

ING becomes title sponsor for Ottawa Marathon

The Ottawa Marathon stepped on to the world stage today as organizers announced that ING will assume title sponsorship of this premier Canadian running event. Ottawa now joins the ING New York City Marathon, the ING Brussels Marathon and the ING Amsterdam Marathon as the fourth city in the ING Globberunners series.

In a second announcement organizers reported that the Ottawa Marathon, part of the National Capital Race Weekend, has been designated as the host of the 2004 Canadian National Marathon Championship by Athletics Canada, making the ING Ottawa marathon a qualifier for the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens. The Ottawa Marathon will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a new one-loop course on May 30, 2004.

The association with ING involves a long-term multi-year commitment to the ING Ottawa Marathon and is aimed at improving the experience for the runners, the participants as well as the spectators. Ottawa has so many of the ingredients we wanted for our Globberunners initiative in Canada: reputation, history, a terrific course, a high level of public participation and support as well as a great organization, says Rick Howe, Ottawa Regional Vice-President for ING Canada. ING is excited to be involved in what we feel is one of the best running events in Canada and we look forward to welcoming more than 20,000 participants on Sunday, May 30.

Our association with ING is an amazing opportunity for our running event and the City of Ottawa. By joining the ING Globberunners series, our marathon will be recognized among the elite races around the world, which is terrific news for us, said Susan Longbottom, President of the National Capital Race Weekend. ING's dedication and commitment to the sport of distance running is obvious and they share our vision for the future of running in Canada.

The ING Globberunners series aims to enhance awareness of the company's brand by supporting distance running events around the world. Distance running fits well with ING's values. Running is one of the few genuinely global sports that is accessible to all. In addition, distance running is challenging and requires commitment on the part of the runner. The ING Globberunners series demonstrates ING's desire to add to the development of the sport of running.

About ING

Amsterdam-based ING Group is one of the largest financial services companies in the world. In Canada, ING is creating one of the most innovative financial services organizations by providing insurance, banking and investment products and services to approximately 4 million customers via the Internet, over the phone, or in person. ING is Canada's leading property and casualty insurer and offers a wide variety of financial products. More than 300 of its employees are located in the Ottawa Area.

About the National Capital Race Weekend

The National Capital Race Weekend, Canada's premier running festival, combines competition, participation and fundraising to make a distinctive contribution to the health of the community. The Race Weekend has over 20,000 participants in 9 races, including the ING Ottawa Marathon. It is run by a volunteer Board of Directors. This year, the Race Weekend is scheduled for the May 28-30 weekend and the ING Ottawa Marathon will feature a one-loop course for the first time in over 10 years. **For more information please contact:**

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