

## A New Direction for Christchurch's Marathon

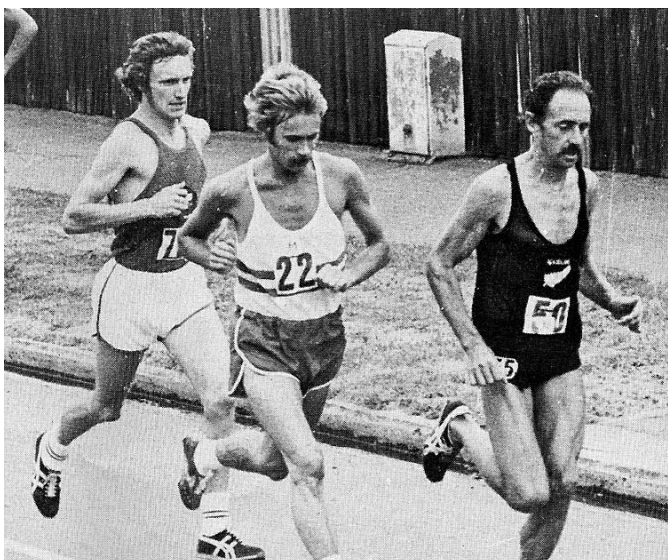
Christchurch's premier marathon is headed in an exciting direction with new title sponsors - **FRONTRUNNER** and **HOKA**.

The City of Christchurch International Marathon Trust has announced renowned running brands, FRONTRUNNER and HOKA, as their new principal sponsors for what will be known as the "FRONTRUNNER HOKA Christchurch Marathon".

In 2021 the Christchurch Marathon celebrated its 40th event and Christchurch International Marathon Trust Chairman, Daniel Reese, says the new partnership is the first step in the next 40 years.

"The Christchurch Marathon has always been about runners first and foremost. So, partnering with well-known specialist running brands such as FRONTRUNNER and HOKA is a great way for the event to move into the future."

Inspired by the 1974 Commonwealth Games Marathon, the Christchurch Marathon was established in 1981 and quickly became the South Island's premier running event. The Christchurch earthquakes saw it pushed to the outskirts of the city and the 10 years since have seen the event battling the same rebuild challenges as the city. Back since 2019 on its traditional course and Town Hall venue, the focus now shifts to the future.



The fast, flat course is renowned as New Zealand's fastest road race, but Race Director, Chris Cox, says, "The success of the Christchurch Marathon has been catering for runners and walkers of all age and ability.

"People come to running from different fitness backgrounds, with different goals and from different walks of life," says Cox.

"A good event should reflect that, and part of that picture is partnering with entities that understand and appreciate what you're trying to do.

"In the past five years our focus has been on bringing the Christchurch Marathon back to its traditional central city home," says Cox. "This has been very successful and ASB has played a big part in that as the principal sponsor for the past four years.

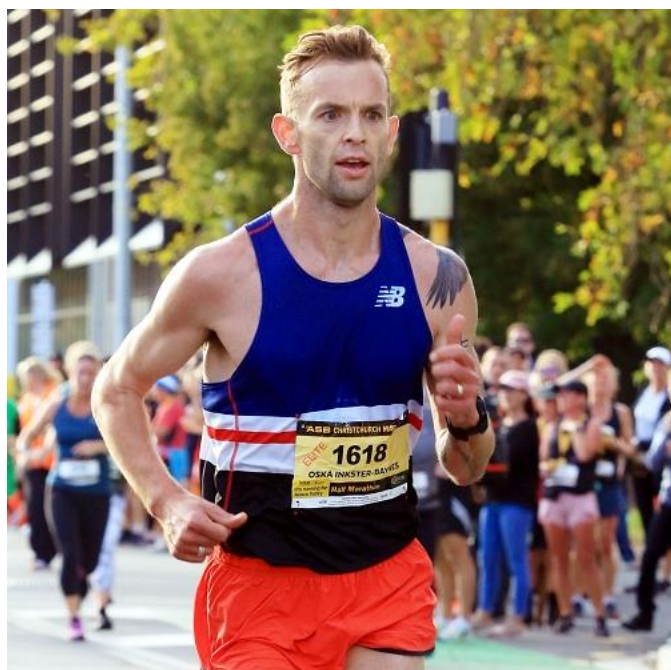
"We can't thank ASB enough as their support came at the hardest point in the event's history. They gave us some stability during the move back to the central city and then helped us get through 2020's COVID cancellation.

"The focus now is taking the event into the future and having principal partners who are as immersed in the running community as we are is a great way to kick that off."

FRONTRUNNER is a national sport retail franchise that had its beginning in Christchurch and now has 10 stores nationwide. FRONTRUNNER Principal, Laurie Blyth, says the Christchurch Marathon history and popularity is what attracted FRONTRUNNER.

“FRONTRUNNER and the Christchurch Marathon have both been major parts of the running community for more than 40 years, so it’s a natural partnership,” says Blyth. “It’s very much a case of both parties getting back to their roots.”

Indeed, local FRONTRUNNER franchisee Oska Baynes is a four-time winner at the Christchurch Marathon, and sharing the naming rights with international running shoe brand HOKA is another part of that picture.



“One of strong points of this event,” says Cox, “is that since day one it has been organised by runners. Now, with our principal sponsor also being immersed in the sport, more than ever the FRONTRUNNER HOKA Christchurch Marathon will be an event that is organised by runners for runners.”

The 2022 FRONTRUNNER HOKA Christchurch Marathon event will take place on Sunday 10th April. Entries for the full marathon, half marathon, 10km and Kids’ Mara’fun are now open at [www.christchurchmarathon.co.nz](http://www.christchurchmarathon.co.nz).

