

Brazilians Dominate Walt Disney World Marathon Again

Returning Brazilian champions are the first male and female competitors across the finish line at the 26th annual 26.2-mile race through Walt Disney World Resort

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (Jan. 13, 2019) – Fredison Costa and Giovanna Martins, past champions of the Walt Disney World Marathon presented by Cigna, took their thrones again Sunday, easily winning the male and female divisions of the 26th annual event.

Costa, a native of Brazil who now lives in Kissimmee and trains at Walt Disney World Resort, recaptured the title after struggling through last year's race. It was his seventh Disney Marathon victory, leaving him one shy of Adriano Bastos' record of eight wins. Running in unseasonably warm Florida weather, Costa posted a time of 2:18:45, far off the race record of 2:11:50, but well ahead of second-place finisher Nick Hilton (2:21:48), the Flagstaff, AZ runner who won the race a year ago, and Jose Lima of Brazil (2:26:40), who was third.

"I've been through hard times this year, so it felt great that this was the seventh time I was the winner," Costa said. "I feel like I'm challenging myself again."

Martins of Salto, Brazil, is the first woman to win four Disney marathon titles, including the last three in a row. She was challenged for much of the race, but kicked it into high gear late in the race to win easily, then celebrated her momentous victory while clutching a Mickey plush in one hand and a Brazilian flag in the other. In fact, she is the only four-time women's winner in race history after crossing the finish line in 2:45:24 – more than two minutes ahead of Antonia Lins Da Silva of Fortaleza, Brazil, who was second (2:47:36) and Nancy Jurgens of Apex, North Carolina who was third (2:50:39).

"Every time I see the 'Where Dreams Come True' sign (at Walt Disney World Resort), it's impossible to not get emotional," Martins said. "Running and winning these races at Walt Disney World truly is a dream come true."

The Disney marathon weekend, which began in 1994 with only one race involving roughly 8,000 runners, has evolved into a multi-race event with more than 100,000 runners and spectators, representing 73 countries around the world. Now 26 years later, this marathon weekend remains one of the most popular in the nation and is widely regarded as the first entertainment-focused marathon in the country. Nearly one million people of various ages and abilities have run in a Walt Disney World Marathon race, including more than 70 who have now run all 26 Disney marathons.

The Walt Disney World Marathon capped an action-packed weekend of races that included a 5K, 10K, half marathon, marathon, *runDisney* Kids Races, and the *runDisney* Health and Fitness Expo.

This was the second of four race weekends during the 2018-19 *runDisney* season, with the next race weekend being the Disney Princess Half Marathon Weekend presented by Children's Miracle Networks Hospitals, February 21-24. Registration for that race and others is available at www.rundisney.com.

Media Contact:

Aubrey Gravante, Disney Sports Public Relations, Aubrey.L.Gravante@disney.com |(313) 720-1109

Darrell Fry, Disney Sports Public Relations, Darrell.Fry@disney.com |(407) 409-1612 (cell)