

Paula Radcliffe
World Renowned Cross Country Runner

Paula Radcliffe is a British long-distance runner and current world record holder in the marathon with a time of 2:15.25. Radcliffe is one of the most celebrated long distance runners, holding numerous awards and titles including winner of the London Marathon, the New York Marathon and the Chicago Marathon, as well European Cross-Country Championships and World Cross-Country championships.

Radcliffe was first noticed in 1992 when she defeated Wang Junxia to win the World Junior Cross-Country title in Boston. She transitioned from junior to senior the following year, placing seventh at the 1993 World Championships at the age of 19. After suffering from a foot injury, Radcliffe came back to place fifth at the World Championships. The following year, she again placed fifth, this time at the 1998 Atlanta Olympic Games. Radcliffe went on to win the silver medal at the 1999 World Championships, missing out on the gold by a few seconds.

In April 2002, Radcliffe finished the London Marathon in 2:18.56, a women's world best, a European record, and the fastest ever debut over the 26 mile distance. At the Commonwealth Games that year, Radcliffe set a new British record at 14:31.42 for the 5000m on home soil. The following week at the European Championship, Radcliffe smashed the European record for the 10,000m. Radcliffe's last race that year was the Chicago Marathon where she beat the world record by 1 minute and 29 seconds. For her 2002 accomplishments, Radcliffe won the IAAF athlete of the Year and the BBC Sports Personality of the Year awards.

Radcliffe returned to London for her third marathon in 2003, where she set another world record in a staggering time of 2:15.25 (amazingly no British male eclipsed that mark in 2003). Radcliffe's world record is a time that no other woman has come within three minutes of.

Although Radcliffe was unable to compete in the 2004 Olympics due to injury, she won the New York Marathon that year, and went on to claim the 2005 London Marathon title. Radcliffe took a break in 2006 to deal with injuries and spend time with her family. She returned in 2007, winning the New York City marathon. A similar pattern occurred in 2008, where Radcliffe was forced to withdraw from the Beijing Olympics, however returned to win the 2008 New York City Marathon.

Through her unfaltering persistence and determination, Radcliffe has overcome obstacles and injury to experience unprecedented success as a woman cross country athlete. Radcliffe reveals the story behind her triumphs and trials in her book, *Paula: My Story So Far*. Over the course of her career, Paula Radcliffe has established herself as one of Britain's leading British athletes and one of the UK's most motivating speakers.

Radcliffe is married to her coach, Gary Lough, and has two children, Isla and Raphael.