

# athletics

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WEEKLY

**Bernard Lagat  
answers your  
questions**



## **Marathon woman**

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Pickering on fire in Glasgow**

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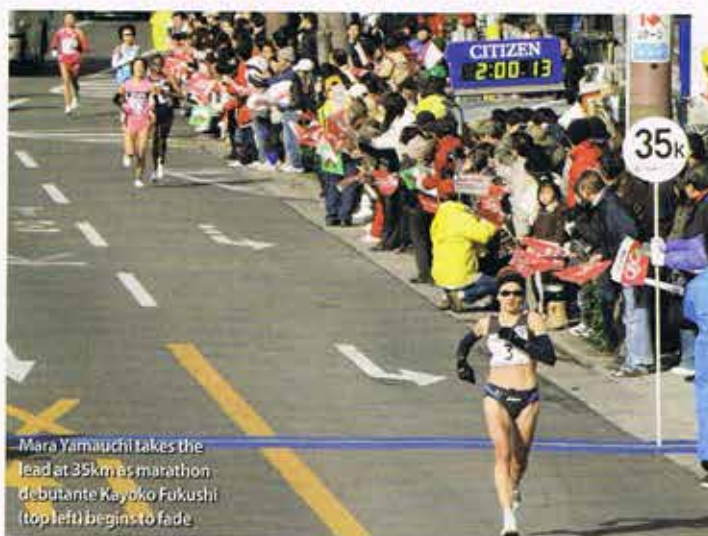
## Mara not taking Paula's route

**A**FTER her stunning marathon victory in Osaka last Sunday, Mara Yamauchi revealed she thought the Flora London Marathon was too close to the Olympics to adequately recover in time, writes Paul Halford.

Though world record-holder Paula Radcliffe has chosen to run London on April 13 to prepare for Beijing, Britain's second-fastest female marathoner in history will miss the event for the first time since 2003.

Yamauchi, who took three seconds off her personal best with 2:25:10 in winning one of the world's highest-quality marathons, decided a race in Japan would enable her to resume training more quickly.

The Japan-based runner said: "I love running London, and it's always very special running in front of a home crowd. Every time it has been a great experience for me. But I decided this year it was too close to Beijing to give me enough time to recover fully, get back into training again and have a long enough build-up for the Olympics,



Mara Yamauchi takes the lead at 35km as marathon debutante Kayoko Fukushi (top left) begins to fade

particularly allowing a bit of extra time for any injuries or other problems that might crop up. Also doing a race in Japan meant less travel and jetlag so I can hopefully recover more quickly."

Yamauchi, like Radcliffe, has not yet been selected to run the 26 miles in Beijing on August 17. However, both look certain to be named on the team by UK Athletics after London – even more so after Yamauchi won one of

the official Olympic selection races in a country which leads the world in women's marathoning.

Yamauchi's highest placing in seven previous marathons had been fifth, but victory in what is arguably Japan's top marathon for women confirms her world-class status.

Among those behind her was Asian half-marathon record-holder Kayoko Fukushi. The marathon debutante holds

Japanese records at 3000m and 5000m and her time for the half is 67:26, but despite leading for 20 miles, endured a spectacular collapse and placed 19th.

Yamauchi's championship credentials were not in doubt, though, even before Osaka. She was ninth in last year's World Championships on the same course and 18th in the 2005 edition in Helsinki.

The 34-year-old Harrow AC member – who will contest the Matsue Ladies' Half Marathon on March 16 – has lived for two years in Tokyo with her Japanese husband Shigetoshi and hopes she will better acclimatised to the conditions in Beijing.

However, she has also undertaken special preparation to cope with the extreme heat and humidity expected.

"Before last year's world championships, I did a lot of work to prepare for the heat, like hydration strategies and getting used to running in the heat," she said. "I was happy with how that all went so I am planning to repeat it again this year with some minor adjustments."

■ SEE page 44 for a full report

## Chambers could sue over ruling

UK ATHLETICS confirmed after the Norwich Union Glasgow Grand Prix that they face the possibility of a costly legal battle with Chambers.

Given that the cost of doping cases in its previous incarnation as the British Athletic Federation helped bankrupt that organisation, this is ominous indeed.

Chambers is contesting UKA's decision to exclude him from the IAAF World Indoor Championship trials in Sheffield next month on the basis that he would be competing for an international place against athletes who had been on the out-of-competition drug testing programme.

When Chambers announced he was going into gridiron, UKA withdrew him from the programme. They confirm his last test was in November 2006.

However, Chambers is understood never to have given formal notice of retirement, or of asking to be withdrawn from the programme. His legal advisers have approached UKA for further information and he is believed to be seeking grounds for an injunction which might allow him to compete in the trials.

Meanwhile, he is entered to compete at the Birmingham Games at the NIA this weekend (see page 54) and, as *Athletics Weekly* went to press,

it appeared he may be free to take his place in this lower-level meeting.

UKA is conducting a complete review of their doping policy under the chairmanship of chief executive Niels de Vos. "It is absolutely essential for UKA to actively lead the fight against drugs," he said. "We now need to ensure that when the system catches a cheat, we do not allow those cheats an easy way back into the sport."

"Those athletes who compete in the trials with a realistic proposition of making the World Indoors are likely to have been part of the testing programme. It is only fair that,



Dwain Chambers entered for Birmingham Games

should Dwain want to return, he too should undergo the same rigorous process for a period of time prior to competing against these athletes."

■ NIELS DE VOS wants a level playing field on drugs – page 62



# results

Our comprehensive results service

## Overseas

### AUSTRALIA

Perth, January 27: Men: PV: S Hooker 6.00.  
Canberra, January 26: Men: 200 (0.6): J Dolphin (NZL) 20.73. 800: r1: L Renshaw 1:46.90. r2: SCOTT TAMBLLIN 1:52.00. LJ: R Crowther 8.01/0.7. JT: 1 S Farquhar (NZL) 83.23; 2 J Bannister 82.60. Women: 100 (-0.2): S McLellan 11.41. 800: 1 T Lewis 2:00.48; 2 M Pape 2:01.24. 100H (0.3): McLellan 12.72. 400H: M Carey (IRL) 56.91. HJ: E Pettitt 1.91. LJ: 1 B Thompson 6.44; 2 K Wheeler 6.42. SP: V Villi (NZL) 19.72.  
Perth, January 13: Men: 800: SCOTT TAMBLLIN 1:52.29.

### BELARUS

Mogilyov, January 26: Women: 800: I Usovich 2:04.08. 60H: Y Valadzko 7.89.

## event organisers

- Please send results immediately after the conclusion of the event to [results@athletics-weekly.co.uk](mailto:results@athletics-weekly.co.uk). Tel 01733-898440/fax 01733-898441
- Please include: date, venue, event name (and league division name, if applicable) and contact number.
- Wind speeds for sprints and jumps should be recorded. If best jumps are illegally wind-assisted (>2mps), provide best legal jump.
- Indicate juniors/veterans competing in senior events.
- Either send results in full or to AW standards, which can be found at [www.athleticsweekly.com](http://www.athleticsweekly.com) or posted/faxed on request.
- Before telephoning results, please extract performances meeting AW standards.

Minsk, January 19: Men: 60H: M Lynsha 7.68. Women: 600: 1 I Usovich 1:27.82 (nat rec); 2 M Kotovich 1:28.38. 60H: Y Valadzko 8.13. SP: 1 N

Ostapchuk 19.73; 2 V Yepimashka 17.92; 3 Y Leantsluk 17.34. 5000W: 1 A Ginko 21:21.04; 2 S Yurchanka 21:58.60.

### BELGIUM

Hannut, January 27: Men: XC (11.7K): 1 L Komon (KEN) 33:42; 2 B Kiplagat (KEN) 33:47; 3 R Sigei (KEN) 34:13. Women:

XC (5.7K): 1 L Masai (KEN, U20) 18:03; 2 V Dejaeghere 18:33; 3 V Kibiwott (KEN) 18:38.

### BERMUDA

Hamilton, January 18/20: Men: Mile: 1 D Freeman (USA) 4:08.9; 2 J Rankin (USA) 4:09.1; 3 NEIL SPEIGHT 4:09.5. 10K: 1 P Koech (KEN) 29:13; 10 SPEIGHT 32:47. HM: 1 Koech 64:27; 6 SIMON ASHBY 85:10. Women: 10K: F Jepkoei (KEN) 34:16. HM: J Cherobon (KEN) 78:23.

### BULGARIA

Plodiv, January 20: Men: LJ: N Atanasov 8.03.

### CHINA

NATIONAL INDOOR GRAND PRIX, Shanghai, January 26/27: Men: 60: 1 W Yongyi 6.58 (nat rec); 2 J Ke 6.66; 3 S Bingtian (U20) 6.73. In hts: h8: Yongyi

# Yamauchi wins with PB in Japan

## JAPAN

INTERNATIONAL LADIES' MARATHON, Osaka, January 27

EXACTLY 100 years ago Dorando Pietri famously staggered toward the finish in the Olympic marathon in London. Such was the drama, Pietri's heroics overshadowed the winner that day. Everyone remembers Pietri, but far fewer people recall the gold medalist from those Games – Johnny Hayes of the United States.

Flash forward to 2008 and the spirit of Pietri was in evidence in Osaka as Kayoko Fukushi, the Japanese 5000m and half-marathon record-holder, faded from first to 19th over the final 9km and fell four times before shuffling home.

Hopefully, the winner will not suffer the same fate as Hayes did a century ago and see her run overshadowed by a gallant loser. Mara Yamauchi of Britain enjoyed the first marathon victory of her career, improving her PB by three seconds with 2:25:10, and she did it in one of the world's most competitive 26.2-milers. Osaka, after all, is one of three official Japanese trials for the Beijing Olympics.

"The highest I've ever placed is fifth, so I am very happy!" the Japanese-based Yamauchi wrote on her website. "I never thought I would win a major race, having finished so many races

Runners pass the Osaka castle



last year in the minor places, so my confidence in my ability to win any races was low. But I knew that this was a race I could win, if I ran sensibly and saved myself for the final few miles."

Unlike the searing heat in Osaka for the IAAF World Championships last August, the race was held in cool temperatures of 5-6°C. The race was also devoid of pacemakers – as organisers wanted to replicate championship conditions.

Yamauchi takes up the story: "I wanted to run 2:23-24 and thanks to Constantina Dita-Tomescu (of Romania), we set off at exactly the right speed, although Fukushi was way ahead on her own from the start. I felt very comfortable and relaxed, and was looking forward to a good race. But from 10-15km Dita let go of the lead and the pace slowed, passing halfway in 72:30. At this point Fukushi was two minutes or so ahead, and I felt like I was

racing for second place."

The race would change dramatically in the latter stages, though. From 25-30km the chase pack began to close on Fukushi. The eight chasers were Yamauchi, Dita-Tomescu and her Romanian team-mate Lidia Simon, Julia Mombi of Kenya, plus Japanese Tomo Morimoto, Miki Ohira, Madoka Ogi and Kazuo Ogoshi and at 30km they were two minutes behind the leader.

However, this group soon reduced to Morimoto, Yamauchi, Ogi and Mombi and at 32km Yamauchi began to push the pace, eventually overhauling the exhausted Fukushi just before the 35km mark.

"Having passed halfway in 72:30, I knew I had to inject some pace to get a PB, so I soon found myself in the lead which, on a windy day, was not where I wanted to be," said Yamauchi, who at this stage began thinking of her World

Championships run last year, when she began her drive for the finish at 29km and struggled home in a slightly disappointing ninth place.

"Going into the lead at about 34km it dawned on me that I could win the race, so I just tried to stay strong until the end.

"Entering the stadium leading the race was fantastic, and I knew I just had to hang on to clinch my first victory. Breaking the tape at the finish for the first time ever was very, very special."

Yamauchi was 24 seconds clear of runner-up Morimoto at the finish. The Kenyan Mombi was third in 2:26:00, with Simon and Tomescu-Dita sixth and ninth respectively and Fukushi gamely hanging on to clock 2:40:54.

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Women: Mar: 1 MARA YAMAUCHI 2:25:10; 2 T Morimoto (JPN) 2:25:34; 3 J Mombi (KEN) 2:26:00; 4 M Ohira (JPN) 2:26:09; 5 M Ogi (JPN) 2:26:55; 6 L Simon (ROU) 2:27:17; 7 M Okunaga (JPN) 2:27:52; 8 A Fujikawa (JPN) 2:28:06; 9 C Tomescu (ROU) 2:28:15;



10 C Daunay (FRA) 2:28:24 (nat rec); 11 A Nakayama (JPN) 2:28:50; 12 M Ando (JPN) 2:29:07; 13 K Ogoshi (JPN) 2:29:31; 14 O Nurgalyeva (RUS) 2:31:23; 15 K Okamoto (JPN) 2:32:09; 16 N Berkut (UKR) 2:32:15; 17 Y Ezaki (JPN) 2:32:33; 18 Y Matsubara (JPN) 2:34:05; 19 K Fukushi 2:40:54; 20 B Schipp (AUS) 2:41:16.



Mara Yamauchi overtakes pre-race favourite Kayoko Fukushi



Mara Yamauchi's win in Osaka was her first marathon victory