

ATHLETICS BRIEFLY

LAUSANNE

LASHAWN DOESN'T MERRITT OLYMPIC TICKET, SAYS IOC

World 400 metres champion LaShawn Merritt will not be able to defend his Olympic 400 metres title at the London Games next year after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) refused to back down from its new tough anti-doping stance. The IOC's ruling Executive Board and Athletes' Commission threw their weight behind the rule, which bars any athlete with a doping suspension of at least six months from competing in the next Olympics.

As title defender from Berlin, he will have the wild card for Daegu World Championships this year. On the other side, while United States Track and Field asks wild card holders to compete at national championships, Merritt's ban ends after the trials in July. Merritt will, however, still be invited to top European meetings and could compete on the circuit.

DUSSELDORF

KENYAN STARS TO BURN TARTAN AT INDOOR MEET

Steeplechase specialist Paul Kipsiele Koech returns for Sixth PSD Bank Meeting in Dusseldorf, Germany, to run the 5,000m. Last year he clocked impressive 13:02.95.

He will clash in the February 11 race with US Galen Rupp and Italian European Championships (Barcelona) medalist Daniele Meucci.

Very fast times could also be recorded in the 1,500m race with Kenyans William Biwott, Geoffrey Rono, Augustine Choge, Nixon Chepseba coming up against arch-rival Ethiopian Gebremhadin Mekonnen, a twice World Indoor Championships finalist.

KINGSTON

BOLT'S BUSINESS EMPIRE RISING UP FAST IN JAMAICA

The world's fastest man, Usain Bolt, has visited his latest business project which is underway at Marketplace in Kingston, Jamaica.

The partnership is a \$1 million (Sh80 million) investment - a unique business and dynamic entertainment partnership between Bolt's UB Brand and the KLE Brand. The partnership will see the roll-out of a series of high-end sports bar products called 'Usain Bolt's Tracks & Records', which will have its flagship in Kingston, but with branches in London as well as other regional territories and in North America.

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Cover photo: Former journalist and athlete, Toby Tanser, at the Indian Ocean in Mombasa before he embarked on his marathon run from the ocean to the top of Mt Kilimanjaro last November. **Photo/COURTESY**

RUNNING FOR CHARITY» FORMER JOURNALIST AND ATHLETE'S ULTRA-MARATHON RUN FROM MOMBASA

From the sea to the stars:

He knew that he wanted to start a landmark project in 2011, building the largest public children's hospital in Africa, yet he also knew he would be short of the million dollars needed to break ground in Eldoret

BY NATION REPORTER

Daniel Komen, a living legend and the current world record holder at 3,000 metres and two miles, has achieved what no other man has on this globe, in the running world - being the only man alive to run two miles in under eight minutes.

Yet, there was one race he wished he had ran: "I wanted to go on that journey. I wanted to run 'from the Sea to the Stars' with Toby, up the mountain."

Two-time New York Marathon Champion, German Silva of Mexico, was another: "The next time you do something crazy, Toby, let me know. I'm coming!"

It was an event that captured the imagination: A run from Africa's very shoreline to its highest ceiling.

At the start of 2010, Toby Tanser, the CEO-Founder-Staff of Shoe4Africa, and one of the directors for the New York Road Runners, who organise the New York Marathon, looked at the financial books of his small charity.

World record attempt

He knew that he wanted to start a landmark project in 2011: building the largest public children's hospital in Africa, yet he also knew he would be approximately \$100,000 (Sh8 million) short of the one million dollars (Sh80 million) deemed the amount needed to break ground in Eldoret.

"I recognized that I must do something unique, never done before, to be able to fund-raise for such a huge amount," he said in an interview with *Monday Sport* last week.

"Ten years ago I was attacked on the African coast, and with a smashed skull, I had run to save my own life, looking for medical care.

"This time, I thought 'let me go back and this time run for the children of Kenya,' symbolically ending the run on the top of Africa's roof, to touch the stars."

Tanser's route would be a world



Shoe4Africa ambassador Cristiano Ronaldo autographs his Manchester United playing jersey for Kenyan fans in this 2009 file picture; Above, right: former journalist and athlete, Toby Tanser, celebrates after reaching the top of Mt Kilimanjaro; Right: Tanser with the shoes he collects in USA and Europe to distribute to underprivileged Kenyans. Photos/File & Courtesy.



record attempt, to get from absolute sea level to the top of the world's highest free-standing mountain, running on foot, from one Sunday to the next.

Most people take an entire week to just climb to Kilimanjaro's 5,895-metre Uhuru peak.

In fact, it is difficult to find a guide who will agree to take you up faster than a week due to safety issues, yet Tanser would try to run 400km from the coastline, through the streets of Mombasa, across the scorching Taru desert, past the town of Voi, over the rolling Taita Hills, through the Tsavo Game Park, into Tanzania, and up the mountain!

"When I was an athlete I liked best the 5,000m distance," said Tanser, who used to train in Ngong town with a group of Kenya's best distance runners in the '90's, the likes of Paul Tergat, Sammy Korir, William Sigei, Eric Kimaiyo, Simon Biwott and Paul Bitok.

"I hated anything to do with the word 'Ultra' when used in conjunction with running. The longest I ever ran was a marathon, which I found

way too long, and here I was planning to run 65 kilometres a day for a week, so of course it was a challenge to me. Could I do it? Could my body handle it?, I wondered.

"Then also, 99 percent of all people I talked to were telling me 'you can't run up Kilimanjaro, it is impossible, you need to acclimatise day by day. People have died trying to climb up too fast."

"It is true, but I knew if I did not make this an intimidating challenge, people would not sponsor me to attempt this run. For the kids I just had to do it, I had to get to one million - my mantra became 'refusing limits'."

On November 21, 2010, with the soles of his shoes wet in the turquoise Indian Ocean, Tanser started running.

Mohammed Said, a tour guide from Mombasa, drove a vehicle to give Tanser water as he ran through the insufferable coastal weather mixed with the heavy choking fumes of the lorries and trucks that pepper the roads.

"He's my hero, he did it, it was not

It is not easy to run from Mombasa to the top of Kilimanjaro, says world champ

"I thought Toby's run was amazing. He didn't do it to be the best or anything. He did it to help charity. So all the pain, all the hard work is to just help other people. It is just such an amazing thing to do that. A very long journey and very impressive." Mo Farrah, Great Britain's double European Champion, who has been training in Iten, says on Tanser's run

"from the sea to the stars."

"He gave us kits that I used for a good three years," adds Simon Biwott, Kenya's World Championships marathon silver medalist and winner of the Berlin, Rotterdam and Paris marathons.

"We thought he was a blessing to Kenya. Then, to get kits and from a white man was very special. That was encour-

agement to me then as I did not have (any running gear)."

"It is not an easy thing to do, you know, to run from Mombasa to the top of the Kilimanjaro. That's why no one has done it before," remarked Sylvia Kibet, Kenya's World Championships silver medalist in the 5,000 metres.

- Nation Correspondent