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Four-time Olympic Gold Medalist and Six-time World Champion Mo Farah Joins Galen Rupp in the 2018 Bank of America Chicago Marathon Men's Elite Field

Event Will Bring Back Pacers ("Rabbits") For The Professional Competitors

CHICAGO – The Bank of America Chicago Marathon announced today that four-time Olympic gold medalist, six-time world champion and five-time European champion Mo Farah will join the 2018 Chicago Marathon elite competition. In 2012, Farah became the first British athlete in history to win an Olympic gold at the 10,000m, and he is just the second athlete in history to pull off back-to-back gold medals in both the 5000m and 10,000m at the 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games.

The Chicago Marathon marks Farah's third go at the distance and his first 42K on U.S. soil. He joins defending champion and former training partner, Galen Rupp, at the front of this year's elite pack. Farah and Rupp made history together at the 2012 London Olympics, finishing with the gold and silver in the 10,000m.

"Mo and Galen are two of the greatest distance runners of all time," said Executive Race Director of the Bank of America Chicago Marathon Carey Pinkowski. "They come to Chicago following in the footsteps of incredible runners like Khalid Khannouchi, Sammy Wanjiru, Moses Tanui, Paul Tergat, Steve Jones and more. These two runners have competed at the highest level of competition and I'm confident they will come prepared for what's shaping up to be an epic showdown."

Farah made his marathon debut in 2014 in London, clocking 2:08: 21 to finish eighth. He refocused his energy on the track and the 2016 Rio Olympics before tackling the distance again this spring. He finished third in London with a new personal best and a national record, 2:06:21. Farah dazzled fans at the 2016 Rio Olympics when he experienced a dramatic fall, tumbling hard to the track, in the 10,000m. Instead of panicking, he found his feet, rejoined the pack and ran away from the rest of the field to win gold. In addition to his Olympic and world titles, he has landed on the top of the podium 20 times in the Diamond League track competitions.

Farah holds national track records in the 1500m, 3000m, two-mile, 5000m and 10,000m, and British road records in the 5K, 10K, 20K, half marathon and marathon. In 2017, Farah was named BBC's Sports Personality of the Year.

Setting ideal conditions for fast times

The Bank of America Chicago Marathon in 2018 will re-introduce pacers – "rabbits" – into the elite competition after breaking from the tradition for the past few years.

“The championship style of racing that spectators enjoy will continue as the race enters its final miles,” Pinkowski said. “The epic 2010 duel between the late Wanjiru and Tsegaye Kebede – arguably one of the greatest finishes in marathon history – underscores the importance of the tactics that still exist and flourish in paced races.”

Pinkowski and event organizers decided to transition back to pacers to leverage the speed of the course, to work towards setting up ideal conditions for the top tier elite athletes confirmed so far, and to respond to feedback received from runners.

“We listened to the athletes and they want to come to Chicago because of our tradition of fast times and our legacy as a world record course,” continued Pinkowski. “If athletes want to run in races without pacers, there are several opportunities for them to do so.”

Journalist interested in covering the 2018 Bank of America Chicago Marathon can apply for media credentials now at chicagomarathon.com.

About the Bank of America Chicago Marathon

In its 41st year on Sunday, October 7, the Bank of America Chicago Marathon welcomes thousands of runners from more than 100 countries and all 50 states, including a world-class elite field, top regional and Masters runners, race veterans, debut marathoners and charity runners. The race’s iconic course takes runners through 29 vibrant neighborhoods on an architectural and cultural tour of Chicago. Annually, an estimated 1.7 million spectators line the streets cheering on more than 40,000 runners from the start line to the final stretch down Columbus Drive. As a result of the race’s national and international draw, the Chicago Marathon assists in raising millions of dollars for a variety of charitable causes while generating \$282 million in annual economic impact to its host city. The 2018 Bank of America Chicago Marathon, a member of the Abbott World Marathon Majors, will start and finish in Grant Park beginning at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, October 7. In advance of the race, a two-day Abbott Health & Fitness Expo will be held at McCormick Place Convention Center on Friday, October 5, and Saturday, October 6. For more information about the event and how to get involved, go to chicagomarathon.com.

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