

# Marcel Hug and Madison de Rozario Win N.Y.C. Marathon Wheelchair Races

Hug, a four-time champion, dominated the men's division, while de Rozario won her first women's title, pulling away in the second half of the race.



*Marcel Hug of Switzerland and Madison de Rozario of Australia after coming in first place in their respective wheelchair divisions. Credit...Uli Seit for The New York Times*

Marcel Hug of Switzerland, known as the Silver Bullet, continued his stellar year by winning the New York City Marathon men's wheelchair race on Sunday for the fourth time. Madison de Rozario of Australia won her first women's wheelchair title.

Hug led from the start, [finishing in 1 hour 31 minutes 24 seconds](#), the capstone of a phenomenal 2021. He won four gold medals at the Tokyo Paralympic Games this summer, including his second consecutive gold in the marathon. After Tokyo, he won the Berlin, London and Boston marathons and finished in second place in the Chicago Marathon just behind one of his biggest rivals, Daniel Romanchuk of the United States.

Hug, who is using a new, high-tech chair, [lost to Romanchuk by one second in New York City](#) in 2019, after winning in 2017. He held off Kurt Fearnley of Australia, the course record-holder, by six-hundredths of a second in 2016. In 2013, Hug beat Ernst van Dyk by five-tenths of a second.

Hug, 35, faced no such drama on Sunday. He held a three-minute lead over David Weir of Britain after 20 kilometers, or 12.4 miles, and passed the halfway point at 43 minutes 52 seconds, and was on a pace to smash his own course best by nearly two minutes. His lead ballooned to more than three minutes as he sped up First Avenue. That lead grew to more than six minutes by the finish.

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“It’s really crazy” to win, [Hug said after the race](#). “It’s been such a tough fall with the Paralympics and then all these marathons.”

Hug said with so many races so close together, he focused on recovery rather than training during the past few months.

Weir finished second at 1:38:01, while Romanchuk came in third at 1:38:22.

“It’s incredible to have this big gap I never expected,” Hug said. “I expected to have a group together. Maybe two or three. But I had the chance to break away early.”

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Hug, who is called the Silver Bullet because of his speed and silver helmet, won four consecutive Boston Marathons through 2018, and has won each of the six Abbott World Marathon Majors. He owns the fastest all-conditions marathon record, which he set in Boston in 2017.

After trailing Romanchuk in the standings for much of the season, Hug secured his third World Marathon Majors title on Sunday.

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“It was interesting to have this big showdown in New York” with Romanchuk, Hug said.

De Rozario, the first Australian champion in the 20-year history of the women’s wheelchair division in New York City, turned a race that was tight early into a one-woman show in Manhattan and the Bronx. She finished in 1:51:01.

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Unlike the men’s wheelchair race, the women’s division was a dogfight among Manuela Schar, 36, the defending champion from Switzerland; Tatyana McFadden, 32, a five-time New York City champion; and de Rozario, 27.

It was de Rozario’s third time racing in the New York City Marathon. Her only other marathon major title was in 2018 in London.

On Sunday, McFadden poked ahead of de Rozario and Schar by about five seconds around the halfway point. McFadden pushed up the Queensboro Bridge, which connects Queens and Manhattan, with de Rozario a few seconds behind. Schar fell much farther back.

But after McFadden hit the peak of the bridge and began to glide down the other side, de Rozario sped past her. De Rozario then pulled ahead for good on First Avenue and continued to build her lead. She finished three minutes ahead of McFadden (1:53:59) and Schar (1:54:02).

## **New York City Marathon Returns for 50th Running**

Marking a [jubilant return](#), some 30,000 competitors made the 26.2-mile journey across the five boroughs. Here’s [how the day unfolded](#).

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- **What It Was Like to Run:** Talya Minsberg, a Times sports editor, ran the race. [Here’s how her day shook out](#).
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Being chased by McFadden and Schar “is one of the most terrifying things in the marathon, so I definitely wanted to avoid” being caught, de Rozario said after the race. “So when that gap opened up, yeah, I just kind of tried to do everything I could to hold it.”

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De Rozario won the gold medal in the marathon at this year’s Tokyo Paralympic Games, edging Schar by one second. She also won gold in the 800 meters in a Paralympic record time, and bronze in the 1,500 meters.

She intended to race in other international marathons this fall, but because of border restrictions in Australia, she was concerned about her ability to return home. But the restrictions were lifted at the start of this month, enabling de Rozario to make it to New York in time to race.

The silver lining of staying home, she said, was that she was more rested than her rivals.

“I think it definitely played into it,” she said.

Unlike in Tokyo, where she held off several challengers in what she called a “panic sprint to the finish,” de Rozario raced in front for the second half of the race on Sunday, which was a new feeling.

“I’ve never won a marathon like that before, and I didn’t know how stressful it means to be out front like that because you really don’t know how close the next athlete is,” she said.

Hug and de Rozario will each receive \$25,000 for finishing first, while Weir and McFadden won \$20,000 for their second-place finishes. Romanchuk and Schar won \$15,000 each.