



MEDIA RELEASE

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RE: Amherst congratulates marathon runner Kaili van Vulpen on her success at New York City Marathon

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Town of Amherst wishes to congratulate Kaili van Vulpen on her recent success in the New York City Marathon.

The Amherst area native, who now lives in Halifax, finished in a time of 2:58:35. She came in fourth among Canadian women participating in the marathon, which attracted more than 50,000 runners from 131 countries. She also met her goal of completing the 42.2-kilometre course in under three hours.

A multi-sport athlete during her time at Amherst Regional High School and a basketball player with the Mount Saint Vincent Mystics during her university days, van Vulpen has been running marathons for 10 years. In that time, she has run in 10 marathons, five of them with her sister, Kendra LeBlanc, who convinced her several years ago to begin running marathons.

“We’d always ran together to stay in shape,” van Vulpen recalled. “She asked me to complete a marathon with her. At the time, I didn’t know what it meant to run a marathon, but she educated me and we started training



FIGURE 1 AMHERST NATIVE KAILI VAN VULPEN CROSSES THE FINISH LINE AT THE RECENT NEW YORK CITY MARATHON. (CONTRIBUTED BY KAILI VAN VULPEN)





together. Since then, Kendra has inspired me to excel.”

Van Vulpen has also received a great deal of support from the Amherst Striders, but it wasn't until she joined the Halifax Road Hammers about four years ago that she started a more consistent training program.

“I feel fortunate to have such a supportive, encouraging running group that I can run with every day in Halifax,” van Vulpen said. “I have to give credit to our coach Lee McCarron, a wonderful leader who makes sure we train properly.”

It was some of her Halifax Road Hammers peers who convinced her to join them in their goal of competing in all of the world's six major marathons, which are held in Boston, New York, London, Tokyo, Chicago and Berlin. She has run in the Boston Marathon three times, the latest was last spring.

Running it and the recent New York City Marathon, the second of the six major world marathons she has competed in, was a bit of a challenge because van Vulpen injured herself last February.

“After running Boston, I had to take some extra time off,” she said. “Usually, I train about 16 weeks prior to a marathon, but because of the injury Lee helped me modify a safe training plan for New York while still completing the distances in training.”

The race itself was “epic,” van Vulpen said, partly because it lived up to the hype of being the largest marathon in terms of participants and spectators and partly because she got to run the race with two of her Road Hammers teammates – Meaghan Strum and Erin Poirier.

The three of them were selected to participate in the sub-elite category (Elites are Olympian and professional runners. Sub-elites are not as fast as the elites, but still post competitive times.) This meant she and her running mates got to warm up with the elite athletes.

The race was run on a hot, humid day – the hottest in the marathon's history – and that took its toll on several runners, but van Vulpen did not let the heat or her injury affect her.





The trio started out strong from Staten Island. Poirier and van Vulpen had planned to run together, but Poirier fell off the pace as she dealt with vision concerns. Poirier chose to complete the marathon as a party and embracing the fun environment.

“Erin was key and monumental during my training, and Meaghan encouraged me throughout the race and during our training runs together,” van Vulpen said. “To experience this race with close friends was really exciting. They both finished so strong in such hot, humid conditions. I was so proud of them and all of our other Road Hammer friends who also ran in New York.”

Van Vulpen said she couldn’t have been as successful without the support of many people.

“I’m constantly inspired by the women I’m running with. They are strong, fit and fast and very, very encouraging of one another,” she said. “I also couldn’t do it without the endless support I get from the Road Hammers and from my family and friends. Training for and running a marathon takes a very large time commitment, and I am beyond grateful for their love and support.”

Her next challenge is to compete in another of the six world major marathons. This time, the London Marathon, which she and fellow Road Hammer friends plan on running next spring. After that she hopes to tackle the Tokyo, Chicago and Berlin marathons.

The Town of Amherst wishes her well in her future endeavours.

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