



香港業餘田徑總會  
Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association



Standard Chartered  
Hong Kong Marathon  
渣打香港馬拉松  
2013



## Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2013 Elite International Runners to Battle for Titles

- International elite runners from 23 countries and regions will take part in the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2013
- 38 athletes from Asian countries and regions will race in the 14<sup>th</sup> Asian Marathon Championships.
- The top three men's and women's Marathon runners from 2012 return to compete in this year's race

**[Hong Kong, 22 February, 2013].** International elite runners from 23 countries and regions will compete at the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2013 in just two days. Following its upgrade to Silver Label Road Race status by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) the race is more eagerly anticipated than ever, especially since it has the added prestige of incorporating the 14<sup>th</sup> Asian Marathon Championships.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Asian Marathon Championships, a focus of this year's event, have attracted 38 top Asian runners to compete for the titles on offer. Although defending Men's Champion Qatar runner Mohammed Abduh Bakhet has had to withdraw due to injury, the field still contains 2008 Men's Runner-up Bat-Ochir Ser-Od from Mongolia and Kenzo Kawabata from Japan, and a fierce battle is expected. Kim Kum Ok from North Korea, Women's Champion of 2006 and 2008, will return to Hong Kong to battle for the title. She will be hard-pushed by Jin Lingling from China and Andreeva Iuliia from Kirghizistan, who has a personal best of 2hr 30min. Hong Kong runners Lai Hok Yan, Wun Yiu Cheong and Lai Ho Ki will represent Hong Kong in the men's category; Fan Sui Ping, Angelina Kong and Chow Chi Ngan will run for Hong Kong in the women's category.

Along with the Asian elite runners, the organizer has also invited overseas runners from countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya, renowned for their distance athletes. Adding to the excitement is the return of the top three men's marathon runners from 2012. Last year, Dereje Abera Ali from Ethiopia, Julius Kiplimo Maisei and James Kariuki Mbugua from Kenya crossed the finish line almost neck and neck, with all three breaking the record set in 1998 by Wolashe Belay. They will once again jostle for the champion's title this year, in what is sure to prove a gripping battle. Morocco athlete in the field is Rachid Kisri has a personal best time of 2:06:48. He poses a genuine title threat to last year's top three, and has the potential to break Ali's record from last year of 2:11:27. Speaking of his title defense this year, Ali said, "It will be of course very challenging. Last year I won by barely a second. With more and more top runners now competing in the Hong Kong Marathon, I will have to perform at my very best to repeat my win."

Misiker Demissie from Ethiopia was last year's women's Marathon champion, while Shitaye Gemechu from Ethiopia and Winfred Nyansikera from Kenya were runners-up. All three are back for this year's race. Including Demissie and Gemechu, four female runners in the field have personal best times of under 2 hours 27 minutes, three minutes faster than the current event record. The race is expected to be one of the most enthralling ever.

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Welcoming the athletes at a press conference today were Mr Benjamin Hung, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited, Mr Kwan Kee, Chairman of the Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association, and Mr William Ko, Chairman of the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2013 Organizing Committee. Paralympics Marathon medalist Henry Wanyoike and his guide Joseph Kibunja were also present to show support for the event, and to invite support for the Standard Chartered's global fundraising initiative "Seeing is Believing", one of the three beneficiaries of the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon Charity Programme.

In his speech welcoming the athletes, Mr Hung said, "For years we have been devoted to supporting designated charities through the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon Charity Programme, and up until last year's race, we had raised a cumulative total of over HKD30 million. Given the outstanding quality of this year's field, we believe the Marathon spirit will spread even further, encouraging more people than ever to RUN FOR A REASON."

Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association Chairman Mr Kwan Kee reflected on the international recognition the race is now receiving. "We have been constantly striving to improve the organization of the Marathon and the caliber of runners," he commented. "Our efforts have proved worthwhile, with the race being upgraded to a Silver Label Road Race and also this year incorporating the 14<sup>th</sup> Asian Marathon Championships, which have attracted 38 elite athletes from 20 Asian countries and regions. I would like to thank both the international runners here today and those who have supported us in the past. I wish them and our local distance runners the very best of luck and a great marathon experience."

Hong Kong elite runners are expected to perform with credit in the other events, with women's Half Marathon defending champion Yiu Kit Ching looking forward to repeating her win. The 2012 men's Half Marathon winner Gi Ka Man will be competing in the Marathon this year, giving Hong Kong-based Kiprotich Thomas, the 2011 Half Marathon Champion and 2012 1<sup>st</sup> runner up, an even better chance of returning to the top step of the podium. Champion of the 2012 men's 10 km race Chan Ka Ho will also be striving to retain his title.

Additional events will include the Leaders Cup, Corporate Challenge, SME Marathon Cup, Disciplined Forces Cup, the 2<sup>nd</sup> 3km wheelchair race, as well as a Half Marathon wheelchair race being held for the first time.

The Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon has received international Silver Label Road Race recognition, and the total prize money on offer has been raised to USD258,400.

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Photo 1

Benjamin Hung (Left), Chief Executive of Standard Chartered Hong Kong, William Ko (Right 1), Chairman of the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2013 Organizing Committee and Kwan Kee (Right 2), Chairman of the Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association (HKAAA) hit the gong together as a symbol of good fortune for the race, overseas and local runners.



Photo 2

Asian Marathon Championships runners put their national and regional flags on to the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon arch to highlight the top Asian athletes competing for the Asian Marathon Championships titles.



Photo 3

Runners received Chinese style folding fans with special wishes from the Organizer ahead of the race.

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Photo 4

From left: Wun Yiu Cheong, Lai Ho Ki, Chow Chi Ngan, Angelina Kong and Lai Hok Yan representing Hong Kong in the 14th Asian Marathon Championships.

~ End ~

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