

# The Third Time's A Charm

## So what's new at ING Hartford for 2010?

That's a loaded question. The 2010 ING Marathon/Half Marathon is in its 17th year but the half marathon course has been completely revamped for this October 9th while the marathon has been tweaked to put what hills were in the last four miles up front this year. The only real hills on the course will be in the first five miles.

The **New England's Finest** program is in just its third year, but building off the success of the previous two years, the program has been expanded to include New York athletes. *New England Runner* covers New York and the state borders Connecticut so it all makes sense. (New England and New York residence is determined by the state in which you are registered to vote.)

With the broadening of the program the prize purse has also been expanded—from the top 5 to the top 8 in the marathon and from the top 3 to the top 5 in the half marathon—with the corresponding New England's Finest bonus purse.

The collaboration between NER and the ING Hartford Marathon organization, headed up by race director Beth Shluger, has had great potential since day one. There will be some killer fields made up of homegrown talent in both the marathon and half marathon this October, but that will all bear out on race day. One interesting caveat: in the marathon, there are no less than six (6) Masters women in the program who have run between 2:53 and 2:59 in the past year. Also, the total number of NEF program participants has been upped to 38 in 2010.

In 2009, there were 2,234 marathon finishers and 4,097 half marathon finishers so everyone has a keen interest in the upcoming course changes with both events. To bring readers and participants up to date on the reasons behind the course changes and the benefits they bring, we've asked Hartford TC



**This year's New England's Finest program has been expanded to include New York athletes.**

*Photo courtesy of ING Hartford Marathon*

president Peter Hawley and Rick Tillotson, both course technicians, to weigh in with their thoughts. —**Bob Fitzgerald**

## What's New With The Marathon?

Well, it's not a bad problem to have. Imagine. There are so many participants in the October ING Hartford Marathon event that the last runners just clear the beginning of the Founder's Bridge at Mile 1 before the

fastest Half Marathoners reach that point on the return at Mile 4.5. [*Ed. note: It took 9 minutes 32 seconds for the last marathoners to cross the start line last year.*] So the pack of runners stretches for nearly 3.5 miles!

So what do we do about it? If the field grew any larger, it could be a problem keeping the path clear for the lead runners. Like any problem to be resolved, there are opportunities. We could simply move the outgoing runners to the other side of the bridge or we could prepare the event for the future, expanding on what works well in the event and incorporating some exciting new ideas.

No one involved with an event like this looks for a quick fix. We owe it to those who train so hard to run in our event to work as hard for them in organizing it. So without a single opposing vote we decided to take a fresh look at ways to both resolve the current issues and to also accommodate future growth and provide course enhancements. And there in the middle of winter in a pizzeria in Glastonbury, the new 2010 ING Hartford Marathon/Half Marathon courses were conceived.

It seemed most of our issues were caused by keeping the Full and Half Marathon events together for too long. By splitting them earlier (at 1.2 miles as opposed to 3 miles) we could be more flexible with both. The Full Marathon seemed to work well with its three major components (South Windsor section, Hartford and East Hartford river paths) so we decided to see if we could head west for the Half Marathon.

And now that we had the Half separated from the Full Marathon course earlier, this allowed us to make some modifications to the Full course that weren't possible when both courses were combined.

Our biggest comment from runners regarding the Full course was that the end was a little hillier than desired. Everyone knows that it's not so much how many hills are on a course, but their location that mat-

## PRIZE STRUCTURE — INCLUDING NEW ENGLAND'S FINEST BONUS

Place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>ING Hartford Marathon</b>	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$750	\$500	\$250	\$150	\$100
Masters Marathon	\$1,000	\$750	\$500					
Event Record Bonus	\$1,000							

**NE Finest Bonus** \$3,000 \$1,500 \$750 \$500 \$250 \$125 \$100 \$75  
*The New England's Finest bonus money corresponds to the finishing place of invited program participants: for example, in 2008 men's marathon winner Pat Moulton, of Providence, RI received \$3,000 for the overall win and an additional \$3,000 in corresponding first-place bonus \$. On the women's side, fourth place finisher Diona Fulton of Somerville, MA won \$750 and the fourth-place NEF bonus of \$500. New England Finest bonus paid only to official program invitees.*

### New England Finest Marathon Age Group Bonus

\$100 award to any New England Finest invitee who finishes first in the following age groups: 40-49; 50-59; 60-69; 70+

Place	1	2	3	4	5
<b>ING Half Marathon</b>	\$1,000	\$750	\$500	\$250	\$150
Event Record Bonus	\$500				
<b>NE Finest Bonus</b>	\$1,000	\$500	\$300	\$200	\$100

*The New England's Finest bonus money corresponds to the finishing place of invited program participants. New England Finest bonus paid only to official program invitees.*

### New England Finest Half Marathon Age Group Bonus

\$50 award to any New England Finest invitee who finishes first in the following age groups: 40-49; 50-59; 60-69; 70+

Place	1	2	3
<b>ING Hartford 5K</b>	\$200	\$100	\$50

**While the marathon and half marathon layouts are different this year, the event record bonus purse is still in play. The times to beat in the marathon are 2:16:34 for men and 2:33:26 for women; in the half marathon it's 1:03:37 for men and 1:15:11 for women.**



Elizabeth Park in October (below).



(Left) The state capitol building, to the right of this year's starting line.

Photo courtesy of I  
NG Hartford Marathon

ters. Hartford could never be called "hilly," but now we had the opportunity to move the sequence of the major sections so that the hills that do exist, occur earlier. Then we would give the runners a straight shot to the finish from the turnaround in South Windsor (a psychological boost knowing every step is bringing you home).

Well, hopefully these changes will make the 2010 ING Hartford Marathon event the best ever, allowing more participants as well as spectators and volunteers to enjoy what the entire Hartford community has to offer. Train well, my friends. We will see you in October! —Rick Tillotson

## The Marathon Course

The 2010 ING Hartford Marathon course has some new and exciting changes. The route has the same shape and most of it uses the same roads, but closer inspection reveals some dramatic differences. The start moves a block, both river paths come early, and after the turnaround in South Windsor, the course runs directly back to the Memorial Arch and the finish.

After starting on Elm Street for its first 16 years, the 2010 race will begin a block away on Capitol Avenue, with Connecticut's imposing State Capitol building on one side and its majestic Supreme Court building on the other. This new location provides a wider and more open feel to the starting festivities,

and instead of starting toward the rising sun, at the gun runners head West, albeit briefly.

For many years, marathoners have shared the road with half-marathoners for at least three miles. This year at 1.2 miles the crowd splits and the full 26.2 distance runners can get down to the real business of the day in relative calm.

The first order of that business is turning North to Hartford's Riverside Park and its river path. Then it is over the river and through East Hartford's Great River Park, on the same path as previous years but in the opposite direction.

Then it's on to East Hartford and South Windsor. The turnaround, up Old Main Street past the llamas and the square dancers, is near 17 miles, and from there our heroes have no detour loops and a mostly straight shot back to the traditional finish line.

The course is set and this is the route for October 9, 2010. You'll want to be there race weekend to see the many other very special events that make the ING Hartford Marathon the ultimate in a runners' Fall festival.

—Peter Hawley

## What's New With The Half Marathon?

Having run and bicycled much if not all of both the new course and last year's course, on (considerably) more than one occasion,

here are my impressions.

This year's half marathon does go up a hill sooner than last year's did. And there are some other gentle inclines along the new course. But then there is Trout Brook Drive to Albany Avenue to Steele Road to Birch Road and into Elizabeth Park, a screaming-fast flat section.

Last year at 12.5 miles you hit a driveway and a path with an uphill to get to the flat finish. At 12.5 miles this year there is the serious downhill of Asylum Avenue to carry runners through the same flat finish. This year there are no sidewalks or paths anywhere, only full-width roads on the half marathon course.

This year's half marathon does *not* go up onto the Founder's Bridge to East Hartford, up onto the Founder's Bridge to get back to Hartford, up the Reverend Moody Overpass, up over a flood control dike to get into Riverside Park or up over another dike to leave the park.

There are some hills on this year's course, but I am sure there were more, higher hills on last year's. —Peter Hawley

## The Half Marathon Course

West Hartford actually has the highest number of participants in our event so it seemed appropriate to snake portions of the Half Marathon route through that town using many of the roads that runners already trained on.

We could keep the festive Hartford Park St. neighborhood early in the course and then showcase what West Hartford has to offer—shaded tree lined streets and, of course, its jewel—Elizabeth Park, world renowned for its rose gardens. We got an enthusiastic buy-in from West Hartford town officials and worked closely with them to come up with a route that was as attractive as possible while minimizing traffic impact and actually reducing the amount of elevation runners had to gain from last year's course.

—Rick Tillotson

Relax, even though this half marathon elevation chart looks like a leg of the Pyrenees in the Tour de France, the highest point on the course is only 125-feet above the start and the starting location is higher than the finish.

