

# PRESS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

Contact:

Jennifer Smollen Carmouche  
Houston Marathon Committee  
713.957.3453  
Jennifer@chevronhoustonmarathon.com



## Trafeh, Rhines Win USA Half Marathon Titles in Houston

*U.S. runners preview 2012 Olympic Trials Marathon course;  
\$59,500 prize purse awarded*

**HOUSTON (Jan. 29, 2011)** - Under overcast conditions in the Bayou City on Saturday morning, **Mo Trafeh** and **Jen Rhines** won USA Half Marathon titles in 1:02:17 and 1:11:14 respectively. The national championship presented by **Aramco Services Company** drew some of the best U.S. distance runners who competed on the same 8-mile loop course for the 2012 Olympic Trials Marathon to be hosted by Houston on January 14.

The men's race unfolded with a pack of eight men through 6 miles when last year's national runner-up **Patrick Smyth** injected a 4:39 mile surge that only U.S. half-marathon record holder **Ryan Hall**, **Jason Lehmkuhle** and Trafeh answered.

The four contenders ran together at 1:02 half-marathon pace until the 10th mile when Smyth surged again which dropped Lehmkuhle, and the title chase was now down to Smyth, Hall and Trafeh.

At 12 miles, Hall, a 2008 Olympian, threw down the fastest mile of the race with a 4:32 split that broke Smyth, but Trafeh, 25, from Duarte, Calif., who has a 1:00:39 half-marathon PR, stayed on Hall's shoulder until mile 13 when the 2010 USA 15K champion moved past Hall for his second national title overall with Hall three seconds back in 1:02:20.

"First, I'm happy to be back from injury. I stayed behind Ryan and was unsure if I would win, but with 200 meters left I sprinted and it worked out," Trafeh said post-race.

Hall called it a competitive race and a good prep for the upcoming Boston Marathon and added: "I'm where I want to be."

The women's national championship race was similar to the men's for the first 7 miles with a large pack of hopefuls, and like the men, the race really took off at the 58-minute mark when Rhines and **Serena Burla** pulled away from rising star **Nan Kennard**.

At mile 11, Rhines, 36, from Mammoth Lakes, Calif. produced the race's second fastest mile split (5:21) to build a 7-second lead over Burla, last year's national runner-up here. Over the final miles, Rhines, a three-time Olympian, extended her lead to eventually earn a 24-second victory over Burla, 1:11:14 to 1:11:38.

"I had a bad patch at 6 miles and later I got a bit antsy, but didn't want to take anything for granted with this field," said Rhines, who set a personal record and won her fourth USA title overall, first U.S. half-marathon crown and first national title since 2005.

Each national champion earned \$15,000 with a total of \$59,500 awarded to the top 10 finishers. The 2011 USA Half Marathon Championships marked Houston's seventh and fifth year to host the men's and women's national road championships respectively.

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Also, from this event, there were six new 2012 Olympic Marathon Trials qualifiers - four men (**Mike Chavez, Joe Driscoll, David Nightingale** and **Ryan Vail**) and two women (**Clara Grandt** and **Lindsey Scherf**).

**USA Men's and Women's Half Marathon Championships** presented by Aramco Services Company  
*Houston, TX, Saturday, January 29, 2011*

**MEN**

- 1) Mo Trafah (CA), 1:02:17, \$12,000
- 2) Ryan Hall (CA), 1:02:20, \$6500
- 3) Patrick Smyth (CA), 1:02:32, \$4000
- 4) Fasil Bizuneh (AZ), 1:02:47, \$2000
- 5) Jason Lehmkuhle (MN), 1:02:49, \$1500
- 6) Ryan Vail (OR), 1:02:51, \$1250
- 7) Scott MacPherson (TX), 1:04:03, \$1000
- 8) Jorge Torres (CO), 1:04:18, \$750
- 9) Mike Sayenko (WA), 1:04:20, \$500
- 10) Joseph Driscoll (NC), 1:04:23, \$250

**WOMEN**

- 1) Jen Rhines (CA), 1:11:14, \$12,000
- 2) Serena Burla (MO), 1:11:38, \$6500
- 3) Nan Kennard (CO), 1:12:03, \$4000
- 4) Katie McGregor (MN), 1:12:13, \$2000
- 5) Tera Moody (CO), 1:12:30, \$1500
- 6) Clara Grandt (MD), 1:13:13, \$1250
- 7) Lindsey Scherf (CA), 1:13:40, \$1000
- 8) Amy Hastings (CA), 1:14:07, \$750
- 9) Magdalena Lewy Boulet (CA), 1:14:28, \$500
- 10) Melissa White (MI), 1:14:50, \$250

For deeper results and more, go to: [www.houstonmarathon.com](http://www.houstonmarathon.com)

**About the Houston Marathon Committee, Inc.**

Established in 1972, the Houston Marathon Committee, Inc. (HMC), a Running USA Founding Member, annually organizes the nation's premier winter marathon, half-marathon, 5K and kids' fun run. In 2010, more than 30,000 runners participated in four race weekend events organized by 7,500 volunteers, creating Houston's largest single-day sporting event. In addition to hosting numerous world-renowned road races, including the USA Men's and Women's Half Marathon Championships since 2005 and 2007 respectively, and the 1992 U.S. Women's Olympic Marathon Trials, HMC will host the 2012 U.S. Men's and Women's Olympic Team Trials - Marathon on January 14, 2012.

For more information, visit [houstonmarathon.com](http://houstonmarathon.com) or call 713.957.3453.

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