

Date: 7/16/07 Revised Date:
Client: Jay Wind
Graphic Name: W&OD Race
Graphic #:0286_SP & 0287_SP
Screenprint Fusion
SP PMS Colors: Black
*pms supplied by customer
Shirt Colors: White
Number Shirts: 210
Email approval to: artstaff@r9dg.com and
owen@sportscienceusa.com
Approved by:
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0287_SP



Abebe Bikila Day
International Peace Half Marathon
Monday, September 3, 2007
Belle Haven Park on the Potomac River, Alexandria VA

This race is conducted in memory of a man who changed the world. Born in Mout, Ethiopia, Aug. 7 ~ the day of the 1932 Los Angeles Olympic Marathon. At 28, he ran the 1960 Rome Olympic Marathon barefooted. He and his coach decided that he would make his move 1k from the finish line.

where the course passed the Obelisk of Axum, a monument plundered from Ethiopia by Italian troops in 1935 and taken to Rome. When Bikila reached the obelisk, he pulled away from Rhadi Ben Abdesselem of Morocco and won by 15:16.2. His victory made him a national hero and inspired athletes throughout Africa and around the world. Bikila returned to the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Marathon- this time running in socks & shoes. He took the lead by the halfway mark won by more than 4 minutes, in 2:12:11.2, a world best for the marathon and a first for two Olympic marathon wins. Instead of a victory lap in the Olympic Stadium, he performed jumping jacks and other exercises immediately after his race while other runners crossed the finish line. At the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Marathon, Bikila tried for a third win, but affected by the heat and altitude, he dropped out after 17k, instead cheering on his countryman Mamo Wolde to victory. In 1969, a car crash near Addis Ababa left Bikila paralyzed from the waist down. As a wheelchair athlete, he won gold medals in 1970 at 10K and 25K cross-country sledge competitions in Norway. Bikila died in Addis Ababa on October 25, 1973.

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to benefit



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~ Association for India's Development ~
~ Girls on the Run of Montgomery County ~
~ Big Brothers Big Sisters of the National Capitol Area ~
~ Stop the Silence ~

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