

# The Adrian Martinez Classic

Thursday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 • Emerson Field • Concord, Massachusetts

## The Adrian Martinez Classic Announces Its High Performance Fields

The 2017 Adrian Martinez Classic will feature a dozen athletes who have represented their country at the Olympics or World Championships, and the mens mile includes 15 sub-4:00 milers. The meet – Thursday June 1<sup>st</sup> in Concord, Massachusetts – honors the memory of local runner Adrian Martinez, who loved track and field and the friendships that grow from it. The evening will begin with community races for runners of all abilities, and will finish with a flourish, as the High Performance athletes chase fast times and \$30,000 in prize money.

HOKA ONE ONE's sponsorship has helped the Martinez Classic become a fixture on the professional circuit. This year, a revamped prize structure will incentivize fast races and offer great opportunities for athletes to hit the World Championships qualifying standard and sharpen up for the U.S. Outdoor Championships. According to HOKA ONE ONE Global Sports Marketing Manager Mike McManus, "HOKA ONE ONE is proud to support the Adrian Martinez Classic and is looking forward to the outstanding group of athletes assembled. We're anticipating this year's Martinez Classic will be the most competitive yet, and challenge all current meet records."

Two-time Martinez Classic champion McKayla Fricker is seeking a three-peat against an incredibly stacked field in the 800. She'll face 6 other women with personal bests of 2:01 or better. In addition to those seven, Amanda Eccleston, with her 4:25 mile and 4:03 1500, has the strength to be considered a favorite. But the entire field may well be chasing French Olympian Justine Fedronic, whose 1:59.86 mark leads all challengers.

In the men's 800, Kyle Merber – part of Team USA's 2015 World Champion and World Best distance medley relay – will test his speed against a handful of 1:44 runners. Shaquille Walker, one of the rising young American stars, will make his first appearance at the Martinez Classic. Ryan Martin, 2014 runner-up and 2015 Champion, will look to regain his crown.

The 3000 meter races will see a clash of Olympians. New England native and 2-time Olympian Donn Cabral will face Jamaican Olympian and national record holder Kemoy Campbell, who now calls Boston home. Challenging Cabral and Campbell will be Brian Shrader, who holds the US road record at 12 Kilometers, and Thomas Curtin, a 6-time all-American from Virginia Tech with a 5K best of 13:27. On the women's side, Olympian and NCAA Champion Marielle Hall is the class of the field. But a trio of athletes from the HOKA New Jersey / New York Track Club – Nicol Traynor, Waverly Neer, and 2013 World Team member Ashely Higginson – will offer a strong challenge.

The Adro Miles, so named to honor Adrian's love for the Mile, cap off the night, and Olympic Silver Medalist Leo Manzano headlines the men's field. Although Manzano is the most decorated athlete in the race, victory is no sure thing. 2016 Adro Mile Champion Sam Penzelstadler is back to defend his title. Colby Alexander (3:54 personal best) will challenge. And Rio Olympian David Torrence, 3x USA Road Mile Champion, also poses a serious threat. The women's Adro Mile features a pair of 2015 World Team members: Nicole Tully, who posted the world-leading mile time at the 2015 Martinez Classic; and Kerri Gallagher, who has a mile personal best of 4:26.

The 2017 Martinez Classic will also see a New York invasion, and Boston-based elites may be hard-pressed to defend the home turf. Legendary coach Frank Gagliano is sending the full HOKA New Jersey / New York track club – twenty-some athletes – north for the meet. Many of his runners figure to be in the mix for wins, including Cabral, Alexander, Merber, Tully, Traynor, and Higginson. “We are very excited to take our entire HOKA NJ/NY team to New England,” said Coach Gags. “We are looking to have a great meet and some fine races and times – it falls at the right time for our preparation for the USA Outdoor Championship.”

In 2009, The Martinez Classic began as a tribute to Adrian, and a way to bring together the entire community of runners – old and young, elites and beginners. In the words of Larry Eder, it celebrates “the fast and the not-so-fast.” According to meet director Steve Lane, “Central to the meet is the belief that running offers something for everyone, that runners are connected not just through competition, but the camaraderie that the sport develops.” The Martinez Classic has grown tremendously – particularly the high performance races – but remains true to its roots, a meet with strong attachments to the local community, and an opportunity for all athletes to chase their best.