Shoes and kit for Africa
Ready to ditch your sports gear? Don't bin it. Send it to Africa instead.

BELIEVE it or not, African athletes do not always run barefoot out of choice, it is often because they cannot afford decent footwear.

In countries like the UK, it would be unheard of for a child to walk or jog to school without shoes, but in many African nations it is commonplace due to poverty.

There are ways, however, to help and reduce the number of people who are without shoes and clothing. Because if you are an athlete who is just about to throw away some gear, then send it to Africa instead.

You may think your shoes have had their day, but it is quite likely they will find an owner who will get quite a bit of mileage out of them – quite literally.

The Shoe 4 Africa scheme is probably at its best known when it comes to sponsoring athletes who are struggling to get adequate footwear to train.

It has produced some amazing stories over the years. In 2001, for example, shoes were given to Ethiopian Jospeh and Francis Robert ali and the following year the latter won the Commonwealth marathon title.


Supporters of the scheme, meanwhile, include Britain's Steve Cram, Norwegian marathon legend Grete Waitz, Kenya's reigning world cross-country champion Lornah Kiplagat, Kenya distance legend Moses Kiptanui and Hollywood actresses Natalie Portman and Cameron Diaz.

Shoe 4 Africa is not the only scheme like this, though British middle-distance runners Becky Lyne and phil Tulga have set up a kit for' Sudan appeal' – and so far it has enjoyed great success.

Lyne and Tulga, who first had the idea when studying together at Loughborough University in 2005, have now accumulated 96kg of second-hand sports apparel, which has been sent out to underprivileged Sudanese children.

Tulga, who is of half-Sudanese descent, said: 'Becky and I are delighted with the scale of the response from British athletes.'

And following a Christmas trip to Sudan, Tulga discovered one of the recipients had transformed into a world-class junior 800m runner highlighting how their much-needed support is making a difference.

FOR information see www.shoe4africa.org and www.beckulyne.com/navigation/kit.html

**PRODUCT NEWS**

When big shoe companies re-release classic shoes, it is always a popular move

NEW BALANCE has delighted its fans by re-launching the legendary 991 model. The shoe, which is made in the UK, was one of the most enduring running shoes during the Eighties and Nineties.

Hand-crafted in Newbury, Berkshire, with premium, full-grain leather upper and a cushioned, durable sole, it is now available in two colourways, grey and white.

Jonathan Frome from New Balance said: 'New Balance have a history of craftsmanship that dates back over 100 years and the company's expertise and innovation has been responsible for many technical advancements as the sport has evolved.

'We have been able to use our knowledge of how feet move and how the body works to re-release the original 991 model in a new and improved version for 2011.'

For further information, contact the
Help the Aged events team by emailing events@helptamaha.org.uk, visiting www.helptamaha.org.uk/events or calling 0203-292-1000.

For more on helping the Aged, visit the web site at www.helptamaha.org.uk