

The morning briefing ... Vancouver INTL. marathon

BY JONATHAN MCDONALD, THE PROVINCE OCTOBER 6, 2011

The 2012 BMO Vancouver Marathon is going in bold new directions. Those directions? All over the place on May 6, 2012, taking advantage of Vancouver's greatest assets.

For the first time, both the marathon and the half-marathon are point-to-point courses rather than loops. In both cases, a radical change as the start has moved from Pacific Boulevard to Queen Elizabeth Park, near Nat Bailey Stadium.

The 41st annual marathon will prove scenic as it heads west toward UBC and winds around Marine Drive down to Spanish Banks and Jericho.

Crossing Burrard Bridge, runners will head along English Bay into Stanley Park, where - in a unique twist - they will run the entire Seawall, which will be closed to pedestrians.

"This will really show off Vancouver," said the marathon's Deirdre Rowland.

She's right. Assuming the logistics work out flawlessly, it's a never-dull-for-a-moment course that should attract runners from around the world. And the changes came following lots of feedback from the local running community.

The marathon will be capped at 5,000 entrants; the half-marathon at 10,000.

© Copyright (c) The Province