



Tim Hutchings To Lead Live Broadcast of Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon by Paul Gains

One of the world's most respected athletics commentators, Tim Hutchings, returns to Toronto this month to head up the broadcast of the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon.

The event will be Live Streamed on stwm.ca and on athleticscanada.tv October 16th with Hutchings marking his fifth time commenting at this IAAF Gold Label race. To say his services are in demand is an understatement.

Indeed, the Englishman worked for NBC at the Rio Olympics then called a fantastic Berlin Marathon last week for the Host Broadcaster Services. He heads to the Bank of America Chicago Marathon this weekend, then onto Toronto. The New York Marathon will close his autumn marathon coverage although he also heads to Delhi to call a Half Marathon.

"I was in Rio for NBC, but as an analyst, not a play-by-play announcer," Hutchings explains. "I prefer leading a commentary than being an analyst, but am very aware that all commentary roles are a privilege and hold great responsibility, so I try to look at all TV work as a glass at least half full and to never take anything for granted.

"Like being an athlete, a good performance is in the preparation and I try to hold to that every time, though it does mean a lot of late nights working on stats and trying to have something on every elite athlete."

Hutchings himself was a world class runner in the 1980's finishing 4th in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic 5000m final and earning a pair of silver medals at the IAAF World Cross Country Championships (1984 and 1989). Having worked for some of the world's biggest TV broadcasters Hutchings, nevertheless, believes live streaming is the future.

"Absolutely it is," he declares. "The whole planet can key in to something on the internet, far more effectively than TV will ever be able to offer. Folks can watch a live webcast from anywhere there's a signal and, of course, the production costs and other implications that restrict access to TV coverage, are miniscule compared with a full OB (Outside Broadcast)."

Hutchings' first Olympics as a commentator was in 1992 where he worked in a sweaty Eurosport Studio in France still trying to come to grips with the fact his own athletics career had been terminated by injury. Since then he has worked every Olympic Games. He offers a glowing assessment of the 2016 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon.

"It's great that Eric (Gillis) is committed to the race, though I'm a little surprised as it'll be just eight weeks since his brilliant Rio run," says Hutchings of the Canadian star. "Once you've nailed a top ten finish in an August Olympic Marathon, I guess anything else you achieve that year is a bonus, so maybe Eric's thinking he's got nothing to lose."

"And for any Race Director, having the previous year's winner back to defend his/her title, is important, so Alan's done well to get Ishhimael Chemtan and Shure Demise to return. Chemtan is really consistent and can certainly go faster, added to which he's coming to Toronto fresh, having not raced a marathon in well over six months."

Another constant in the live stream broadcast has been Matt Hortobagyi the Kitchener, Ontario based producer who brings his trademark enthusiasm to the event.

"It's a ten camera broadcast," Hortobagyi says proudly. "We will have ten cameras, six motorcycles and this year we are going to fly a drone and broadcast from the drone as well."

"I am working with Transport Canada to get permission to shoot (with the drone) downtown. We have a couple of site locations and one is right across from the finish area. The pilot rides with a motorcycle and he will get dropped off, get the drone up, get the shots then proceed to the next location."

Hortobagyi, who is a partner at AstroDog Media, says the broadcast will begin at 8:15 a.m. with a thirty minute pre-show before the elite athletes set off at 8:45 a.m. They will be on air until 3:00 p.m. covering the race at the front, the Canadian Championship medal battles as well as various human interest stories.

Michael Doyle, Editor of Canadian Running Magazine, returns once again to offer his insight while the commentary team will feature a new face in Lanni Marchant, the Canadian women's marathon record holder.

"I am excited, but I am a bit nervous as it's a little outside the realm of what I have normally done before," Marchant admits. "I am really excited to be part of the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon weekend still. I switched roles with Krista (DuChene) because she is going to be running and she has been commentating the last couple of years"

The event holds a special place in Marchant's heart. In 2013 she beat the Canadian women's record with 2:28:00 and then a year ago she qualified for the Rio Olympics on this course with 2:28:09. Asked if she sees this as a stepping stone to a new career she is non-committal. A criminal lawyer by profession she is bringing the same resilience to her preparation for the marathon as she does the courtroom.

"I will be there all weekend and will be at the technical meeting and will practice some of the names of the East Africans that are racing," she says. "I want to do my homework and know who the field is and primarily the top runners but also focus on the top Canadians."

"The Canadian women's field is especially good. It is going to be an amazing race. I am excited that I will be able to commentate as it is unfolding. I want to make sure I am 'me'. I don't want to come across as robotic. That is my biggest fear."

The broadcast team is in place and the audience awaits. Now it is down to the elite athletes to make the 2016 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon a memorable event for the world.