

ELITE RUNNERS

Elite Men: Entries

Bib no.	Name	Nation	PB	Bib name
1	Emmanuel Mutai	KEN	2:04:40	E MUTAI
2	Patrick Makau	KEN	2:03:38	MAKAU
3	Wilson Kipsang	KEN	2:03:42	KIPSANG
4	Markos Geneti	ETH	2:04:54	GENETI
5	Abel Kirui	KEN	2:05:04	KIRUI
6	Vincent Kipruto	KEN	2:05:13	KIPRUTO
7	Martin Lel	KEN	2:05:15	LEL
8	Tsegaye Kebede	ETH	2:05:18	KEBEDE
9	Feyisa Lilesa	ETH	2:05:23	LILESA
10	Bazu Worku	ETH	2:05:25	WORKU
11	Jaouad Gharib	MAR	2:05:27	GHARIB
12	Marilson Gomes dos Santos	BRA	2:06:34	DOS SANTOS
13	Yared Asmerom	ERI	2:07:27	ASMEROM
14	Samuel Tsegay	ERI	2:07:28	TSEGAY
15	Abraham Cherkos	ETH	2:07:29	CHERKOS
16	Abderrahim Bouramdane	MAR	2:07:33	BOURAMDANE
17	Adil Annani	MAR	2:10:15	ANNANI
18	Solonei Rocha da Silva	BRA	2:11:32	ROCHA
19	Scott Westcott	AUS	2:11:36	WESTCOTT
20	Zersenay Tadese	ERI	2:12:03	TADESE
21	Martin Dent	AUS	2:12:23	DENT

Preview

Emmanuel Mutai defends his men's crown against five fellow Kenyans vying for places on their country's Olympic team. Mutai smashed the course record to win the 2011 race in 2 hours 4 minutes 40 seconds and went on to finish second in New York last November pocketing half a million dollars as World Marathon Majors champion. But he'll need to be at his best on 22nd April against an elite men's field that includes 11 men who have run 26.2 miles in under 2:06 and 16 who are faster than 2:08.

Kenyan runners won all six World Marathon Majors races in 2011 plus virtually every other significant city marathon. They also filled all but three of the top 20 places on the 2011 world list.

Fastest of the lot are the two men who broke 2:04 last year: Patrick Makau, who erased Haile Gebrselassie's world record in Berlin last September just five months after finishing third in London, and Wilson Kipsang who was just four seconds slower when he retained his Frankfurt title at the end of October.

Double world champion Abel Kirui is also in the field along with two other Kenyan contenders: three-times London champion Martin Lel, who was second last year; and world silver medallist Vincent Kipruto.

Tsegaye Kebede is the only non-Kenyan to win the London men's title in the last eight years and the talented 2010 champion leads the challenge to Kenyan dominance again this time.

Kebede's Ethiopian compatriots include last year's Los Angeles champion Markos Geneti, who smashed his personal best to finish third in Dubai this January; Bazu Worku, the former world junior record holder who was third in Berlin in 2010 aged 20; Feyisa Lilesa, bronze medallist at the Daegu World Championships; and Abraham Cherkos who was fifth in Boston last April.

Olympic silver medallist Jaouad Gharib returns for his eighth London Marathon hoping to return to the podium for a fifth time after finishing out of the medals last year. The field also includes the world half marathon record holder, Zersenay Tadese of Eritrea, and Brazil's two-time New York champion Marilson dos Santos who was fourth here 12 months ago.

Tadese will be supported by two other quality Eritreans in Yared Asmerom and Samuel Tsegay, both quicker than 2:07:30, while Gharib will have fellow Moroccans Abderrahim Bouramdane and Adil Annani for company.

Australians Scott Westcott and Martin Dent, plus Brazil's Pan American Games champion, Solonei Rocha, are also in the line-up.

Elite Men: Biographies

Emmanuel Mutai (Kenya)

Born: 12 October 1984 Tulwet, Rift Valley
Marathon best: 2:04:40 London 2011
London Marathon record: 2008- 4th 2:06:15, 2009- 4th 2:06:53, 2010- 2nd 2:06:23, 2011- 1st 2:04:40
Other World Marathon Majors
 Chicago: 2008- 5th 2:15:36
 New York: 2010- 2nd 2:09:18, 2011- 2nd 2:06:28
Other major city marathons
 Amsterdam: 2007- 1st 2:06:29
 Rotterdam: 2007- 7th 2:13:06
Marathons in major championships
 Worlds: 2009- 2nd 2:07:48

Career notes

Mutai broke a sequence of second places when he ran away from the field over the last 10km in London last year to take Sammy Wanjiru's course record. He covered the 50m from 30-35km in 14:16 and won by the biggest margin since 1981. His winning time of 2:04:40 made him the ninth fastest marathon runner in history.

Having finished second to Tsegaye Kebede the previous year, and to Gebre Gebremariam in New York 2010, Mutai pocketed the \$500,000 World Marathon Majors prize for 2010/11 when he was runner-up to Boston champion Geoffrey Mutai in the Big Apple last November.

After a gentle marathon debut in Rotterdam in April 2007, Mutai produced a sparkling performance in Amsterdam that October, winning in an eye-catching 2:06:29, the second fastest of the year behind Haile Gebrselassie's world record.

In March 2008 he ran 57:33 for third in the Alphen 20km race, again in Holland, before finishing fourth in London in 2:06:15.

He ran his second World Marathon Majors event in Chicago in October that year, finishing fifth in 2:15:36 after leading the field through a swift half of 62:27.

In 2009, he finished out of the medals in London for the second year in a row, but came close to his PB with 2:06:53, fast enough to win a place on Kenya's World Championship team.

At the World Championships in Berlin he ran side-by-side with Abel Kirui for much of the race as Kenya sought to dominate the podium. Kirui pulled away in the final stages but Mutai bagged a silver medal.

Mutai arrived in London in 2010 seeking to make the podium for the first time. He achieved his goal by finishing second behind Kebede, clocking his fourth sub-2:07 time, just eight seconds outside his best.



Reuters



In November that year he made his New York debut, and had to be satisfied with second again, this time trailing Gebremariam to the line.

After his big breakthrough in London last year, Mutai ran a personal best for the half marathon when he was third at the Great North Run in 59:52 last September.

In New York last November, he battled Geoffrey Mutai for much of the race, eventually finishing second again. Crucially, he was ahead of Kebede and so won the WMM series.

In January he was named as one of six athletes on Kenya's provisional list for Olympic selection.

He was sixth in the Discovery half marathon in Eldoret on 29 January in 62:56.

Personal notes

His full name is Emmanuel Kipchirchir Mutai and he lives in Lessos.

He is no relation to 2011 Boston champion Geoffrey Mutai but he is related to Richard Limo, the 2001 world 5000m champion.

VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Patrick Makau (Kenya)

Born: 2 March 1985 Manyanzwani
Marathon best: 2:03:38 Berlin 2011
London Marathon record: 2011- 3rd 2:05:45
Other World Marathon Majors
 Berlin: 2010- 1st 2:05:08, 2011- 1st 2:03:38
 New York: 2009- dnf
Other major city marathons
 Rotterdam: 2009- 4th 2:06:14, 2010- 1st 2:04:48
Marathons in major championships: None

Career notes

Patrick Makau became the world record holder on 25 September last year when he broke Haile Gebrselassie's 2008 mark by 21 seconds as he successfully defended his Berlin Marathon title.

The 26-year-old produced a memorable performance in the German capital, surging ahead of the Ethiopian legend after 26km and zig-zagging up the road to break clear before leaping a temporary kerb just in front of the finish line. He ran even halves of 61:44 and 61:54.

He won the 2010 Berlin Marathon under even more challenging conditions, defying heavy rain to finish in 2:05:08. That was good for a two-second win over countryman Geoffrey Mutai who had stayed with him until the final few hundred metres.

Makau's performance made him the second man to finish two marathons in a calendar year in a combined time of under four hours 10 minutes as he had won the Rotterdam Marathon in 2:04:48, again beating Mutai to the line.

A year earlier in Rotterdam he'd run the second fastest debut marathon in history, clocking 2:06:14 to finish fourth behind Duncan Kibet and James Kwambai.

He was third on his London debut last year in the same time as second-placed Martin Lel. Makau fell just after half way but recovered strongly and almost caught Lel at the line.

He made his reputation as a half-marathon runner. Twice a World Championships silver medallist (2007 and 2008), he ran the third fastest half marathon ever in 2009 (58:52), and has broken the one hour barrier a record eight times. He also won the Berlin half marathon in 2007 and 2008, and the Berlin 25km race in 2006 and 2007.

He finished his 2010 season in Hawaii, pacemaking at the Honolulu marathon on 12 December, and opened 2011 at the Ra's Al-Khaymah half marathon where he was 12th in 63:52.

In January he was named as one of six athletes on a provisional list for selection to Kenya's Olympic team.



On 5 February he was second in the Granollers half marathon in 62:40.

Personal notes

Makau is from Manyanzwani, in the Eastern Province of Kenya. The second of five children, he went to Unyuani Primary School until 1999, after which he joined Kyeni Academy, Misiani.

Makau and his wife have a daughter, Christine Mueni, born in 2008.

His idol is Paul Tergat.

Makau was a pacemaker in the 2007 London Marathon.

VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Wilson Kipsang (Kenya)

Born: 15 March 1982 Keiyo District
Marathon best: 2:03:42 Frankfurt 2011
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors: None
Other major city marathons
 Frankfurt: 2010- 1st 2:04:57, 2011- 1st 2:03:42
 Lake Biwa: 2011- 1st 2:06:13
 Paris: 2010- 3rd 2:07:13
Marathons in major championships: None

Career notes

Wilson Kipsang missed Patrick Makau's one-month old world record by just four seconds when he retained his Frankfurt Marathon title on 30 October last year. The 29-year-old put in a magnificent effort over the last 5km but had to be satisfied with another course record, taking over a minute from the time he set in 2010.

He now sits second on the all-time list (although fourth if you include last year's wind-blown race on Boston's downhill course), and is now 17 seconds quicker than Haile Gebrselassie who had reigned supreme until a month earlier.

Originally a road runner, Kipsang's main claim to fame before his marathon debut in 2010 was finishing fourth at the 2009 World Half Marathon Championships. He was also second at the 2009 Ra's Al-Khaymah half in 58:59, good for eighth place on the world all-time list.

His first marathon was in Paris in 2010 when he was third in 2:07:13, half a minute behind winner Tadesse Tola. He won the Frankfurt Marathon that October in a course record of 2:04:57, this time beating Tola by more than a minute.

He set another course record when he won the Lake Biwa Marathon in Otsu last March in 2:06:13 ahead of Deriba Merga.

Indeed he lost only one of his five races last year – when he was second over 10km in Appingedam.

He finished third in this year's Ra's Al-Khaymah half marathon on 17 February in 61:01.

Personal notes

His full name is Wilson Kiprotich Kipsang.

He began running for the Kenyan police force and was discovered after he finished second in the Tegla Loroupe Peace Race over 10km.



VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Markos Geneti (Ethiopia)

Born: 30 May 1984 Walega
Marathon best: 2:04:54 Dubai 2012
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors: None
Other major city marathons
 Dubai: 2012- 3rd 2:04:54
 Los Angeles: 2011- 1st 2:06:35
Marathons in major championships: None

Career notes

Markos Geneti joined the sub-2:05 club in only his second marathon when he completed Ethiopia's clean sweep of the podium places in Dubai this January clocking 2:04:54 in third place.

It was a big leap forwards for the 27-year-old who'd made an impressive marathon debut in Los Angeles last March. Geneti was a revelation as he took close to two minutes off the course record with his winning time of 2:06:35, then the sixth fastest debut marathon.

He reduced that by another minute and a half in Dubai where he was 31 seconds behind the winner Ayele Abshero and just four adrift of runner-up Dino Sefer. It means Geneti lies 12th on the all-time list and is the fifth fastest Ethiopian.

From winning the 3000m title at the World Youth Championships in 2001, Geneti has moved up in distance in the classic manner. In the process he won the 5000m silver at the 2002 World Junior Championships and picked up a bronze over 3000m at the 2004 World Indoor Championships in Budapest.

He was also 15th at the World Cross Country Championships in 2007 and represented his country over 1500m at the 2005 World Championships in Helsinki. But there was little to suggest he would succeed so well at the marathon before his performance in LA.

Indeed, his half marathon PB was 63:06 until he improved last September to 62:01 at the Philadelphia Half Marathon. He also ran a 10km PB of 29:38 in Atlanta last July.



Reuters



VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Abel Kirui (Kenya)

Born: 4 June 1982 Rift Valley
Marathon best: 2:05:04 Rotterdam 2009
London Marathon record: 2010- 5th 2:08:04, 2011- dnf
Other World Marathon Majors
 Berlin: 2006- 9th 2:17:47, 2007- 2nd 2:06:51
 New York: 2010- 9th 2:13:01
Other major city marathons
 Rotterdam: 2009- 3rd 2:05:04
 Singapore: 2006- 3rd 2:15:22
 Tokyo: 2008- dnf
 Vienna: 2007- 3rd 2:10:41, 2008- 1st 2:07:38
Marathons in major championships
 Worlds: 2009- 1st 2:06:54, 2011- 1st 2:07:38

Career notes

Abel Kirui became the third man to retain the world marathon title in Daegu last September when he won gold by nearly two and a half minutes, the widest margin in World Championships history. He ran away from the field with an astonishing 14:17 for the 5k from 7 to 30.

It was a brilliant return to form for the Kenyan after he had dropped out of the later stages of the 2011 London race. It also secured his place on Kenya's Olympic selection shortlist, announced in January.

Kirui's emergence on the world scene began slowly, with 61:15 in the Berlin half marathon in April 2006. That won him a place as a pacemaker in the full marathon in the German capital later that year. He completed his pacing duties for Haile Gebrselassie, then kept going, clocking 2:17:47 at the finish.

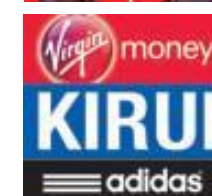
Ten weeks later, running under challenging heat and humidity in Singapore, he managed to take more than two minutes off that time. He made an even bigger improvement in Vienna in April 2007 when he was third in 2:10:41. As a tune-up to that race he had a major victory at the International Paderborner Osterlauf Half Marathon in 61:32. Kirui improved his personal best to 60:11 when sixth at the Rotterdam Half Marathon in September.

He was back in Berlin at the end of that month pacing Gebrselassie to his first world marathon record. Taking advantage of ideal running conditions and the fast course, he finished second to the Ethiopian and smashed his previous personal best by almost four minutes with 2:06:51, the sixth fastest in the world for 2007.

Kirui's first marathon of 2008 was again pacing Gebrselassie, this time in Dubai. He did not complete the race and did not finish the Tokyo International Marathon that February either, but was a big winner when he returned to Vienna two months later and set a new course record.



Reuters



Pacing Gebrselassie in Berlin again that September, he sped through 30km in 1:28:25, a couple of seconds ahead of the world record holder who went on to run the first ever sub-2:04 marathon.

Kirui's own breakthrough came the following spring in Rotterdam when he clocked 2:05:04 finishing third behind Duncan Kibet and James Kwambai. Still his PB, at the time it made him the sixth fastest all time.

He returned to Berlin that August as the fastest entrant in the 2009 World Championships. He was in control throughout, passed halfway in 63:03 and pulled away from his Kenyan teammate Emmanuel Mutai with 5km left to break the tape in 2:06:54, a championships record by 97 seconds.

2010 was less successful for Kirui, however. In London he challenged Kebede until mile 20 but faded to fifth, and he suffered a similar fate in New York when he was ninth.

Last year he seemed to be heading the same direction when he dropped out in London, but Kirui's dominance in Daegu was impressive as he retained the world title.

He set PBs at 10miles (46:40) and 30,000m (1:30:00.1) last year. This year he won the Barcelona half marathon on 26 February in 60:28.

Personal notes

A child of the Rift Valley, Kirui did not have to look far for inspiration. His uncle, Mike Rotich, has a marathon best of 2:06:33 (2003), although Kirui claims his family's running history goes back to his great grandfather who "used to chase an antelope and catch it".

He started running at Samitui Primary school, but only got serious after he won a race he'd entered as part of a police recruitment exercise. He eventually moved to Kapsabet and began racing in Poland.

VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Vincent Kipruto (Kenya)

Born: 13 September 1987 Keiyo District
Marathon best: 2:05:13 Rotterdam 2010
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors
 Chicago: 2009– 3rd 2:06:08, 2010– 5th 2:09:08
Other major city marathons
 Paris: 2009– 1st 2:05:47
 Rotterdam: 2010– 3rd 2:05:13, 2011– 2nd 2:05:33
 Reims: 2008– 3rd 2:08:16
Marathons in major championships
 Worlds: 2011– 2nd 2:10:06

Career notes

Vincent Kipruto clinched a World Championships silver medal in Daegu last year behind his teammate Abel Kirui.

Kipruto made his marathon debut in 2008 when he was third in Reims but his big breakthrough came the following year when he won the Paris Marathon in a course record of 2:05:47.

He then finished third in Chicago behind Sammy Wanjiru and Abderrahim Goumri, and he was fifth in Chicago the following year.

He set his personal best earlier in 2010 in Rotterdam when he was third behind Patrick Makau and Geoffrey Mutai in 2:05:13, making him the 10th quickest of all time (now 20th). He was only 20 seconds slower in Rotterdam last year when he lost to Wilson Chebet by just six seconds.

That performance secured his selection for Kenya's World Championships team and in Daegu he out-kicked Ethiopian Feyisa Lilesa to take silver nearly two and a half minutes behind Kirui.

Last November he took on Haile Gebrselassie at the Zevenheuvelenloop 15km race in Holland, finishing second in a PB 43:15.

He also set a PB for 10km last year (28:45 in Bangalore). His half marathon PB stood at 61:43 from Abu Dhabi in 2010 until 26 February this year when he clocked 60:46 to finish sixth in Rome–Ostia.

Personal notes

His full name is Vincent Limo Kipruto.

He was inspired by William Kiplagat, a marathon runner who lived near his home and became his coach.



VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Martin Lel (Kenya)

Born: 29 October 1978 Kapsabet
Marathon best: 2:05:15 London 2008
London Marathon record: 2005– 1st 2:07:26, 2006– 2nd 2:06:41, 2007– 1st 2:07:41, 2008– 1st 2:05:15, 2011– 2nd 2:05:45
Other World Marathon Majors
 Boston: 2003– 3rd 2:11:11, 2004– 3rd 2:13:38
 New York: 2003– 1st 2:10:30, 2007– 1st 2:09:04
Other major city marathons
 Venice: 2002– 2nd 2:10:02
 Prague 2002– dnf
Marathons in major championships
 Olympics: 2008– 5th 2:10:24

Career notes

Martin Lel made a superb return to marathon running in London last April when he was second behind Emmanuel Mutai in a time only 30 seconds slower than his PB.

A late entry to the field, Lel hadn't run a marathon since the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games when he was fifth. Earlier that year, Lel had not only retained his London title, but third overall, but smashed the six-year-old course record with 2:05:15 leading three runners under 2:06 and six under 2:07 in what was then the highest quality race of all time.

Lel's superb performance guaranteed his place on Kenya's Olympic team for Beijing and in the heat of the Chinese capital he and teammate Sammy Wanjiru set a blistering pace that laid the foundations for the swiftest marathon ever seen at a major championships. Only weeks before Lel had been suffering from malaria.

Lel's fifth place in Beijing ensured he became the 2007/08 WMM champion, but nearly three years of injuries followed as he was forced to miss the 2009 London race with a hip injury and 2010 with shin problems.

He ran his first marathon in 2002 at Prague, but after going through the half way point in 64:51 he did not finish. Five months later he placed second at Venice and in November 2003 he had his first big marathon victory in New York.

Eighteen months later he took three minutes off his best to win his first London title in 2:07:26. A year later he lost by just two seconds to countryman Felix Limo but returned in 2007 to win another dramatic sprint, this time by three seconds from Abderrahim Goumri.

He went on to claim his second victory at the New York Marathon, thus becoming the first man ever to win London and New York in the same year.



He began 2008 hiding from the tribal violence that erupted in Kenya that January. Lel was forced to flee to tea plantations to continue his training and eventually relocated to Namibia. The disruption did little harm, however, for he arrived in London in superb shape and left a few days later as the fourth fastest man in history.

He started 2009 in good form too but it turned out to be a disappointing year. After beating Wanjiru in the Lisbon half marathon in March in 59:56 he looked forward to London with confidence. But in his last training session, just a week before the race, Lel injured his right hip. He travelled to London but was forced to pull out on the eve of the race and could only watch as Wanjiru sliced five seconds from his one-year-old course record.

He missed the World Championships in Berlin but returned to Britain in September 2009 to win the Great North Run in 59:32, just two seconds outside his PB from 2006. There was further disappointment, however, when he had to pull out of the New York Marathon that November and the 2010 London race.

Lel failed to finish the Rock 'n' Roll half marathon in San Diego last June but he won at 15km on New Year's Eve when he ran 44:28 in São Paulo.

Disappointed to be left out of Kenya's provisional Olympic squad, Lel hoped to prove he was still a contender at the Dubai marathon this January, but he was no match for the flying Ethiopians, finishing a tired 35th in 2:34:57.

Personal notes

Lel (Kiptolo) is coached by Dr Gabriele Rosa and lives in the Rift Valley region of Kenya.

Tsegaye Kebede (Ethiopia)

Born: 15 January 1987 Gerar Ber
Marathon best: 2:05:18 Fukuoka 2009
London Marathon record: 2009- 2nd 2:05:20, 2010- 1st 2:05:19, 2011- 5th 2:07:48
Other World Marathon Majors
 Chicago: 2010- 2nd 2:06:43
 New York: 2011- 3rd 2:07:14
Other major city marathons
 Addis Ababa: 2007- 1st 2:15:53
 Amsterdam: 2007- 8th 2:08:16
 Fukuoka: 2008- 1st 2:06:10, 2009- 1st 2:05:18
 Paris: 2008- 1st 2:06:40
Marathons in major championships
 Olympics: 2008- 3rd 2:10:00
 Worlds: 2009- 3rd 2:08:35

Career notes

After emerging quietly onto the international scene in 2007 with victory in Addis Ababa and eighth place in the Amsterdam marathon, Tsegaye Kebede burst to prominence in 2008 with an impressive series of races that brought him an Olympic bronze medal and a course record in Fukuoka.

Kebede started 2008 finishing second in the Ra's Al-Khaymah half marathon in 59:35 following a dramatic and bruising battle with Patrick Makau in which they traded elbows. That was followed by fourth a few weeks later in the Zayed international in Abu Dhabi (61:45).

His first marathon victory came in Paris on 6 April where he led home a record finish as no fewer than 12 men broke 2:10 and the first eight set PBs. Kebede's 2:06:40 made him then the second quickest Ethiopian of all time behind Haile Gebrselassie and marked him out as a potential Olympic contender.

He proved worthy of those predictions when he emerged over the last 10km of the Olympic race to take third, improving from sixth place, more than a minute down on the leaders, to catch his countryman Deriba Merga with just 200m to go.

Kebede then went on to win the Fukuoka international marathon in December 2008 in 2:06:10, breaking the course record set by Sammy Wanjiru a year earlier. It was also a Japanese all-comers' record and made him the 12th fastest of all time.

If anything, 2009 was even better. Kebede arrived in London as 'one to watch' and lived up to the tag in a race of unprecedented pace. After what was then the fastest first half ever run, he not only hung on to Wanjiru over the closing miles but constantly threatened to close the gap. He was rewarded for his persistence with second place and a PB of 2:05:20.

He went on to win his second major championships bronze medal when he was third in the World Championships in Berlin, preventing a Kenyan clean



sweep of the medals. And there was even better to come late in the year when he returned to Fukuoka and broke his own course record with another PB of 2:05:18, making him the ninth quickest ever (he is now 23rd on the all-time list; seventh Ethiopian).

In 2010, Kebede secured his first WMM victory, dominating the race in London as Wanjiru faltered. He powered away from his rivals over the last six rainy miles to win in 2:05:19, just a second outside his PB.

He took on Wanjiru again in Chicago that year and seemed on track for another victory until the final mile when the Kenyan swept past him.

Last year was less successful for the diminutive Ethiopian, however. He lost his London title in April when Mutai cruised away at 30km. Kebede hung on to place fifth in a modest time and was left behind in New York too when the two Mutais raced away in the closing stages.

He was 10th in the Ra's Al-Khaymah half marathon on 17 February in 62:34.

Personal notes

The fifth of 13 children, Kebede was brought up in poverty in Gerar Ber, 40km north of Addis Ababa. He collected firewood and herded livestock to supplement his father's income, earning about 30 US cents a day to pay for his own education. He ate one meal a day.

He began running aged eight and was offered a place in Getenah Tessema's training group after competing in a half marathon in Addis in 2006.

He survived a bus accident just days before his marathon debut in Addis Ababa. He is 158cm tall (about 5 foot, 2 inches).

Feyisa Lilesa (Ethiopia)

Born: 1 February 1990 Addis Ababa
Marathon best: 2:05:23 Rotterdam 2010
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors
 Chicago: 2010- 3rd 2:08:10
Other major city marathons
 Dublin: 2009- 1st 2:09:12
 Nice: 2011- 4th 2:09:54
 Rotterdam: 2010- 4th 2:05:23, 2011- 7th 2:11:42
 Xiamen: 2010- 1st 2:08:47
Marathons in major championships
 Worlds: 2011- 3rd 2:10:32

Career notes

Feyisa Lilesa became the youngest marathon medalist in the history of the World Championships when he finished third in Daegu last year at just 21. While Abel Kirui cruised away for his second world title, Lilesa fought a hard battle with Vincent Kipruto and was rewarded with the bronze medal.

Lilesa won his debut marathon in Dublin in 2009 and gave a preview of his emerging marathon talent at the beginning of 2010. Still 19, he won the Xiamen Marathon in China in 2:08:47, knocking four seconds off the course record.

Three months later he became the youngest man in history to break 2:06 (a distinction later surpassed by his countryman Bazu Worku) when he clocked 2:05:23 in the Rotterdam Marathon just 10 weeks past his 20th birthday.

He ran with a large group that went through half way in 62:06 and tried to break away with 10km to go before eventually yielding to a trio of more experienced Kenyans.

In Chicago that October he again contested the top spot, this time racing Sammy Wanjiru and Tsegaye Kebede. He eventually finished third in 2:08:10.

He returned to Rotterdam last April but couldn't match his performance from 12 months' earlier as he finished seventh in his slowest time to date.

He returned to form in Daegu, however, where he was the only non-Kenyan to make the podium in either marathon. He went on to place fourth in the Nice to Cannes marathon last November in 2:09:54.

Lilesa set a personal best of 59:22 for the half marathon when he won in Houston on 15 January. Then he was fifth in Ra's Al-Khaymah on 17 February in 61:52, and third in New York on 18 March in 60:45.



VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Bazu Worku (Ethiopia)

Born: 15 September 1990
Marathon best: 2:05:25 Berlin 2010
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors
 Berlin: 2010- 3rd 2:05:25
Other major city marathons
 Dubai: 2012- 13th 2:07:48
 Ottawa: 2010- 3rd 2:09:54
 Paris: 2009- 2nd 2:06:15
Marathons in major championships
 Worlds: 2011- dnf

Career notes

Bazu Worku was generally acknowledged as the world junior record holder for the marathon until October last year when the 19-year-old Kenyan Eric Ndiema ran 2:06:07 in Amsterdam (although officially the IAAF does not ratify junior records in this event).

At the 2009 Paris Marathon, the then 18-year-old Worku shattered the previous best time placing second to Vincent Kipruto in 2:06:15. It was also, at the time, the third fastest marathon debut ever.

After a rather mundane marathon at Ottawa the following May, Worku astonished again in Berlin in September 2010 when he was one of three fighting through heavy rain. Although he could not answer the final surge of Patrick Makau and Geoffrey Mutai, Worku achieved another personal best placing third in 2:05:25. Just 11 days past his 20th birthday, it made him the youngest man in history to break 2:06, taking that distinction from his compatriot Feyisa Lilesa.

Worku was due to make his London debut last year but withdrew with food poisoning just three days before the race. He did run at the Daegu World Championships, but it was another uncomfortable experience as he dropped out.

He opened his 2012 campaign in Dubai, but while it was a memorable day for some of his countrymen, he struggled to stay with the pace and finished 13th in 2:07:48.

He first competed internationally at a couple of races in New Delhi in 2008 when he ran a 10km in 28:21 and a half marathon in 62:51. He ran his half marathon PB of 61:56 in Paris in March 2009 and was second in the Utica Boilermaker 15km race that July in 43:57.

At the end of October 2010, he was second in Ethiopia's national 30km championships in 1:32:23, beaten by Azmeraw Bekele.



Personal notes

At 21 years 220 days, Worku will be the youngest ever London Marathon champion if he wins on 22 April. The previous youngest was Sammy Wanjiru, who was 22 when he won in 2009.

His full name is Bazu Worku Hayla.

VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Jaouad Gharib (Morocco)

Born: 22 May 1972 Khenifra province
Marathon best: 2:05:27 London 2009
London Marathon record: 2004- 3rd 2:07:12*, 2005- 2nd 2:07:49, 2006- 8th 2:08:45, 2007- 4th 2:07:54, 2009- 3rd 2:05:27, 2010- 3rd 2:06:55, 2011- 6th 2:08:26
Other World Marathon Majors
 Chicago: 2007- 2nd 2:11:11
 New York: 2009- 3rd 2:10:25, 2011- 5th 2:08:26
Other major city marathons
 Fukuoka: 2006- 3rd 2:07:19, 2010- 1st 2:08:24
 Rotterdam: 2003- 6th 2:09:15
Marathons in major championships
 Olympics: 2004- 11th 2:15:12, 2008- 2nd 2:07:16
 Worlds: 2003- 1st 2:08:31, 2005- 1st 2:10:10

Career notes

Jaouad Gharib shocked the field at the 2003 World Championships, not only because he won, but because he smashed the 20-year-old World Championship record set by Rudy de Castellia in the first Worlds back in 1983.

Gharib had run only one previous marathon – finishing sixth in Rotterdam that April – and had solid but not spectacular track bests of 13:19.69 for 5000m and 27:29.5 for 10,000m. He was 10th in the 2001 World Championships 10,000m and second in the 2002 World Half Marathon Championships.

Yet he proved his 2003 win was no fluke by becoming the second man (after Abel Anton) to successfully defend his world title, winning in Helsinki in 2005. Gharib improved his PB in London in 2004 (see note below) and a year later he was only slightly slower when he finished second to Martin Lel.

After finishing eighth in 2006, Gharib challenged Haile Gebrselassie at Fukuoka that December but finished well behind the Ethiopian and was beaten into third by Dmitriy Baranovskiy who set a Ukrainian record.

In March 2007 he finished third in the Lisbon half marathon and was fourth in the London Marathon the following month, posting the fourth sub-2:08 time of his career so far.

He decided to bypass the Osaka World Championships to concentrate on Chicago, a strategy that almost reaped dividends. Under extremely warm conditions, with 50 metres to go he appeared to have secured victory but Patrick Ivuti caught him on the line. Although both were timed at 2:11:11, Ivuti was given the verdict after a 15-minute review.

He skipped London in 2008 due to injury, and warmed up for the Olympics with a half marathon in Lisbon (he finished 10th in 64:28).



The tactic paid dividends when Gharib added to his superb record by taking Olympic silver in Beijing after a fascinating tussle with Sammy Wanjiru that lasted until the last two kilometres. Gharib clocked 2:07:16, 40 seconds behind the leader but way inside the previous Olympic record.

Gharib then chased Wanjiru and Kebede home in London 2009 to take some two minutes from his PB with 2:05:27, just 17 seconds behind the winner. It also eclipsed Khalid Khannouchi's 2001 Moroccan record and proved he is not only a great champion-ship runner but a quick one too.

He was forced to miss the 2009 World Championships in Berlin with a back injury but returned to finish third in the New York Marathon in November 2009.

He finished third yet again in London 2010 behind Tsegaye Kebede and Emmanuel Mutai before he notched up his first non-championships marathon victory in Fukuoka in December 2010.

Gharib failed to make the podium in London last year, finishing sixth in 2:08:26, his worst result here since 2006. After finishing sixth at the Great North Run, he clocked the same time for fifth in New York.

Now nearly 40, this will be Gharib's eighth London Marathon.

Personal notes

Gharib is a Berber from Khenifra, a town in the mountainous Middle Atlas region of Morocco. He didn't start running until he was 22, when he was inspired by a TV broadcast of the Marrakech Marathon.

* Note: Gharib's time in the 2004 London Marathon was originally recorded as 2:07:02 but a re-examination of the race video proved that his time should be 2:07:12.

VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Marílson Gomes dos Santos (Brazil)

Born: 6 August 1977 Brasília

Marathon best: 2:06:34 London 2011

London Marathon record: 2007- 8th 2:08:37,
2010- 6th 2:08:46, 2011- 4th 2:06:34

Other World Marathon Majors

Chicago: 2004- 6th 2:08:48

New York: 2006- 1st 2:09:58, 2007- 8th 2:13:47,
2008- 1st 2:08:43, 2009- dnf, 2010- 7th 2:11:51

Other major city marathons

Paris: 2004- 6th 2:12:22

Marathons in major championships

Olympics: 2008- dnf

Worlds: 2005- 10th 2:13:40, 2009- 16th 2:15:13

Career notes

Marílson dos Santos reduced his personal best by more than two minutes when he was fourth last year. It was a suprising improvement for the 34-year-old Brazilian who beat Tsegaye Kebede to be the first non-Kenyan home. He missed Ronaldo da Costa's South American record by just 29 seconds.

Dos Santos burst to prominence when he scored an upset victory at the 2006 New York Marathon making him the fifth Brazilian to win in a World Marathon Major city after Joselido da Silva (Chicago 1991), Jose Cesar de Souza (Chicago 1992), Luiz Antonio dos Santos (Chicago 1993-94) and Ronaldo da Costa (Berlin 1998).

Earlier that year he'd beaten Boston Marathon champion Robert K Cheruiyot by 56 seconds in a São Paulo 15km road race, established Brazilian records over 5,000m (13:19.43) and 10,000m (27:48.49), and won the Ten Miles Garoto in Vitoria by more than a minute.

A superstar in his sports-mad country, dos Santos had finished 10th at the 2005 World Championships, and sixth in Paris and Chicago in 2004, but had done little to suggest he was a likely New York champion.

He was fourth at the 2007 London Marathon where, despite warm temperatures, he was one of the few elite runners to lower his PB, clocking 2:08:37 in eighth place.

He was eighth in New York too, in 2:13:47, but he did set two South American records in 2007 – lowering his own 10,000m mark to 27:28.12 at Neerpelt and running 59:33 for seventh at the World Half Marathon Championships.

He dropped out of the 2008 Beijing Olympic marathon after passing 30km in 1:44:30, but returned to form that November to win his second New York Marathon in 2:08:43.



He was 16th in the 2009 World Championships marathon (2:15:13) and 17th in the World Half Marathon Championships in Birmingham in October that year (62:41) before dropping out of the 2009 New York Marathon.

He returned to New York for the half marathon in March 2010 and finished ninth in 62:57 before placing sixth in London in 2:08:46, just nine seconds outside his best. *En route* he broke the South American 30km record, clocking 1:29:23.

He went on to finish seventh in New York before ending the year with a win at 15km in São Paulo on New Year's Eve.

Last year he set a road PB for 10 miles (27:59), won the Brazilian and Pan-Am Games 10,000m titles, and claimed the South American half marathon title.

He has warmed up for London this year by finishing second in the São Paulo half and ninth in the New York half in 61:26.

Personal notes

Dos Santos is from Ceilandia, near Brasília. He discovered his talent for running when he took up the sport at 15, following his 17-year-old brother. After winning a 3000m at a regional youth competition, he was recruited by the Sao Paulo based club Atletismo BM&F.

He is married to Juliana Paula de Azevedo, the 2002 world junior 800m bronze medallist and a national 800m and 1500m champion.

Athens Olympic marathon bronze medallist Vanderlei de Lima is a fellow club member, and the two occasionally train together.

VIRGIN LONDON MARATHON 2012

Yared Asmerom (Eritrea)

Born: 3 February 1979 Asmara

Marathon best: 2:07:27 Chunchon 2011

London Marathon record: None

Other World Marathon Majors

Berlin: 2006- dnf

Other major city marathons

Chunchon: 2011- 2nd 2:07:27

Frankfurt: 2010- 19th 2:14:07

Hamburg: 2006- 13th 2:15:36, 2007- 16th 2:15:14

Madrid: 2005- 10th 2:21:30

Otsu: 2008- 2nd 2:08:34, 2009- 3rd 2:10:49

San Sebastian: 2004- 1st 2:16:45

Seoul: 2010- 5th 2:11:46

Marathons in major championships

Olympics: 2008- 8th 2:11:11

Worlds: 2005- 25th 2:18:46, 2007- 4th 2:17:41,
2009- dnf, 2011- dnf

Career notes

Yared Asmerom is an Eritrean marathon runner with 15 races behind him and four appearances in the World Championships. He has broken the Eritrean record four times, most recently when he was second in Chunchon last year. He was fourth at the Osaka World Championships in 2007 and eighth at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

He first broke the national record on his debut in 2006 when he won the San Sebastian marathon in 2:16:45, which remains his only victory to date.

The following year he was 25th at the Worlds in Helsinki and ninth at the World Half Marathon Championships in Edmonton. In 2006 he lowered his marathon record to 2:15:36 when he was 13th in Hamburg.

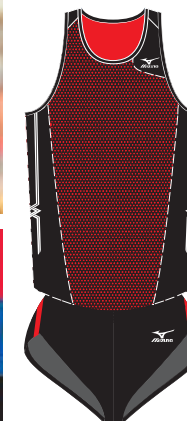
He sliced another 12 seconds from the record when he was 16th in Hamburg in 2007 and went on to finish fourth in the sweltering heat of Osaka where he missed out on a medal by 16 seconds.

His good form continued in 2008 when he slashed more than six minutes from his PB running 2:08:34 for second in Otsu and claimed a top 10 place at the Olympic Games.

He made the Otsu podium again in 2009 but later failed to finish at the Berlin World Championships. He didn't improve in 2010 and had another dnf next to his name after the Daegu World Championship marathon last summer.

But in the Chunchon International Marathon last October he reclaimed the national record shaving a second from the time run by compatriot by Samuel Tsegay only seven days earlier. He was second behind Stanley Biwott's course record.

He set a PB for 10 miles (47:54) at the Great South Run in 2007, and has a half marathon best of 60:28.



He finished eighth in the Lisbon half marathon on 25 March in 63:43.

Samuel Tsegay (Eritrea)

Born: 24 October 1988 Kudofelasi
Marathon best: 2:07:28 Amsterdam 2011
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors: None
Other major city marathons
 Amsterdam: 2011- 8th 2:07:28
Marathons in major championships
 None

Career notes

Samuel Tsegay claimed the Eritrean record from Yonas Kifle when he made his marathon debut in Amsterdam last October only to see it vanish a week later when Yared Asmerom took a second from his time of 2:07:28.

Tsegay finished eighth in the Dutch city, an encouraging step up for the 23-year-old who has twice finished fifth at World Half Marathon Championships. He is an experienced cross country international at junior and senior levels with a half marathon best of 60:17.

Tsegay broke the national junior 10,000m record when he was fourth at the 2006 World Junior Championships and he lowered it again at the 2007 All-African Games. He also finished eighth in the junior races at the 2006 and 2007 World Cross Country Championships.

At senior level he was 16th at the World Cross in 2009 when the Eritrean team took bronze. He also represented Eritrea over 5000m at the 2009 World Championships in Berlin where he was eliminated in the heats.

A fifth place at the 2010 World Cross gained him a team silver but he was disqualified in 2011 after he and Abera Kuma began fighting in the final stretch. Tsegay accused the Ethiopian of deliberately elbowing him and standing on his heels. He reacted by grabbing Abera's leg and threw a punch before dashing to the finish. The IAAF disqualified both athletes.

On the roads, Tsegay made an encouraging step up to the half marathon when he was fifth at the 2009 World Championships in Birmingham and he was fifth again in Nanning the following year.

He ran a personal best for 10 miles (44:38) in Zaandam last September before making his marathon debut in the same country a month later.

He opened 2012 in Netherlands too, finishing third at Egmond Aan Zee in 61:09.

Personal notes

His full name is Samuel Tsegay Tesfamariam.



Abreham Cherkos (Ethiopia)

Born: 23 September 1989 Asella, Oromia region
Marathon best: 2:06:13 Boston 2011
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors
 Boston: 2011- 5th 2:06:13
Other major city marathons
 Amsterdam: 2010- 4th 2:07:29
Marathons in major championships: None

Career notes

Since winning gold over 3000m at the World Youth Championships in 2005, Abreham Cherkos gradually moved up through the distances till he made his marathon debut in 2010.

That was in Amsterdam where he was fourth in 2:07:29, six seconds behind Chala Dechase, a time he improved by more than minute when he was fifth in the wind-blown Boston race last year behind Ryan Hall.

Along the way he picked up World Junior silver and gold medals over 3000m, won a World Indoor bronze, made the final of World Championships and Olympic Games and set world youth and junior records for 3000m, 5000m and 5km on the roads.

Cherkos was just 15 when he won his World Youth 3000m title. The following year he took silver over 5000m at the World Juniors in Beijing, improving to gold two years later.

In 2006, he set world youth records for 3000m and 5000m, plus a world junior record for 5km when he ran 13:15 to win the Carlsbad 5000 aged 16.

In 2007 he was eighth over 5000m at the World Championships in Osaka and in 2008 he set a world junior indoor record for 3000m at the Sparkassen Cup in Stuttgart. A few weeks later he took a bronze medal at the World Indoor Championships in Valencia.

He was still only 19 when he placed fifth in the Olympic 5000m final won by his famous compatriot Kenenisa Bekele.

He made his first serious foray on the roads in 2010. In July that year he clocked 28:14 for ninth in the Peachtree 10km in Atlanta, and he was second at the Giro di Castelbuono behind Zersenay Tadese but ahead of Samuel Wanjiru and Vincent Kipruto.

Last year he ran his first half marathon, clocking 61:42 for fourth in Ostia just two months before the Boston Marathon.

Personal notes

His full name is Abreham Cherkos Feleke.



Abderrahim Bouramdane (Morocco)

Born: 1 January 1978 Fès
Marathon best: 2:07:33 London 2010
London Marathon record: 2010- 4th 2:07:33, 2011- 7th 2:08:42
Other World Marathon Majors
 Boston: 2008- 2nd 2:09:04
 New York: 2008- 5th 2:13:33, 2009- 5th 2:12:14, 2010- 10th 2:14:07
Other major city marathons
 Eindhoven: 2005- 21st 2:20:52
 Marrakech: 2005- 1st 2:15:16
 Otsu: 2009- dnf
 Ottawa: 2006- 1st 2:12:18, 2007- 2nd 2:10:41
 Seoul: 2007- 2nd 2:08:20
 Toronto: 2006- 2nd 2:10:41
 Tunis: 2004- 1st 2:15:38
Marathons in major championships
 Olympics: 2008- 26th 2:17:42
 Worlds: 2005- dnf, 2007- 45th 2:33:26, 2011- 4th 2:10:55
 Francophone: 2005- 3rd 2:18:46

Career notes

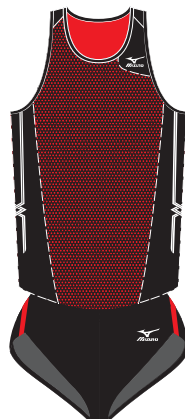
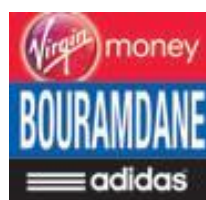
A very consistent competitor, Abderrahim Bouramdane has placed in the top five in 12 of his 19 marathons. He has won races in Tunisia and Morocco, took a bronze medal at the 2005 Francophone Games in Naimey, Nigeria, and was fourth at last year's World Championships in Daegu.

In 2006 he was involved in one of the more bizarre marathon finishes. He and countryman Zaid Laaroussi were in the lead at the Ottawa Marathon when the trailing pack took an inadvertent 400m shortcut to go ahead of the Moroccan duo. Bouramdane eventually caught up but then fell back in the final stages. He was third to cross the finish line but as the first to run the full 42.195 km distance, he was declared the winner.

He returned in 2007 but again was not the first across the line, finishing second in 2:10:41. In November that year he broke through both the 2:10 and 2:09 barriers when he was second in Seoul in 2:08:20.

At Boston in 2008 he stuck with eventual winner Robert Kipkoech Cheruiyot longer than anyone else and placed second in 2:09:04. After a disappointing 26th at the Beijing Olympics, Bouramdane bounced back to finish fifth in New York, a performance he repeated in 2009.

He set a 10km PB of 29:15 in New York in 2009 and was 12th in the 2010 New York half marathon in a personal best of 63:29.



He surprised many on his London Marathon debut in 2010, finishing fourth in 2:07:33, shaving nearly a minute from his PB. He returned to the UK that September and was fifth in the Great North Run with a PB of 62:40. He was 10th in the 2010 New York Marathon in 2:14:07.

In London last year he couldn't quite repeat his 2010 form, finishing seventh just a place behind his countryman Jaouad Gharib, in 2:08:42.

At the World Championships in Daegu he missed out on a medal by 23 seconds, beaten to third by Feyisa Lilesa.

Bouramdane is no stranger to the UK - was third in the Birmingham half marathon last October and a week later set a 10 mile PB when he was sixth in the Great South Run in Portsmouth.

He ran the New York half marathon on 18 March this year, finishing 27th in 64:28.

Personal notes

Bouramdane began running in 1993 and was inspired by Abdesslem Rhadi, the Moroccan who won the marathon silver medal at the 1960 Olympics.

His hometown is Fès and he enjoys playing football.

Adil Annani (Morocco)

Born: 30 June 1980
Marathon best: 2:10:15 Oita 2009
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors: None
Other major city marathons
 Casablanca: 2008- 1st 2:12:03
 Dubai: 2011- 8th 2:11:15
 Marrakech: 2008- 3rd 2:11:05
 Oita: 2009- 1st 2:10:15
Marathons in major championships
 Worlds: 2009- 7th 2:12:12, 2011- dnf

Career notes

Adil Annani made his marathon debut in 2008 when he was third in Marrakech and enjoyed his first triumph later that year when he won the Casablanca marathon.

His success continued in 2009 when he won again, this time in the Beppu-Oita marathon, clocking 2:10:15 which remains his PB. This secured his place on Morocco's World Championships team and in Berlin that August he achieved a top 10 place when he was seventh in 2:12:12.

He did not race at all in 2010 but returned in January 2011 to finish eighth in Dubai, the only man in the top 10 not from either Kenya or Ethiopia.

He ran 1:40:26.6 to finish fifth in the 30,000m race in Eugene last June when Moses Mosop broke the word record.

He didn't fare so well in Daegu, however. Ananni dropped out of the World Championships marathon.

He set his half marathon PB of 61:31 when finishing 12th in the New York half on 18 March this year.

He began his international career 10 years ago as a 3000m and 10,000m track runner and has a 10km road PB of 28:04.



Solonei Rocha da Silva (Brazil)

Born: 18 April 1982
Marathon best: 2:11:32 Padua 2011
London Marathon record: None
Other World Marathon Majors: None
Other major city marathons
 Padua: 2011- 4th 2:11:32
 Porto Alegre: 2010- 1st 2:15:45
Marathons in major championships
 Pan American: 2011- 1st 2:16:37

Career notes

Solonei Rocha da Silva won the Pan American Games marathon in Guadalajara at the end of October last year. He entered with the fastest time and delivered Brazil's fourth consecutive Pan Am gold with a minute to spare over Colombia's Diego Colorado.

His time of 2:16:37 may not be much to shout about but then Guadalajara is over 5,000 feet (1500m) and Rocha had tried athletics for the first time just two years before.

Rocha was working as a bin man in Penápolis in 2009 when his wife suggested he enter a local race held in honour of Saint Francis of Assisi. He finished third and the following February ran 29:39.72 for 10,000m in Rio.

In April 2010 he ran his first half marathon, in Sao Paulo, finishing third in 65:19, then in May he took on the Porto Alegre marathon. He won in 2:15:45, surprising the field and himself.

By the end of the year he'd reduced his 10,000m PB to 29:17.8, run 29:22 for 10km on the roads, and finished fourth over 10,000m at the Brazilian championships.

By now he was under the guidance of two-time Olympian Clodoaldo do Carmo, and he began 2011 winning the South American cross country championships in Asuncion, Paraguay, with a sprint finish ahead of fellow Brazilian Gládson Barbosa.

In March last year he came to Europe for the first time and reduced his half marathon PB to 64:10 finishing 10th in Lisbon, the first non-African, before taking fourth spot at the Padua Marathon in 2:11:32.

Two more fourth places followed, over 5000m and 10,000m at the national championships last August, before his marathon triumph at the Pan Am Games.

Personal notes

He is coached by Clodoaldo do Carmo who was 11th in the 1992 Olympic steeplechase final and also ran for Brazil in Atlanta 1996.



Scott Westcott (Australia)

Born: 25 September 1975 Parkes, NSW
Marathon best: 2:11:36 Oita 2005
London Marathon record: 2004- 14th 2:13:30
Other World Marathon Majors
 Berlin: 2007- 17th 2:15:02
 Chicago: 2004- 8th 2:13:08
Other major city marathons
 Fukuoka: 2003- 20th 2:17:58
 Oita: 2005- 2nd 2:11:36, 2008- 3rd 2:13:35,
 2009- 4th 2:12:56
 Padua: 2008- 5th 2:16:28
Marathons in major championships
 Worlds: 2005- 27th 2:19:18, 2009- 58th 2:26:02
 Commonwealths: 2006- 4th 2:16:32

Career notes

Scott Westcott will run his first marathon for almost three years on 22 April having missed the whole of 2010 and had only one outing (a half marathon in Melbourne) last year.

A middle and long distance track runner in the late 1990s, Westcott made his marathon debut as long ago as 2003 when he was 20th in Fukuoka in 2:17:58.

He improved rapidly in 2004 running 2:13:30 in London and 2:13:08 to finish eighth in Chicago, a notable top 10 placing in one of the world's major marathons.

He took another minute and a half from his PB when he was second in Oita the following February in 2:11:36 making him the 15th fastest Australian of all time and securing his qualification for the 2005 World Championships and 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne.

Westcott was 27th at the Helsinki Worlds, first Australian home, and the following year he was unlucky to miss out on a Commonwealth medal on home soil in Melbourne when he was fourth behind Britain's bronze medallist Dan Robinson.

He was 17th in the Berlin Marathon in 2007 and although he didn't improve his PB he had three more top five finishes in 2008 and 2009, two of them in Oita where he was third in 2008 and fourth in 2009.

His last marathon was at the World Championships in Berlin nearly three years ago, but it wasn't a race to remember for Westcott as he trailed home 58th in 2:26:02.

His half marathon best stems from 2000 when he ran 63:03 to win the national championships. He represented Australia at the 2003 World Half Marathon Championships in Vilamoura when he was 49th.



Personal notes

Westcott is a secondary school teacher by profession. He married Jessica Manning in 2004 and they live in Newcastle, New South Wales.

He was raised in a small country village, Alectown, located just outside the town of Parkes.

He studied teaching in Armidale and his first teaching job (in 1998) was in the Hunter Valley where he linked up with his coach Ian Leitch.

Zersenay Tadese (Eritrea)

Born: 8 February 1982 Adi Bana
Marathon best: 2:12:03 London 2010
London Marathon record: 2009- dnf, 2010- 7th 2:12:03
Other World Marathon Majors: None
Other major city marathons: None
Marathons in major championships: None

Career notes

Great anticipation surrounded Zersenay Tadese's marathon debut in 2009, but the Eritrean endured a baptism of fire. As Sammy Wanjiru and co scorched through London at world record pace, Tadese hung on gamely for 19km. But it all proved too much and in the end Tadese dropped out at 35km.

Great hopes surrounded his return in 2010 too as he'd just broken the world half marathon record in Lisbon a month before. This time he finished, but it wasn't the world beating breakthrough some had predicted. Tadese again lost touch with the leaders in the second half and came home seventh in 2:12:03.

Many say there must be more to come from a man who's won the world half marathon title three times, the world 20km title, and beat Kenenisa Bekele to win the World Cross Country Championships.

Tadese won Eritrea's first ever Olympic medal in 2004 when he was third in the Athens 10,000m, and its first world championship medal when he took silver at the 2005 World Cross Country Championships.

In 2005 he ran what was then the fastest ever half marathon when he won the Great North Run in 59:05 (although it was not a record due to the GNR's slightly downhill course).

In 2006 he became the world road running champion over 20km, and in 2007 he beat Kenenisa Bekele to win the World Cross Country Championships before going on to win the World Half Marathon Championships later in the year in 58:59.

In May 2008 he was second in the BUPA London 10k and third at the World Cross Country Championships in Edinburgh. He went on to finish fifth in the Olympic 10,000m final in Beijing and that October he retained the world half marathon title in Rio.

He began his 2009 campaign by finishing third in the Great Edinburgh Cross Country on 10 January and was third again at the World Cross Country Championships in Amman.

At the Berlin World Championships he chased Bekele home in the 10,000m final to claim the silver medal, and in October that year he completed his hat trick of world half marathon titles. Tadese clocked 59:35 to win gold in Birmingham.



Tuning up for his second crack at the London Marathon, Tadese took 10 seconds off Sammy Wanjiru's world record when winning the 2010 Lisbon half marathon in a scorching 58:23, smashing Haile Gebrselassie's world 20km record on the way with 55:21. He was also four seconds short of the world record for 15km as he passed that point in 41:33.

In London Tadese again found the full marathon distance too much for him, and in October he lost his half marathon crown when Wilson Kiprotich beat him in Nanning by four seconds.

On the roads last year he produced another blistering run, clocking 58:30 in Lisbon, his second quickest half ever, before concentrating on the track. He was a sub-27 minute 10,000m in Eugene in June and was fourth in the world 10,000m final in Daegu. He was third in this year's World's Best 10k in San Juan on 26 February in 28:13, and won the Lisbon half on 25 March for the third consecutive year in 59:34.

He currently holds national records at 3000m, 5000m, 10,000m and 10km, as well as world records at 20km and half marathon.

Personal Notes

Tadese won a national road cycling title in 2001 before taking up athletics. He has six siblings. His brother Kidane is also a top class athlete – he was 10th in the 2008 Olympic 5000m and ninth in the world 10,000m in 2009.

Tadese's first international was at the 2002 world cross in Dublin where he was 30th despite wearing ill-fitting shoes and being startled by the starting gun. Some 2500 guests attended his wedding to Merhawit Solomon, which was broadcast live on Eritrean television.

Martin Dent (Australia)

Born: 8 February 1979 Chertsey, UK
Marathon best: 2:12:23 Fukuoka 2011
London Marathon record: 2009- 14th 2:15:24
Other World Marathon Majors:
 Chicago: 2004- 13th 2:15:35
Other major city marathons:
 Canberra: 2004- 1st 2:15:12
 Fukuoka: 2002- 11th 2:20:04, 2008- 13th 2:14:46, 2011- 8th 2:12:23
Marathons in major championships:
 Worlds: 2009- 21st 2:16:05
 Commonwealths: 2010- 6th 2:20:19

Career notes

A former Australian champion at 3000m steeplechase, Martin Dent is a versatile distance runner, having competed internationally at every event from 1500m to the marathon.

He ran his marathon PB in Fukuoka last December, his third PB in his visits to the prestigious Japanese race but a fraction outside Athletics Australia's 2:12 Olympic qualifying time.

He made his debut here in 2002 when he was 11th in 2:20:04, won the Canberra marathon in 2004 in 2:15:35 and returned to Fukuoka in 2008 when he lowered his best to 2:14:46.

His one previous appearance in London was in 2009 when he was 14th. He was 21st at that summer's World Championships in Berlin and finished sixth in the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi.

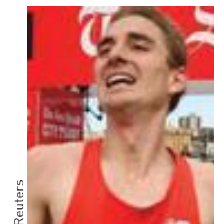
His half marathon best stems from 2009 when he was third in the Gold Coast half in 62:16.

On the track, Dent compiled an excellent junior career, winning three Australian junior steeplechase titles and competing at two World Junior Championships and two World Junior Cross Country Championships.

He made his senior international debut in 1999 when he competed at the World University Games and senior World Cross Country Championships. He just missed selection in the steeplechase for the Sydney 2000 Olympics and graduated to the 10,000m and marathon soon after.

The nearest Dent came to international success on the track was at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne when he was fourth in the 3000m steeplechase final behind three Kenyans.

A week later Dent ran both the short and long course events at the World Cross Country Championships in Fukuoka finishing 42nd and 45th respectively. In October 2006, he was the only Australian male in the IAAF World Road Running Championships in Debrecen, Hungary, finishing 45th.



He also represented Australia at the 2007 and 2008 World Cross Country Championships.

Last year he won half marathons in Sydney and Melbourne and was close to his PB when he won a 10km race in Sydney in 29:31.

Personal notes

Born in Chertsey, England, Dent now lives in Canberra. He is married to Kathie, has three boys, and works as a public servant in the department of finance and administration.

Self coached, he used to train with Scott Westcott.

He also used to be a member of Belgrave Harriers and ran for them in the 2003 European Club Championships.

His heroes are Rob de Castella and Steve Moneghetti.