



March 25, 2018

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### **Thousands of Chicago Area Runners Take to the Streets for the 2018 Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle 8K**

CHICAGO – Thousands of runners turned the streets of downtown Chicago green today as they kicked off the spring running season at the 39th annual Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle 8K. Defending champion Stephen Sambu, 29, of Tucson, Ariz., sprinted his way into first place, finishing in 23:10, becoming the first person in event history to win four consecutive times. The women’s winner, Laura Thweatt, 29, of Boulder, Colo., finished strong with a time of 26:02, propelling her and her Boulder Track Club teammates to victory of the 10th annual Deloitte Elite Club Competition.

“As the saying goes, everyone is Irish on St. Patrick’s Day—a week later in Chicago, that mantra still holds true as runners showed us their Shamrock spirit and speed on race day,” said executive race director Carey Pinkowski. “This 39-year-old tradition celebrates everything I love about Windy City running—from those decked out head to toe in green, to the pros leading the charge—and I had so much fun today joining them on the roads. This is the beginning step for many on their journey to the Bank of America Chicago Marathon. There’s no better way to kick off the outdoor running season than the Shamrock Shuffle 8K.”

Pinkowski followed in the footsteps of Sambu and Thweatt, joining more than 20,000 finishers and his American Cancer Society Team DetermiNation teammates for the annual Chicago tradition. Today’s race was the culmination of Pinkowski’s fundraising campaign, exceeding his \$18,000 goal by \$2,000 to raise a total of \$20,226 for the American Cancer Society, and marked his return to the Shamrock course after running it in 1988.

In a sprint finish, Sambu, the world’s fastest man ever over the 8K distance (22:01.1), became the first athlete in the event’s history to win four consecutive times, adding to his 2015, 2016 and 2017 first place finishes. Following close behind was Isiah Koech of Kenya and Ian La Mere of the Hansons-Brooks Distance Project – so close that all three men share the finish time of 23:10. Sambu was the first to break the tape after breaking away in the final stretch.

“This morning was beautiful,” said Sambu. “I love running in Chicago and look forward to racing here again in October at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon.”

Thweatt notched a 26:02 with a commanding performance in her first professional race since recovering from a pelvic injury this summer. Her Boulder Track Club teammate Janelle Lincks finished behind her in second place with a finish time of 26:46. Finishing out the top three was Anne-Marie Blaney in 26:48.

“Today was a great day,” said Thweatt. “I’m coming off a pretty big injury and it was my first time racing in 11 months. All in all, it was a fun environment and a great reminder of what I love about racing.”

Bank of America Chicago Marathon champion Amanda McGrory, Champaign, Ill., took the overall win in the wheelchair competition, stopping the clock in 23:00. Her University of Illinois teammate Brian Siemann, Champaign, Ill., took first for the men in 21:41.

The 2018 Shamrock Shuffle also included the tenth annual Deloitte Elite Club Competition, featuring 54 elite USATF-member club teams from around the country. This year saw new winners in both the men’s and women’s competition. Kansas City Smoke took the men’s title thanks to four runners with a combined score of 1:37:02. The Playmakers Elite New Balance team finished second in 1:37:09 and the Second City Track Club finished third in 1:37:15.

In their Shamrock Shuffle racing debut, the Boulder Track Club finished on top of the podium in the women’s competition, scoring three runners, with a combined team score of 1:20:27. Hansons-Brooks Distance Project finished second in 1:21:14 and the Second City Track Club finished third in 1:22:34.

### **Top 10 Male Finishers**

1. Stephen Sambu, 23:10
2. Isiah Koech, 23:10
3. Ian La Mere, 23:10
4. Andrew Colley, 23:25
5. Zach Zarda, 23:48
6. Joe Moore, 23:49
7. Brogan Austin, 23:50
8. Evan Landes, 23:51
9. Aaron Easker, 23:53
10. Oscar Medina, 23:54

### **Top 10 Female Finishers**

1. Laura Thweatt, 26:02



2. Janelle Lincks, 26:46
3. Anne-Marie Blaney, 26:48
4. Olivia Pratt, 26:55
5. Kristen Heckert, 26:58
6. Alyssa Schneider, 26:58
7. Maggie Callahan, 27:00
8. Danna Herrick, 27:31
9. Gabi Anzalone, 27:34
10. Kyle Blakeslee, 27:35

**About the Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle 8K**

Long recognized as an annual rite of spring, a celebration of St. Patrick's Day and the kickoff to the outdoor running season in Chicago, the 39<sup>th</sup> annual Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle 8K takes runners on a scenic tour of downtown Chicago, starting and finishing in Grant Park. Continuing for the tenth year, the event hosted the Deloitte Elite Club Competition featuring USATF-member running clubs from across the country. For more information about the event and how to get involved, go to [www.shamrockshuffle.com](http://www.shamrockshuffle.com).

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