

## Bereket Yemane Clinches an Overall Tour Victory

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### *The Story of the Two Inseparable Riders - Bereket and Daniel*



Bereket Yemane became the latest cycling Tour of Eritrea 2009 winner that wrapped up on Sunday 20th December entertaining 9 different national teams, 3 of which are from Eritrea. Bereket, one of the young Eritrean riders, is better known for his climbing and chronometer or time trial skills in local and international competitions. He has proved his talent in the 2006 ANOCA competition in Kenya, in the 2007 African Championship in Cameroon, in the 2008 African Championship in Morocco and in the 2008 Tour of Ivory Coast. On 27 September 2009, Bereket was on the verge of retaining the 2009 Central Region Cycling championship. But he missed the opportunity as he was beaten and dominated on the last stage by Meron Russom.

Earlier, in 2008, Bereket Yemane was also on the edge of claiming Eritrea's 2008 Cycling Championship that wrapped up in an incredibly speedy sprint at Bahti Meskerem square. It was too difficult for the local cycling federation to differentiate Daniel Teclehaimanot from Bereket Yemane with almost parallel sprinting finish. The riders and fans had to wait for about 40 minutes to know the result of the sprint that defined Eritrea's 2008 Cycling Champion. Bereket Yemane was awash with tears in front of the crowd of fans at the Square as Daniel Teclehaimanot cracked a smile after it was announced that Daniel's wheel crossed the line first.

"It was one of my saddest days on the saddle" remembers Bereket as he still finds it too difficult to accept that missed chance. Although he is still very young, he had been looking for that kind of tangible and historic national victory for a long while. Soon after the 2008 Eritrean Cycling Championship competition, Daniel headed to Switzerland for an advanced UCI training as Bereket concentrated on local competitions here in Asmara.

10 months after his advanced UCI training course, Daniel returned back home and took part in the first international Tour of Eritrea 2009 together with Bereket, lining up in the same Eritrean National Team A. Not surprisingly, Daniel became the winner of the first stage that headed to Mendefera from Keren. But more surprisingly Bereket followed Daniel to a second place in the stage. Some people started raising their foreheads wondering if Daniel and Bereket are going to get entwined in a championship circle of fierce competition inseparably.

Daniel's stage one victory of the tour was his first competition after his return to Eritrea from Switzerland. About 11 months ago, Daniel left Eritrea grabbing 2008 Central Region Cycling championship. What could his first stage victory on his first competition back home bring about?

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