

## **.US National 12K - Press Conference Quotes**

### **Jill Geer, USATF Chief Public Affairs Officer**

"Welcome to beautiful, sunny, and compared to last year, balmy Alexandria, Virginia, for our third .US National 12K presented by Neustar. It's our third year of this race. It has been our pinnacle and be all-end all for our running circuit. And from what we have seen from participation, we have seen a lot of athletes come back to several years in a row with the two-time defending champion here as part of that."

"Before we get started, we wanted to talk about our partnership with Neustar. As I said, we are in our third year, and it is really a partnership that enabled us to really get into the road racing space in a new way, especially to provide significant financial support to these athletes who are out here competing."

"Thanks to Neustar, we have \$100,000 of prize money for our athletes - again for the third year in a row. After the end of a long season, it probably sweetens the pot a little bit to stick it out for another week or two."

"This race is also our USATF Masters Championship. We have 180 athletes competing for age group titles. Especially in road racing, the masters demographic drives road racing on a participatory level. Our Masters LDR Committee has really gotten behind this event to make it a really first-rate masters event as well as open race. Most of the athletes out there tomorrow will actually be over the age of 40, running either for fun or personal fitness, as well as to compete."

### **Crystal Peterson**

#### **Director of Registry Services, Neustar**

"I am so excited that we are at this weekend too at the .US National 12K, and I wish all of the runners this year very good luck. As Jill (Geer) said, Neustar has been a partner of USATF for the past three years, and we are very excited about this partnership."

"We look forward seeing what the next year will bring. With USATF, this race is right in our backyard. We are a proud sponsor, and we are very excited to see all of the runners. Extending that running season just a little longer, we thank you all. We are very excited to be here, and I am very excited to see what tomorrow brings."

### **Kim Conley**

*Opening Statement*

"I am very excited to be here. This is the third year in a row that I've gotten to compete in the event, and I absolutely love it and I love coming to Alexandria. I've been able to run a have had few more USATF road racing championships this fall than I have in the last few falls, so I have really enjoyed being able to do that, and I'm very happy to be taking part in the circuit this year."

*On stepping back mentally after injury*

"Competing is just very different from anything you can do in training. Mentally and physically, but especially that competitive edge. I have had to be in race setting in order to find that. I started back with the CVS 5K in September, which is the U.S. 5K road championships. I went out really hard chasing Molly and Shalane, and it stung a lot. It was a hard awakening back into racing, but I have continued to build on racing. I had another good run at Tufts, and I'm excited to keep moving forward now."

*On how this is preparation heading into 2016 season and Olympic Games*

"I'm using this race right in the middle of a season. I'm just enjoying being in a competitive field and competing against other great American runners. Then I'll turn my attention to the track. I'm running the 10,000 in December and hoping to run the Olympic standard in the 10K there. Later in the winter, I'll hit reset a little bit and ultimately be looking to peak in the summer for the trials heading into the Olympics."

*On doping*

"We as the clean athletes stand to benefit from the sport being cleaned up. That's ultimately what we want. I think if we can push as the athletes and you as the media can push for a more transparency overall, we all stand to benefit."

*On what they are going to do to make it an exciting event*

"My philosophy in any championship race is to go out and compete hard against the field and let the time happen. I think when you get caught up racing each other that's really when the excitement gets going."

**Sam Chelanga**

*Opening Statement*

"I feel the same (as Kim). This is my first season running these road races. I just want to thank USATF and Neustar for sponsoring these races. It's been a lot of fun, and I can't imagine doing other races this season. I'm excited for tomorrow."

*On how this is preparation heading into 2016 season and Olympic Games*

"This is the beginning for me. I am getting ready for the marathon trials, and it's going to be the first time I'm going to run the marathon. I guess I can just say that I'm just sizing people up. I'm just going to do this race because I just love this race and take some time to go for the marathon and that's it."

"I think with all the races we have had this fall, I think it's going to be exciting. Believe me. It's going to be exciting."

#### *On doping*

"I also agree with Molly. It seems like it's a tough time if you are into running. There's always cynicism. You always look around wondering who is clean and who is not. It's very important that we put this to rest. Everyone who is in a position of power should do something. The good people just sit there and watch, then it's just going to continue. Send a strong message and endure through the tough times. If somebody gets banned, or even a whole federation like Russia, it's tough, because maybe there are some clean athletes there. But it's the price the sport has to pay to get better."

#### *On where he is training and who he is training with*

"I'm training in Tucson with James Li, and since it's a nice Winter area, I'm going to stay there. Stephen Sambu and Bernard Lagat are training partners. Workouts are more like Tyler said aerobic. My coach isn't crazy into mileage. Instead of saying we did 100 miles, we'll just going to do 24 miles fast at like 5:30 pace."

#### *On what they are going to do to make it an exciting event*

"I'll do a staring contest with Tyler. With our racing this fall, it's going to be exciting. Believe me."

### **Molly Huddle**

#### *Opening Statement*

"I'm excited to run my third .US 12K Championship. I've seen two different courses here, and a lot of new faces and similar faces in Kim (Conley) here and Sarah (Hall). And we always have a great field of men and women, and it's always an exciting race. I'm looking forward to capping off a solid road season here, and then freshening up for next year."

#### *On what she has done in training to get these results*

"I think the last two years, getting ready for an early spring half marathon, has helped me get carry some strength through the year. We just tweak a few workouts throughout the year for that, and it seems to last most of the year - that strength. I always do try and fit a road season in sometimes before the track, sometimes after. But I always say it's my most enjoyable time of the year, so this is no different. Some of the races have helped me come away with - depending on the distance - a bit

more strength. I've enjoyed it this year; I've enjoyed running hard. They've given me the opportunity to do that, and I think I'm getting really comfortable on the road."

*On winning USATF road racing five titles and a chance for sixth. What has changed for her over the last few years to get where she is now?*

"Again, just a little bit more volume in workouts and when that leads to a good race, I think the confidence from that rolls over for the next training block and the next race. Just momentum and training and momentum and confidence from races that have gone well. I think I have also just kind of refined how to prepare for a race both mentally and physically, so I'm putting it to good use at this point in my career."

*On how this prepares heading into 2016 season and Olympic Games*

"This is the end of my season as well, so I'll take a break and then start to build up for the Olympic year. I probably won't sharpen up until track season, but I definitely have a few road races beforehand."

*On doping*

"I think although it's an ugly part of the sport it's pointing towards a hopeful future. The more threatening it is to the countries and individuals that do things the wrong way, the more they'll be scared off from doing that. It only benefits the clean athletes. I think one way to improve the future would be lifetime bans. I think everyone agrees with that, and I'm not sure what the holdup is there. Hopefully things are taken care of sooner rather than later."

*On what victory has meant the most*

"To start off the year, New York half was a big victory. It kind of set the tone for me, and I wasn't expecting that and that was a special moment. Anytime you win a U.S. track championship, that's also special. Obviously if you compete against the best in the country like Shalane, Emily (Infeld), Emily (Sisson) and Amy (Cragg), to come out on top is always a hard task. Championship racing is hard. Sometimes the fittest person doesn't always run away with the win."

*On training across various distance*

"I feel like the 5K and half marathon training, at least the way I do it, is not very different. Any given workout is going to apply to any of those distances. The mile for me is usually a one-time, painful hit for me if I can do it. My first half marathon, my coach was like just run your 10K PR and keep going. And I was like, 'What kind of strategy is that?' It's a range that isn't as far apart as people think it is."

*On what they are going to do to make it an exciting event*

"I second what Kim said. The year we ran fast, Shalane and I were just competing. I didn't think twice about time until we crossed the finish line. I find if when everyone is putting an honest effort in to win or finish as high as they can, you'll see everyone's best. Hopefully the weather is cooperative, too."

## **Tyler Pennel**

### *Opening Statement*

"I'm excited as well. This is what I like to do, and I'm very grateful that with USATF and Neustar and the other sponsors we are able to have races like this, that pit a bunch of the great American runners (against each other), that are currently running all together, and have some great fields and great races. This will be my second time at the .US (National 12K) Championships. I didn't run it last year, but I ran it the year before and I'm excited to go out there and compete again."

### *On how this prepares heading into 2016 season and Olympic Games*

"I'm a little different from Sarah because this is actually the end of my season. I am aiming for marathon trials. I am going to take a little break and then get right into marathon training and the goal is to go out there and make it top-three at trials in L.A. and make the Olympic Team."

### *On doping*

"We, as the clean athletes, tend to benefit more by getting drug cheats out of the sport and leveling the playing field. Other countries, not just Russia, are having problems as well. Kenya just said they are creating an anti-doping agency that is going to be much more productive and transparent, hopefully. As this keeps developing, hopefully more countries will see that if Russia gets banned from the Olympics, that sends a strong message."

### *On key to training at such a range of distances*

"Training for so many distances, the marathon and mile are very different events and they do use different systems. The training I've found that I work better on are work around are very aerobic. When I broke four (minutes), I wasn't doing a whole lot of speed. I wasn't doing your mile-type of workouts. Having a little touch on faster paces and faster-twitch muscles helps a lot to recruit them later in races. That's one thing I have worked on the last six weeks. I also have a very strong aerobic background with the marathon and that helps in any race."

### *On what they are going to do to make it an exciting event*

"I came in to race this fall, and I'm just going to continue to race. When people are competing, it's much more fun than when someone is just out there. Hopefully it will be a fun race to watch."

"I'll just third what everyone else has said. I came into this fall to race. I'm just going to keeping continuing to do that. I've had some success this fall, so that's pretty much my goal tomorrow: to go

out and compete. That's when I run best. I know that when people are competing, it's much more fun than when people are just going out there just time trialing to run fast. We'll be - Sam and I and a couple others will be - up there hopefully with 2K to go and it will be a fun race to watch."

## **Sara Hall**

### *Opening Statement*

"I'm really thankful to be here as well. This race wasn't really on my radar this year with Chicago Marathon, and I was really bummed because fall road races are my favorite time of the year. But fortunately, I took my break and started back up with Chicago. Everything was going well, so here I am, and I'm looking forward to it."

### *On how becoming a mom to three adopted daughters has changed her approach to running*

"I wasn't sure how becoming a mom was going to change my running, my training and just my passion toward it. But in a lot of ways, it hasn't changed. It's been awesome because I love what I do, and I'm still really passionate about competing. I spend a little more time on Facetime at meets, but it's been really neat to model that to my girls. They grew up in a culture that wasn't very empowering for them. Just being able to share through example, a lot of times what mom has to do is hard, and just how to push through and how if you really want something you have to work hard towards it. Even sharing running with them, we've been taking them running quite a bit. They did their first race a week ago, and they really enjoyed it."

### *On how this prepares heading into 2016 season and Olympic Games*

"This is the start of my year and I am planing to run marathon Olympic Trials in February, so depending on how this race goes, I'll kind of plan the rest of my racing season, and it will give me a good idea of where I am for my workouts and determining pace."

### *On doping*

"I feel hope and encouragement through this process that we are getting to the root of some of the really bad seeds of the sport. I would just encourage fans not to lose hope in track and field; there are lots of people at the highest level that are clean and are doing it the right way. Just hang in there and keep celebrating those people."