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ROBEL TEKLEMARIAM TO REPRESENT ETHIOPIA AGAIN IN UPCOMING VANCOUVER WINTER OLYMPICS

Four years ago, Ethiopia Ski Team's cross-country skier, Robel Teklemariam, made history when he entered Ethiopia into the Winter Olympics for the very first time. Still living the dream, Teklemariam is bound for Vancouver 2010, aiming to make Ethiopia a mainstay in the world of winter sports.

Richmond, VA – December 21, 2009 -- The year 2010 will mark two important Olympic moments for Ethiopia; the 50-year anniversary of Abebe Bikilia's legendary (barefoot, world-record setting) gold medal Marathon win in Rome, and Robel Teklemariam's return to the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada in February.

Bikila's historic moment not only inspired today's young Ethiopian champions of long distance running, but especially Teklemariam, a trailblazer for a field of sports that are non-traditional to Ethiopia, but would likely translate well for young Ethiopian athletes. Mr. Teklemariam has always stressed that his dream to participate in the Winter Olympics was mostly driven with interest in displaying his passion for the wonderful sport of cross-country skiing, hoping to spark interest among young Ethiopians worldwide.

“What I think this does for Ethiopia is it opens the road...if you really want to go to the Olympics in skiing, the avenue has been opened. Endurance sports are what Ethiopians are good at. I think if you get an Ethiopian started in cross-country skiing when he/she is young, maybe 8 or 9 years old, I really don't see any reason why they cannot be winning medals.” -Robel Teklemariam

With the Ethiopian Ski Association (ESA) established, ready to groom young Ethiopian skiers into competitive world-class athletes, the hopes of Teklemariam and ESA rest in his Olympic participation to bring about exposure to this young organization. ESA can only survive and achieve its goal through the continued support of individuals, businesses and organizations.

ESA strives to extend the tradition of Ethiopia's success into the winter games for years to come. Sponsorship opportunities, and online donations are available at www.ensf.org. For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Yoseph Teklemariam at yoseph@ensf.org

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