



Press Release | 17 September 2026

Further Top Female Athletes Strengthen the Field for the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON 2026

- European Champion Alisa Vainio Confirmed
- Laura Hottenrott Set to Compete
- Running Legend Kenenisa Bekele Returns
- Media Opportunities & Media Guide



The BMW BERLIN-MARATHON takes place from 26 to 27 September 2026. A total of over 80,000 participants are expected across the various competitions. The event features elite athletes in inline skating, handbike, wheelchair racing, and running, alongside thousands of recreational runners and dedicated events for children and young people. Comprehensive coverage across all aspects of the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON will be provided during the media events listed below. Once again, press conferences will take place at the Hotel Berlin, Berlin (Lützowplatz 17, 10785 Berlin). In addition, several late additions to the elite field have been confirmed.

European Champion Alisa Vainio Joins the Field

The women's elite field will be further strengthened by Laura Hottenrott and Alisa Vainio. The Finnish athlete was crowned European Marathon Champion in Birmingham just a few weeks ago, cementing her position as one of Europe's most successful distance runners. Vainio established herself among Europe's elite at the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON 2024 with a time of 2:25:36, followed by an impressive rise throughout 2025/26. In the space of seven months, she ran five high-calibre marathons and set three Finnish national records, culminating in a personal best of 2:20:39 in Seville. In August 2026, she capped her remarkable progression by taking European Championship gold in Birmingham with a championship record of 2:22:26. Just four weeks later, she claimed the Finnish national title. Her ultimate goal remains the 2028 Olympic Marathon in Los Angeles.

Top German Female Marathoner from the European Championships to Compete

Laura Hottenrott fulfilled a lifelong dream in 2024 by competing at the Paris Olympic Games, finishing 38th in 2:31:19 under warm conditions on a demanding course. At the 2026 European Championships in Birmingham, the 33-year-old finished 16th as the top German runner. Now, Hottenrott returns to the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON, having previously lined up in 2023. She recently celebrated a victory at the historic Jungfrau Marathon in Switzerland. Her marathon personal best of 2:24:32 was set in Valencia in 2023.

Running Legend Kenenisa Bekele Returns to Berlin

Ethiopia's distance running legend Kenenisa Bekele is returning to the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON. The 44-year-old ranks among the most successful runners in history, holding three Olympic gold medals, 11 World Cross Country titles, and having dominated the 5,000m and 10,000m world records for years. Bekele has also written marathon history in Berlin: he won the 2016 race in 2:03:03 and came agonizingly close to the world record in 2019, winning in 2:01:41—just two seconds off the mark. In 2024, he finished second at the London Marathon in 2:04:15, setting a world masters record. He returns to the streets of Berlin once again in 2026.

Media Schedule & Press Conferences

Thursday, 24 September 2026

Elite Press Conference (Part 1): 11:00 AM

Panel: Women's Elite Runners, Jürgen Lock (Managing Director, SCC EVENTS), Mark Milde (Race Director).

Topics: Elite field presentations, EXPO launch, weekend preview, sustainability initiatives.

Location: Hotel Berlin, Berlin.

Friday, 25 September 2026

Elite Press Conference (Part 2): 11:00 AM

Panel: Men's Elite Runners, Elite Skaters, Elite Wheelchair Athletes, Jürgen Lock, Mark Milde.

Topics: Elite field presentations, EXPO, weekend preview, weather forecast.

Location: Hotel Berlin, Berlin.

Saturday, 26 September 2026

Post-Race Press Conference (Inline Skating): 3:30 PM

Panel: Inline Skating Winners.

Location: Hotel Berlin, Berlin.

Sunday, 27 September 2026

Post-Race Press Conference (Running & Wheelchair): 12:30 PM

Panel: Winners of Wheelchair, Handbike, and Running divisions.

Location: Hotel Berlin, Berlin.

Panel Talks

Two panel discussions will be held as part of the Abbott Big City Talks at the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON:

Thursday, 24 September 2026

5:30 PM, Panel 2: Closing the Type 2 Diabetes Care Gap

Featuring Maria-Lena Weiss MP and Volker Höttgen, politician and person living with type 2 diabetes, among others.

6:30 PM, Panel 3: Type 1 Diabetes & Ketones – Beyond Glucose

Featuring Sandra Starke (TBC), professional footballer and person living with type 1 diabetes; Dr. Ebert (TBC), healthcare professional; Kathi Korn, diabetes advocate; Ines Riefenstahl, 2026 marathon runner and person living with type 1 diabetes; Kristina Groos, athlete and person living with type 1 diabetes; Ulrike Thurm, diabetes expert and person living with type 1 diabetes; and Aleey, influencer and person living with type 1 diabetes, among others.

Attendance for both panels is strictly by prior registration via the following Abbott link:

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Thursday, 1 October 2026; 12:00 PM | Brandenburg Gate

On 1 October 2026, all eyes will turn to the future at the Brandenburg Gate. As part of the **REGISTRATION RUN for 2027**, members of the press are invited to a special event featuring high-profile guests – and a major announcement that is set to make headlines well beyond this autumn's marathon season.

Details of what will be announced on the day remain strictly under wraps.

To apply for press accreditation for this event, please contact: gerte.buchheit@scc-events.com

Downloading and using photos

The high-resolution photos may be used free of charge for editorial purposes, provided the source is credited. Further information and photos are available on our website.

[TO WEBSITE](#)

Media Guide & Accreditation

The official BMW BERLIN-MARATHON [Media Guide](#) – featuring detailed bios of national and international elite athletes – is available in the [Media section](#) of the official website. Accreditation collection times and Media Centre opening hours (Hotel Berlin, Berlin, Lützowplatz 17, 10785 Berlin) can also be accessed online.

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The BMW BERLIN-MARATHON is an event of SCC Berlin, organised by SCC EVENTS.



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