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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Four Earn Spots on Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team Today

Vail, CO ----- The final selection race for the 2008 Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team was held today at the LaSportiva Berry Picker Trail Race in Vail, CO. Four runners were named to the team including Simon Gutierrez, 42, Alamosa, who made his seventh straight team with his win today.

"I'm happy," said Gutierrez, "It was one of my major goals this year to make the team; my next is a good result at the World Trophy."

Gutierrez plans to race uphill courses every two weeks leading up to the World Trophy which will be held in Sierre Crans-Montana, Switzerland on September 14. One of those races will include the World Mountain Running Masters Championships in the Czech Republic to be held one week before the Trophy. Gutierrez is the two-time defending masters' world champion and has his sights set on a third masters' title.

Gutierrez was timed in 38:15 over this challenging course which was primarily on single track trail and gained more than 2,000 feet of elevation in 4.6 miles. Second and third place went to sea-level runners Matthew Byrne, 33, Scranton, PA, who ran 39:05 and Shiloh Mielke, 28, Weaverville, NC, timed in 39:57.

Gutierrez will join teammates who secured spots at the first and only other mountain team selection race on June 21, the Mount Washington Road Race. Those athletes are Eric Blake, 29, New Britain, CT, Joe Gray, 24, Lakewood, WA, and Rickey Gates, 27, Boulder, CO. Both Byrne and Mielke are strong contenders for the final at-large spots on the men's six-member squad.

Megan Kimmel, 28, Silverton, CO, bested a packed women's field to earn a spot on her first mountain team. Kimmel, who lives and trains above 8,000 feet is no stranger to altitude, but is still a newcomer to the sport. She ran her first mountain race in Steamboat Springs last month where she finished second to Laura Haefeli, 40, Del Norte, CO. Today the finish places were reversed with Kimmel winning in 45:58 followed by Haefeli in 46:39.

"I'm really excited and very surprised," said Kimmel about her finish. "My goal today was to just come out and run. I didn't know what to expect – there were a lot of good runners here. Looking toward the race in Switzerland I don't feel pressure. I'm just really, really excited to go and run with the world's best ladies. It's exciting to go international."

Haefeli, with her runner-up finish, will be on her fourth mountain team. "I'm psyched," said Haefeli, "I feel awesome and my training is going well. I'm going to take a little break now, and then get ready for Switzerland. I think the U.S. team needs to go for the gold again (the women's team won gold the past two years with Haefeli leading the way in 2007 with a bronze-medal individual finish). I want to go for a medal too. I certainly hope for a top 10 (finish)."

Rounding out the top three spots for the women was Brandy Erholtz, 30, Bailey, CO, who finished in 47:25. Erholtz clinched her spot on the team with a win at Mt. Washington. When asked about how the team is shaping up Erholtz commented, "I feel we're going to have a really strong team. I feel like we'll have a good chance for medals."

There is still one at-large spot for the women's four-member squad. Women who finished in the top spots at the Berry Picker and Mount Washington will be considered for that spot.

This was the first year in the six-year history of the junior team that an athlete has earned a spot on the team at a selection race. Typically all of the juniors (four men and three women) are selected based on their running resumes. Paul Petersen, 16, Broomfield, CO, earned his junior team spot today with a 44:42 finish time edging out two-time junior member Jonny Stevens, 18, Vail, CO, by one minute for the win.

"I feel awesome," said a very enthusiastic Petersen. "It's a really cool opportunity to run the first year I'm able to (juniors must be at least 16 in the year of competition and not yet 20). My goal today was to win the race. At the beginning, I was right with Jonny until about 1/3 of the way through the course. I passed him and then kept my lead." Petersen was also the junior champion at last month's USA 8 km Trail Championships in Steamboat Springs, CO.

At the World Trophy, the junior men, like the senior women, will run an eight kilometer course. The junior women run approximately 4.5 kilometers, and the senior men run approximately 12 kilometers. Like the Berry Picker, the World Trophy Course is an entirely uphill event. In odd-numbered years the World Trophy is held on an up/down course.



L-R: women's team manager Ellen Miller, Gutierrez, Petersen, Kimmel, Haefeli, Erholtz

Sponsors of the 2008 Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team include title sponsor Teva, the official footwear of the team since 2002, SportHill is the official apparel sponsor providing team uniforms, OrthoLite Insoles, the world's leading supplier of open cell foam insoles in the performance and footwear category is the official insole, Fleet Feet Sports Boulder, the official specialty running store, Windermere of Teton Valley, the official real estate company, Wicked Fast Sports Nutrition, Wicked Fast sports nutrition, the official dietary supplements for pre-exercise energy/endurance (Energ-Ease) and post-exercise recovery (Recover-Ease), and product sponsors FuelBelt, Inc. (hydration products), Costa Del Mar (performance sunglasses), and *Youth Runner* magazine.

For additional information visit the websites listed below:

- USA Mountain Running Championships www.mountwashingtonroadrace.com
- Berry Picker Selection Race www.vailrec.com
- USA Track & Field www.usatf.org
- World Mountain Trophy 2008 www.wmrt2008.org/pages/fr/
- American Trail Running Association www.trailrunner.com
- Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team www.usmrt.com
- Teva www.teva.com
- SportHill Clothing www.sporthill.com
- Windermere www.juliebryan.mywindermere.com
- Fleet Feet Sports-Boulder www.fleetfeetboulder.com
- Wicked Fast Sports Nutrition www.recover-ease.com
- OrthoLite www.ortholitefoam.com
- Costa Del Mar www.costadelmar.com
- Fuel Belt www.fuelbelt.com
- Youth Runner www.youthrunner.com