

Hamstring blow puts Yamauchi out of London

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Britain's Mara Yamauchi has been ruled out of this year's Virgin London Marathon with a hamstring injury.

The Japan-based runner was hoping for a return to form after two disappointing performances in 2010, in London last April and at the New York marathon in November.

But with the London 2012 Olympics on the horizon, Britain's main hope for the race on 17 April has been forced to concentrate on treatment and rehabilitation.

She said: "I am very disappointed to have to withdraw from the 2011 Virgin London Marathon due to a hamstring injury. London is an iconic marathon which I have enjoyed racing many times.

"I was looking forward to returning to London this April. But my injury treatment and rehabilitation must take priority, especially with the 2012 London Olympics approaching fast.

"I hope to return to my best as soon as I can. I wish everyone who competes on 17 April the best of luck."

Yamauchi was one of 15 women announced in the elite line-up who have a marathon best of less than two hours 25 minutes. She set her personal best of 2:23:12 when finishing second to Germany's Irina Mikitenko in 2009, a performance that appeared to herald a breakthrough for the former diplomat. But a series of injuries have prevented her reproducing that form since.

She missed the 2009 world championships in Berlin with a foot injury and could only finish 10th in London last year exhausted by a six-day journey from her training base in the United States caused by Iceland's volcanic ash cloud.

She skipped last August's European Championships in Barcelona but lined up for the New York Marathon on 7 November with high hopes of finishing in the top three. After racing with the leading group for the first half of the race, she faded to finish 13th in 2:31:38.

Virgin London Marathon race director Dave Bedford said: "It is a hugely disappointing to lose Mara from this year's race. Many in Britain were hoping to see her up with the medalists again, as she was two year's ago.

"It is a bitter blow for her, but we understand she needs to recover fully from this injury and prepare as well as possible for the Olympics next year.

"Despite Mara's absence, we still have one of the most talented women's fields ever for this year's Virgin London Marathon and are looking forward to a fantastic race."

Britain's hopes in the women's event now rest with Olympian Liz Yelling, the former Commonwealth Games bronze medalist, plus two marathon debutantes, Yelling's sister-in-law Hayley Yelling, and seasoned international Jo Pavey.

Andrew Lemoncello will fly the flag for Britain in the men's race. The Scotsman was eighth on his debut last year.

The following is a full list of the men's and women's elite entries for the 2011 Virgin London Marathon.

Elite athletes and their best marathon times

Men

Tsegaye Kebede	ETH	02:05:18
Patrick Makau	KEN	02:04:48
Samuel Wanjiru	KEN	02:05:10
Abel Kirui	KEN	02:05:04
Bazu Worku	ETH	02:05:25
Jaouad Gharib	MAR	02:05:27
Emmanuel Mutai	KEN	02:06:15
Viktor Röthlin	SUI	02:07:23
Abderrahime Bouramdane	MAR	02:07:33
Yonas Kifle	ERI	02:07:34
José Manuel Martínez	ESP	02:08:09
Marilson Gomes dos Santos	BRA	02:08:37
Dathan Ritzenhein	USA	02:10:00
Dmitry Safronov	RUS	02:10:12
Dylan Wykes	CAN	02:12:39
Cuthbert Nyasango	ZIM	02:12:40
Jason Lehmkuhle	USA	02:12:54
Mike Shelley	AUS	02:13:05
Michael Aish	USA	02:13:21
Andrew Lemoncello	GBR	02:13:40
Collis Birmingham	AUS	Debut
Stephan Shay	USA	Debut
Patrick Smyth	USA	Debut
Mohamed Trafah	USA	Debut

Women

Zhou Chunxiu	CHN	02:19:51
Irina Mikitenko	GER	02:19:19
Constantina Dita	ROU	02:21:30
Askale Tafa	ETH	02:21:31
Inga Abitova	RUS	02:22:19
Lornah Kiplagat	NED	02:22:22
Aselefech Mergia	ETH	02:22:38
Bezunesh Bekele	ETH	02:23:09
Bai Xue	CHN	02:23:27
Mariya Kononova	RUS	02:23:50
Xiaolin Zhu	CHN	02:23:57
Aberu Kebede	ETH	02:23:58
Yukiko Akaba	JPN	02:24:55
Edna Kiplagat	KEN	02:25:38
Magdalena Lewy Boulet	USA	02:26:22

Liz Yelling	GBR	02:28:33
Lisa Weightman	AUS	02:28:48
Mary Keitany	KEN	02:29:01
Fiona Docherty	NZL	02:32:17
Tanith Maxwell	RSA	02:32:33
Jo Pavey	GBR	Debut
Jessica Augusto	POR	Debut
Nikki Chapple	AUS	Debut