

February 22, 2013

Tokyo Marathon Foundation

### **Tokyo Marathon 2013 Sports Symposium**

Tokyo Marathon 2013 Sports Symposium was held on Friday before the marathon at 4PM. The main attraction of the marathon symposium was the panel discussion by the race directors of World Marathon Majors – Hugh Brasher of the London Marathon, Tom Grilk of Boston Marathon, Mark Milde of Berlin Marathon, Michael Nishi (associate director) of Chicago Marathon, Mary Wittenberg of New York Marathon and Tadaaki Hayano of Tokyo Marathon. The moderator was Glenn Latimer, Secretary General of World Marathon Majors. Two advisors – David Bedford, chair of IAAF Road Running Commission and Sean Wallace Jones, senior manager of IAAF Road Running Commission – were also in attendance. Bedford was the former race director of London Marathon and, of course, the former world record holder at 10000m.

The opening ceremony featured the speeches from Irina Sziewinska, IAAF council member and, of course, multiple Olympic medalist and Dave Bedford.

Next, Tokyo Marathon director Tad Hayano presented the disaster relief (for hurricane Sandy) donation to New York City Marathon race director Mary Wittenberg.

In the first part of the panel discussion, six World Marathon Majors race directors shared some information about their races. Tom Grilk explained about the tradition and history as well as their unique (among the Marathon Majors) feature of qualifying with time at the Boston Marathon. Next London Marathon director Hugh Brasher talked about the great field of upcoming race as well as their involvement with charity. Third Mark Milde of Berlin Marathon went over the history of the Berlin Marathon – how the race went from a small race around the wood in west Berlin to the giant race that tours the entire city of great Berlin. After Michael Nishi explained about the tradition and spirit of Chicago Marathon, Mary Wittenberg explained about how the race went from a small race in the Central Park to the five borough race. She summarized it as “Marathon Sunday is the New York’s best day.” To round up the speech from the race directors, Tad Hayano of Tokyo Marathon explained how Tokyo joined the World Marathon Majors.

Finally after Sean Wallace-Jones and Dave Bedford spoke, important announcement on the topic of doping violation was made by Tom Grilk. The World Marathon Major is going to implement much tougher penalty for doping violation. Specifics of penalties will be spelled out in the elite runner’s contract. The World Marathon Majors are committed to keep the sports clean.

In the second part of the panel discussion was question and answer session. Topics such as TV coverage, entry fees, charity and Tokyo’s bid for the 2020 Olympic Games came up and race directors answered the questions. The director of small road race even asked for advice.