

**NEW YORK  
ROAD RUNNERS****Contacts**

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## ATHLETES TO WATCH

### Central Park Challenge Women's Invitational

**Shalane Flanagan****Age:** 26**Residence:** Pittsboro, North Carolina**A Dominant Performance**

Flanagan demonstrated her fitness beyond the shadow of a doubt at the USA Cross Country Championships in February, winning by 70 seconds—the largest margin of victory in that race since records have been kept. She's been training at altitude in Mexico since early January, and she feels that her strength heading into this 8K race is better than it has ever been. It will take a special performance to challenge her, but with two other women in the field who have also run under 15 minutes for 5000 meters, a Flanagan victory is by no means assured.

**Return to Glory**

For three years, Flanagan dealt with intense foot pain that affected her training and nearly ended her running career. After consultations with eight different doctors, the three-time NCAA champion for the University of North Carolina was finally diagnosed with an extra bone in her foot that eventually caused her posterior tibial tendon to tear. After surgery to remove the extra bone, Flanagan began running again in July 2006. She set an American indoor record for 3000 meters (8:33.25) at the Reebok Boston Indoor Games in January 2007—her first race on the track in 17 months!

**All in the Family**

Flanagan's mother, Cheryl Treworgy, is the former world record-holder in the marathon and competed for the United States in five World Cross Country Championships, finishing fourth in 1969. In 1966, Treworgy (née Bridges) became the first woman to earn an athletic scholarship to a public university when she enrolled at Indiana State.

**What to Watch For**

At the USA Cross Country Championships, Flanagan jumped to the lead early and never looked back. She's so confident in her strength that a similar strategy in this race shouldn't surprise anyone.

**Amy Rudolph****Age:** 34**Residence:** Providence, Rhode Island**An Unknown Quantity**

Rudolph's only race since September was a victory at the Pensacola Double Bridge Run in Florida last month—a race she treated more as a tempo run than an all-out effort—so it's difficult to guess how she'll fare against women who have already had several hard racing efforts this year. With personal bests of 14:56.04 and 31:18.96, though, Rudolph is one of the fastest U.S. distance runners in history, and she's got two appearances in the Olympic Games and six USA titles to back it up.

**Friendly Course...**

Rudolph is no stranger to Central Park. Her course record at the 2004 Emerald Nuts Midnight Run stood until this year (when it was broken by fellow Central Park Challenge entrant Carmen Douma-Hussar), and she finished as the top American in sixth place at the 2006 Circle of Friends New York Mini 10K.

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### **...Friendly Distance**

The NCAA champion from Providence College has also seen success at the 8K distance: She won the USA 8K Championship in 1998 and ran to the bronze medal when NYRR hosted the USA Women's 8K Championship in 2005.

### **What to Watch For**

Because she'll be running against women who have more races under their belts this season, look for Rudolph to let someone else take the lead during the first half of the race, and-if she can-make a move in the final miles.

### **Katie McGregor**

**Age:** 30

**Residence:** St. Louis Park, Minnesota

### **Driven Like the Snow**

McGregor has endured a brutal winter in Minnesota, but prefers she staying at home rather than packing her bags for a warm-weather training spot because she believes the difficult conditions give her an added toughness. She was tough enough to qualify for her sixth-consecutive World Cross Country Championships team in February, but will have to run away from her faster competitors early to secure a victory here.

### **A Heartbreaking Fourth**

With 2004 Olympic Trials 10,000-meter champion Deena Kastor opting to focus on the marathon in the Athens Games, a spot on the team was open for fourth-place finisher McGregor. She was unable to achieve the Olympic "A" standard, however. McGregor has already taken care of the standard for the Beijing Games, and is now determined to qualify for one of the three spots at the Olympic Trials that will earn her a trip to her first Olympics.

### **An Excellent Support System**

The three-time NCAA champ at the University of Michigan trains with the Team USA Minnesota group under coach Dennis Barker. Five of the group's athletes are scheduled to compete in the Central Park Challenge: McGregor, Tollefson, Andrew Carlson, Matt Gabrielson, and Brad Lowery.

### **What to Watch For**

At the USA Cross Country Championships, McGregor ran the first 2K with Flanagan before finishing fourth. She has another four weeks of training, and should look to stay near the lead for longer.

### **Carmen Douma-Hussar**

**Age:** 31

**Residence:** Ardmore, Pennsylvania

### **The Wheels to Win...**

With personal bests of 2:02.43 for 800 meters and 4:02.29 for the 1500, and a silver medal from the 2004 IAAF World Indoor Championships, Douma-Hussar is the fastest athlete in the field.

### **...The Strength to Surprise**

What isn't as well known about Douma-Hussar is her strength in longer races. She broke the course record at the Emerald Nuts Midnight Run (4M) on New Year's Eve, and has notched three top-25 finishes at the IAAF World Cross Country Championships.

### **The Mile Master**

Douma-Hussar's success in the 1500 and mile isn't surprising. Her longtime coach is Marcus O'Sullivan, who-with 101 sub-4:00 miles to his credit-knew a little something about racing that distance himself.

### **What to Watch For**

Douma-Hussar has twice won the Continental Airlines® Fifth Avenue Mile with a withering surge over the second half, and would be hard to count out if she's within striking distance in the race's later stages.