.  
**8:00 P.M.** Results at [www.cherryblossom.org](http://www.cherryblossom.org)

— End —

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*Please do not reply to this email; this address is not monitored. Please address all inquiries to Keith Peters at [kpeters@cherryblossom.org](mailto:kpeters@cherryblossom.org).*

Credit Union Cherry Blossom, Inc. | [www.cherryblossom.org](http://www.cherryblossom.org)