

3M News

For More Information, Contact:

Jane Kovacs

512-984-6747

jkovacs@mmm.com

on Twitter [@3MHalfMarathon](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Near Sell-Out 3M Half Marathon and Relay Attracts Diverse Group

AUSTIN, Texas – Jan. 18, 2010 – With less than a week to go until race day, the 2010 3M Half Marathon is on track to sell out. Celebrating its sixteenth year, one of Austin's favorite races again boasts a diverse group of athletes, new and returning, from around the world. International runners representing six nations will be competing against regional runners for the \$18,250 in cash prizes and bonuses on **Sunday, January 24, starting at 6:45 a.m.**

The race follows the same down-hill, point-to-point course used for the previous three years, starting in Austin's Arboretum area on Stonelake Boulevard near the Baby Acapulco Restaurant & Cantina and ending at Waterloo Park. This is the same course used for the previous three years. The 13.1-mile course features long straight-aways and minimizes turns while passing through a variety of Austin neighborhoods: Westover Hills, Northwest Mesa Oaks, North Loop, Hyde Park and the University of Texas area, just to name a few. The undercard event is a two-person relay with legs of 6.4 miles and 6.7 miles using an exchange point near Northcross Mall.

Event organizers anticipate nearly 5,500 runners for this year's event, which includes the half marathon and a two-person relay.

Strong elite field

Among the top elite male athletes returning are **Ezkyas Sisay from Ethiopia**, a sixth-place finisher in 2009, and **Demesse Tefera also from Ethiopia**, who placed 2nd in the 2007 race. Returning elite female runners include last year's winner **Belainesh Gebre of Ethiopia**, **Argentina's Claudia Carmargo**, who placed fifth in 2009, and **Fiona Docherty from New Zealand**, who finished eighth in the 2009 event. Female masters will be led by **Russia's Larisa Mikhaylova** and fifth place finisher in 2009, **Cindy Salazar from Austin**. In the male masters division, 2007 winner **Reuben Chesang** returns along with two local runners, Paul Zimmerman from Cedar Creek and Jeff Shelton from Buda. **Brad Ray of Albuquerque**, last year's wheelchair division winner, is returning in the male wheelchair division. Perennial winner **Kristen Messer**, leads the female chair racers once again this year. She will be challenged by **Sandi Rush from Oceanside, Calif.**

Last year, **Martin Fagan of Ireland** won the male open division and set a new event record with a time of 1:01:05. Gebre won the 2009 female open division with a time of 1:11:17. Also in 2009, **Russia's Albina Gallyamova** won her third consecutive 3M Half Marathon in the female

masters division, crossing the finish line at 1:17:19. **Sergey Keledin, also of Russia**, won the male masters division last year, finishing in 1:08:36.

Ray won the male wheelchair division last year for the second year in a row, finishing in 53:04. Messer topped the female wheelchair division with a time of 1:33:02.

New this year

Participants should note, the race has an **earlier start time** this year of 6:40 a.m. for the wheelchair division and 6:45 a.m. for all runners. “We made this change to accommodate residents along the route and as well as Sunday morning commuters, especially those moving through the Central Business District,” said Matt Fagan, 3M Half Marathon & Relay race director.

The 2010 3M Half Marathon and Relay is proud to feature **official pace groups** – powered by RunTex and the Twenty-Six Two Marathon Club of Austin – for the first time in the race’s history. Pace group leaders are all veteran marathoners and will help runners reach their finishing goals. The pace groups will provide pacers for the following finish times: 1:30, 1:40, 1:50, 2:00, 2:10 and 2:20. All participants are invited to run with a pace group. On race day, runners should look for the pace group leaders wearing brightly colored shirts and carrying pace signs in the starting corrals. For more information about the pace groups, visit the [3M Pace Team Information Page](#).

Also new this year, **relay participants will receive medals**. “We realize medals are a bit of a collector’s item in the running community,” said Matt Fagan, 3M Half Marathon & Relay race director. “The relay is a great way to work your way up to a half marathon, and we want to recognize the hard work of these participants as well.”

Another first for the 2010 3M Half Marathon & Relay will be **two pre-race carbo load dinners**. The dinners take place at Cannoli Joe's Gourmet Italian Restaurant at 4715 U.S. 290 on Friday, Jan. 22, 2010 and Saturday, Jan. 23, 2010. Reservations can be made [online](#) when registering for the race. Participants who are already registered can still make reservations for the pasta dinner on the online race registration page.

Registration and Packet Pickup

Participants can register [online](#) through Jan. 21. After that, registration will only be available at packet pickup on Friday and Saturday before the race. Packet pickup will be held 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 22 and 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 23 at the 3M Innovation Center, 6801 River Place Blvd. Race day registration will not be available this year.

The 2010 3M Half Marathon & Relay is the fifth stop in the Austin Distance Challenge. Participants who complete all of these events are eligible for awards. More information about the series is available at www.austindistancechallenge.com.

Beneficiary, accolades and sponsors

3M selected Any Baby Can of Austin as the 2010 event beneficiary and guarantees a \$30,000 donation in conjunction with the half marathon. Any Baby Can Child and Family Resource Center has served Austin/Travis County and its surrounding communities for more than 30 years as a premiere, comprehensive family service organization. Any Baby Can's mission is to ensure that all children reach their potential through education, therapy, and family support services. Each year, Any Baby Can brings help and hope to more than 6,000 of Austin's youngest, sickest, and poorest children.

Austin Monthly named the 3M Half Marathon & Relay to its list of 159 top galas and fundraisers for 2010. In 2008, *Runner's World* honored the 3M Half Marathon & Relay with the "Best Schwag" distinction for the race's legendary goodie bag loaded with 3M products, including Scotch tape, Post-it pads, insect repellent, lint rollers and bandages. An Austin favorite, the race was also voted Austin Race of the Year in 2007 and in 2002 by Austin runners. It was selected by *Competition Texas* magazine as the top half marathon in 2006.

The gold sponsors of the 2010 3M Half Marathon and Relay are 3M Scotchlite Reflective Materials, Brooks Sports, Inc., JetBlue Airlines, Liaison Resources, Reunion Band, Kolar Advertising and Marketing, and RunTex.

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About the 3M Half Marathon & Relay

Athletes enjoy this fast, downhill race in Austin, Texas. A perennial favorite with runners, the 3M Half Marathon & Relay is the capital city's third largest distance road racing event. The sixteenth annual 3M Half Marathon & Relay benefits Any Baby Can of Austin, a non-profit organization whose mission is to ensure that all children reach their potential through education, therapy and family support services. Any Baby Can will receive a guaranteed \$30,000 donation in conjunction with the event. The race starts at 6:45 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 24 in the 9500 block of Stonelake Blvd. For more information on the 2010 3M Half Marathon, visit <http://www.3MHalfMarathon.com>.