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Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team Member Wins America's Uphill

Aspen, CO ---- Three-time Teva US Mountain Running Team member Anita Ortiz showed her continued strength in Colorado's snowshoe race circuit by winning today's America's Uphill, a 2.5 mile continuous uphill route climbing 3,267 feet from start at the base of Aspen Mountain to finish at the summit, elevation 11,212 feet. Ortiz dominated the snowshoe category in an unofficial time just under 50 minutes besting last year's time of 50:02 and earning sixth place overall. LaSportiva-GoLite Running team member Bernie Boettcher, 41, Silt, CO was the men's Uphill champion.



There are several competitive categories in America's Uphill including snowshoes (not stabilicers; shoe must measure at least 20" in length for age 12+), track skis (lightweight skating/diagonal gear), telemark (full metal edged skis with a 3-pin or cable binding), and heavy metal (alpine skis, randonee bindings, plastic boots).

Ortiz, 40, Eagle, CO recently won the North American Snowshoe Championships on March 5 outdistancing her nearest competitor by nearly two minutes over a challenging 10km course in Beaver Creek, CO. "I was pleased with my time today and also with my effort. Most people ran slower this year due to the snow conditions and I shaved a few seconds off last year's time. I'm very happy with my result this year," said Ortiz.

Ortiz has been cross training this winter to prepare for the upcoming mountain race season. She plans to represent team USA at the inaugural Japan Challenger's 10Km race in the Okutama Mountains outside Tokyo on April 30. Ortiz will then race at the first Teva US Mountain Running Team Selection race, the Gore-Tex USA 10km National Trail Running Champs on June 4 in Vail, CO followed by Mount Washington Hill Climb in Gorham, NH on June 18.

Ortiz is sponsored by Teva footwear, 180s Innovative Sportswear, CWX, Beaver Creek Resorts, Power Bar, and Northern Lites Snowshoes. She is a graduate of Colorado State University and received her Master in Education at Florida State with an impressive 4.0 average. Married to Mike Ortiz, Director of the Vail Resort District, the couple is raising their four children Amelia age 12, Amanda age 10, and twins David and Acacia age 8. Ortiz is the Media Specialist at Eagle Elementary School.

This year's America's Uphill was dedicated to the memory of Jeremy Wright, the 2000 and 2001 winner of the race. Wright was tragically killed on January 3, 2005 while serving in Afghanistan as a member of the US Army Special Forces. His running accomplishments included being a two-time All-American cross-country runner and a three-time member of the U.S. Mountain Running Team. He also earned many military awards including the Purple Heart, the National Defense Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Parachutist Badge. He was a tremendous athlete and an inspiration to many. He will be missed.

Complete results from today's event will be available at www.utemountaineer.com.

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Websites of interest:

www.cerritos.edu/lgersitz/MUT/Home.html - USATF Mountain Ultra Trail Running Council
www.wmra.info - World Mountain Running Association
www.trailrunner.com – All American Trail Running Association