

Swiss Medal Hopeful Running for Rotary

Tadesse Abraham (31), a professional marathon runner, has been living in Switzerland for the past 10 years. The native Eritrean, a member of the track and field club Uster, is currently applying for his Swiss passport. Then he would be in the upcoming European Athletics Championship, held this year in Zurich, one of the few hopefuls for a Swiss medal. The two-time winner of the Zurich Marathon is supporting the charity run, run4change, of the Rotary Club Zurich Belvoir International.

Tadesse Abraham is married and lives with his wife Senait and his son Elod in Geneva. Not only the European Athletics Championship but also the charity run of Rotary Club Zurich Belvoir International – run4change – draws him to Zurich. Tadesse in an exclusive interview with Rotary Magazine:

Rotary Magazine:

Tadesse Abraham, how did you get involved with Rotary?

I have to honestly admit that I did not know Rotary before being asked to participate. As I looked into it, it became immediately clear that I would help. I am very impressed with Rotary's long and successful fight to combat polio, especially their many efforts in Africa. Here, Rotary has accomplished an amazing feat.

Rotary Magazin:

On April 26th you will actively support the second charity run, run4change of Rotary Club Belvoir International. Why?

I also come from a country where children are in many cases deprived and the health care system unfortunately does not function. The charity run, run4change benefits the St. Jude India ChildCare Centres in Mumbai. They offer children with cancer and their parents a clean and safe place to stay where they are cared for during their treatments. That earns my support, in my opinion – so I do what I can to contribute my share.

Rotary Magazine:

On April 26th, the 2nd Run4change charity run takes place. What can the runners expect when they come to the sports facilities at Sihlhölzli?

One is not expected to be a professional runner (laughs). Last year there were many motivated runners, who each wanted to contribute in their own way. Whether an ambitious sprinter or a relaxed hobby runner – it does not matter. It is about joining in! I will personally run a few rounds together with the runners and of course I will be on hand to offer tips about running. As a family man, I am naturally excited about getting as many families as possible involved. Last time there were babies in buggies as well as even a dog that made the rounds. The Rotary Club Zurich Belvoir International has once again put together a great program for all ages, I can only say that it is worth it to come by and participate!

Rotary Magazine:

Our last question – The run4change will not challenge you athletically – how does your competition program look this year? You have big goals, we have heard...

That's right, 2014 is a very important year for me. I will run the Zurich Marathon on April 6th and I hope to be a third-time winner and if possible break the Swiss marathon record. Then of course I hope that my application for citizenship is approved so I can run on August 17th in the European Athletics Championships for Switzerland. This would be my dream and to win a medal would be a once in a lifetime experience. These are big goals, but a proverb says: "Only with an impossible goal can you achieve what's possible."



The 2nd charity run, run4change, takes place on Saturday, April 26th 2014, at the sports facility Sihlhölzli. You can sign up until April 23rd 2014. More information found on the website: www.run4change.ch/en

Charity Run for Children with Cancer

Every year, children, along with their families, travel to large Indian cities from distant towns and villages, in the hope of being cured of cancer, without knowing what awaits them. Though they receive the cancer treatment free of charge, they often have no place to live and end up sleeping on the footpaths outside the hospital, in terribly unhygienic conditions. Under these conditions, the chances for a successful recovery from cancer decrease drastically, even with optimal medical treatment. Often it is a matter of sheer survival.

The non-profit organization St. Jude India ChildCare Centres (www.stjudechild.org) provides free of cost housing for these children and their parents along with free nutritional support, transportation to the hospital, and counseling services – a "home away from home". Since the organization began, over 2'000 children and their parents have received this much needed support.

When supporting our charity run as a runner or a sponsor every franc you donate goes 100% directly to St. Jude's ChildCare Centres.