

# CHATTING TO WILSON KIPKETER

**K**enyan-born **Wilson Kipketer**, 34, moved to Denmark in the early 1990s. He dominated the 800m distance for more than a decade, won silver and bronze at the 2000 and 2004 Olympics respectively and remains the world record holder at the indoor and outdoor 800 metres as well as the indoor 1000 metres. After 11 years at the top level, having run his best from 1994 to 2004, he retired from competitive athletics in August 2005.

Kipketer and his Danish wife, **Pernille**, have two sons aged one year and four years. The family has homes in Kenya, Denmark and Monaco. **Kipketer** is soft-spoken, friendly and humble.

I had a chance to meet with and ask Wilson a few questions while attending the Barcelona Marathon.

Q: Do you miss competitive running?

A: No, I'm now enjoying quality time with my family. It's good to be realistic – I reached a point when I recognised the time to quit.

Q: Are you sad you never won an Olympic gold medal?

A: No. In 1996, it was my ambition to win at the Olympics, but I wasn't allowed to compete for Denmark. Four years later I won everything. But I got sick three weeks before the Olympics, so was happy with getting silver there.

Q: What advice can you give to aspiring athletes?

A: Do things step by step, nothing happens overnight. Secondly, every athlete needs a good coach. Thirdly, never have a negative attitude, you have to think positively!

Q: What do you do now?

A: I'm consulting for young athletes in Denmark. It's all about technique.

Q: Do you still run?

A: No, not much. Maybe once a week.

Q: So how do you stay in shape?

A: You can't eat the way you did when you were training hard. Everything in moderation.

Q: What's the best memory of your competitive running years?

A: I have so many great memories about running and life! I experienced so much competing and going from one country to another.

*Sue Dickson*

