RACE IN THE SUN
39 TOPS, SHORTS & TRAIL SHOES FOR SUMMER RUNNING

WARRIOR
“I BEAT A BUNCH OF BLOKES!”
Ultrarunner Marina on coming third in the 260km Wadi Rum Ultra

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The controversy that swirled around this iconic event—a woman running in a men-only marathon—tends to diminish the athletic achievements of one of the world’s most renowned female runners. Kathrine went on to run Boston eight times, bettering her first time in 1967 of 4 hours 20 minutes down to 2 hours 51 minutes in 1975. At this time she was the third fastest American woman and sixth fastest in the world. Her 27-minute victory margin in the 1974 New York City Marathon remains the biggest margin of victory in the history of this race.

But back to the 1967 marathon. Kathrine entered as the gender neutral KV Switzer in order to receive a bib. Just two miles into the race, Jock Semple, the race co-director, spotted her from the press bus and attempted to rip off her number. Kathrine’s boyfriend, Thomas Miller, responded by knocking Semple to the ground, enabling her to continue. History was made, captured and the images that were reported around the world inspired a generation of women to take up running and believe they could do anything a man could do. However, it would be another five years before women were officially allowed to compete in the race. Kathrine’s destiny was set, but this race was only the first step. Her personal goal became to show women’s capability and in 1977 she created the Avon International Running Circuit, a global series of women’s races that became established in 27 countries and was pivotal in securing the women’s marathon into the Olympic Games for the first time in 1984.

Kathrine continues to fight for the empowerment of women globally through the 261 Fearless movement (261fearless.org)—the name is derived from her Boston Marathon number. This supportive social running network encourages women of any age, ability or background, to connect, embrace healthy living, and take control of their lives through the freedom gained by running.

In 2017, aged 70, Kathrine returned to run Boston wearing her iconic 261 bib number, to mark the 50th anniversary of her historic marathon. Unlike 1967, she did not run as a lone female. She was joined by over 13,700 women, almost half of the total runners. It was a testimony to her run in 1967, which went on to be the catalyst for global change.