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MEDIA ALERT

TRACK LEGEND AND KEEP LA RUNNING SPOKESPERSON ZOLA BUDD PIETERSE TO APPEAR AT L.A. MARATHON

Who: Track legend Zola Budd Pieterse, the official spokesperson for the 2010 charity Keep LA Running 5K Run/Walk, 10K Run at 10/20 Mile Fun Bike Cruise, will appear at the KLAR booth at the LA Marathon Expo.

When: This Saturday, March 20, 9 am – 11:30 am

Where: LA Marathon Expo, Dodger Stadium, keep LA Running Booth

Activities: Budd Pieterse will give running tips, pose for photos, and sign a few autographs for the marathon runners/Expo attendees

Why: Zola Budd will be at the LA Marathon Expo to meet and greet runners in the LA Marathon and to promote the 17th annual Keep LA Running charity 5K Run/Walk, 10K Run, and Fun Bike Cruise set for July 11 at Dockweiler Beach in Playa del Rey.

WHAT PEOPLE REMEMBER ABOUT BUDD

- *1984 Collision With Mary Decker in Olympic 3000 Final Made her Track's "Villain"*

Zola Budd (married Pieterse), was only 18 years old in 1984 when she unwillingly caused one of the biggest dramas of the Los Angeles Olympics.

Born in South Africa in 1966, Zola revealed phenomenal talent at young age, breaking the world record in the 5000 meters before turning 18. Since her performance took place in apartheid South Africa, her record (15:01.83) wasn't recognized. Taking

advantage of the fact that her father was British, Zola applied for a British passport in order to compete in the LA Olympics.

The buildup for the 3000 final was unprecedented, as American record holder Mary Decker (Slaney) had won both the 1500 and the 3000 meters at the 1983 inaugural World Championships in Helsinki. In all the hoopla around the anticipated Mary vs Zola duel, nobody seemed to notice that veteran Romanian Maricica Puica had ran the fastest 3000 meter of the year.

Zola's barefoot running and her lack of experience, along with Decker's inability to handle running in tight packs led to catastrophe. When Budd took the lead just past midpoint and, somewhat abruptly cut in front of Decker, the American bumped her twice then crashed on the infield, unable to resume the race. Booed by the packed Coliseum and herself shocked by what had happened, Zola faded to 7th place, while Puica ran away to win the gold. After the race, a IAAF jury found the Budd was not responsible for the collision, but for the American public Zola would unjustly remain "the villain" forever.

Zola Budd Pieterse joins other track luminaries who have served as spokespersons for Keep LA Running – Carl Lewis, Billy Mills, Frank Shorter, Joan Benoit Samuelson, Mary Decker, Henry Rono, Steve Scott, Johnny Gray, Louie Zamperini.

Keep LA. Running, which has grown into one of the most popular distance running events in Southern California, has raised over \$800,000 for its beneficiary charities. Keep LA Running is a very special event, benefiting children with cancer, premature born babies and other worthy causes. For more information visit www.keeplarunning.com

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