



November 1, 2018, COLUMBUS, Ohio – The 40th anniversary of the Nationwide Children's Hospital Columbus Marathon next October will have an added level of prestige when it serves as a qualifying event for the Abbott World Marathon Majors Wanda Age Group World Rankings.

The Abbott World Marathon Majors is a series of six of the largest and most renowned marathons in the world - Tokyo Marathon, B.A.A. Boston Marathon, Virgin Money London Marathon, BMW BERLIN-MARATHON, Bank of America Chicago Marathon and TCS New York City Marathon.

In September, the Abbott World Marathon Majors launched the Wanda Age Group World Rankings program at the BMW BERLIN-MARATHON. Participants in an AbbottWMM Wanda Age Group World Ranking qualifying race earn points according to their age, time and gender, aligned with the following age groups for men and women: 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80+.

In the program's first year, more than 50 events across six continents and 24 countries are providing athletes the opportunity to earn ranking points and qualify for a spot in the inaugural AbbottWMM Wanda Age Group World Championships, which will take place at the April 2020 Virgin Money London Marathon.

Year two of qualifying, of which the Nationwide Children's Hospital Columbus Marathon will be part, runs from Oct. 13, 2019 to Oct. 11, 2020. It begins with the start of the AbbottWMM Series XIII at the 2019 Bank of America Chicago Marathon and ends with the 2020 Chicago race. The World Championships following Chicago 2020 will take place in 2021 at a yet-to-be-named location.

“We are very excited about the response to the AbbottWMM Wanda Age Group World Rankings from marathons around the world. More than 125,000 runners aged 40+ participate in AbbottWMM races each year and this new system will allow even more runners to become a part of the AbbottWMM family,”

said Tim Hadzima, Executive Director of Abbott World Marathon Majors. “Our system gives runners a chance to run all over the world and all across the calendar on a truly global stage. We want to give them a chance to gain recognition like never before. We are proud to be working with all our partners to take age group marathon running to the next level and showcase the achievements of these everyday champions.”

Darris Blackford, Race Director of the Nationwide Children’s Hospital Columbus Marathon, said being chosen a qualifying race for such a prestigious program as the Abbott World Marathon Majors Wanda Age Group World Rankings is an honor that will help solidify the celebration of the Nationwide Children’s Hospital Columbus Marathon’s 40th anniversary.

“Our race has a long history of providing high-quality, trusted services and offering a fast, exciting, well-supported course to runners from around the world,” Blackford said. “From our start in 1980, to hosting the 1992 U.S. Men’s Olympic Trials, to raising millions for our benefiting charity Nationwide Children’s Hospital, we are an event that is top-notch in every sense, and this opportunity to serve as a qualifying race for the AbbottWMM Wanda Age Group World Rankings is a milestone of which we are extremely proud.”

For more information on the scoring system and world rankings, visit www.Abbottwmm.com