

## PRESS RELEASE

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**SHAMROCK SHUFFLE 8K**

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### U.S. Olympian Deena Kastor Returns to the Road at 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Shamrock Shuffle

**CHICAGO, IL (March 23, 2009)** – After injury forced her to drop from the 2008 Beijing Olympic Marathon field mid-race, decorated U.S. runner Deena Kastor will make her return to road racing on Sunday, March 29 at the Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle 8K. In so doing, Kastor, 36, will return to the site where she set the current American women’s 8K record in 2005 (24:36).

“After more than 6 months of recovery and training, I am so excited to race again,” said Kastor from her home in Mammoth Lakes, Calif. “Chicago has a special place in my heart as a city where ‘luck’ has been on my side both at the 8K in 2005 and again later that year at the marathon distance. I look forward to starting my 2009 racing season at the Shamrock Shuffle 8K. It is just my style to be in a race where there is so much enthusiasm and excitement on the starting line.”

Kastor’s 2005 Chicago appearance was preceded by her Olympic Marathon bronze medal performance in the 2004 Athens Games. Her medal was the first for a U.S. woman in the marathon since Joan Benoit (Samuelson) won the inaugural gold in 1984.

Following her 2005 Shamrock Shuffle performance, Kastor returned to Chicago in October to win the Chicago Marathon in 2:21:25. The following spring she set the current American women’s marathon record with a 2:19:36 win at the Flora London Marathon.

Kastor will lead the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Shamrock Shuffle field on Sunday, March 29 featuring 32,500 participants in the 8K run (30,000) and 5K Fitness Walk (2,500). The annual rite of spring for local fitness enthusiasts begins and ends in Chicago’s historic Grant Park.

In advance of the event, a two-day Health & Fitness Expo featuring more than 75 industry-related exhibitors will take place at Navy Pier on Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28. The Expo is free and open to the public as is the event day race course. The event will conclude with its traditional post-race party in Grant Park featuring live musical entertainment by *Maggie Speaks*.

More information on the event including course maps, street closures and how to get involved can be found at [shamrockshuffle.com](http://shamrockshuffle.com).

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### **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Shamrock Shuffle**

The Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle will officially usher in the Chicago running season on Sunday, March 29, 2009 with an 8K run through the city and 5K Fitness Walk along the lakeshore. Beginning and ending in historic Grant Park, the 8K provides an abbreviated preview of the Bank of America Chicago Marathon course as it circles the city's stunning downtown architecture. 5K walkers are treated to a scenic stroll along the shores of Lake Michigan in the shadow of the magnificent city skyline. Online registration for both events opened on Thursday, January 1 and closed on January 29 when the 32,500 participant capacity was reached. The entire Chicago community is invited to celebrate along the 8K course or sign up to volunteer. For more information, visit [shamrockshuffle.com](http://shamrockshuffle.com).

*[www.shamrockshuffle.com](http://www.shamrockshuffle.com)*