

PRESS RELEASE  
September 5, 2020

## Prague 21.1 km – Ready for the Restart witnessed a half marathon world record!

The miracle is complete! Peres Jepchirchir set a new world record in women's only race. As part of the Prague 21.1 km - Ready for the Restart project, the Kenyan ran an amazing half marathon time of 1:05:34. The men's race was controlled by Kibiwott Kandie, his time of 58:38 is the fifth best time ever in history.

Peres Jepchirchir completely dominated the 16,5 laps of a 1.3-kilometer-long oval race in Prague's Letna Park. She left her rivals far behind after only 20 minutes in the race, going after her laurel in what became a big solo ride. "I am just happy and proud. Although I thought for a while that I could run at the limit of 65 minutes, I am also really happy with the time and especially the new record," Jepchirchir did not hide her emotions.

The president of RunCzech organizing committee Carlo Capalbo, who literally kicked the whole project off the ground with his team in just four weeks, was also full of smiles. "I don't even know what to say," he searched for the right words. "Organizing a world-class event in such a short time is unbelievable. I think that we have just created a model for other races around the world. This could be a model of how we can work in a pandemic. The end may be far away, but we will not give up," added Capalbo.

Prague on Saturday early morning (the start of the women's race was at 6:20) saw a really top spectacle. Women elite, usually paced by men, this time had to rely on themselves; Jepchirchir practically was running solo more than two-thirds of the race. "Running alone is really difficult, but the fact that I managed is all the more valuable," said the old-new record holder. Her performance was also praised by the chairman of the Czech Athletic Federation, Libor Varhaník. "Amazing, I am very glad that such a performance was successful in the Czech Republic. Peres ran alone, which makes her performance truly unique," he said.

Peres knows well how sweet the world record can be. In 2017, she was the fastest half marathoner of all time, when she ran 1:05:06 in the race with male pacers in Ras al-Khaimah. However, the acronym WR lasted only seven months behind her name, and today she is the seventh fastest woman in history. In the purely women's race, Peres captured the world maximum this morning with an overwhelming performance: her time of 1:05:34 is 37 seconds better than the previous maximum of Netsanet Gudeta (1:06:11 from Valencia 2018).

Brenda Jepleting (1:07:07) ran for silver. "I was supposed to pace up to the tenth kilometer, but Peres needed to keep up her pace. Fortunately, I had enough strength to finish second," said Brenda. Dorcas Kimeli finished third with her hands over her head (1:07:14). "My training was not ideal and the start of the race was really fast, and so I am satisfied with how I managed the finish, she said.

Kibiwott Kandie set the men's race for himself in a personal record. He was the only contender to run under 59 minutes this year (he ran 58:59 in Ras al-Khaimah in February) and now he has improved his performance in Prague! Kandie also ran most of the race alone, escaping his pacer just before halfway through the race and with a time of 58:38 recorded the fifth fastest time in half marathon history. "I am

just happy. The lap was great, the new adidas adizero Pro shoes really helped me a lot to perform, "said the winner at the finish. After all, the new product from adidas was praised by all runners after the race. "I was exhausted for the last five kilometers, but the new shoes have helped me set a record," said Peres.

The men had a bit more difficult conditions than the women, at eight in the morning Prague was already in warmer weather, which further underlines Kandie's fantastic performance. Philemon Kiplimo took second place in the Letna oval (59:56). "It was not my day today, but I will be back," the Kenyan promised. Benson Kipruto finished third (1:00:06) "It was a good racing spectacle," he praised the event.

Alberto Uncini Manganelli, the General Manager/Senior Vice President at adidas also shared his thoughts: "I think this is fantastic. Great for athletes, great for everyone. Organized in a situation that is extremely difficult. It is a great show up of how organization can work. And how Czech Republic supports all this, we are all pleased to see that".

And Davor Savija, the manager of elite athletes, is looking for a deeper meaning in the Prague 21.1 km - Ready for the Restart project. "I hope that what happened in Prague inspires other organizers around the world to save our beautiful sport, which is experiencing difficult times. This can really be a new start," he concludes optimistically.

At the end, Carlo Capalbo added "if you want it strong enough, it will happen".

Note for editor:

### **21.1 km – Ready for the Restart**

#### **Women**

1. Peres Jepchirchir (1:05:34), 2. Brenda Jepleting (1:07:07), 3. Dorcas Kimeli (1:07:14), all KEN

#### **Men**

1. Kibiwott Kandie (58:38), 2. Philemon Kiplimo (59:56), 3. Benson Kipruto (1:00:06), all KEN

### **Half Marathon WR**

#### **Women**

Ababel Yeshaneh 1:04:31 Rás al-Chajma, 2020

Peres Jepchirchir 1:05:34 Prague, 2020 (women race only)

#### **Men**

Geoffrey Kamworor 58:01 Copenhagen, 2019