

In an Olympic year, all eyes will be on this year's Elite Athletes at Run the Tan 2024

The annual Run the Tan showcase event will be held at Melbourne's iconic Tan Track on Sunday 21 April 2024 to raise awareness and funds for local mental health charities.

It will be a battle of the minds when it comes to the Elite Para race, with Jaryd Clifford and Michael Roeger going head-to-head to claim the title of the fastest multiclass lap for the para-athletes. It's a coveted title and has already set the tone for what will surely be a great race.

After setting the para record in 2021, Jaryd lost his title to Michael who broke that record in 2023. Jaryd is determined to win that title back, so as the saying goes 'it's on'.

In a coup for Run the Tan, Lauren Ryan, returns to take on the Elite women's field. Having recently broken a 21-year-old Australian record at The Ten 2024 athletics meet in California, Lauren finished the women's 10,000m event with a run time 30:35.66, coming in under the qualifying mark for the Paris Olympics. Lauren has now set her sights on being the fastest female in a lap around the famed Tan running track, all in the name of mental health. Lauren will compete against 2022 Commonwealth Games bronze medallist, Abbey Caldwell, who returns for another tilt at the Elite title.

Race regulars Dave Hughes, Alicia Loxley and Liberty's Archie Thompson will battle it out for fastest celebrity, alongside AFL greats Campbell Brown and Steven Baker, Essendon's AFLW Maddie Prespakis and Melbourne Renegades Mackenzie Harvey. Jason Warne returns in honour of his late brother, Shane, who was an inaugural ambassador for the charity event.

Mental health advocate, and former Miss Universe Olivia Molly Rogers also joins the celebrity race for her first time, as does comedian Ash Williams and podcaster and ex-radio host, Dean Thomas.

Aussie tri-champion Emma Carney will join Olympian Tamsyn Manou who will again be taking a lap around the famous track.

Back for another lap, Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp will officially open this year's Run the Tan and praised the event for its contribution to the community and supporting such an important cause.

"Run the Tan is an annual highlight for Melbourne runners, as thousands flock to the beautiful Tan Track at the Royal Botanic Gardens to raise awareness of mental health.

We know that 1 in 5 Australians will suffer mental illness in any year, and that running for 15 minutes a day reduces the risk of major depression.

I'd like to thank all the participants coming together for this important cause and look forward to walking The Tan in 2024's event."

Thanks to naming rights sponsor Liberty, the event will offer the largest prize money for any event of its kind in Australia. The event also aims to raise \$100k to support local mental health charities such as Lifeline, One in Five, RUOK, SANE and Beyond Blue. Participants can choose to create their own fundraising page to support the work of their preferred charity.

Run the Tan Founder, Darren Templeton said he felt passionately about the event for several reasons.

"Run the Tan has not only helped reshape the historical books but has also inspired a new generation of athletes and enthusiasts to strive for excellence, all in support of mental health," said Darren Templeton, Founder of Run the Tan.

Leading lender Liberty is back for the third consecutive year, supporting the event as major sponsor in 2024.

With a Liberty team participating in the public run, and a presence in the event village offering Bike n' Blend stations for attendees, the lender is an active contributor to the free-thinking and inclusive ethos of the day.

Liberty's Manager - Group Communications Kate Jenkinson is taking to the track with Team Liberty for her third Run the Tan and says it's an event that really must be experienced: "Each year I'm blown away by the vibe on and around the track.

"It's such a wonderfully accessible community event for people of all fitness levels to come together in support of a good cause. You come for the public race and stay to cheer on the professionals and the celebs. It just seems to get bigger and better each year."

Liberty continues to drive support for the event through its existing sponsorships with the Melbourne Renegades, Essendon Football Club and A-Leagues.

Other key event sponsors include New Balance, Up There Athletics, Myriad Kofkin Global, Jellis Craig, GMHBA, and McArthur, with additional support from City of Melbourne, Athletics Australia, Athletics Victoria and Bennelong.

Registrations for Run the Tan are still open, but with limited spots available <https://runthetan.net/> - it's time to sign up!

END NOTES //

- External link: <https://runthetan.net/>
- Downloadable images: TBA

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ABOUT RUN THE TAN

Now in its fourth year, the Run the Tan annual showcase event, supporting mental health charities, has quickly become one of the most popular and well well-known running events in Melbourne and Australia. The inaugural event was held in April 2021 between COVID lockdowns.

Run The Tan is a not-for-profit organization under Run for Mental Health Ltd, advocating for mental health awareness through promoting an active lifestyle. Its annual showcase event brings together athletes, enthusiasts, and mental health charities in a celebration of physical and mental wellbeing. Founded by Darren Templeton in 2019, the organization provides a central source of truth and governance process for all official recorded run times around the Tan (including the all-time top 10 and top 100 fastest times for men and women).

Run the Tan runs a free weekly community run club initiative which sees new runners joining regularly. Held at the Tan Track at 8am every Saturday morning, it caters to all fitness levels and abilities, and is open to everyone in the community.