



Running to make a difference

Miyachi will race in Las Vegas to help raise money for disaster victims

April 6, 2011 – As one of the top trail runners in Japan, Fujio Miyachi is trying to lead the way for some of his fellow countrymen in need.

Miyachi will enter the XTERRA Lake Las Vegas Trail Run on Saturday, April 9, at Henderson, Nev. One of his goals is to win the race – and he is considered a solid contender.

But his main goal is to raise money for victims of the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan on March 11. Miyachi resides in Minatoku, Tokyo, Japan, which is about 150 miles from the main area of destruction, so he and his immediate family were safe. However, he said he has friends and relatives who live closer to the disaster area.

“Some of their houses were severely damaged by the earthquake, and some are completely gone (because of) the tsunami,” he said.

After the disaster hit, Miyachi was not sure if he wanted to travel to his scheduled races. But after receiving clearance from race officials that he could set aside a donation box at the Lake Las Vegas race, he started making his travel plans.

“Finally, I decided to go to Las Vegas to run in order to encourage my friends and other people at affected areas,” he said. “I believe that the Japanese people will overcome the difficult situation. But I also believe the support of the people around the world will definitely give strong power to our Japanese people who have been severely affected by the disaster.”

The XTERRA Lake Las Vegas Trail Run is a 21-kilometer race that will take place on a desert trail near Lake Las Vegas in Henderson. More than 200 trail runners from around the world are expected to participate. Miyachi, 32, is one of several elite runners in the field. He finished in the top 10 of the XTERRA Trail Run World Championship in both 2009 and 2010.

A donation box will be set up at the registration area on race day, and anyone – participants or spectators – can make a cash donation. Money raised will be sent to Civic Force, which is a non-profit organization in Japan that provides emergency services for victims of disasters.

Entries for the race are still being accepted, and it is open to runners of all ages and skill levels. In addition to the 21-kilometer championship course, there will also be separate 10-kilometer and 5-kilometer courses.

For entry information, please visit <http://www.xterraplanet.com/xduro/lakelasvegas.html>.

