

AIU ROAD RUNNING INTEGRITY PROGRAMME POISED TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

01 September 2020, Monaco: The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) welcomes the announcement from World Athletics today of the continued support from the road running industry for strong anti-doping measures.

The Abbott World Marathon Majors, World Athletics Label road races, Platinum and Gold Label athletes and athlete representatives have all reinforced their commitment to the Road Running Integrity Programme, which includes testing, intelligence, investigation, prosecution, and education. Three major running shoe companies - Adidas, ASICS, and Nike have also committed to supporting the programme financially.

The programme started well in January and the AIU conducted over 350 Out-of-Competition tests during the first three-months of the year, however the change in circumstances caused by COVID-19 pandemic has forced the AIU to revise its programme for the rest of the year. Due to the decreased number of races in 2020, the programme has been adapted to the economic reality while still maintaining its original long-term objective of protecting the integrity of athletics.

Key features of the programme for 2020 include:

- An overall Registered Testing Pool (RTP) of 305 athletes. The vast majority of these athletes come from two East African nations: Kenya and Ethiopia.
- The top 40 runners (20 male and 20 female) will be tested in accordance with an advanced intelligence-led testing programme that is appropriate to their 2020 racing calendar.
- The remaining 265 athletes will be subject mainly to group testing specifically for the purpose of establishing their Athlete Biological Passport (ABP) profile. This group of athletes are mainly new to the Registered Testing Pool (RTP) and the samples collected from them will be used to establish the initial values for their ABP profiles before targeted testing commences in 2021. The group testing will include some advance-notice testing in various locations in Kenya and Ethiopia. Advance-notice testing forms a legitimate part of building an ABP profile together with no-notice tests.
- Intelligence gathering and building of individual profiles will continue for all 305 athletes.
- The AIU, in conjunction with the two National Federations and the National Anti-Doping Agencies in Ethiopia and Kenya, will also direct resources to support education activities across the 305 athletes, utilising digital resources, leaflets, virtual conferences and face-to-face seminars, when and where they are safe to conduct, for the remainder of the year.

“This approach is a practical response to the unique circumstances we currently face with regards to road running,” commented Head of the AIU Brett Clothier.

“There was clear feedback from the key stakeholders, that, despite the financial difficulties, the sport does not want to raise the white flag on anti-doping and when the sport does return to a more normal level of competition in the future, it should be with a strong integrity platform still in place.”

Health and Safety protocols

All group testing will be carried out in compliance with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) guidance related to testing during the pandemic, and the health guidelines of the local governments in Kenya and Ethiopia. The concerned athletes and the sample collection personnel have already received detailed advice concerning testing protocols during the pandemic, which, among others lists health and safety guidelines, hygiene, and the social distancing measures to be followed. The athlete advisory and safety measures can be found here:

Athlete advisory: <https://bit.ly/2YHamKt>

Safety measures: <https://bit.ly/2YCVvAy>

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About the Road Running Integrity Programme

The Athletics Integrity Unit runs an extensive anti-doping programme covering more than 300 professional road runners. The programme activities of testing, intelligence, investigation, prosecution and education are funded entirely through contributions from World Athletics, Abbott World Marathon Majors, World Athletics Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze Label Road Races, Platinum and Gold Label Athletes and their Athlete Representatives, and running shoe companies: Adidas, ASICS and Nike.


About the Athletics Integrity Unit

The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) is the independent body created by the World Athletics that manages all integrity issues – both doping and non-doping – for the sport of athletics. The remit of the AIU includes anti-doping, the pursuit of individuals engaged in age or competition results manipulation, investigating fraudulent behaviour with regards to transfers of allegiance, and detecting other misconduct including bribery and breaches of betting rules. It is the AIU's role to drive cheats out of our sport, and to do everything within its power to support honest athletes around the world who dedicate their lives to reaching their sporting goals through dedication and hard work.


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