

NEWS

Contacts:

Lauren Loeb 212.423.2271 | lloeb@nyrr.org
Media Relations Department, New York Road Runners
Drea Braxmeier 212.423.2287 | dbraxmeier@nyrr.org
Media Relations Department, New York Road Runners

For Immediate Release

U.S. Men’s Olympic Marathon Team—Meb Keflezighi, Ryan Hall, and Abdi Abdirahman—to Compete at UAE Healthy Kidney 10K on May 12

Powerhouse trio will chase \$25,000 first-place prize—the largest of any 10K in the world—in pre-London matchup

New York, April 3, 2012—In an unprecedented gathering of the entire U.S. Men’s Olympic Marathon team prior to the Olympic Games, Meb Keflezighi, Ryan Hall and Abdi Abdirahman will run the UAE Healthy Kidney 10K on Saturday, May 12, it was announced today by New York Road Runners president and CEO Mary Wittenberg.

Keflezighi won the U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials in Houston on January 14, finishing in a personal-best time of 2:09:08. Hall, the defending Olympic Trials champion, finished second in 2:09:30. Abdirahman secured the third and final Olympic qualifying spot in 2:09:47, his fastest marathon since 2006. All three will be chasing a \$25,000 first-place prize at the UAE Healthy Kidney 10K, the largest winner’s purse in any 10K race in the world.

“We’re thrilled to welcome three of America’s finest long-distance runners and perennial New York favorites to the eighth annual UAE Healthy Kidney 10K,” said Wittenberg. “It’s the first time NYRR will host a complete Olympic men’s marathon team prior to the Games, and we couldn’t be more excited to be a part of this talented trio’s road to London.”

After winning the marathon Trials earlier this year, Keflezighi, 36, of Mammoth Lakes, CA, was the top American in the NYC Half in March, placing 13th in 1:01:41. In 2009, he became the first American since Alberto Salazar in 1982 to win the New York City Marathon. He has finished in the top 10 in the ING New York City Marathon a total of six times, most recently with a sixth-place finish in 2011. A silver medalist in the marathon at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Keflezighi is a three-time USA cross country champion (2001, 2002, 2009) and has won more than 20 USA titles in his career. This is his second appearance at the UAE Healthy Kidney 10K, having finished third in 2005, the race’s inaugural year.

“I love to compete in New York City,” said Keflezighi. “I am excited to once again be a part of the elite field for the UAE Healthy Kidney 10K. This race has become one of the premier 10K events in the world. NYRR always does a great job of assembling great American and international fields. It will be nice to participate in this event with my U.S. Olympic teammates, Ryan and Abdi.”

Hall, 29, of Big Bear Lake, CA, qualified for his second Olympic Games at this year's marathon Trials. He won the 2008 Trials in New York City in November 2007 and went on to finish 10th in Beijing. In 2011, Hall ran the fastest marathon ever by an American at the Boston Marathon, finishing fourth in 2:04:58. He is the only American to have broken the one-hour barrier in the half-marathon, which he did by running 59:43 to win the 2007 Houston Half-Marathon. In addition to the Olympic Trials, Hall found success in New York when he won the 2006 USA Cross Country Championships 12K, and also in his first appearance in the NYC Half in 2009, when he finished third.

"Anytime I get the chance to race in New York City I get excited," said Hall. "The added bonus of racing my first race in my buildup to the Olympic Marathon, and the fact that it will be the first time Meb, Abdi, and I have raced together since the Olympic Marathon Trials, puts my excitement through the roof. I've followed the UAE Healthy Kidney 10K results every year and looked forward to the year when I could run it myself. The road to London starts here."

Abdirahman, 35, of Tucson, AZ, became a four-time Olympian by finishing third in the marathon Trials earlier this year. He is also a four-time USA 10,000-meter champion (2001, 2005, 2007, 2008). Abdirahman ran the NYC Half 2007 in 1:00:29, which is currently the third-fastest half-marathon ever run by an American. He finished second behind Haile Gebrselassie's course record. He finished fifth in 2:11:24 at the ING New York City Marathon 2005. Abdirahman has earned 13 USA Championships at 10,000 meters, 10K, 10 miles, and 20K. This is his fourth appearance at the UAE Healthy Kidney 10K.

"I'm excited to come back to New York for the UAE Healthy Kidney 10K," said Abdirahman. "It's a great event and it supports a great cause. I'm looking forward to seeing my Olympic teammates Meb and Ryan; running against them always brings out the best in me."

The eighth annual UAE Healthy Kidney 10K offers something for everyone—thrilling performances from some of the world's top athletes, a fast course for runners chasing personal records, a great cause to inspire them all, and fantastic giveaways including a technical shirt for every registered entrant and exciting raffle prizes. Held over Central Park's rolling hills, the race is sponsored by the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates and will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 12, on Central Park's West Drive near 62nd Street. For more race details, please visit <http://www.nyrr.org/run-with-us/uae-healthy-kidney-10k>.

About NYRR

New York Road Runners was founded in 1958 when a small group of passionate runners vowed to bring running to the people. Over the past 53 years, NYRR has grown from a local running club to the world's premier community running organization. NYRR's mission is to empower everyone, of all ages and abilities—beginners and competitive athletes, the young and the elderly, adult professionals and underserved schoolchildren—to improve their health and well-being through the power of running and fitness.

NYRR's races, community events, instruction and training resources, and youth programs give hundreds of thousands of people each year the motivation, know-how, and opportunity to start running and keep running for life. NYRR's premier event, the famed ING New York City Marathon, attracts the world's top pro runners and committed amateurs alike while also raising millions of dollars annually for charity and driving economic impact for the City. But NYRR is equally committed to the runners of tomorrow, passionately providing youth fitness programs that educate and inspire more than 100,000 kids in underserved communities in New York City, all 50 states, and around the world.

Headquartered in New York City, NYRR implements a unique nonprofit model that teams contributed and earned income to make all its efforts possible. To learn more, please visit www.nyrr.org.

About United Arab Emirates Embassy

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Embassy in Washington, DC sponsors the annual “Healthy Kidney 10K Run” in New York City’s Central Park. The race brings together an international field of professional and amateur runners. Last year over 10,000 people participated in the race, which benefitted the National Kidney Foundation, including top-ranked professional runners and a delegation of athletes from the UAE. The race is organized by the New York Road Runners in cooperation with the UAE Embassy and held in honor of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the first President of the UAE. Sheikh Zayed was treated for kidney disease in the United States, and benefited from the expertise, knowledge and professionalism of US institutions and doctors. In this regard, the Healthy Kidney 10K race highlights two key UAE government initiatives: sports and health. Officials from the UAE Embassy, the UAE Permanent Mission to the United Nations and the UAE Armed Forces Officers’ Club attend the event, serving as honorary race starters, and congratulating the top finishers.

The UAE Embassy is honored to be a part of this important event, and to help raise awareness of kidney disease. Through the continued efforts of the National Kidney Foundation, people around the world are being educated on the importance of prevention and treatment options. The Healthy Kidney 10K honors those efforts, and also serves as a tribute to American excellence in kidney transplantation.