

CIM brings together runners for competitive achievement and charitable causes

CIM hosts USATF Marathon Championships, returns course record-holder, while raising funds and awareness for Butte County Communities and local charities.

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SACRAMENTO, Calif - The 36th annual California International Marathon is set to host the event's largest field of runners in history on Sunday, Dec. 2. General marathon registration and marathon charity entries pushed the registration total to over 13,000 runners with another 7,500 runners combined in the CIM Relay Challenge, inaugural Capitol 5k, and maraFUNrun 5k, for a race weekend total of over 20,000 participants.

Runners will converge on Northern California from all over the world to run the CIM route from the Folsom Dam to downtown Sacramento and the California State Capitol. Varying goals and hopes will be sought, from winning the prestigious USATF Marathon Championship to raising funds and awareness for charities and foundations.

Here are five major storylines to follow on race day:

Professional Runners Return to CIM For 2018 USATF Marathon Championships

For the second year in a row, the CIM will host the USATF Marathon Championships. The 2017 CIM had a near record-breaking 91 athletes run under the 2020 U.S. Olympic Trials qualifying standards of 2:46 for women and 2:19 for men. The 2018 CIM has attracted a deep professional field to follow-up the success of the 2017 Championships.

Many professional athletes who competed at the 2017 CIM are set to return this year, including Fairfield, Calif. native Anthony Costales. Costales had a breakthrough performance in 2017, crossing the CIM finish line in 2:13:12 and placing fourth.

"I was 15 years old the first time I ran CIM, as a relay. I have since run CIM 11 times," revealed Costales.

"I've run relays, paced friends, debuted in the marathon, hit two Olympic trial standards and shattered my personal best just last year.

"I am excited to come back home for another great race," added Costales.

The USATF Marathon Championships are the culminating race of the year-long USATF Road Running Circuit. The 2018 U.S. marathon champions and circuit winners will be determined on Dec. 2. USATF will provide a live stream through their subscription channel on USATF.tv.

Runners to Raise Funds for Butte County Fire Victims

The CIM, in partnership with race sponsor and Chico, Calif. based Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, is encouraging runners to donate to the Sierra Nevada Camp Fire Relief Fund via the Golden Valley Bank Community Foundation.

The CIM and Sierra Nevada will provide a variety of avenues for participants, spectators, partners, and stakeholders to make donations towards the Camp Fire relief efforts, both online and in-person, throughout race weekend. The Sacramento Running Association will also donate a portion of the proceeds from the 2018 CIM to the Camp Fire Relief Fund.

“We’ve been overwhelmed with gratitude for the outpouring of support from our friends and community, said Sierra Nevada Brewing Company Representative Robin Gregory.

“The fundraising efforts from the California International Marathon and the runners who support them will help us rebuild our Butte County community together.

“We are so thankful for our partnership, now more than ever.”

Adding to the efforts, professional runner Emma Bates is partnering with Sierra Nevada to raise funds through her local breweries in Boise, Idaho, while also raising awareness through her CIM debut marathon run.

Bates will race in the USATF Marathon Championships’ field with the words "RUN for CAMP FIRE RELIEF" on her singlet, with the hopes of raising awareness of the need for donations for the Butte County communities.

“I hope wearing these words will start a conversation with those that follow running,” said professional runner Emma Bates.

“People affected by the Camp Fire need our help.

“Their community has been completely destroyed, not to mention the countless lives that have been lost.

“Wearing a singlet is the absolute least I can do,” added Bates.

Guide Who Lost Home in Camp Fire Leads Visually Impaired Runner at CIM

Paradise, Calif. resident Deb Yoder was 8,000 miles away, volunteering her services to improve emergency care in the Pohnpei Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) when she received word that her home and community were both gone.

Yoder had been planning since October to lead a visually and hearing impaired runner at the 2018 CIM for the third time. As a guide, Deb makes sure her athlete can safely run the CIM route—avoiding other runners and hazards in the road, while making sure her athlete takes the correct turns and properly receives fuel along the course.

“As guides, we are the VI athlete's mirrors, reflecting the bright light of their inspirational journeys,” said Yoder.

“Without hesitation I said yes to still guiding because that light still needs to shine.

“In adversities like the one my community is experiencing it is important to remain hopeful and resilient.

“So many of these athletes we guide have overcome so much adversity to be at CIM.”

CIM Runners Raise Funds and Awareness for Neonatal Necrotizing Enterocolitis

CIM's chief charity beneficiary, UC Davis Children's Hospital, is partnering with the Neonatal Necrotizing Enterocolitis (NEC) Society to raise funds and awareness for babies affected by NEC, a devastating intestinal disease with high morbidity and mortality rates.

Funds raised through the NEC CIM Running Team campaign will support the NEC Society's Mapping Donor Milk project, which is building a comprehensive map of hospitals in the U.S. that offer donor milk for medically fragile infants.

"My son Micah died of neonatal necrotizing enterocolitis a month before his first birthday," said NEC Society Founder and Director, Jennifer Canvasser.

“Suddenly, I forgot how to breathe, I didn't know how to eat, or how to live without Micah.

“But, I knew how to run so I ran through my grief.”

Six years after losing Micah, Jennifer and 19 NEC CIM Running Team members, including UC Davis Children's Hospital NICU nurses and NEC Society members, are set to dedicate their CIM miles in honor of nearly 50 infants impacted by NEC.

“Behind our CIM runners are extraordinary babies and their families, along with the most committed researchers and clinicians,” added Canvasser.

“Together we are elevating NEC awareness and moving us closer to prevention.”

Course Record Holder Jerry Lawson Returns to CIM

At the 1993 CIM, Jerry Lawson ran a still-standing course-record time of 2:10:27. Lawson's time was the fastest American marathon in 1993. For the 25th anniversary of

his record-breaking run, Lawson returns to Sacramento to take on the 26.2-mile distance and inspire the next generation of runners and CIM record seekers.

“I am once again proud to be a part of the CIM experience,” said Lawson.

“I am honored that my course record has lasted as long as it has, knowing the many great champions that have chased for over the past 25 years.

“It would be great to come back in another 25 years to celebrate my course record, but records were made to be broken!”

Lawson will be involved in the USATF Marathon Championships’ Top-10 Bib Reveal at the CIM Expo on Dec.1 at 11:30 a.m. along with welcoming runners race morning at the start line and presenting race winners at the Awards Ceremony on Dec. 2 at 11:00 a.m.

The Sacramento Running Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to finding ways to encourage people of all ages and abilities to run. The SRA is committed to developing new, quality running events that appeal to a broad variety of runners.

Other SRA events include the recently concluded Run the Parkway, the Super Sunday Run on Feb. 3, 2019, the Credit Union SACTOWN Run on April 7, 2019, the Gold Country Half on May 19, 2019, the Capital Cross Challenge on September 29, 2019 and the Youth XC Series in October.