

ABBOTT WORLD MARATHON MAJORS UNVEILS NEW RACE SERIES FORMAT TO DEBUT AT TOKYO MARATHON

- Series also will introduce increased anti-doping efforts beginning in 2015

TOKYO, Feb. 19, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- The ninth running of the Tokyo Marathon on Feb. 22, 2015, marks the official start of Abbott's title sponsorship of the Abbott World Marathon Majors (AWMM) and a number of key changes to the iconic series. Announced today by the organizers of the six marathons in the global race series, the champions of the AWMM will now be determined through a new one-year cycle of Qualifying Races featuring unprecedented anti-doping protocols.

Now in its ninth year, the Abbott World Marathon Majors determines the world's best male and female marathoners, awarding a \$1 million prize purse split evenly by the men's and women's champions. The new format features a rotating start and finish at each of the six annual series races. AWMM Series IX begins this weekend at the 2015 Tokyo Marathon and ends upon completion of the February 2016 Tokyo Marathon. AWMM Series X begins at the April 2016 Boston Marathon and ends upon completion of the April 2017 Boston Marathon. Each subsequent series will begin and end at the next AWMM Series race on the calendar. The Olympic Marathon and IAAF World Championships Marathon will serve as Qualifying Races and be included in the race schedule in the years they are held, but will not begin or end a Series.

Abbott World Marathon Majors also announced it is further strengthening its anti-doping efforts. Together with the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), the AWMM will create a pool of championship-eligible runners who will undergo additional out-of-competition drug testing. Details on the athlete pool and the new testing protocols will be announced at a later date. Prize money payments also will be adjusted to take advantage of long-term biological mapping of athletes. Thus, the \$500,000 prize awarded to the men's and women's champions will no longer be made in one lump sum payment and will now be paid out over the course of five years, at \$100,000 each year.

"With a new title sponsor, a new series format and an increase in our anti-doping efforts, the Abbott World Marathon Majors begins a new era in marathon history," said Carey Pinkowski, executive race director of the Bank of America Chicago Marathon. "The integrity of the Abbott World Marathon Majors championship title is our top priority, as our champions represent the hundreds of thousands of runners from around the world who participate in our races annually."

Abbott's new title sponsorship was announced in October 2014 at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon, making Abbott the first-ever title sponsor in the global race series' eight-year history. Abbott aims to create opportunities for the company to bring to life its mission of helping people unlock all that life has to offer through the power of health. This mission is expressed through the company's new brand line - "Life. To the Fullest." - and will be rooted in communications and branding efforts around Tokyo and each of the other five races.

"Abbott is committed to helping people around the globe live active, healthy lives," said Elaine Leavenworth, senior vice president, chief marketing and external affairs officer at Abbott. "We're excited to take on a leadership role within the global marathon community with the Abbott World Marathon Majors and look forward to celebrating the achievements of hundreds of thousands of runners in the years ahead."

AWMM Series IX will kick off at the Tokyo Marathon this Sunday, Feb. 22 and continue throughout 2015 with the Boston Marathon on April 20, the Virgin Money London Marathon on April 26, the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON on Sept. 27, the Bank of America Chicago Marathon on Oct. 11 and the TCS New York City Marathon on Nov. 1, and conclude at the Tokyo Marathon in February 2016.

Abbott World Marathon Majors Series Guidelines

Qualifying Races: The Abbott World Marathon Majors Series will cycle through one year of competition and consist of the following Qualifying Races: Tokyo Marathon, Boston Marathon, Virgin Money London Marathon, BMW BERLIN-MARATHON, Bank of America Chicago Marathon, TCS New York City Marathon, Olympic Marathon and IAAF World Championships Marathon.

Prize Purse: AWMM will award a \$1 million prize, to be split equally to the top male and female point earners in Qualifying Races, after each full-year cycle of competition.

One Year Series: AWMM Series IX begins at the 2015 Tokyo Marathon and ends upon completion of the 2016 Tokyo Marathon. AWMM Series X begins at the 2016 Boston Marathon and ends upon completion of the 2017 Boston Marathon. AWMM Series XI begins at the 2017 Virgin Money London Marathon and ends upon completion of the 2018 Virgin Money London Marathon. AWMM Series XII begins at the 2018 BMW BERLIN-MARATHON and ends upon completion of the 2019 BMW BERLIN-MARATHON. AWMM Series XIII begins at the 2019 Bank of America Chicago Marathon and ends upon completion of the 2020 Bank of America Chicago Marathon. AWMM Series XIV begins at the 2020 TCS New York City Marathon and ends upon completion of the 2021 TCS New York City Marathon. Each subsequent series will begin and end at the next AWMM race on the calendar. The Olympic

Marathon and IAAF World Championships Marathon will be included in the race schedule in the years they are held, but will not begin or end the Series.

Point System: The champions of the AWMM Series will be the male and female athlete who scores the greatest number of points from Qualifying Races during the one-year scoring period. During each scoring period, points from a maximum of two Qualifying Races will be scored. An athlete must start in two Qualifying Races over the Series cycle to be eligible for the championship. If an athlete earns points in more than two events, the athlete's highest two finishes will be scored.

Points are allocated following each race as follows:

1st place	2nd place	3rd place	4th place	5th place
25 points	16 points	9 points	4 points	1 point

Tie Breaker: In the event of a tie in points earned at the conclusion of a Series cycle, the winner shall be determined using the following rules (addressed in descending order).

1. The athlete with the best head-to-head record in Qualifying Races during the Series period will be declared the winner. Only the fact that one athlete finished ahead of the other will be taken into account and not by how many places. For purposes of clarity, it shall not matter whether or not the athletes scored points towards their Series total when considering head-to-head competition.
2. The athlete who has won the most Qualifying Races during the period.
3. The athlete whom the majority of the Race Directors of the six Abbott World Marathon Majors determines to be the champion. In such circumstances, the Race Directors may decide to award the title jointly.

Doping Violations: Under AWMM rules, no athlete who has been found guilty of any anti-doping rules enforced by the IAAF, World Anti-Doping Association (WADA), National Federations, or any of the individual AWMM races is eligible to win the AWMM championship title. Athletes must comply with the AWMM Code of Conduct.

About Abbott World Marathon Majors

The Abbott World Marathon Majors (AWMM) was established in 2006 and is now comprised of Qualifying Races including the Tokyo, Boston, Virgin Money London, BMW BERLIN, Bank of America Chicago, and TCS New York City Marathons. In the years in which they are run, the Series also includes the IAAF World Championships and Olympic Marathons. At the conclusion of each Series cycle, a \$1 million prize purse is divided equally between the top male and female marathoners in the world as determined by points earned in Qualifying Races. The inaugural 2006-2007 Series was launched at the 110th Boston Marathon on April 17, 2006, and concluded at the New York City Marathon on Nov. 4, 2007. The 2013-2014 series, the WMM's eighth two-year series, began with the Tokyo Marathon on Feb. 24, 2013, and concluded at the TCS New York City Marathon on Nov. 2, 2014. The first Abbott World Marathon Majors series, titled AWMM Series IX, will begin in Tokyo on Feb. 22, 2015, and conclude in Tokyo in February 2016.

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