



# News Release

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## John Hancock Announces 2020 Boston Marathon Elite Team

*75 Elite Athletes, Including Olympians, Paralympians, World Champions, Olympic Medalists and Abbott World Marathon Majors Winners, from 17 Countries Invited for 124th Running on April 20*

**BOSTON, MA, January 22, 2020, 9:00 a.m. EST**—John Hancock and the Boston Athletic Association (B.A.A.) today announced the elite international fields for the 124th Boston Marathon on April 20. Complete field lists follow.

The 2020 Boston Marathon elite field has won more than 230 international marathons and includes 16 Boston Marathon champions, Olympic and Paralympic medalists, World Record holders, World Champions and Abbott World Marathon Majors Series champions. These accomplished athletes will challenge their respective fields to seek the coveted olive wreath at the world's most historic marathon.

<https://youtu.be/7giAh7sh5BY>

“John Hancock is proud to announce our accomplished international team in our 35<sup>th</sup> year as principal sponsor of the Boston Marathon,” said Barbara Goose, Chief Marketing Officer at John Hancock. “Over the years we’ve recruited more than 900 of the world’s best runners from 48 countries and this year’s team is one of the most accomplished. We’ll be cheering for these athletes and all participants as they run from Hopkinton to Boston in April.”

“The Boston Marathon is proud to welcome the world’s best athletes each April, and this year’s race is no exception,” said Tom Grilk, CEO of the B.A.A. “With Olympic and Paralympic medalists, national record holders, and rising stars, the race toward the finish line will be both fierce and exciting. We look forward to crowning our 2020 champions on what will be another memorable Patriots’ Day.”

### Women’s Field Summary

John Hancock has assembled a talented field of seasoned and rising elites with 12 women holding personal best times under 2:23 and five under 2:20.

Leading the way are five Boston Marathon champions: **Worknesh Degefa**, the defending Boston champion and Ethiopian marathon national record holder; two-time Olympian **Desiree Linden** of the United States, who won Boston in 2018; two-time World Championships gold medalist and three-time Abbott World



Marathon Majors Series winner **Edna Kiplagat** of Kenya, who won Boston in 2017; 2015 Boston Marathon, Prague, and Las Vegas champion **Caroline Rotich**, also of Kenya; and Ethiopian **Buzunesh Deba**, the 2014 Boston Marathon course record holder.

Challengers for the title include **Mare Dibaba** of Ethiopia, who returns in excellent fitness having recently run 2:20:21 to place runner-up at the 2019 BMW Berlin Marathon. Dibaba has finished as high as second in Boston and is the 2015 World Athletics Championships Marathon gold medalist, 2016 Olympic Marathon bronze medalist, and 2014 Bank of America Chicago Marathon winner.

Olympian **Rose Chelimo** of Bahrain is on the team, having claimed both a silver and gold medal at the last two World Athletics Championships Marathons (2019 and 2017). Chelimo was eighth at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic Marathon.

Three-time Olympian **Gelete Burka**, a gold, silver, and bronze medalist at World Athletics Championships on the track and in cross country will lead a trio of Ethiopians: two-time Olympian **Meskerem Assefa**, winner of the Rotterdam and Frankfurt Marathons; **Yebgual Melese**, who has earned wins in Shanghai, Prague and Houston; and three-time Rome Marathon champion **Rahma Tusa**.

Returning to the team with top finishes in previous Boston Marathons are Canadian Olympian **Krista Duchene**, third in 2018; World Athletics Half Marathon silver and bronze medalist **Mary Ngugi** of Kenya, seventh in 2019, and **Kate Landau** of the United States, 13th and top masters finisher last year.

The Kenyan trio of **Magdalyne Masai**, Olympian **Besu Sado** and **Caroline Chepkoech Kipkirui** will make their Boston debuts, as will Ethiopian **Haftamnesh Tesfay**. Masai won in Toronto last fall and was runner-up in Hamburg; Sado made her marathon debut in Amsterdam last October and finished fourth in 2:21:03; Kipkirui is a two-time Falmouth Road Race winner and the former world-record-holder in the 5K (14:48 en-route to a 30:19 win at the 2018 Prague 10K); and Tesfaye ran 2:20:13 in her 2018 marathon debut in Dubai.

Four-time TCS New York City and Virgin Money London winner **Mary Keitany** of Kenya had accepted an invitation to run Boston, but she is currently sidelined with a back injury.

In the women's wheelchair division, **Manuela Schär** of Switzerland returns as defending champion, having won last year's race in 1:34:19. A two-time Boston winner, Schär's first victory came in course record fashion when she timed a world best of 1:28:17 from Hopkinton to Boston in 2017, becoming the first woman ever to dip under the 1:30 barrier. She'll be joined on the starting line by five-time Boston champion **Tatyana McFadden** of the United States and **Madison De Rozario** of Australia; the pair finished second and third in Boston a year ago. McFadden has earned 17 Paralympic medals over the course of her career.

Americans **Susannah Scaroni**, **Amanda McGrory**, and Massachusetts native **Katrina Gerhard** all have personal bests under 1:37, while Australia's **Eliza Ault-Connell** looks to podium for the first time.



McFadden and Scaroni have already secured their positions on Team USA for the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

### **Men's Field Summary**

With 10 men holding personal best times under 2:07, and most having competed against each other in championship events, the race up front should prove competitive on the challenging Boston course.

Leading the elite men are four Boston Marathon champions from the last five years: **Lawrence Cherono** of Kenya, the reigning Boston and Bank of America Chicago Marathon champion; **Lelisa Desisa** of Ethiopia, a two-time Boston winner, TCS New York City champion and the 2019 World Athletics Championships Marathon gold medalist; **Yuki Kawauchi** of Japan, the 2018 Boston victor; and 2017 World Athletics Championships gold medalist **Geoffrey Kirui** of Kenya.

Chasing the champions is 2012 Olympic Marathon champion and 2013 World Athletics Championships gold medalist **Stephen Kiprotich** of Uganda. Also in the hunt are two athletes looking for their first Abbott World Marathon Majors win: **Albert Korir** of Kenya, second at the TCS New York City Marathon last fall, and Ethiopian **Dejene Debela**, runner-up to Cherono by one second at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon.

Returning to Boston are Kenyans **Kenneth Kipkemoi**, third at Boston last year and winner of the Rotterdam Marathon; **Philemon Rono**, three-time Toronto champion; and **Benson Kipruto**, also a past Toronto winner. **Felix Kandie** also returns after finishing fourth in Boston last year.

The Japanese pair of **Kentaro Nakamoto** and **Shoya Osaki** also join the John Hancock Elite Team. Nakamoto has represented his country on three World Championships teams and was sixth at the 2012 Olympic Marathon.

Newcomers to the course include 2019 Frankfurt winner **Fikre Bekele** of Ethiopia and two-time Eritrean Olympian and junior stand-out **Abrar Osman**. Making his marathon debut is **Jemal Yimer**, the Ethiopian national record holder in the half marathon (58:33).

Also joining the John Hancock Elite Team are Olympians **Dylan Wykes** of Canada and **Li Zicheng** of China, as well as **Stephen Scullion** of Ireland and **Fernando Cabada** of the United States.

In the men's wheelchair division, previously announced defending champion **Daniel Romanchuk** of the United States looks to earn his second wheelchair title. Romanchuk, 21, became the youngest Boston Marathon wheelchair champion in history and is the first American since 1993 to hold the men's wheelchair title in Boston. Four-time champion **Marcel Hug** of Switzerland and 10-time winner **Ernst van Dyk** of South Africa will both challenge Romanchuk, the reigning Abbott World Marathon Majors Series champion.



Joining Romanchuk, Hug, and van Dyk are fellow Boston winners **Masazumi Soejima** of Japan as well as former course-record-holder **Joshua Cassidy** (Canada). British star **David Weir**, Spain's **Jorge Madera**, as well as Japan's **Hiroki Nishida** and **Kota Hokinoue** all are in search of their first Boston win.

American men's contenders, in addition to Romanchuk, include **Aaron Pike**, **Joshua George**, **James Senbeta**, **Krige Schabort**, and **Hermin Garic**.

<b>2020 Boston Marathon John Hancock Elite Team</b>		
<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>Personal Best</b>	<b>Country</b>
Worknesh Degefa	2:17:41 (Dubai, 2019) NR	ETH
Yebrgual Melese	2:19:36 (Dubai, 2018)	ETH
Edna Kiplagat	2:19:50 (London, 2012)	KEN
Mare Dibaba	2:19:52 (Dubai, 2012)	ETH
Buzunesh Deba	2:19:59 (Boston, 2014) CR	ETH
Haftamnesh Tesfay	2:20:13 (Dubai, 2018)	ETH
Meskerem Assefa	2:20:36 (Frankfurt, 2018)	ETH
Gelete Burka	2:20:45 (Dubai, 2018)	ETH
Besu Sado	2:21:03 (Amsterdam, 2019)	KEN
Magdalyne Masai	2:22:16 (Toronto, 2019)	KEN
Desiree Linden	2:22:38 (Boston, 2011)	USA (MI)
Rose Chelimo	2:22:51 (Boston, 2017)	BRN
Caroline Rotich	2:23:22 (Chicago, 2012)	KEN
Rahma Tusa	2:23:46 (Rome, 2018)	ETH
Mary Ngugi	2:27:36 (NYC, 2019)	KEN
Krista Duchene	2:28:32 (Toronto, 2013)	CAN
Caroline Chepkoech Kipkirui	2:31:44A (Kisumu, 2012)	KEN
Kate Landau	2:31:56 (Boston, 2019)	USA (FL)

<b>2020 Boston Marathon Elite Wheelchair Team</b>		
<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>Personal Best</b>	<b>Country</b>
Manuela Schär	1:28:17 (Boston, 2017)	SUI
Susannah Scaroni	1:30:42 (Grandma's, 2019)	USA (IL)
Tatyana McFadden	1:31:30 (Grandma's, 2019)	USA (MD)
Amanda McGrory	1:33:13 (Boston, 2017)	USA (IL)
Katrina Gerhard	1:36:26 (Grandma's, 2019)	USA (MA)



Jenna Fesemyer	1:37:02 (Grandma's, 2019)	USA (IL)
Christie Dawes	1:37:14 (Boston, 2017)	AUS
Shelly Woods	1:37:44 (Padova, 2008)	GBR
Margriet Van Den Broek	1:38:33 (Boston, 2017)	NED
Madison De Rozario	1:39:22 (Chicago, 2017)	AUS
Arielle Rausin	1:40:51 (Grandma's, 2019)	USA (IL)
Eliza Ault-Connell	1:41:46 (Boston, 2019)	AUS
Vanessa De Souza	1:45:19 (Oita, 2018)	BRA
Michelle Wheeler	1:45:55 (Oita, 2018)	USA (NJ)
Yen Hoang	2:01:06 (Boston, 2019)	USA (IL)

<b>2020 Boston Marathon John Hancock Elite Team</b>		
<b>MEN</b>	<b>Personal Best</b>	<b>Country</b>
Lawrence Cherono	2:04:06 (Amsterdam, 2018)	KEN
Lelisa Desisa	2:04:45 (Dubai, 2013)	ETH
Philemon Rono	2:05:00 (Toronto, 2019)	KEN
Benson Kipruto	2:05:13 (Toronto, 2019)	KEN
Kenneth Kipkemoi	2:05:44 (Rotterdam, 2018)	KEN
Dejene Debela	2:05:46 (Chicago, 2019)	ETH
Felix Kandie	2:06:03 (Seoul, 2017)	KEN
Fikre Bekele	2:06:27 (Seoul, 2019)	ETH
Geoffrey Kirui	2:06:27 (Amsterdam, 2016)	KEN
Stephen Kiprotich	2:06:33 (Tokyo, 2015) NR	UGA
Abrar Osman	2:07:46 (Amsterdam, 2019)	ERI
Albert Korir	2:08:03 (Ottawa, 2019)	KEN
Yuki Kawauchi	2:08:14 (Seoul, 2013)	JPN
Kentaro Nakamoto	2:08:35 (Oita, 2013)	JPN
Dylan Wykes	2:10:47 (Rotterdam, 2012)	CAN
Shoya Osaki	2:10:48 (Oita, 2019)	JPN
Fernando Cabada	2:11:36 (Berlin, 2014)	USA (CA)
Li Zicheng	2:11:49 (Shanghai, 2010)	CHN
Stephen Scullion	2:11:52 (Houston, 2020)	IRL
Jemal Yimer	Debut (58:33 Half, Valencia, 2018) NR	ETH

<b>2020 Boston Marathon Elite Wheelchair Team</b>		
<b>MEN</b>	<b>Personal Best</b>	<b>Country</b>
Marcel Hug	1:18:04 (Boston, 2017)	SUI



Ernst Van Dyk	1:18:04 (Boston, 2017)	RSA
Joshua Cassidy	1:18:25 (Boston, 2012)	CAN
Masazumi Soejima	1:18:50 (Boston, 2011)	JPN
Hiroki Nishida	1:20:28 (Boston, 2017)	JPN
Kota Hokinoue	1:20:54 (Seoul, 2013)	JPN
Aaron Pike	1:20:59 (Grandma's, 2019)	USA (IL)
Daniel Romanchuk	1:21:36 (Boston, 2019)	USA (IL)
Joshua George	1:21:47 (Boston, 2017)	USA (IL)
Rafael Botello Jiménez	1:22:09 (Boston, 2017)	ESP
Jorge Madera	1:22:10 (Boston, 2017)	ESP
Patrick Monahan	1:22:23 (Grandma's, 2019)	IRL
Krige Schabort	1:23:44 (Boston, 2012)	USA (GA)
Takashi Yoshida	1:24:04 (Oita, 2019)	JPN
James Senbeta	1:24:27 (Boston, 2017)	USA (PA)
Simon Lawson	1:25:06 (Boston, 2017)	GBR
David Weir	1:26:17 (Boston, 2016)	GBR
Sho Watanabe	1:26:22 (Seoul, 2017)	JPN
Ryuichi Kawamuro	1:29:35 (Boston, 2019)	JPN
Johnboy Smith	1:29:44 (Berlin, 2017)	GBR
Hermin Garic	1:32:27 (Grandma's 2019)	USA (NY)
Callum Hall	1:32:49 (Seoul, 2019)	GBR

The 2020 Boston Marathon marks the 35th year of John Hancock's landmark sponsorship of the legendary race. For more information about the elite athlete program and sponsorship, please [visit: John Hancock](#)

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