

Running the NYC Marathon with the Italian Parliament

Patrizia Orioli (October 31, 2011)



This coming Sunday, 15 deputies of different political parties will take part in one of the nation's most important long-distance annual running events in order to promote healthy living and help the mentally disabled.

A team of 15 members of the [Italian Parliament](#) [2], known as the [Montecitorio Running Club \(MRC\)](#) [3], will represent Italy at the [ING New York City Marathon](#) [4] scheduled for November 6th.

This yearly marathon, of the length of 42.195 km/26.219 mi, is one of the largest marathons in the world. Along with the Boston Marathon and the Chicago one, the ING New York City Marathon is among the preeminent long-distance annual running events in the US and it attracts professional competitors and amateurs from all over the world. Because of the popularity of the race, participation is chosen largely by a lottery system.

This definitely is one of the most important events for the MRC, a team that brings together – despite



different political views and preferences – politicians who love to run... that's as simple as that!

“The goal of the Montecitorio Running Club,” one of the four Vice Presidents of the [Chamber of Deputies](#) [5], Maurizio Lupi, who happens to be a marathon runner and the promoter of the initiative, “is to stimulate the Italian people's attention on the health benefits of running. Running helps our body, it prevents some diseases and helps curing others.” Some of these benefits may include weight loss, improved cardiovascular health, improved bone health, improved mood and sleep and better coordination.

The participation of the Parliament members at the ING New York City Marathon will also help the team to raise funds for the rehabilitation center, [Centro di Riabilitazione Don Orione](#) [6] in Ercolano (in the province of Naples) and specifically for the Special Project London 2012, an important enterprise whose goal is to build sporting facilities for mentally disabled kids whose dream is to participate in the Paralympic Games next year.

Everybody is invited to bet on the results of the athletes, and all the money will go directly to the Don Orione Center. Directions on how to do so can be found on www.montecitoriorunningclub.it [3]

During the two previous seasons over 400.000 euros were collected to benefit the foundation [Fondazione Il Cireneo](#) [7] (in support of autistic children) and the foundation [Fondazione Anffas](#) [8] (in support of orphans and disabled kids) in Abruzzo. In the past, among the numerous contributors to the cause, special mention goes to the Italian-American foundation [Sons of Italy](#) [9].

In addition to Maurizio Lupi, there will be the Pdl deputies Marcello Di Caterina, Enrico Costa, Valentino Valentini and Paolo Vella, the Pd Parliament members, Paolo Fadda, Sandro Gozi, Paola De Micheli and Lapo Pistelli, those of Idv, Fabio Evangelisti, Augusto Di Stanislao and Ivan Rota, Davide Caparini from Lega Nord and the senators Roberta Pinotti (Pd) and Filippo Saltamartini (Pdl). This group of deputies/marathon runners is particularly proud to represent Italy. They will be wearing uniforms in the color blue in celebration of the 150 years of the unification of Italy.

The Montecitorio Running Club was started in May 2009, and it now includes 80 Parliament members coming from all different parties. Throughout the year they meet for practice, competitions, tests, meetings, sport events and fundraisers.

All participants are followed by sport experts and medical personnel as per an agreement with [Fidal](#) [10] (Federazione Italiana di Atletica Leggera, Italian Athletics Federation) and [CONI](#) [11]'s Centro di Medicina dello Sport (Center of Sports Medicine). These “political athletes,” who are well trained and competent, wish to establish new personal records on both medium and long distances, and run a real marathon of 26.219 miles.

“Travels are not paid by government grants or by the Parliament,” Lupi explains, “Each team member uses personal vacation time, wishes to promote health and well being and contribute to a just cause.”

The MRC sport project is promoted by the Chamber of Deputies and supported by the following sponsors: [Fastweb](#) [12], [Lottomatica](#) [13], [Grana Padano](#) [14], [MSC Crociere](#) [15], [Asics](#) [16], [Human Tecar](#) [17] and [Terramia Club](#) [18].

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[2] <http://www.parlamento.it>



- [3] <http://www.montecitoriorunningclub.it>
- [4] <http://www.nycmarathon.org>
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- [6] <http://www.donorione.net/campania/ercolano>
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