



December 8, 2022

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Ron Ilgen Named 2022 MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year

December 8, 2022 — A committee made up of race directors, athletes, media, corporate executives and club officials has named Ron Ilgen, Pikes Peak Marathon, Inc. President and Race Director, as the MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year. MYLAPS is the presenting sponsor.

He will be honored at a reception at the Road Race Management Race Directors' Meeting in Hollywood, FL on December 8.

Phil Stewart, Editor and Publisher of *Road Race Management*, said:



Ron Ilgen, President and Race Director of Pikes Peak Marathon, Inc., is the recipient of the 2022 MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year Award, presented by MYLAPS.

“We’ve honored 35 individuals with the Road Race Management Race Director of the Year award since 1987, and they have faced plenty of challenges, but none have been quite as daunting as organizing a marathon and half marathon up one of Colorado’s tallest peaks. Thin air is only a minor inconvenience – but can be challenging, as I know from experience when I crawled into an aid station above the 12,000-foot level when I completed the race – but nature throws plenty of other challenges on the Front Range of the Rockies, including blizzards, forest fires and flash floods, to which our nominee has had to respond. He has done so for the last 20 years, which has earned Ron Ilgen the 2022 MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year Award presented by MyLaps.”

Ron’s nominator said of him:

“Ron Ilgen has been the lifeblood of the Pikes Peak Marathon, Inc. race for over 25 years. Ron began his involvement with the Pikes Peak Ascent and Marathon as a volunteer, a lead volunteer and eventually the executive director and overall race director. Ron has provided oversight and direction for all races under the organization’s brand for the past 20 years.



The summit of the Pikes Peak Marathon

“Race directing a trail race up a 14,115-foot mountain is more of a mountaineering event than a traditional running race. The logistics and volunteer needs are extensive to pull off successful back-to-back races. Ron has navigated some of the worst circumstances a Race Director can imagine keeping the Pikes Peak Marathon going strong. In 2005, the race

experienced a massive storm that left hundreds of runners trapped on the summit of Pikes Peak. In 2006, a blizzard caught 1,000 runners off guard, and they had to finish in trash bags to protect themselves from the elements. In 2012, Colorado Springs was devastated by the Waldo Canyon

Fire that led to a flash flood and significant damage to the Manitou Springs area during race week. In 2018, Ron made the tough call as Race Director to cut the Ascent race short due to the weather forecast. Finally, as all Race Directors experienced, COVID-19 threw a curveball in 2020, but Ron pushed ahead and challenged his team to navigate the COVID-19 guidelines and still host the Marathon event, making Pikes Peak Marathon now the longest recurring marathon in the U.S. (67 years running in 2022).

“Ron is fueled by the history of the Pikes Peak races, so much so that he dedicated several years to finding the first woman to finish the Pikes Peak Marathon in 1959, Arlene Pieper. For 50 years Arlene Pieper did not know she made athletic history as the first woman to ever compete a sanctioned marathon in the U.S., until 2000 when the stars aligned, and Arlene was located and invited to be part of the 50th running of the Pikes Peak Marathon.

“The fiercely loyal volunteer base is derived from a deep respect and appreciation for Ron’s leadership. He extends appreciation for all volunteer positions and engages in the race prep work on the mountain. Ron himself has completed each volunteer duty in his many years with the race organization, and volunteers appreciate that aspect of his leadership.”

The MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year award (presented by MYLAPS) is made annually to recognize and promote excellence in race directing. Nominees were judged on several factors, including overall ability, reputation of race, creativity and organizational ability. For a list of previous recipients, visit <https://www.rrm.com/act/rdm/rdypast.asp>.

Road Race Management (www.rrm.com) is a member-based organization that publishes a digital newsletter and many other publications designed for race and industry professionals and conducts a prestigious annual national race directors’ meeting and trade show in Florida.

MarathonFoto (www.marathonfoto.com) combines the industry’s best logistics and customer service, all supported by cutting-edge technology, to create images and videos to celebrate and inspire athletes. MYLAPS

(<https://www.mylaps.com>) helps athletes, timers and events to create the ultimate sports experience for participants, followers and sponsors.

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