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With the move of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 5K to Saturday at 9:15 a.m. this year, there will now be one press truck for the 5K and two for the 10 Mile on Sunday (one for the women's race, which starts at 7:18 a.m., and one for the men's race at 7:30 a.m.). Space on all media trucks is extremely limited, so call ahead to ensure seating. TV crews should also call in advance to secure parking for vehicles near the 5K start/finish area at Freedom Plaza on Saturday, and on Jefferson Drive SW between 14th and 15th Streets on Sunday morning.

Please note: *There will be very limited space at the 5K and 10 Mile finish lines for photographers. Access to these areas will require special credentials 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.*

Links to all relevant media resources can be found on the Credit Union Cherry Blossom website [here](#).

Bonuses Totaling \$50,000 Could Produce Record-setting Times at 50th Annual Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile

USATF National 10 Mile Championship Lures Top Americans to Chase Open, American, and RRCA prize money and bonuses worth \$139,500; PRRO prize money could add another \$2,500-\$10,000.

March 29, 2023, Washington, DC: Peak bloom of Washington DC's iconic cherry trees may have passed for this year, but peak performances are fully expected for this coming Sunday's 50th running of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile (CUCB), also known as *The Runner's Rite of Spring*®, as 16,000 runners take to the streets. With the race serving as the USATF 10 Mile National Championships, the RRCA National 10 Mile Championship, and the 2022-23 PRRO Circuit Championship, there will be plenty of titles, prize money, time incentives, and record bonuses to go around as the event bolsters its reputation as the city's only running event attracting world class athletes. (The elite women will start first, at 7:18 a.m., followed by the elite men and the masses at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 2.)

The 50th Annual CUCB 10 Mile will offer a guaranteed prize purse of \$71,000 (\$40,000 in the international division, \$25,000 for Americans, and \$6,000 for athletes eligible to receive RRCA RunPro Camp Alumni Development Awards), plus \$53,500* in World Best, American Record and sub-46 and sub-52 minute time incentives for men and women respectively.

In addition, winners of the 2022-23 PRRO Circuit events (the 2022 Lilac Bloomsday 12K in Spokane, WA, Boilermaker 15K in Utica, NY and CUCB) are eligible to compete for the \$10,000 PRRO Super Bonus, which is awarded to eligible PRRO Circuit winners (bonus split if an eligible male and female win the PRRO titles). As last year's CUCB women's champion, **Susanna Sullivan** would earn the PRRO Super Bonus by defending her title; if she places second through 10th, she will take home the \$1,500 PRRO Event Champion's Bonus. If a non-eligible athlete wins the PRRO Circuit Championship, he or she will earn a \$2,500 bonus in addition to the prize money at Cherry Blossom.

In the women's elite race, Sullivan faces some talented challengers in defending her title. Twenty-one-year-old **Sarah Chelangat** from Uganda comes into the race as the highest ranked female competitor in World Athletics Road Rankings (17th) based on her consistently quick performances over 10K in the past year; she does not, however, have a 10-mile time on her running resume. But Chelangat had better respect her elders, especially 38-year-old Kenyan **Caroline Rotich**, who won Cherry Blossom in 2013, and placed fourth in 2021, just 12 seconds behind winner **Nell Rojas**.

Rojas returns to see if she can win her second USATF 10 Mile National Championship in our Nation's Capital. She'll be joined by 39-year-old **Sara Hall**, who has fourth and sixth place finishes in previous CUCB 10 Mile races (2014 and 2021 respectively). Last year's second and third place runners, **Carrie Verdon** and **Paige (Stoner) Wood** will also be on the starting line. The list of other top women includes: Ethiopian **Anna Dibaba** and Americans **Emma Grace Hurley**, **Lauren Hagens**, and **Diane Nurkuri**.

A 21-year-old may be the favorite in the men's race as well. Ethiopian **Tsegay Kidanu** recently won the Publix Atlanta Half Marathon, finishing almost two minutes ahead of last year's CUCB third place finisher **Shadrack Kimining**. Kenyan **Charles Langat**, however, boasts the fastest 10-mile best among the elite men (45:14) and the highest World Athletics Road Race Ranking of 12th.

A number of leading American men will take a shot at Greg Meyer's 40-year-old American Record time of 46:13 set at Cherry Blossom in 1983. (Meyer will be holding one end of the finish line tape for the American champion). American **Emmanuel Bor** has the highest World Athletics Road Race Ranking (53rd), though his younger brother **Hillary Bor** comes into the race with the fastest personal best over 10 miles. (Hillary ran 46:06 at the 2022 USATF 10 Mile National Championships; however, the race was run on a point-to-point course that was not record-eligible.) Other top American men include: 2016 CUCB champion **Sam Chelanga**, and 2021 USATF 10 Mile National Champion and CUCB second place overall **Abbabiya (Biya) Simbassa**.

The list of other top men includes: Canadian **Ben Flanagan**; American **Jacob Thompson**, who passed five men in the finish straight of this year's Cowtown Half Marathon.

* If World Best times and American Records for men and women are set by the winners at the event (e.g. four records set), the \$50,000 record bonus would be split into four \$12,500 shares. If only one World or American record is set for either men or women, the athlete setting the record would get the full \$50,000. If an American sets an American record and no other World or American records are set, he or she would receive the entire \$50,000 as well. Currently, the times to beat are as follows:

- **Haile Gebreselassie's** (ETH) World Athletics Best of 44:24, run at the Tilburg 10 Mile in Tilburg, Netherlands, September 4, 2005;
- **Keira D'Amato's** World Athletics Best in a women's only race of 51:23, run at the UpDawg 10 Mile in Washington, DC, November 24, 2020;
- **Greg Meyer's** American Record of 46:13, run at the Cherry Blossom 10 Mile in Washington, DC, March 27, 1983; and
- **Keira D'Amato's** previously mentioned World Best 51:23, which is also the American Record for a women's only race.

For reference, the fastest time among the men's field is Charles Langat's 45:14, run at the 2022 Dam tot Damloop in The Netherlands. Among the elite women, Nell Rojas's 52:13 from 2021 is the best 10-mile time among this year's elite entrants. Abbabiya Simbassa's 46:18 from 2021 is the best CUCB mark among the American men, while Nell's 52:13 is, of course, the leading mark among the American women.

Not to be ignored when looking ahead to this coming weekend is the reimagined Credit Union Cherry Blossom 5K presented by REI. What began as a two-mile fun run in 1973, and grew first into a 3K, then a timed 5K Run-Walk in 2006 — and always held on 10 Mile race day — is now a standalone event with over 7,500 entrants scheduled for 9:15 a.m. on Saturday, April 1, with packet pickup and start/finish activities taking place at Freedom Plaza (14th and Pennsylvania Ave., NW). With all the upgrades to the 5K, the level of competition in the 5K has also changed a bit: no man has ever run faster than 16:05 at Cherry Blossom, but 11 men have entered this year with faster bests, including **Gavin Parpart** and **Johan Fagerberg** (14:01 and 14:02 PBs respectively); and four women have run faster than the CUCB event best time of 18:29, including **Rachel Gallap** and **Casey Greenwalt** (17:45 and 17:59 respectively).

The inaugural Cherry Blossom Ten Mile in 1973 was won by **Sam Bair**, in a time of 51:22; the women's winner was **Kathrine Switzer**, in a time of 1:11:19; 127 men and 12 women ran that first race. **Bill Rodgers** holds the honor of most victories, with four consecutive wins between 1978 and 1981. Three women have each won the race three times: **Julie Shea** (1975-77), **Lisa Weidenbach Rainsberger** (1985, '89 and '90) and **Lineth Chepkurui** (2008-10). **Ben Beach** leads all Cherry Blossom finishers with an active streak of 49 years. Switzer, Rodgers and current women's course record holder from 1998 **Colleen De Reuck** are entered in the 10 Mile, while Rainsberger will be running the 5K. A comprehensive media guide detailing a wide variety of statistics from the first 49 CUCB races is available [here](#).

Thanks to Credit Union Miracle Day's title sponsorship since 2002, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has raised over \$10.2 million for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, including \$323,000 in 2022. The 2023 fundraising total will be announced on race weekend.

2023 Event Timetable

March 20 — April 16, 2023

Anytime, everywhere: Credit Union Cherry Blossom Virtual Run.
Registration closes April 9, see CherryBlossom.org for details.

Friday, March 31 National Building Museum

3:00 P.M. — 8:00 P.M.

Health and Fitness Expo presented by Wegmans
(Packet pickup for 10 Mile, 5K and Kids' Run closes at 7:45 P.M.)

4:00 P.M. — 7:30 P.M.

[Speakers Program](#) featuring *Running While Black* author Alison Mariella Désir and others in National Building Museum Auditorium

5:00 P.M. — 7:30 P.M.

Book signings in the expo hall

**Saturday, April 1
Freedom Plaza**

7:00 A.M. — 8:45 A.M.

5K race bib and t-shirt pickup

9:00 A.M. — 9:15 A.M.

Opening Ceremonies for Credit Union Cherry Blossom 5K presented by REI

9:15 A.M. — 10:30 A.M.

Red, White and Blue Waves start at 9:15, 9:19 and 9:25, respectively

Starting line closes at 9:40

5K course closes at 10:30

10:15 A.M.

5K Awards Ceremony

**Saturday, April 1
National Building Museum**

9:00 A.M. — 5:00 P.M.

Health and Fitness Expo presented by Wegmans

(Packet pickup for 10 Mile closes at 4:45 P.M.)

9:10 A.M.

Opening Ceremony for Credit Union Cherry Blossom Kids Run presented by REI

9:30 A.M. — 10:30 A.M.

Credit Union Cherry Blossom Kids Run presented by REI

(Warm-up activities begin at 8:00 A.M.)

11:00 A.M. — 4:00 P.M.

[Speakers Program](#) in National Building Museum Auditorium

12:00 P.M. — 4:00 P.M.

Book signings in the expo hall

**Sunday, April 2, 2023
Washington Monument Grounds**

6:00 A.M.

Bike Valet opens

6:15 A.M.

Bag Check opens

7:00 A.M.

Deadline for check in at media tent for anyone seeking press truck access — first come, first served

7:13 A.M.

Presentation of the colors by the Navy Ceremonial Guard and singing of the National Anthem by Washington Choral Arts Society

7:18 A.M.

Advance start for elite and seeded women

7:25 A.M.

Credit Union Miracle Day check presentation at start line

7:29 A.M.

Wheelchair start

7:30 A.M.

10 Mile start for elite international and U.S. men as well as the first of six mass start waves, five more of which will depart every 1-2 minutes thereafter

7:54 A.M.

Final wave of 10 Mile starts

8:00 A.M.

Starting line closed; no late starters allowed

8:09 A.M.

Expected arrival time of female winner

8:15 A.M.

Expected arrival time of male winner

9:10 A.M.

10 Mile course closes at 5-mile mark for entrants moving slower than 14-minutes-per-mile pace

10:00 A.M.

Random Awards begin at stage

10:15 A.M.

Formal awards ceremony begins (age group and team awards are not given out on race day)

10:18 A.M.

10 Mile course closes — all runners must exit the 10 mile course — access to finish line will be sealed at 15th and Independence Ave., S.W.

10:20 A.M.

10 Mile finish line closes

8:00 P.M.

Results posted at www.CherryBlossom.org

Sunday, April 9

Online registration closes for Credit Union Cherry Blossom Virtual Run; results will be accepted through April 16.

About the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile:

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom races, organized by Cherry Blossom, Inc., a 501c(3) chapter of the Road Runners Club of America, are known as “The Runner’s Rite of Spring®” in the Nation’s Capital. The staging area for Sunday’s 10 Mile is on the Washington Monument Grounds, and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, DC Memorials. In 2023, the re-imagined Saturday 5K will stage on Freedom Plaza and traverse the route of Presidential Inaugurations down Pennsylvania Avenue before crossing the National Mall in the shadow of the Capitol Building and returning by the same route. The Kids Run is staged at 9:30 a.m. Saturday on the grounds of the National Building Museum. All events serve 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 10 Mile, 5K, Kids Run and Virtual Run. Current presenting sponsors include ASICS, REI Co-op and Wegmans; supporting sponsors include CACI, Co-op Solutions, CUNA Mutual Group, Outside+, Gatorade Endurance, Guayaki, MedStar Health, PSCU, Potomac River Running, Suburban Solutions, The MO Apartments and UPS.

The 10 Mile is a proud member of the PRRO Circuit (PRRO.org), a series of this country’s classic non-marathon prize money road races with circuit stops in Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; and Utica, NY. The 2023 10 Mile will serve as the 2022-2023 PRRO Championship.

In addition to being sanctioned by USA Track & Field and the Road Runners Club of America, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom races have 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 and follow the event on social media @CUCB and #CUCB2023.

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 races, 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, and low or no-fee products and services. The credit union philosophy of placing members' needs first is why more than 131 million Americans do their banking at a credit union.

— End —



Please do not reply to this email; this address is not monitored. Please address all inquiries to Keith Peters at kpeters@cherryblossom.org.

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