

**February 27, 2007**

**WORLD MARATHON MAJORS**  
BOSTON LONDON BERLIN CHICAGO NEW YORK

An interview with:

**GUY MORSE  
DAVE BEDFORD  
MARK MILDE  
CAREY PINKOWSKI  
MARY WITTENBERG**

RICHARD FINN: On behalf of everybody at the World Marathon Majors, I'd like to welcome you to this race directors' conference call as we approach the start of the spring season with the Boston Marathon and the Flora London Marathon coming up in a very short time in April.

We have all five race directors from their respective cities on the line. I will ask each of them to make a brief opening remark and then we will open it up for questions.

Again, I welcome everybody to this call. I would like to turn it over to at this point to Carey Pinkowski, The LaSalle Bank Chicago Marathon executive race director.

CAREY PINKOWSKI: Thank you very much. Thanks to all the media that's participating. As you know, we're well into our second year of the World Marathon Majors. Obviously the series is our most visible effort so far and collaboration. Obviously, as you well know, the events continue with the tradition of deep, talented performances. Obviously the series has developed with some interesting leaders. Obviously Robert Cheruiyot on the men's side and Jelena Prokopcuka on the women's side. It's been exciting for us.

Discussing it with observers that are in the know and casual observers, it has reached our objective of creating some interest, a different facet to our elite world class fields. I think this is the most visible piece obviously. But there's been a lot of things develop behind the scenes and I'm very happy. It's been a great year officially with our relationship and partnership. I think there's going to be some more wonderful things that come out of it.

Obviously running, marathon running, continues to be on the upswing in and the popularity continues to grow. Collectively as a group our events raised in excess of \$110 million for charity, which is another element that I think is fascinating and we'll continue to develop as we move forward.

As we move into the spring, we've got some really wonderful competitions coming up in Boston and London which I think will add a new facet and interest to the series. As always, I continue to be optimistic and enthusiastic about our relationship in the series and the development of the World Marathon Majors. It's a big part of what we're doing. We were just together in Tokyo recently and had some great meetings and had a chance to observe the Tokyo Marathon, which is the first mass participation event really on a grand scale in Japan. That was exciting for us also. Looking forward to talking to you this morning.

What I would like to do now is hand it over to my colleague in New York and partner, Mary Wittenberg.



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MARY WITTENBERG: Thank you. Hello, everybody. Thanks for joining us.

The need for the World Marathon Majors Series and our first key initiative only became clear this year, especially standing on the finish line in New York. It is brutally hard to win a major. It's doubly hard to win repeatedly. What the World Marathon Majors Series gives us is the opportunity to celebrate and promote the best athletes in our sport in the top echelon because in our sport excellence runs deeper than just the winner on the given day of a major marathon.

We're already where we hoped to be coming into year two of the first series. We've got some 13 countries represented on the women's leaderboard, easily 10 women still in contention for the win. On the men's side, we have men from eight countries and a good, solid six or so men that can take the win. In both cases they include some of the very top legends in our sport as well as some of the newer runners in our sport. So that's exciting for everybody.

In addition to 2007 being the second year of series one, it's also the first year of the next series which will run through the 2007 and 2008 races. Again, the idea there, the nature of the overlapping series, means that relevant points—all the points being scored in 2007 are relevant not only because right now the chase is on, but even as we get to the fall, those points will matter, not only this year but into next year. The series is, as we expected, heated. Lots of competition to take the win and the title of the first ever World Marathon Majors Series champion.

Also, as Carey said, we just had our winter meetings in Tokyo. As a group the World Marathon Majors Series is our first initiative, but what we are constantly working on is advancing the sport, both the business of the sport and promoting the promotion of the sport. You can count on us, as we said before, our standards and expectations are extremely high for this sport. We're doing everything we can to raise awareness of our great athletes, of our great fields and drive excitement among the masses that participate in our races and really leverage that aspect of our events and our sport that really make us different from most other professional sports.

So we're pleased with where we are. We're doing a lot of work to build and expand on what we've started. We're looking forward to growing in the right direction and in the right way.

I'll finish up by adding, Carey said it right, we're poised for some thrilling racing this spring with London and Boston. It's my privilege to introduce the race director of one of the spring Majors, Guy Morse from the Boston Marathon.

GUY MORSE: This is Guy in Boston. I add my gratitude to all of you who took your time today to meet with us.

As Carey and Mary stated, we're looking to a very exciting spring kickoff to the marathon season. Here in Boston at the very least you can really sense the excitement building, not only because it's spring, but also because of the anticipation of what will take place in April in Boston. It's always an exciting time here. It's made even more exciting this year with the resumption of the quest to take the leadership role on the World Marathons Series. Boston, as you know, has always been a hallmark and a place where competition is supreme, and you will see that taking place again here at Boston.

We were proud to launch the inaugural series last year and we're excited of continuing it this year as Mary stated, and also at the same time beginning the first race for the new series of the World Marathon Majors. There's double reason to be excited and to watch what's going on in the springtime.

We're very fortunate to have the men's and women's leaders at Boston this year, as has been mentioned, both Robert Cheruiyot and Jelena Prokopcuka. They're returning here to Boston to really hopefully take a leadership role even more so in the series with the World Marathon Majors, and it really is adding to the



prestige of this great event.

We also have three of the top five women on the leaderboard in Boston rounding out that field, including Rita Jeptoo and also Deena Kastor, as you know. Those additions will also make for an exciting race at Boston this year.

We have a strong field not only for the men and women for the leaderboard position at the World Marathon Majors, but also because this is the site of the 2007 U.S. Women's Championships. Again, Deena Kastor leading that field. We do see an exciting time here. Again, the intrigue is building, it's beginning to be discussed among the athletes and among the press and spectators who are anticipating being in Boston this year.

We look forward to April 16th in Boston where the leaders of the 2006 and '07 series and also the leaders of the 2007 and '08 World Marathon Majors will have crossed the Boston Marathon finish line. It will be at that point that we look forward to the rest of the year, especially as we look just a few days later to the London Marathon.

With that, I'd like to turn this part of the conference over to London Marathon, race director David Bedford, who will add to the excitement.

DAVE BEDFORD: Good afternoon, everybody. This is a strange time of year for us because we have some members of the World Marathon Majors nice and relaxed, enjoying their off period, and Guy and myself going into what at times is a hell hole, into our marathons. We are just over seven weeks away and, of course, as well as talking about elite athletes, we will have 35,500 other runners on race day to look after. So although the journalists on this press conference may be interested particularly in the elite side, as race directors we have significant responsibilities to a few other people as well.

I'm delighted with the way that the London elite field has come together this year. It's always nice if you can say, I think this is either the strongest or one of the strongest fields that we've ever put together. Of course you need a lot of luck. At the moment we have had no pull outs. We know that on the women's side Mizuki Noguchi has had a minor Achilles problem, which our latest information is that she is coping with well, and is responding well. Of course, when you get that kind of call this near to the race, you always dread the worst. I think until we now see her on that start line on race day, we will continue to be a little bit nervous about that.

She, of course, is in a very strong race with a few people. I'm sure you've all seen the websites with the stars there. We are particularly looking forward to welcoming Chunxiu Zhou from China, who of course is one of the few people who have run a sub 2:20 marathon. Berhane Adere, who was third here last year, but won well in Chicago. An old favorite of ours Constantina Dita, who I think every single year here in London, she continues to run well, quality personal best of 2:21.30. Gete Wami, who of course was the winner in Berlin earlier this year. Susan Chepkemei, Benita Johnson, if my memory is right was second in Chicago. We have Britain's Mara Yamauchi, Kathy Butler, Liz Yelling also taking part. A debut performance from Isabella Ochichi, who was the silver medalist at the Athens Olympics over 5K.

We're very excited about that field. We think it's going to be a competitive field and hopefully we will have a very, very close race. We like close races. It's nice when they run fast. But it's even nicer when you get a number of people coming down the home straight together trying to win.

The men's field, we have followed our pattern over recent years in making sure we have people with titles where possible. We have Paul Tergat, the world record holder. Khalid Khannouchi, of course, from USA, the former world record holder. Probably the greatest distance runner the world has ever seen, Haile Gebrselassie. Last year's winner Felix Limo, the winner from the year before Martin Lel. Hendrick Ramaala,



who has run exceedingly well in New York a couple times. Jaouad Gharib, the world champion, Stefano Baldini, the Olympic Champion. We have Marilson Gomes dos Santos, who of course won New York in November. We have Meb Keflezighi, of course, who was second in the Olympics in '04. And a very interesting late addition, which I'm sure you all noticed, was Ryan Hall who recently broke the USA half marathon record. We thought that it would be a great opportunity for him to come to London. We think that a debut marathon, wherever you do it, is going to be a tough one. So why not do it at a venue where we have a flat course and hopefully conditions that will allow him to maximize his performance in his first race.

We think we're going to get great races. I now keep my fingers crossed. It's quite strange really because, probably like most other races, we have quite a large amount of dollars involved in the participation money, appearance money, if you like, of these athletes. We always expect something like 15 to 20 percent dropouts as we get nearer the race through injuries. On one hand I'm always disappointed to lose a great athlete that we've been looking forward to seeing, but on the other side it makes the budget balance. I've been doing this for a few years. I think you have to be a little bit relaxed about that.

We will continue to develop our vest system. I know you saw this started in London last year. It's been picked up in the other marathons subsequent to that. We continue to get a great deal of support from the major shoe companies. We will have some something like 20 men and 20 women in easily recognizable and different colors at our race this year.

This, as you know, is something we believe is important for people who are following the race so that very easily they can spot their person. Of course, for people who aren't perhaps experts in who the personalities are, it's often easier to follow a color combination of vest and shorts than trying to follow the commentator. We're there. We're ready. We need the weather to be a bit nicer than today. We have a horrible, miserable, gray, wet day here in London, a bit cold, only 5 degrees. We need it to warm up a bit. With a bit of luck, we'll have perfect conditions here in London.

RICHARD FINN: Thank you, Dave. We'll conclude with Mark Milde, the race director of the Berlin Marathon.

MARK MILDE: Hello from Berlin, Germany. As Dave has mentioned, I'm one of the race directors who has a low season at the moment, but nevertheless I'm looking forward to the other races that you guys will be putting up.

I think the most important points have been raised already by my colleagues so I can only remind you of the dates of our second half of the first series, which will begin in Boston, as you all know, usually on a Monday, April the 16th, and will continue on April 21 with London, where we also will meet as a group for internal meetings to talk about the future and the remainder of the 2007 period. Then going into the summer, we are excited to have a kind of premiere, for the first time the World Championship races in Osaka will work or go into our series. We are planning to have reception, as we had at the last World Championships in Helsinki, on August 25. All of you on this call and who also will be in Osaka will be invited for this. After these two races in Osaka, our series will continue, of course, with our race in Berlin on September the 30th, followed one week later by the Chicago Marathon, and will end on November 4th in New York, where we will have the next premiere, the crowning of our first champions. How and when exactly this will happen is yet to be decided. But, of course, we will keep you updated on this.

Also from our side, I want to thank you for joining, your support, and want to hand it back to Richard.

RICHARD FINN: Thanks to all the World Marathon Majors race directors. We will now open it up for questions.



**Q. Guy, now that the series is one year in, how are you finding it shaping the way your fields come together? How much of an effect has it had?**

GUY MORSE: If I heard correctly, we're seeing it beginning to there's many reasons why athletes determine where they run. But we're beginning to see the fact that the series is having an influence. It's an opportunity to really take your running to another level and really make an impact on the sport. We're beginning to see that that influence is beginning to take hold.

I think it's going to take more than just one year, however, to really have the series shake out and become even more of a dominant influence. But I believe it's on the way to doing just that.

**Q. Any of the fall race directors, would it be disappointing to you, it looks like the men's race could be wrapped up before it gets to you, would that be a disappointment?**

MARY WITTENBERG: We're always looking for as much suspense in our sport as possible. It would be ideal to come into the fall with two hotly contested races. That said, we considered it extensively when we set up the series and ensured we would always have an element of suspense, hence the overlapping series.

We're each driving to be the greatest marathon in the world on our own. We always expect hot competition in each of our races which will ensure that it's always exciting.

**Q. Could a couple of you talk about the possibility of bringing in more Majors, a sixth major in Japan, for example.**

CAREY PINKOWSKI: Collectively the five events obviously are the premiere events. We've obviously had discussions in this area. For me personally in my piece of this, I still think that these are the five premiere there are some great events, but still don't have the level with the elite men, elite women, mass participation, prize money, et cetera, that the five of us offer.

We're always optimistic and open minded to some developments. But for me and Chicago's perspective, I can't see that happening for a while.

MARY WITTENBERG: I would add we were all in Tokyo together and we shared a great respect for what Tokyo pulled off. In their inaugural race, they had 95,000 applicants which is right where London and New York are after 25-, 35-plus years. Our hearts felt for them as they conducted their first marathon with over 25,000 runners on the road in freezing rain. There was a lot that we all saw of our own race in the race and we were very impressed with the debut that had a professional men's field but not a women's field. I completely support what Carey had said and would only add in addition that among the things we're talking about, we play a leadership role in this sport, and we look beyond ourselves. So in addition to focusing on what may be the next Major, which only time will tell, we're also constantly looking at the overall schedule of our sport and thinking about how we may best align with other events and other opportunities over time to continue to build towards a calendar that makes sense for the media and for the public.

**Q. I don't know who would answer this, but I was wondering what, if any, developments there have been in an attempt to get a series wide sponsor for the series?**

DAVE BEDFORD: We continue to talk to a number of companies. There is interest out there. The challenge that we have is placing an additional series sponsor in a way where it doesn't impact on the individual sponsorship arrangements that each of our marathons have.

We think that we are getting nearer being able to make some sort of announcement. But in truth for us at this moment in time we are happy to see our series developing and building up interest on the way. As soon as we



have some good news, you will certainly be the first to know.

MARY WITTENBERG: I can't help but resist adding, we spend a lot of time on the business side. Our principal focuses on the business side are TV, media, broadcast through streaming and otherwise, website discussions. What we're doing is looking at the business and the revenue side as a totality with exposure being very important and revenue being important. Sponsorship fits into that. Dave just updated where we are in title sponsorship. We're also beginning to explore, as well, different levels of sponsorship. We all understand the pros and cons of title sponsorship. What we're trying to do is look at it in a totality and maximize revenue and exposure across television, media, web, sponsorship, licensing.

**Q. With the great mass participation in all of these races, has any more thought been given to expanding the concept maybe to the age-group runners, citizen runners?**

MARK MILDE: We are working on such things at the moment. We are quite sure that we will have some news on this for the series which will be starting in 2008. This is an important factor. We think it makes sense to include this. As Dave has mentioned before, it's not only the elite runners, we have about 30,000 plus runners in each of our races. We will be taking care of them, as well.

**Q. Maybe somebody could explain, this year is the second year of the series but the first that the first that a non series or non Major race in the guise of the World Championships is figuring in. Can you go over the mechanics of that. Also, how do you think that's going to impact the overall standings, so forth?**

DAVE BEDFORD: I think the first thing to remind you is that when we set our series up, we did it with consultation with the IAAF, the world governing body. We didn't want to be seen to be breaking away from the sport; we wanted to be seen to be adding value to the center of our sport. Because of that, three years out of four, there will either be a World Championships or an Olympic games. So, of course, in every single cycle there will be at least 11 races, and in some cases of course 12.

It's a great question: What impact will that have? I don't think we all know the answer to that. When we put our scoring structures together, we went back over something like 15 years of results to see whether we had the points appropriate to finishing positions in order to make sure that we didn't suddenly have some kind of result that was just that just didn't fit in with anyone's ideas about whether someone is a champion or not. I think the interesting thing now will be what happens from the spring with perhaps athletes who haven't yet committed to be taking part in the World Championships in the summer. I think that will depend very much on how their spring marathons go. I could certainly see anyone that comes out of a spring marathon, but thinking that they have abilities to win our championship, I could certainly see them putting the World Championships marathons in their schedule.

We don't have to be in the guessing game with this. We believe that the fields of both the World Championships and the Olympic Games are, of course, significant. It would be ridiculous to have a scoring system that didn't take account of those.

**Q. The scoring is going to be the same as it would be for a Major, is that correct?**

DAVE BEDFORD: Yes, absolutely.

**Q. Guy, can you talk about the new 10:00 start for the Boston Marathon and how that affected you having to deal with the all the cities and towns, the different things that presents. Also, the fact that the**



**U.S. Championships are here, how will that enhance Boston?**

GUY MORSE: In terms of the 10:00 start, that may seem normal and appropriate a lot of places, for Boston it was a big change. As you know, we had been working on that idea for a couple years. We have now implemented the 10:00 start, as you know.

The cities and towns themselves have been, as usual, hugely cooperative with this idea. We've adjusted all of our systems accordingly. We expect it to be a very positive move for the community. I think they're looking forward to it because it will create a situation where everyone may have to work a little harder a little bit earlier in the day. The day won't be quite so long as it has been in the past, into the evening. We're very encouraged about that change being a successful one.

In terms of the championships, yes, we're very pleased to have the women's championships within our race this year. It has really added another level of competition to the sport, to this particular race this year. It will happen within the context of our women's elite start which goes off before the major men's open race. It will include Deena Kastor, among others. It really has resulted in a growing number of American women being involved at the Boston race.

Again, we look at it not only for the race that it will be in and of itself, but it also will be the prelude to a year's worth of excitement as we look not only to '07 but also to '08 for the women's Trials being here at Boston.

**Q. The scheduling of Boston, London, five days apart, is that kind of difficult in the overall scheduling? Golf, tennis, Majors are set aside by months. If you want to attract top names...**

DAVE BEDFORD: Absolutely certain it's not ideal. The problem with our sport of marathon running is that historically we have had spring marathons and autumn marathons with World Championships in the summer. The reason, of course, for spring and autumn marathons is because that's when the weather is kinder. We have at the moment some complications with our date and Boston's date. Boston's date, of course, has particular significance in the U.S., being Patriots' Day, and it's set. Our date moves around a bit. We have to avoid such things like Easter Sunday, Palm Sunday when we can as well, so that we don't upset too many of the church congregations within London.

I think this year is probably as close as we ever get. As we go forward, this is a bit more split between our dates. But even if our dates were a month apart, we're talking at the elite end about athletes who couldn't do another marathon probably within 10 to 12 weeks. So from an elite point of view, it doesn't have that significance. We need to stay away from the World Championships and the Olympic Games as much as possible. We are where we are, as we say in London.

MARY WITTENBERG: I used to see it as all disadvantage. Now I'm beginning to see some advantages. Given the way it works right now, there is sort of enhanced hype around marathoning in a concentrated period. I think when there's times when Wimbledon and the French Open are closer together, too, it kind of raises the bar now that people know that London, all eyes will turn there and Boston for road running for two weeks in a row. Chicago and New York, we were two weeks apart last year for the first time in a long time. I actually thought we generated some extra buzz.

There are some advantages to the way the existing schedule works for us.

**Q. Doesn't it bother the points race, knowing that a lot of the top runners can't run?**

MARY WITTENBERG: If you step outside our sport, which is always the perspective we try to have, there are a number of ways that we might recut it in a way that could make more sense. But given where we are



today and trying to maximize where we are today, what it enables us to do is there are so many athletes, top, world class athletes from around the world, it shakes out actually pretty easily across two races in the spring and three in the fall that there's plenty of athletes to go around at that very top level to our races, rather than having every single athlete in one race each spring, fall or quarter, which could be interesting, too. The way it works now, there's plenty of athletes, so it works in that way, as well.

GUY MORSE: Maybe to put closure on this, this situation, whether you're talking about the spring or the fall races, really is one of those realities of our sport that we've found a way to deal with. We've found a way to cooperate, to create the series that works best. We found a way to coexist. We think it works quite well.

We're going to continue to work to make the schedule the best it can be. But the reality is, an elite athlete is only going to run one or two per year anyway. We're making the best of the situation. It hasn't really affected us at all in a negative way overall.

CAREY PINKOWSKI: I think also, you know, this is accomplishing what our objective was: to create some interest, intrigue or strategy onto where these athletes race and compete. I mean, this was the plan from the initial design of the series. Its objective is being completed of creating some interest. Remember, we have races within a race. There's a significant amount of incentives and prize money within our individual races. It's an added facet of interest that on a broader appeal we thought would create some visibility. I think we've reached that objective.

**Q. In some other sports, like in the new mixed martial arts league, they've created teams of fighters, aligned them with cities. Would that be a way around that, if you had literally teams of runners as another angle, regardless of which countries the runners were from, even if some of them couldn't make different races, you would still have the colored jerseys representing different teams?**

DAVE BEDFORD: I don't think that's a bad idea. We do, however, need to remember that there is already a strong relationship between marathon runners and their shoe companies. I think as this develops, as we engage shoe companies in our discussions about how to make our sport make more sense, an awful lot of things will happen.

But I think we have the expression, "Rome wasn't built in a day." I don't think you will see a new marathon joining us in the very near future, by that I mean in the next couple of years, because I think races have to be around for a while, to get that sort of gravitas. You can't suddenly jump in and say, I'm a marathon that should be World Marathon Majors. There are other marathons out there who have been running for many years who also would like to join and who are trying to work out how they can increase their own standards so that we might look on them as being ideal additions.

I think we should accept that what we're doing here is a starting point. It's a journey. We have no idea where it's going to finish. I think when we look at this in a few years' time we will see where we came from and what we've been able to achieve by working together. I think the fact that you have these five race directors under the umbrella of World Marathon Majors talking to you in unison from across the world but in a very joined up way, I think that is a very positive sign. If we can keep using all these pluses and input from journalists who, of course, also have a stake in our sport, then we will go somewhere.

MARY WITTENBERG: I would only add that that is the kind of thinking we're engaging at all levels. We've even talked about, do you split with a men's and women's tour. The one aspect I want to raise is that the individual races remain important, too. Hence, we end up with both men and women because it gives us two stories per race.

There's something to the team idea. We've talked about that, about the Olympic Games, if we also ran not



only as individuals but countries. Toni and others have raised that over the years. It's all good thinking, as Dave said. It's an important part. We're working together. We appreciate others that want to share their thoughts in looking at this as we move forward.

**Q. The World Championships, of course, are in Osaka, Japan, this year. It's where World Marathon Majors makes its entry into the World Championships. Japan being the fanatical marathon nation it is, so far ostracized from World Marathon Majors, I wonder whether you think that country will warm to your concept when you get there?**

DAVE BEDFORD: Let me have a go first.

If the welcome we got when we were in Tokyo is anything to go by, they understand who we are, they understand our history, they understand what we are trying to do. The word "ostracize" I think is not the word. They have not had a mass participation race with a strong elite end until Tokyo this time. Any of their other races were elite only, and therefore they did not have a race that we could even consider joining our World Marathon Majors from the start.

I'm certain that the move from the City of Tokyo to have a mass participation race, and very brave to start off with close on 30,000 people at their first attempt. I don't think I would do that. They got away with it in spite of very difficult conditions. They put on a great show. They only had, of course, a men's elite field. They didn't have a women's elite field. One of the things that we have in common is that we've been around for a while, we have status, we have mass participation, and we have strong men's and women's elite fields.

CAREY PINKOWSKI: I'd like to reiterate what Dave said. Our group was in Tokyo. I think not only welcomed, but I think there was a real appreciation for what we do with mass participation, all of the elements in the production of what we do in the World Marathon Majors. I mean, traditionally the marathons in Japan have been elite men, elite women, very limited fields, limited amount of operational schemes that go into that.

I think the Tokyo organizers obviously spent some time in Chicago, they spent time at all of the other four major events to observe how we do things. I think they realize there was a new found respect for how challenging these are as they reflected dealing with street closures. I was very pleased about that. I think the relationship will only continue to grow.

**Q. What talks have you had with the IAAF and the local organizers with regard to branding your event, World Marathon Majors, within the World Championships? Will competitors who are near the top on the leaderboard of World Marathon Majors be identifiable during the race?**

DAVE BEDFORD: We have had some very initial conversations. Obviously the IAAF want to make sure they protect their relationships with their sponsors. We have, with support from the IAAF, identified a location on the course for the men's marathon where they will be hosting a reception right on the course. We will continue to look for ways to make sure that those people who are watching the marathons from the World Championships are able to put it into context with the World Marathon Majors Series and its part to play within that.

For us it's more about telling the story on television than necessarily worrying about branding on race day, et cetera.

**Q. Carey, with New York hosting the men's Trials this fall, how is that affecting your race, trying to track American talent?**



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CAREY PINKOWSKI: Obviously the men will be our top American men will be focusing on New York, which I think is great. I commend Guy and Mary for stepping up and bringing the men's and women's Trials to World Marathon Majors venues obviously.

We have to deal with it. But I think it's an excellent showcase. On the women's side I think we'll have some opportunity. I think there will still be some women, if my information is correct, that could still possibly qualify for Boston in the spring. We may see some interesting women participation, women trying to qualify for the Trials in Boston.

That's part of the schedule and what goes on. I think the fact that they're in New York is a very, very positive element. It will elevate where traditionally these Trials have been in smaller markets. I think it's a chance for the Olympic Trials to be showcased in a major media center and really get in front of a lot of people, which hasn't happened in the past. I'm excited about it and will support it any way that we can.

MARY WITTENBERG: We worked with USATF to actually change the rules so that the men can qualify through Chicago this year. Even though that would be a hell of a double to qualify in Chicago and come into New York, there will be a little bit of a story there. Really we're in the same place Carey is when you look at Sunday. Our ING New York City Marathon is vitally important as part of the World Marathon Majors and as an event in itself. We'll both be working very hard to ensure those global fields are extremely strong despite losing the American men in those races.

**Q. How does it affect the scoring with the American men? They lose out on a chance in the fall to score points?**

MARY WITTENBERG: Yes. Admittedly it's a challenge. I've said it before. At New York, I'll let Guy speak for Boston, we're working within the system that exists now. We would essentially much prefer, I would and New York would, to see the Trials as part of the major day of the ING New York City Marathon, as London has had in the past, which would be an amazing opportunity for our men and/or our women to be on race day of any of the Majors. The reality today, that's not an option with the USOC. We will run them separately. Our men just need to be and our women need to be that much more careful in their planning.

Luckily the way it's playing out, fortunately or unfortunately, it's not going to be much of an issue for the American men in the series close, this first round. Next round, you know, the Olympic Games will count. They've just got to look out over next year and consider what they might want to do next spring and next fall around the Olympic Games if they want to be in the running. Luckily there are enough races that if they want to go to three in a year, do what they may need to do to be in contention, they have the opportunity, it's just going to be a little harder for them.

GUY MORSE: I reiterate and support what Mary said. We'd very much like the system to be different. We hope that over time we can convince the Federation that that is the way to go because it is a greater opportunity, a greater chance. We look to do that in the future. Right now it is what it is and we'll make the most of it. We would look for some change in the future. We've been together on that since the beginning.

**Q. From the initial series that we're part of at the minute, any problems that have come up that you want to be looking at changing in future series?**

DAVE BEDFORD: I think it is still too early. I think if you ask us that question in November, after the last event of the first two years, we may well be able to answer that. The concept we put together was an intellectual concept that we hoped created a satisfactory, practical result. We're just about to start year two. I think at the moment it is still too early to say whether we got it right, whether it needs some adjustments, et



cetera. But ask us the question after November and we'll certainly give you an answer rather than a "Please hold your question for the moment."

MARY WITTENBERG: Dave is exactly right on the logistics of the series. The challenges that we see are many of the ones we saw in the beginning, which are, given the nature of our event, over a two year period, we're considering ways to (indiscernible) some more immediacy on an annual basis, talking about some initiatives that may make sense there. Those are the types of things we saw coming into this.

**Q. Does the group have any comment about the change in the media landscape in the U.S. with the purchase of *Running Times* magazine by *Runner's World*?**

MARY WITTENBERG: I'll say what I said to the two groups in an email this morning, Good for them. I think it's a brilliant move on *Runners World's* part. I think *Running Times* has a niche on the competitive market that can really add to *Runners World's* great success in the mass market.

I think for *Running Times*, it's a tremendous opportunity to better relate and expose our competitive side to the masses. We look very much forward to seeing how the union of the two can help best promote our competitive and pro side to the masses and how the pros may help inspire the masses and vice versa.

It's kind of directly in line with some of what we're trying to do with connecting the two. Hats off to both of them thinking beyond themselves and moving towards an alliance that we hope will be stronger for the sport.

GUY MORSE: I'm still looking at it, to be honest. I hope it's as rosy a picture that has been painted. I want to see how it plays out. I think it's important to have as many voices out there as possible. I'd like to reserve my actual opinion to see how this acquisition takes place and the effect of it.

To me, there's a lot involved. It can be very positive. Certainly it should be very positive for the sport. But I'd like to see how it plays out, how it's handled, how it's separated out in the next few months.

**Q. Right now it's not possible for the citizens of the cities of all five Majors to watch the other Majors on television in their town. How close are the Majors to achieving that goal?**

GUY MORSE: That's one of the things that we're spending a considerable amount of time on. Just to a point earlier, we're looking at all the other opportunities would make this series greater, make our individual events greater.

Sponsorship is important. Other aspects of additional participation is important. Television is important. But one is not affecting the advancement of the other.

In terms of television, we are devoting a considerable amount of time to trying to find a way to do just what you suggest. We're not there yet. Like in so many other initiatives, it's taking a serious amount of work to accomplish. Each of us, as Dave said earlier, have set and serious relationships whether you're talking sponsors or media relationships, contracts in terms of broadcast coverage. There is that challenge to rise above that in terms of putting something together that is amenable to all of us for the betterment of the group of us.

I would say, I'm sure someone else will follow up, we're pretty much in the middle of that process right now. We're all negotiating both local and national deals and international deals. In our case we're with WBZ TV on a local basis exclusive in April and on national cable with Versus, and we are also on Eurosport internationally among others.

For example, using those relationships as an example, we're looking to find a way to make this broadcast situation work for all of us. That is a goal of ours for all of us to be on television and linking us all together. That's something that's still a work in progress.



DAVE BEDFORD: If it helps you guys, I can't give you the details today, but very shortly I will be able to announce it will be possible for the Flora London Marathon to be seen on a TV channel and also available on the web on the day of the race. We will make sure that everyone in the business gets information about that so that they can follow certainly what happens here in London.

**Q. A governance, athlete question. You've talked before about getting the athletes to be more professional, for lack of a better word, getting contracts standardized as to what the athletes' responsibilities are. There's an issue that is not in your races but in other races where they're having payment problems, problems getting their money, their awards. It's not a drug test issue that delays it, but other issues of getting it paid. Is there any attention being paid to the rights of the athletes as well as the responsibilities of the athletes, schedule of payment, that sort of thing, that would go into these contracts because you're trying to set up sort of a best practices model that would seep down into the other races, if the athletes would get this as World Marathon Majors, this he would be hopefully looking for it in other races where they may have problems or have had problems in the past getting paid and getting the funds that are owed them.**

DAVE BEDFORD: I don't believe the role World Marathon Majors is taking is to act in all aspects like a governing body. I think we can show leadership. I think that we can show good practice. Certainly athletes who participate not only in our own races but also seek the overall prize can be assured that monies will be paid. We have sufficient funds and sufficient marketing and development to ensure that our races would not go forward without knowing that the prize money and the participation money that we are exposed to is already set not in actual concrete boxes but certainly intellectually they are. That even goes to say, in London, if we had no dropouts, which certainly won't happen, but if we had no dropouts, we would be able to extend our budgets to make sure that every single deal that we've got will be dealt with not only appropriately but also quickly.

I think the relationship that our races have with the athletes and the athletes' agents is because we've dealt with those issues professionally over a number of years.

MARY WITTENBERG: I would add that these athletes are the stars of our show. Their rights need to be protected. Dave said it right, that you're not going to find a situation like that among the Majors. Here I'll speak for New York because we haven't talked about it as a group extensively, but it's a major problem for our sport when there are other races outside of us that don't pay on a timely basis because that's not a professional sport.

What we try to do is use our influence where we can, behind scenes, to say athletes and agents should certainly be we don't advocate they should participate in any race where someone hasn't been paid from the race the year before or some other unfairly extended time frame.

GUY MORSE: As Mary and Dave both said, this sort of problem is totally unacceptable and should not occur. That is part of the body of whatever you call the problems of our sport. While we're not a Federation, obligated to lead by example, that's exactly what we're attempting to do with our series this year and in future years and also with our organization in terms of discussing ways to raise the standards across the board, not only for ourselves but for all races. We're committed to doing just that.

CAREY PINKOWSKI: Just to reiterate what my colleagues are saying, we lead by example. Our reputation and the way we do things, our business standards, that should be the model that other events aspire to. That's the best that we can do is to create opportunities for athletes to compete, to continue and grow athletically and professionally. We're trying to build the model that sets the tone for how things are done. That would be



my response to the question.

**Q. There's been talk at various times about road running being its own developing its own governing body, separate structure. If IAAF or whatever organization has rules that should be enforced that would prevent this kind of activity happening, does that make the World Marathon Majors or other groups think, 'We're not being well served by our governing bodies, therefore we had to take the issue by the horns and start looking at something independent or something that would address these issues'?**

MARY WITTENBERG: I'm sure we all want to speak to this one. Where we are today is that we believe track and field and road running, cross country, all go together. We are the leaders in our sport of road running. We think we're best served in the sport, our athletes are best served at this time, exerting our influence and working with the other powers to be in the sport.

We are constantly pushing forward. We're constantly pushing the envelope. You can rest assured that with a concerted effort from all of us, you will see a stronger sport over these next few years. We think it's likely all parties will see that opportunity. If at times we feel, with justification, after trying extensively, there are challenges, we may go a different route. That's where we are today. We feel good about it, excited about where we can all go in a concerted effort.

DAVE BEDFORD: As you know, Mary and I both sit on the IAAF Road Running Commission. We are having some interesting conversations there. Like all world governing bodies, things don't happen overnight. At least we are in the right place to engage the interest and the concentration of the IAAF on these kind of matters. We have Parallel Running within the UK, a newly formed road running leadership group, which although under the auspices of the UK Athletic Association, has essentially been given an open brief to restructure how the sport of road running happens within the UK. There are certainly, from my point of view on the two fronts that can have some direct involvement with, there are things certainly happening on behalf of our sport.

**Q. Although you aren't the governing body, you do lead by example. Kind of related to prize money, but the other side of the coin, is there any talk of synchronizing the prize money across your races, deemphasizing the appearance money, going towards higher prize money? Probably impossible to do, but in terms America, the PGA TOUR bans appearance money. No one here in America really knows how much money you have and put into these races. You win London, you get about 60,000. Any talk about you getting together and trying to bump up the runner's fee? Maybe that's what the \$500,000 World Marathon Majors bonus is. Is there any kind of talk about that?**

DAVE BEDFORD: We've had lots of conversations. I think the one thing that you must remember is that although we are working together within World Marathon Majors, what we're not going to do is become a commune, we're not going to become a company that owns and organizes every single bit of five races. We are individual races who have a common purpose. Where things make sense for us to bring some sort of rational approach to our sport, we will do so. But, of course, at the same time we must also make sure from our own individual positions that we don't harm the status of our own races in our own market areas.

MARY WITTENBERG: I would add that we definitely see the merits of what you're saying. We have to constantly as individual events, as Dave said, then, where relevant across the board, think about the pros and cons of moving in a direction like that. But we definitely see certainly New York and we've all understand the power of money and letting people know, particularly for young runners, this is a professional sport



which the top tier can make a living in, and for the media and public to understand that when you cross that finish line, there's an awful lot at stake as to what place you're in and how you do. You're raising a good question.

**Q. Have you considered partnering up with shorter lead in races, which almost all your marathons have a long time de facto association with, because the athletes have a tendency to go to the Cherry Blossom or Philadelphia or Birmingham where you can get minor points so there's a connection beyond five races in a given year?**

GUY MORSE: That's one of several very important questions that we have among ourselves been talking about. Again, that may happen in the future. We're unclear at this point what route we will take. That's certainly one of several good ideas that we have talked about because we are looking for ways to increase the excitement, increase the participation, increase the alignment, as you say, among more than just the five of us.

But that's one of those things that is going to take some time to develop because our priority is to make sure this series is set up correctly to make sure this series functions properly, not only with the series itself but our organization itself, so all of these things are taking precedent right now. Those sorts of ideas, that one in particular, is something that we will continue to look at and may be in our future.

MARY WITTENBERG: I think Guy said it right. We see the potential for that idea. We like very much the idea of eventually copying or borrowing from the US Open Series type buildup to the US Open where we could work with other races that are very significant races in our sport, be it a Philly distance run or Nova Great North run and a slew of others that have reached top tiers at their distances.

I think Dave opened or said along the way here today the right thing, that for today we're focusing on the execution of the World Marathon Majors Series, but we are certainly spending time considering those next elements. Whether it's adding the short course events in the mix as part of the series or adding series ending championships, it's all on the drawing board and part of a strategic vision that will take some time to play out.

RICHARD FINN: I want to thank everybody that has stayed with us from the media for quite a lengthy call. I again would like to thank all five of our race directors from their respective cities for their time today. All of us at all of the media offices at all the five races look forward to working with you together for the World Marathon Majors. Please let us know what else any of us can do to assist you with your coverage of our sport, our series. We look forward to working with everybody and seeing everybody in Boston and in London in a couple weeks. Thank you very much.

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