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2002 Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team Announced

The 2002 Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team will travel to Innsbruck, Austria to compete in the WMRA World Mountain Running Trophy Race this September. The senior women will run a 9.2K uphill event on Saturday, September 14 and the senior men will race 11.7K uphill on Sunday, September 15. The women's team includes four athletes an alternate, and a manager with the top three finishers scoring for the team. Six athletes, an alternate, along with a manager represent the men's team with the top four finishers scoring. The alternates will run in the Open race, or should another athlete be unable to compete, in the Trophy race. The team was selected based on the following criteria:

- The first U.S. male and female finisher at the 5.8 mile Wolverine Hill Climb in Anchorage, AK (June 8) received automatic berths.
- The first U.S. male and female finisher at the 7.6 mile Mount Washington Road race (June 15) in Gorham NH received automatic berths.
- The first U.S. male and female finisher at the 7.5 mile Vail Hill Climb in Vail, CO (July 7) received automatic berths.

The remaining team members were selected by the ten-member USATF Mountain/Ultra /Trail (MUT) Running Council based on:

Prior world mountain running trophy performances

- International mountain results
- National mountain results
- Regional mountain results
- Trail, cross country, and road results

The athletes selected are among the finest mountain runners ever assembled for a US team. The runners are not only mountain specialists, but also excellent road and cross-country runners. The group includes: Olympic Trials qualifiers, National Champions, national class cross-country and trail runners, US 100K team members, top snowshoe racers, and a sub-four minute miler. A short bio on each athlete can be found below:

Open Men

Simon Gutierrez (NM) 36 is a physical therapist, he was an automatic qualifier based on his victory at the Mt Washington Hill Climb, he also won the Vail Hill climb. This will be Gutierrez's first time on the US Mountain running team. He has been a member of the USA National Cross Country team three times. Gutierrez was an Olympic trials qualifier in the marathon. He is a three-time winner of the La Luz mountain race. In 2000 he finished second overall in the Swedish Grand Prix Circuit. Simon finished fourth in 1999 and third in 1998 at the Mt Washington Hill Climb. He is a highly durable athlete, typically running the 4K and 12K at the cross-country nationals. He has PR's of 14:21 for 5K, 29:17 10K, 1:03:47 ½ marathon, and a 2:18:36 for the Marathon.

Eric Morse (VT) 37 is employed as a draftsman. Morse was an automatic qualifier based on his victory at the Wolverine Mountain Race, he also finished second at Mt. Washington. He has competed four times for the US Mountain Running Team having finished third US in '96 and second US in '97 and '00, and was unable to

attend in 2001 due to travel restrictions. Morse has been named Vermont runner of the year ten times and has won twelve USATF NE championships. Morse finished first at the USATF New England Mountain Circuit 1997, 1999, 2000-2002 and was the USATF NE Mountain running champion in 1998 & 1999. Eric was named the USATF Mountain Runner of the year in 2001. He has PR's of 3:59 in the mile, 14:17 5K, 29:20 10K and 1:03:50 for the half marathon.

Dave Dunham (MA) 38 works for the Treasury Department. Dunham finished second at the Wolverine race, and fifth at Mt Washington. Dave has competed on the USA Mountain running team ('92-96,'98, and '00). He was selected but injured in '97 and '99, and was unable to make the race in '01' due to travel restrictions. Dunham captured the silver medal at the Worlds in Gap France (1993), and was the top USA finisher in 1992-96, and '00 (2nd US in '98). He qualified for the Olympic Marathon Trials in 1992 and 2000. In 1996, Dunham founded the USATF NE mountain circuit, and then won the circuit in both 1996 and 1998 (runner-up in 1999, 2000, and 2001). Dunham was the 2000 USATF Mountain Runner of the year. The multi-talented athlete also represented the U.S. on the World 100K team and was the National Snowshoe champion in 2001 and the runner-up in 2002. In addition to being the Mountain representative at the New England Association (USATF), he serves on the National Mountain/Ultra/Trail Running Sports Council. Dave has PR's of 14:08 for 5K, 29:17 10K, 1:00:53 20K, 2:19:28 marathon, 2:57:36 50K, and 6:46:39 for 100K.

Paul Low (MA) 28 is currently studying at UMass Amherst working towards his M.S. in Geosciences (studying igneous petrology and tectonics). In 2002 he placed second at Vail and fourth at Mount Washington. In addition Paul set a course record in winning the Seven Sister's 12-Mile Trail Race and finished 7th in the USATF New England 10K championships (30:41). Paul was a US team member in 1999 and 2000 (2nd and 5th US finisher). He set a course record at the Mt Toby Trail Run and was 19th at the US National 25K championship (1:19:50) in 2001. In 2000 Low was the 2nd US finisher at Susa Italy, Kitzbuhel Austria, and Oberstaufen Germany and the top US finisher at the International Snowdon race in Wales (finishing 5th overall). He has PR's of 14:44 for 5K, 24:38 5 mile, 30:36 10K, 1:07:28 ½ marathon and 2:26:00 for the marathon.

Richard Shelley (NM) 40 works as a Quality Manager. He was the top US finisher at 1998 World trophy and 2nd US in 2000. Shelley is an uphill specialist who races sparingly. In 2002 he placed 8th at Mt Washington. In 2001 he was the 1st US finisher at Susa, Italy, Zermatt, Switzerland, and Kitzbuhel, Austria. Shelley also won the 2001 La Luz trail run. His PR's are 14:19 for 5K, and 29:56 for 10K. Richard will also be competing in the WMRA World Masters (40+ for men; 35+ for women) Mountain Running Championships in Innsbruck on September 21, the weekend following the World Trophy.

Dan Verrington (MA), 40 makes his living as a Cemetery Superintendent. He was selected to the team from 1994-1999, and 2001 and was the alternate on the 2000 team. Verrington has been one of the most consistent finishers for the team during that time. He was the second US finisher in 1994, third US in 1996 & 1998, fourth US in 1997, and fifth US in 1999, he was 2nd US finisher in 2001. He was 3rd overall in the 2000 Open race. Verrington won the USATF New England Mountain Running Championships in 2001. In 2002 he was the National 50K champion and was the 2nd US finisher on the World 100K team. Verrington lists his PR's of 5k 14:48, 10k 30:35, half marathon 1:05:32 and 2:21:10 in the marathon. Dan will also be competing in the WMRA World Masters Mountain Running Championships the week following the World Trophy.

Richard Bolt (NH) 31, has been selected to be the alternate. Bolt was the 3rd US finisher at the 1999 World trophy and at the Challenge Stellina. Bolt completed all three of the selection races, placing sixth at the Wolverine run, ninth at Mt Washington, and eleventh at Vail. He was the bronze medallist at the 2002 Snowshoe national championships. Bolt finished third at USATF NE mountain circuit in 2002 and 2000. He also competed in the US Olympic trials and was All-American for Nordic skiing and was on the 1997 World Duathlon Team. Richard has PR's of 4:19 for the mile, 14:49 5K, 24:48 5 Mile, and 31:06 for 10K. He has

fully recovered from a bout with Lyme disease in 2001.

Open Women:

Anita Ortiz (Eagle, CO) 38 is the only woman to earn an automatic berth on the team. Ortiz traveled to all three of the U.S. selection races winning the Alaska and Vail events and was the top American at Mt. Washington finishing second to last year's World Trophy runner-up Anna Pichrtova of the Czech Republic. Ortiz is the reigning North American Snowshoe Champion, and so far this year unbeatable on the trails. This will be Ortiz's first appearance on the U.S. team. She teaches kindergarten and has four active youngsters of her own.

Julie Bryan, (Jackson, WY) 34, is real estate specialist in her hometown of Jackson. Bryan was second US finisher at Mt. Washington (fifth overall), and just two weeks prior to the Vail event Bryan was injured when her truck topper shattered and severed tendons in her wrist. Bryan received the go-ahead from doctors to run easy at the Vail Hill Climb where she finished seventh. She is back to full training and setting her sights on a top finish at the World Trophy in Austria. This is Bryan's second appearance on the mountain running team. She finished a strong second for the U.S. in last year's competition in Arta Terme, Italy. Bryan, a former mountain and road cyclist new to mountain running in the past three years, holds course records at the Targhee Hill Climb and the Rendevous Hill Climb (both set in '99) in her home state.

Kari DiStefano, (Telluride, CO) 43, finished second to Ortiz at the Vail Hill Climb. She was the top U.S. finisher at last year's World Trophy placing 21st, the top finish by an American woman in the seven years of fielding a woman's team. In her home state in 2001, DiStefano posted wins at the Highline 15 Miler, the Arbor Day 10 Km Trail Race, her sixth win at the grueling Imogene Pass Run, third-place finish at the U.S. Fila SkyMarathon, and fourth at the North American Snowshoe Championships. She was the 2001 USATF Mountain Runner of the year and demonstrated equal tenacity on the roads by finishing second at the 2001 Big Sur Marathon. DiStefano has three children and works as a mapper for San Miguel County.

Nikki Kimball (Waterford, NY) 31 will make her first trip to the Worlds this year. She finished sixth at Mt. Washington just behind Bryan. Kimball earned a berth on her first U.S. Mountain Running team last year, but was unable to make the trip to Italy due to travel restrictions. Kimball has set course records this year at Mt. Kearsarge (8.5Mile Uphill), Whiteface Mountain (8 mile uphill), Northern Nipmuk 16 Mile, and won the Merrimack River 10 Mile. Like Dunham, Kimball represented the U.S. in the World 100K Challenge in 2001 and 2002. Kimball is an orthopedic physical therapist.

Suzy West, (Putney, VT) 39 makes her fourth U.S. team, this year as the alternate She participated in two of the US selection races finishing third at Wolverine Mountain and ninth at Mt. Washington. In 1999 she was the top U.S. finisher, fourth U.S. finisher in 2000, and although she was named to the team in 2001 travel restrictions forced her to remain in the U.S. West won the 2000 and 2001 New England Mountain Running Circuits. In 2002 West has been strong in Circuit placing second to Kimball at Kearsarge, second at Mount Wachusett, third at Pack Monadnock, and second at Mount Ascutney. West has a successful dental practice in Putney, VT.

A six-member U.S. junior squad will debut at the World Trophy on September 14 running a 3.3K course (junior women) and 9.2K course (junior men). The juniors were announced on June 2 and include Nicole Hodgson, 19, CA, Colorado athletes Jessica Pitzer, 16, Melissa Marts, 17, and Eduardo Pasko, 17, Matt Winter, 17, MT, and Trevor Hanlin, 16, OR. Jeff Adams, Colorado Springs, CO will serve as manager of the junior team.

Related Web Sites

www.alaskamountainrunners.org - Wolverine Mountain Run

www.gsr.com - Mount Washington Hill Climb

www.vailrec.com - Vail Hill Climb

www.tlv.at/worldtrophy2002 - World Mountain Running Trophy 2002

www.usatf.org - USA Track and Field

www.wmra.info - World Mountain Running Association

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