

Records Abound at the 36th Running of the Chevron Houston Marathon, Aramco Houston Half Marathon

Female winner shatters 2007 record; race draws largest field ever

HOUSTON, Jan. 13, 2008 – More than 20,000 participants, a race record, lined up on a weather-perfect morning for the 36th running of the Chevron Houston Marathon trio of races. Among the records set, Dire Tune obliterated her 2007 record by a staggering 2 minutes, 12 seconds for back-to-back victories in the marathon.

Tune, 22, of Ethiopia set a course record 2:24:40, besting her 2007 record of 2:26:52. Worknesh Tola, 30, of Ethiopia, finished second in 2:35:37.

In the men's race, David Cheruiyot, the 2005 and 2006 marathon winner, returned to Houston to claim his third victory in four years.

Cheruiyot, 37, of Kenya had a closer race, finishing in 2:12:32, just 13 seconds ahead of Kasime Adilo of Ethiopia. With his victory, Cheruiyot joins Stephen Ndungu as the second three-time winner of the Houston Marathon.

In the Aramco Houston Half Marathon, which serves as the USA Half Marathon Championships, James Carney clocked a 1:02:21, eleven seconds ahead of Jason Lehmkuhle. Kate O'Neill, 27, broke the tape in 1:11:57, 13 seconds ahead of Desiree Davila.

“We are proud the Chevron Houston Marathon and the Aramco Houston Half Marathon continue to attract some of the finest athletes in the world, proven by yet another year of record-setting performances,” said Brant Kotch, race director. “None of this would be possible without the support of our sponsors, our army of 5,000 volunteers and the quarter of a million spectators who line the streets of Houston on race day. They combine to provide a world-class experience for all participants.”

Tune, who hopes to make the 2008 Ethiopian Olympic team, said she expected to run a record time, but was concerned about the breezy conditions on an otherwise ideal day. For her victory, Tune pocketed \$25,000 and an additional \$10,000 for the record.

O'Neill, of Palo Alto, California and Carney, 29, of Boulder, Colorado, fresh off his 2:16:54 showing at the U.S. Olympic Trial marathon in November, take home \$12,000 each in prize money.

The races are expected to raise a record \$1 million for 44 charities associated with the Houston Marathon Committee's Run for a Reason charity program.

The Chevron Houston Marathon, a Running USA founding member, is the nation's premier winter marathon, annually attracting participants from all 50 U.S. states and nearly 30 foreign countries. In 2008, more than 23,000 runners took part in four marathon weekend events (marathon, half marathon, 5K and children's run). The Chevron Houston Marathon offers the only closed marathon course in Texas and is ranked among the top five in the nation by the *Ultimate Guide to Marathons* for fastest course, organization and crowd support. More than 5,000 volunteers organize the race, which is Houston's largest single-day sporting event.

More information is available online at www.chevronhoustonmarathon.com or by calling 713-957-3453.