

CHALLENGING CONDITIONS AT SOUTH ISLAND CURE KIDS GREAT ADVENTURE RACE

March 2 2008: Rain created challenging conditions for competitors in the South Island Cure Kids Great Adventure Race in Queenstown yesterday (Saturday March 1) but spirits were high as they crossed the finish line in Arrowtown.

Twelve corporate teams competed in the event which raised \$170,000 for medical research into children's life threatening illnesses.

Top honours and the Cure Kids Great Adventure trophy went to the Auckland's Team Nestle who completed the trekking, mountain biking and orienteering course in 8 hours 8 minutes.

Team Livingstones of Christchurch was second in 9 hours 10 minutes, while the Queenstown based team Arrow International pushed hard to take third place, two minutes behind in 9 hours 12 minutes.

Race Director Alan Nelson says the wet weather did not deter competitors although in parts it slowed the race down. "The mountain biking section was very muddy and the normally fairly easy section became quite slippery. But while the conditions had an effect, it fortunately remained relatively warm and the teams coped well."

The race began at Coronet Peak with a ridge trek to Brow Peak, followed by a bush navigation section. The mountain bike stage up the Arrow River involved a number of river crossings before branching on to a track through Glencoe Station and finishing on the Crown Range at the top of Tobins Track. The final trek was through tough terrain taking in Mount Beetham and Bracken Gully before returning to the finish at Arrowtown.

Three teams were diverted to the gateway course after failing to reach the cut off time on the main course. Three finished with just three team members after losing competitors due to minor injuries.

"It was a demanding race and quite different from last year's very hot conditions," says Mr Nelson. "But all the teams were buzzing when they finished. There was an obvious feeling of satisfaction for what they had achieved and certainly there was a variety of new experiences for many of the competitors."

Cure Kids South Island Funding Manager Josie Fitzgerald was delighted with the event and the fundraising by the teams.

Colliers International (Christchurch) won the fundraising trophy raising \$30,000, Cadbury (Dunedin) raised \$21,000 and Livingstones was third raising \$18,500.

Cure Kids ambassadors Stefanie Fong (Christchurch) and Sophie Newbold and Isabella Davies (Queenstown) were part of the event and Ms Fitzgerald says their presence provided a great boost to the teams.

“The ambassadors who live with life threatening illnesses put things very much in perspective for the competitors and reinforce for them why they are racing.”

Ms Fitzgerald also paid tribute to the many volunteers, search and rescue and ambulance personnel and the local community for their support.

“Without them we could not make an event like this happen. The funds raised will ensure on going vital research can be carried out.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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