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TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon
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Is Mulugeta Uma the Next Great Ethiopian Marathoner By Paul Gains

Ethiopia has been blessed with exceptional marathon talent beginning with 1960 Olympic champion Abebe Bikila and continuing on to the present. There are always prospects waiting to emerge. Among the most exciting newcomers is Mulugeta Uma.

Canadian marathon fans will have the chance to witness his prowess when he lines up for the 2024 TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, October 20th, as one of the favourites in this World Athletics Elite Label Race.

Earlier this year the 26-year-old won the Paris Marathon with a new personal best of 2:05:33 but nearly didn't make it to start line. Like most runners he suffered nerves in the days leading up to his excellent performance likely due to travel but also due to his new professional circumstances.

"I was stressed," he admits. "It was my first race under Moyo Sports Management and my new sponsor Asics. Thus I had had to run carefully.

"I was drinking plenty of water, I was determined to finish. When I reached 25 km I felt better and I was thinking of making the podium. After 35 km I was confident I would win the race. I won the race with a new personal best. Jesus, my Lord, helped me for glory."

Few people knew that on the evening before the race he and his management huddled together to decide whether he should even start the race due to his upset stomach. They were glad he persevered. The victory earned him \$55,000 USD.

Although he is now a world-class marathoner, Mulugeta began his athletics career as a 1,500m runner earning silver medals for his country in both the 2014 Youth Olympics in Nanjing, China and in the 2015 World Youth Championships in Cali, Colombia. But injuries from training in spiked shoes halted his progress.

Over the following five years the problems with his achilles tendon persisted, hence the decision to take up road racing.

Last year he finished 7th in the Seville Marathon finishing in a time of 2:06:07. He followed that up with a second-place finish in Frankfurt last October 29th. His time on that occasion was 2:06:47. Together with his Paris victory that makes an impressive triple over a fourteen-month period. It is safe to say most marathoners would be happy with even one of those results.

Mulugeta grew up on a farm in Wolisa about 100 kilometres southwest of Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa before joining a club in the city. Asked what he would be doing if not for his running career he is quite emphatic.

"I'd be a farmer, because I am the only son in the family," he explains. "My parents do farming for a living."

Mulugeta and his wife have no children. Between training sessions he says he enjoys time with his wife and friends and also listening to spiritual songs. He believes he has a good future in marathon running.

"As with any world-class athlete I want to run a fast time and win big competitions like the World Championships and Olympics," he declares.

For now, his training and his mental focus is set on performing well at the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon. This will mark his first time in North America. Ten weeks before the journey he admits he has not studied the Toronto race in detail though he is confident of another great performance.

"I don't know anything (about it). I only know that the course record is 2:05," he offers. "With God's help I want to break the course record and win the race."

About the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon

The TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon is Canada's premier running event and the grand finale of the Canada Running Series (CRS). Since 2017, the race has served as the Athletics Canada national marathon championship race and has doubled as the Olympic trials. Using innovation and organization as guiding principles, Canada Running Series stages great experiences for runners of all levels, from Canadian Olympians to recreational and charity runners. With a mission of "building community through the sport of running," CRS is committed to making sport part of sustainable communities and the city-building process.

To learn more about the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, visit www.torontowaterfrontmarathon.com.

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As part of the Tata group, India's largest multinational business group, TCS has over 601,000 of the world's best-trained consultants in 55 countries. The company generated consolidated revenues of US \$29 billion in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024, and is listed on the BSE and NSE in India. TCS' proactive stance on climate change and award-winning work with communities across the world have earned it a place in leading sustainability indices such as the mSCI Global Sustainability Index and the FTSE4Good Emerging Index.

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