



## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
No. 73/11

November 12, 2011

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# Kennedy Kemei breaks all-time course record in men's SunTrust Richmond Marathon; Mekides Bekele claims female title

## Bedada sets new women's McDonald's Half Marathon course record; Towett reclaims men's half marathon title

### Record-size field of 17,073 highlights 34<sup>th</sup> running of event

RICHMOND, VA – With a time of 2:13:45, Kenya's Kennedy Kemei, 33, set a new course record today in the 2011 SunTrust Richmond Marathon. The previous course record was 2:14:32, set by Andrei Gordeev in 2005. Kemei walked away with a total of \$5,500 in prize money - \$2,500 for the first place finish, an additional \$2,500 for setting a new course record, and a bonus of \$500 for finishing under two hours and twenty minutes. Mekides Bekele, a 25-year-old Ethiopian, was the first female to cross the finish line, clocking in at 2:47:50.

In the fourth year of the McDonald's Half Marathon, a new course record was set in the women's division. Nineteen-year-old Bekelech Bedada of Ethiopia crossed the finish line with a time of 1:13:33, besting the previous course record set in 2010 by nearly three minutes. Kenya's George Towett, 27, won the men's division (1:04:34) for the second consecutive year.



In the HCA Virginia 8k, Charlottesville's Donnie Cowart (22:56.20) inched past Julius Kogo of Kenya (22:56.26) in the closest 8k finish in memory. On the female side, 21-year-old Alemtsehay Misganaw captured first place with a time of 26:17.

New in 2011, the SunTrust Richmond Marathon added the Richmond Region Marathon Championship and awarded prize money to the top three local male and female marathon finishers. Chris Carrier was the first male Richmonder to cross the finish line with a time of 2:39:13 and Catherine Sykes, 29, was the first female (3:01:22).

An all-time record of 17,073 runners participated in this weekend's events. The 26.2-mile SunTrust Richmond Marathon drew in 4,922 runners, while the McDonald's Half Marathon had a record 7,493 and the HCA Virginia 8k had 4,658 participants.

(More)



In addition to a record-breaking number of participants, spectators also crowded the streets cheering and handing out water and snacks to the runners. There were 29 bands and musical performers lining the courses as well as 22 official cheering stations and four SunTrust/NBC 12 Party Zones.

The 2012 SunTrust Richmond Marathon is scheduled for Saturday, November 10. **A special \$55 marathon entry fee and \$45 half marathon entry fee** is available from through 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, November 17. For more information and full results, please visit [www.richmondmarathon.org](http://www.richmondmarathon.org).

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