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# NEWS

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For Immediate Release

## **Dold to Attempt Record-Setting Seventh Victory at the Empire State Building Run-Up Powered by the MMRF**

*More than 650 participants ready to run up 1,576 steps in new time-trial format*

**New York, January 25, 2012**—After a record sixth victory in 2011, Thomas Dold of Germany will go for his seventh straight win at the Empire State Building Run-Up Powered by the MMRF on Wednesday, February 8, it was announced today by New York Road Runners president and CEO Mary Wittenberg.

This year, the race boasts two new features: a nighttime finish and a time-trial format. The 8:00 p.m. start time will allow participants to finish under the famed lights of the Empire State Building, and the move to a time-trial format will make it possible for additional climbers to participate—650 in all, with one climber starting every 10 seconds.

“NYRR is so excited to again stage the ever-popular Empire State Building Run-Up Powered by the MMRF,” said Wittenberg. “We are confident that the new improvements—a nighttime finish and the time-trial format—will give all our runners an enhanced experience and challenge them in the most iconic building in the world.”

Dold, 27, finished in 10 minutes, 10 seconds in 2011 and won by more than one minute. His sixth victory puts him ahead of Australian Paul Crake (1999–2003) and Al Waquie of the United States (1983–87) for most victories in this signature race on the NYRR calendar. The Empire State Building Run-Up Powered by the MMRF will test the limits of competitors from around the world as they race up 86 flights—1,576 steps—to the outdoor Observation Deck of the world’s most famous office building and the tallest building in New York City. Alice McNamara of Australia won the women’s division in 2011 (13:03); she will not return to defend her title.

Dold is a standout in the sport of professional tower climbing, with a lengthy list of victories around the globe and several sponsors. Topping the Tower Running circuit’s World Cup

rankings, Dold is up against tough competition from Omar Bekkali, 33, of Belgium, and Christian Riedl, 31, of Germany, who finished second and third, respectively, in 2011.

“To be the most successful runner and defending champion makes it easy for all other top runners to find their goal: just to beat me,” said Dold. “This makes it attractive and keeps me always innovative in my training, and this year, training is going really well.”

Three-time women’s champion (2007–9) Suzy Walsham, 38, of Singapore, returns with a chance of equaling the women’s race record of four wins, currently held by Cindy Harris, 43, of Indianapolis. Harris will be one of her leading challengers. After missing the 2011 race, 2010 champion Melissa Moon will return in 2012 to race for a second title.

“The Empire State Building Run-Up is such an iconic race—the combination of a famous landmark and an incredibly challenging mental and physical test,” said Walsham. “I’m excited to return to New York to challenge myself and other competitors in this famous race, and am especially looking forward to the new night race format.”

Crake, of Australia, holds the course record at 9:33, which he ran in 2003. The time is three minutes faster than Gary Muhrcke’s winning time (12:33) in the inaugural 1978 race. Crake was paralyzed in a tragic cycling accident in 2006, the same year that Andrea Mayr of Austria set the women’s record of 11:23.

### **About the Empire State Building**

Soaring 1,454 feet (from base to antenna) above Midtown Manhattan, the Empire State Building is the “*World’s Most Famous Office Building*.” With new investments in infrastructure, public areas and amenities, the Empire State Building has attracted first-rate tenants in a diverse array of industries from around the world. The skyscraper’s robust broadcasting technology supports all major television and FM radio stations in the New York metropolitan market. The Empire State Building was named America’s favorite building in a poll conducted by the American Institute of Architects. The Empire State Building Observatory is one of the world’s most beloved attractions and is the region’s #1 tourist destination. For more information on the Empire State Building, please visit [www.esbnyc.com](http://www.esbnyc.com), [www.facebook.com/EmpireStateBuilding](https://www.facebook.com/EmpireStateBuilding), or [@ESBObservatory](https://twitter.com/ESBObservatory).

### **New York Road Runners**

Headquartered in New York City, New York Road Runners is dedicated to advancing the sport of running, enhancing health and fitness for all, and meeting our community’s needs. Our goal is to use the expertise acquired in our 53-year history to empower all people to live fitter, healthier lives through participation in our races, community events, instruction and training resources, and youth programs. Our races and other events draw more than 300,000 people each year. The ING New York City Marathon, NYRR’s premier event, is the largest and most inclusive marathon in the world, attracting the world’s top professional runners every year and raising \$34 million for charity in 2011. NYRR’s running-based youth programs, which currently serve more than 100,000 children in hundreds of schools and community centers, promote children’s health and fitness, character development, and personal achievement in underserved communities. For more information, visit [www.nyrr.org](http://www.nyrr.org).