

CATWALK

NEVER SAY NEVER

SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH TRUST



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
The CatWalk Spinal Cord Injury Research Trust



Auckland and New York Marathon reviews on pg. 6 & 7

THIS ISSUE

December 2019

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A special thank you to our supporters who help us produce this magazine



Founder's FOOTNOTE

Research is CatWalk's focus. Research that makes a real difference to those living with a spinal cord injury.

Dear CatWalkers,

When I received an email from CatWalk's Relationship Manager, Chris Lovelady, reminding me my Founder's Footnote was due, it was another sign that 2019 has been a busy year. So many personal goals have been set and achieved by so many passionate CatWalk supporters and following you all as you map out a plan, follow it through and achieve what are initially seen as some pretty daunting goals is not only humbling but makes this wheelie and the whole CatWalk Team very proud. What's incredible is not only the effort that has gone into the goal but the creativeness behind the FUNdraising.



Sam Pritchard & Alice Pritchard, Alice Pritchard & Angus Buchanan, Sophie Dunn & Ryan Dunn

So many cool stories have made this year another CatWalk special, such as Alice Montgomery's cycle from the bottom to the top of Britain, Brent Thurlow and Tom Winlove's 4000km-plus hike from the US/Mexican border to Canada, 66 runners/walkers completing New York/Auckland/Queenstown marathon distances, Elise Stables' Mongolian Derby, the Thirty-Eight in 38 Team, and our 76 passionate cyclists who pushed themselves through a week of cycling, drinking and eating in the Loire Valley in France!

There have been lots of fantastic FUNdraising efforts (thanks to you all) but the two common themes are "moving that body because you can!" And, "the fun had whilst FUNdraising!"

When the CatWalk Team makes an event plan, ticking those two boxes are the first keys to success. With that in mind please pop 25 July 2020 @ Ellerslie Event Centre in your diary, CatWalk will be celebrating 15 years and

with your passionate committee behind it, it's guaranteed to be another magical evening.



Stu McLeod & BJ

Losing close friend and loyal CatWalk Patron Sir BJ Lochore this year reminded me how privileged we'd been to be supported by one of life's greatest. His mana, his no-nonsense approach to everything and his kindness despite his stature (and his ginormous hands!) represented something unique. To Pam and family thank you for sharing New Zealand's rugby legend and icon, the man we all knew fondly as BJ, so generously with us all. BJ was one in a million.

The CatWalk family lost another special friend recently in David Pritchard. There are not enough superlatives to describe David because although a very successful businessman, it's his family (which we came to know as the Brady Bunch) that was his greatest pride and joy. Their support of CatWalk after David's spinal cord injury fitted CatWalk's culture instantly.

We all acknowledged that an SCI is far from fair, in fact I'm still yet to understand why these things happen, but our focus at CatWalk is positively forward and doing all we can to make this life the very best it can be by pushing those boundaries. To Jacqui and your wonderful family, thank you for all your magic, you've been like no other.

A couple of special 2019 highlights were celebrating 25yrs of the Burwood Spinal Trust with a super fun evening in Christchurch. Spending time with doctors, nurses and specialists who have dedicated their lives to making wheelies the best they can be shows the calibre and strength of character in the people that are around us. Rock solid enthusiasts and always glass half full – we love that type!

Another was showing another Kiwi icon and CatWalk Patron Sir Mark Todd some of the cutting-edge SCI research being done right here in NZ. If you'd like to visit Auckland University first-hand and meet the research team, please get in touch with CatWalk because as much as we love all the FUNdraising activities, it's the research progress that really gets us excited! Thank you to each and everyone of you for your donations to CatWalk of time and money. Whether large or small, commercial or personal it's appreciated more than you'll ever know.



Sir Mark Todd at the SCIRF

On a personal note I'd like to thank those who have given so much time to my personal training this year: Wendy, Linda, Steve, Erin, Tim, Teresa, Lynette, Josh, Jess, Grayson and the team at Making Strides. Your positivity and dedication towards improving this body and it's functionality is why we keep pushing every boundary possible.

So, here's to 2020 being CatWalk's best year yet and to kick it off will be the Valachi Downs Brazen Beau filly going through the NZB auction house during the sales series on Monday 27th January at approximately 1pm. This service was kindly donated by Darley three years ago and with thanks to Kevin and Jo Hickman's generosity it's turned into the gift that keeps giving. Come and stand ringside with us as we see who takes up the challenge of turning this regally bred filly into a racing champion with sale proceeds all going to CatWalk!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR International Patron

Dear CatWalk friends and family

In this note, I want to acknowledge two of my fellow CatWalk patrons and their contributions to our shared cause of a cure for spinal cord injury. Sir Mark Todd's retirement from international eventing a couple of months back marked the end of an era. There are few people who are truly recognised as icons, but in equestrian sports, "Toddy" was one. Both my parents and I have had the privilege of competing against the Kiwi master, and in my case learning so much from him, with more than a few laughs along the way!

And of course, it was Catriona's connection with Mark which first drew me into CatWalk and for that I am also very grateful. Enjoy your "retirement" Mark, I know you will be kept very busy with the racehorses.

In closing, and very sadly, the recent passing of Sir Brian Lochore represented a huge loss, not only for CatWalk but for the international rugby community and for his family. I know Brian and Pam have been with CatWalk from the very start and I was always very happy to see him at any of the New Zealand events. Both Mike and I want to recognise Brian's contribution to international sport and we send much love to his family.

Arohanui

Zara Tindall, MBE

NATIONAL PATRONS

Sir Brian Lochore, ONZ, KNZM, OBE; Richie McCaw ONZ; Dr Rick Acland, Dion Nash; Lance O'Sullivan, ONZM; Aaron Slight MNZM; Toni Street, Sir Mark Todd, CBE; Sarah Walker, Duane Kale ONZM; Dame Lowell Goddard, DNZM, QC.

TRUSTEES

David Pretorius (Chair), Deb Haworth (Deputy Chair), Emeritus Professor Louise Nicholson, Grant Sharman, Tom Brady, Paul Wilcox



Celebrating Mark's retirement at Blenheim Horse Trials 2019.

Photo courtesy of Libby Law Photography.



SIR BRIAN (BJ) LOCHORE ONZ, KNZM, OBE

3 SEPTEMBER 1940 - 3 AUGUST 2019

Dear CatWalk family, like many of you I'm struggling to find a way to reflect the great loss and sadness I feel at the passing of our 'gentle giant' and national patron Sir Brian Lochore, the friend we knew as BJ.

"We've truly lost a great person. Brian was so proud of New Zealand, and of the Wairarapa, and he oozed a mana that was indescribable.

"I feel personally fortunate to say he's been one of my favourite friends for a long long time. When I'd won something big or done something exciting with the horses, Brian would ring and quietly say 'well done.' He and Pam were one of the first to visit me in Burwood. The nurses were all in awe but to us he was just BJ.

"He attended many of our early CatWalk events and later on in 2012, there was a serious dinner hosted by Sir Jerry Mataparae at Government House in Wellington for all the country's famous Sirs and Dames ... it was very exciting when Brian took me along as his guest. Date night!

"Thursday when we say goodbye will be tough because like me, he made many of you feel special, especially when he wrapped our little paws in his big hands. If only we could replicate him again and again, but of course, there'll only be one Brian.

"You can read more about Brian on our website: www.catwalk.org.nz/about/supporters and it makes me smile when I read the story about how young Brian's pony Winkle travelled to

horsey events in the back of the family Chev with his head out the window. Have wheels will travel... a common wheelchair motto!

"While we all know what he did on the rugby field, it's what he did off it that moves me just as much. From the highest events in the land to local 'do's' here in the Wairarapa, Brian was so generous with his time and energy and we were so fortunate to have him as part of the CatWalk Team.

"BJ was often asked to speak at functions. When asked for payment he'd say 'please just make a donation to CatWalk,' so we would often get a surprise cheque in the post from various groups. As one of you wrote to me this week, 'BJ was such a great man contributing in so many ways. While tonight's news paid tribute to his place in rugby, his death sees CatWalk lose the king of its loyal patrons.'

"So from all of us, and from the bottom of my heart – thank you Brian, and thank you to Pam, Sandra, Joanne, David and families for sharing you with us.

"We'll never forget you BJ."

Catriona x



Team CAT

Running so others can walk

Auckland



The new look CatWalk running shirt was easily spotted at the 2019 ASB Auckland Marathon.

Ranging in age from 12 through to mid 70s, our team of over 60 members was a diverse and fun bunch! All distances were covered from the 5km walk through to the full marathon, and also included Laura Stuart and Wesley Pigg in the wheeled division which is now a permanent category of the marathon after the successful trial in 2018.

The wheeled athletes were the first to hit the road followed by the full marathon runners. Our marquee in the Charity Hero section of the finish village was well stocked with refreshing drinks and delicious food from Jess Underground Kitchen and the beanbags were soon filled with the team members and their supporters relaxing after they finished their distances.

A strong fundraising effort resulted in our \$100,000 target being achieved, and this will go towards vital spinal cord injury research.

Thank you to all the team members, supporters and those who donated. Details of our involvement in the 2020 Auckland Marathon will be on our website early in the new year.

DALE LAMBIE

Dale Lambie has been involved in CatWalk since the day our founder Catriona Williams suffered her spinal cord injury at a horse event in November 2002 which Dale was attending. This is Dale's review of her first Auckland Marathon:

After a fabulous sojourn in the French countryside with the CatWalk team, riding bikes, tasting wine and learning about the wonderful life changing work that they are doing with the money the CatWalk Spinal Cord Injury Research Trust is raising, I decided to get a little more involved. So on return to Auckland I encouraged a few mates to join me and walk the 5km family walk, part of the Auckland Marathon and raise some money for spinal cord injury research.

It seemed a simple enough idea but we managed to complicate the 'living daylights out of it'... and drive the very kind and understanding Chris crazy... however she never complained... we ended up with not one but numerous names for our group. Catriona's Foot Soldiers in varying forms, individuals, the Walkie Talkies, who managed to go walkabouts off the donation page but Chris came to the rescue, once again, and they were eventually sorted. We decided to wear simple outfits with something colourful that would stand out in the crowd... there were 12 of us in total who registered for the walk so bright orange leis were the choice ... one Team member was offered Double if she dressed as a Trump supporter and she did with nobody hitting her.

The walk took place on a beautiful sunny morning with supporters lining the streets, music and drums every few meters, young and old running or walking creating a wonderful atmosphere and between us all we raised about \$15,000 which was a very satisfying feeling. We all had a great day ending up in the CatWalk Tent still with lots of energy & enjoyed the goodies on supply and where we received our special medals for our great efforts. We

felt very proud of ourselves and are determined next year to do the 11km over the Bridge whilst 'beating the trees harder' to raise even more money for such a wonderful cause.

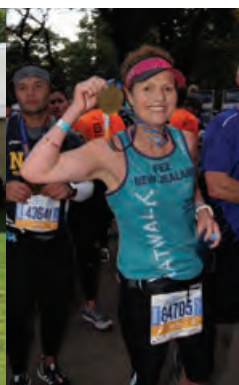
- Dale Lambie, Auckland

LAURA STUART

I have this terrible habit of jumping at opportunities before allowing any thoughts of doubt creep in. So when someone posted on Facebook that ASB was giving away a Top End pushrim to promote the new permanent wheelchair category in the Auckland marathon, I thought – the worst that could happen is that I could win it. And then I won - two months out from the 2018 marathon. Thankfully the wheelchair had to be measured and manufactured to fit so it didn't arrive in the country until 2019 and it wasn't until the handover ceremony/media stint at the end of March when I realised I now had no excuse but to begin training.

I needed a reason more than myself to get into the pushrim and roll for hours. So when I was chatting to my friends Gabby and Ed about how the CatWalk Spinal Trust was staying at Ed's father's chateau in France to raise money for spinal cord research, I looked up the Trust and saw that they were entering in the marathon too. That was the perfect motivation. It was purely self-interest as there is nothing more in the world I wish for than for a breakthrough in spinal cord research.

Going for a training roll is a lot more involved than going for a run. Now I dream of being able to put on a pair of sneakers and run out the door within minutes. These days a training roll is a half-day outing. The first time I tried to get the pushrim out of the house and into the car I managed to drop it down the stairs into the garden. After driving to the Hutt River Trail, which is the only flat route safe enough to roll in Wellington, I get out of the car into my wheelchair, grab the pushrim from the boot and put it within reaching distance from



WALK 2019

Ranging in age from 12 through to mid 70s, our team of over 60 members was a diverse and fun bunch!

driver's seat, then I get back into the car, put my wheelchair away and then contort myself into the pushrim – an hour since I've left the house and I'm ready to start training. I quickly realised I don't have time to spend 3-4 hours on a training outing so I bought a pair of motorbike workstand rollers from Torpedo7 so I could sit inside with the TV on and roll.

The day before the marathon I drove to my Airbnb in Devonport I realised that I had done no hill training. Despite living in Wellington there are no gentle gradients to train on without risking being run over by a bus on a narrow corner.

On the marathon day at 5:55am the hills were definitely a slow slog and the runners caught up with me on the first hill. But as a mountain-biker I prefer a short grind to the top and a downhill reward for the effort. I did a lot of shouting to get people out of the way and on the North Harbour Bridge I had to go outside of the cones for fear of rolling into unsuspecting runners.

After the bridge the rest of the course was largely flat although the inner city roadworks around Wynyard quarter was rather uncomfortable and by the 23km mark my ribs were beginning to ache. The most enjoyable part was rolling around Mission Bay – with a gentle breeze it was almost pleasant.

Getting to the finish line was easier than I expected – my ribs were sore but my arms could've kept going for a few more kilometres so my strength must have improved with a couple more years in a wheelchair. It was also fantastic to be whisked from the finish line to the charity heroes VIP tents and great to be able to meet the rest of the CatWalk team. The whole event was a great experience and I'm glad to have the opportunity and the wheelchair to be able to take part.

- Laura Stuart

New York Marathon 2020

CatWalk has continued its love affair with the New York marathon in 2019, taking another team of Kiwis over to this magnificent city in order for everyone the chance to complete this world-famous marathon event.

This year, CatWalk's new Chairman and New York marathon Team Captain, Dave Pretorius returned for his 5th (and final!) New York marathon run, taking a team of 8 runners with him. Once again, everyone funded their own way there in addition to raising funds for our charity as it continues to focus on finding the cure for spinal cord injury.

This year's team comprised runners from Auckland, Cambridge, Hamilton and Wellington, all connected to a common cause and all coming to us from various networks and word-of-mouth discussions. Indeed, we even had founder Catriona Williams' cousin Fee Webby (nee McLeod) come along with her husband Matt to complete her first marathon after contemplating doing it for nearly a decade!

The New York City marathon remains the largest marathon in the world, taking runners through all five boroughs of New York, including all the sights and sounds and smells of Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Manhattan.

This year, over 53,000 runners completed the course, and boy do you feel that when you're running through some of the narrow streets!

Temperatures were lower than in previous years (7 degrees) but it was a windless, cloudless day – perfect for running. The marathon finishes in Central Park, and it is said that over 1 million spectators line the streets urging every single runner on.

Dave has learnt over the years that it is crucial to have your name written high up on your chest, because for the entire length of the marathon, all one hears is screams of "You got this! You're looking good, Dave!"

Apparently the feeling is akin to rock star status. A few of the runners wore their 'CatWalk' shirts with their names pre-printed just to get a little bit of this wonderful feeling!

The team returned to New Zealand in the second week of November, with the marathon always occurring on the first Sunday of the month. They successfully raised over \$65,000 for this campaign, which took the collective total with the Auckland marathon to over \$150,000.

The CatWalk board extends its heartfelt thanks to all runners and to everyone who donated funds, helping the team achieve this fantastic success.

Thank you!



For more information on any of these CatWalk events please visit: catwalk.org.nz/events

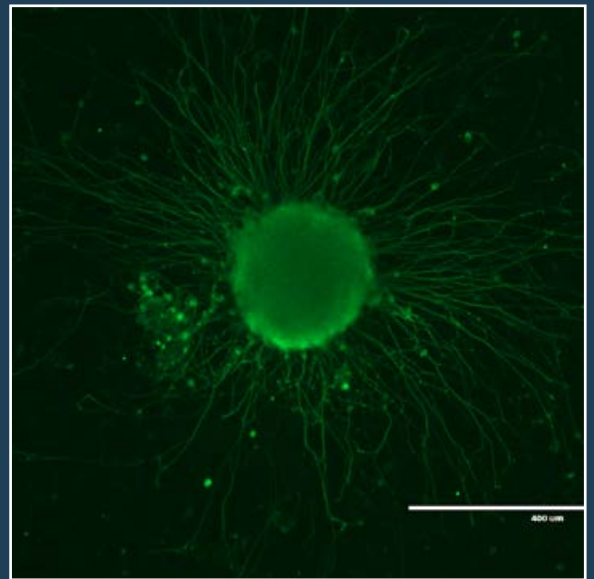
Spinal Cord Injury Research Facility Progress Update - DECEMBER 2019

A new and exciting field of research that is underway in the SCIRF is a project developing the use of microelectrode arrays to guide the regrowth of nerve cells after spinal cord injury.

These microelectrode arrays are designed to deliver electrical currents to the nerve cells of the spinal cord, and by selecting the correct current, we will be able to stimulate the nerve cells to grow and reconnect. These electrodes can also be used to deliver growth-promoting drugs to the cord in combination with electrical stimulation, and so will be a powerful tool for the repair of the spinal cord after injury. This project is a collaboration between Associate Professor Darren Svirakis, an expert in designing drug delivery systems and Dr Simon O'Carroll in the SCIRF and they are leading a team of scientists and students on this project.

In the first part of this project, we are growing human spinal cord cells and developing methods to injure them and test different electrical stimulation and drug delivery and determine what will be most effective at getting nerve cells to regrow.

At the same time, we are developing arrays to be placed on the spinal cord. We will use these to study the changes in nerve cell electrical activity after injury and combined with the results of the spinal cord cell work; we will develop a treatment that allows nerves cells in the spinal cord to regrow and reconnect. This exciting and ground-breaking research is being carried out in the SCIRF, which we believe has real potential to help people with spinal cord injury.



Human spinal cord nerve cells that have been treated with growth factors to encourage growth of new axons.



The Research Team: Ernest Cheah, Mahima Bansal, Anusha Dravid, Associate Professor Darren Svirakis, Dr Simon O'Carroll, Dr Bruce Harland, Dr Brad Raos, Dr Sam Paritt, Dr Zaid Arqawe.

Health Research Council ANNOUNCEMENT

The CatWalk Trust and the Health Research Council are pleased to announce that funding has been offered to the following recipient through the HRC and CatWalk Trust partnership.

This call for applications was about supporting biomedical and clinical research in spinal cord injury treatment and cure.

2019 HRC and CatWalk Trust partnership recipient:

Associate Professor Darren Svirskis, The University of Auckland. A bioelectronic implant to reconnect damaged nerves following spinal cord injury.

36 MONTHS, \$476,190

Spinal cord injury (SCI) is a devastating, and currently incurable, disease and has a profound impact on an individual's quality of life.

An estimated 27 million people suffer from SCI globally, due either to trauma or as a result of disease, with a lifetime cost per person as high as \$10 million.

This project will investigate an innovative new treatment combining both beneficial electrical fields and nerve growth factors to regenerate damaged nerves following SCI.

We will first determine the best combination of treatment parameters in vitro before delivering them through our bioelectronic implant to an animal model.

In our animal model of SCI we seek to demonstrate that damaged nerves can be regenerated and functional recovery achieved. This transformative technology has the potential to boost the body's innate ability to heal itself, and would deliver both health and economic benefits to New Zealand.

“This transformative technology has the potential to boost the body's innate ability to heal itself, and would deliver both health and economic benefits to New Zealand.”



Associate Professor Darren Svirskis, recipient of the joint HRC and CatWalk funding pictured with Dr Jarred Griffin, Dr Simon O'Carroll and Emeritus Professor Louise Nicholson.

Griffith University Research Update

Balance is everything – optimising the cell combination for three-dimensional nerve bridges

.....

The Spinal Injury Project team at the Clem Jones Centre for Neurobiology and Stem Cell Research at Griffith University, Queensland, Australia, is optimising a cell transplantation therapy to treat the injured spinal cord. To improve outcomes, the team has created a novel nerve bridge which is made entirely of cells. The nerve bridge is beneficial for two main reasons: (1) more cells survive the transplantation, compared to traditional approaches of injecting cells, and (2) the cells of the nerve bridge rapidly integrate with the cells of the injury site and form a pathway for the nerve cells to grow across.

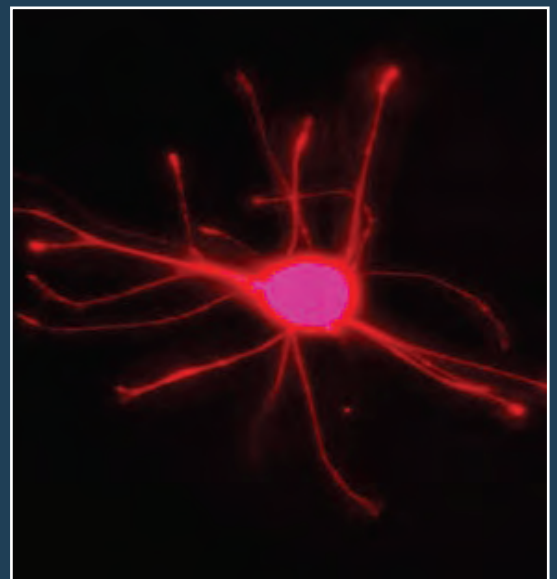
The cells that are transplanted are “olfactory ensheathing cells” which are specialised supporting cells from the olfactory (sense of smell) nerve. These OECs help clean up dead cells and then provide support for regeneration by producing growth factors that encourage the growth of nerve cells. The Spinal Injury Project team has now found that another cell type, called fibroblasts, can improve the structure of the nerve bridges. Using both of these cells, the team can now create layered nerve bridges which resemble the structure of nerves found within the body. This means that when the nerve bridges are transplanted into the injury site, they are more likely to provide appropriate support for the nerve cells.

The Griffith Institute for Drug Discovery at the Nathan campus in Brisbane is home to NatureBank and Compounds Australia which together house hundreds of thousands of natural and synthetic compounds. The Spinal Injury Project team has performed a large screen of some of these compounds and found more than 30 compounds which can stimulate the activity of OECs. Importantly, compounds have been identified that improve the production of more OECs; large numbers of cells are needed to generate the large nerve bridges. Other compounds have also been found which stimulate the migration of OECs, and the ability of OECs to take up and remove cell debris. These outcomes mean that the transplanted cells could be stimulated to improve how they repair the injury site which should lead to enhanced recovery of function after spinal cord injury.

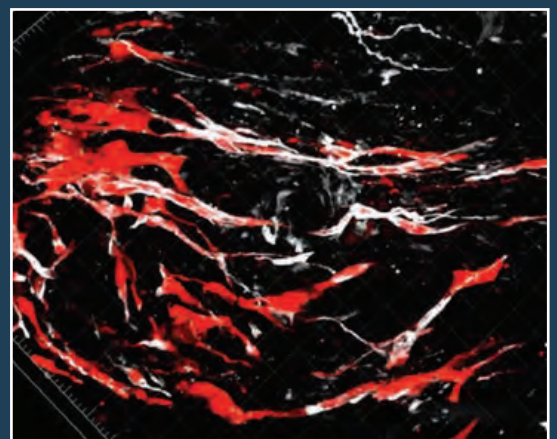
The team is now combining the drug discovery work with the optimised cellular nerve bridge technology to improve how the nerve bridges are produced, and to improve how the cells respond after transplantation. The current priority is on working with clinicians to develop a range of nerve bridges that suit different injury sites and to determine the best methods for surgically transplanting the nerve bridges. Overall, the cell transplantation results are encouraging and demonstrate that when there is good integration of the transplanted cells the nerve cells respond and grow across the injury site.

More information about the Clem Jones Centre can be found here cjncsr.org, and for the Spinal Injury Project: www.sipishope.com

“The cell transplantation results are encouraging and demonstrate that when there is good integration of the transplanted cells the nerve cells respond and grow across the injury site.”



An olfactory ensheathing cell in three-dimensions. Olfactory ensheathing cells extend numerous branches as they explore the 3D environment. This helps them to form connections with other cells and to grow in the right direction.



When olfactory ensheathing cells (red) are transplanted into the injured spinal cord in mice, they form a bridge which encourages the nerve cells (white) to grow. The nerve cells closely follow the transplanted olfactory ensheathing cells.

Dr Michael Fehlings

WORLD-LEADING NEUROSURGEON

Dr. Michael Fehlings is a world-leading neurosurgeon based at Toronto Western Hospital in Canada and is internationally regarded as a leader in SCI clinical trials.

Thanks to our donors, CatWalk is providing funding to support the inclusion of two New Zealand hospitals in Dr.Fehlings' major international SCI clinical drug trial entitled - **the Riluzole in Acute Spinal Cord Injury Study (RISCIS): a multi-centre, placebo-controlled, randomised trial of the safety and efficacy of riluzole as a neuroprotective agent for acute traumatic SCI.**

Dr. Fehlings was recently in NZ to receive a **Ryman Healthcare Prize for his work with non-traumatic spinal cord injury, in particular degenerative cervical myelopathy.** He also took the time to present an update on his research at the Spinal Cord Injury Research Facility.

More indepth information regarding the research project can be found on the CatWalk website – www.catwalk.org.nz

“Thanks to our donors, CatWalk is providing funding to support the inclusion of two New Zealand hospitals in Dr.Fehlings' major international SCI clinical drug trial”



Dr Michael Fehlings, with Catriona Williams, Emeritus Professor Louise Nicholson, and Dr Simon O'Carroll.

NEUROLOGICAL RECOVERY

Take the NextStep in your recovery...

NextStep New Zealand is a state-of-the-art, community-based paralysis recovery and fitness center. By offering standardized activity-based therapy programs and interventions, based on research; our center provides the best chance for recovery, independence, and health.

QUALIFIED AND EXPERIENCED STAFF,
ACCESSIBLE FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT

OUR ACTIVITY BASED THERAPY SERVICES:

GUIDED ACTIVITY-BASED THERAPY

Guided Activity-Based Therapy consists of 1-on-1 or 2-on-1 training with our certified activity-based therapists. Our trainers will work with you to promote functional recovery and improved health.

NEUROMUSCULAR ELECTRICAL STIMULATION

Neuromuscular electrical stimulation, an activity-based therapy, provides high frequency, wide pulse width, task specific stimulation to generate a motor output while increasing the central state of excitability in the spinal cord. Neuromuscular electrical stimulation is provided via the Restorative Therapies Incorporated Sage unit with Xcite software and use of lead wires to 12 different muscle groups. Tasks are performed with and without stimulation to transfer the improved neuromuscular capacity into the home and community environment.

GAIT & LOCOMOTOR TRAINING

Locomotor Training allows individuals living with paralysis to repetitively practice standing and stepping using body weight support. In a therapy session, the participant is suspended in a harness over a treadmill while specially trained therapists move his or her legs and body to simulate walking. As the person gains function, improvements in sitting, standing, reaching, grasping or walking occur.



GET IN TOUCH

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The Mongol Derby

The Mongol Derby was the experience of a lifetime. It showed me what I as an individual could really do and what my body is truly capable of.

Start camp almost had us fooled, we had air mattresses in our gers and a bus with hot showers! However after 3 days of briefings and weigh ins, the start gun was fired at 10am on the 4th of August and we were on our own in the longest and toughest horse race in the world.

The first leg was a novelty, riding with a lot of the other riders with adrenaline pumping and I enjoyed it while it lasted. Vet checks are performed at every station (29 checkpoints about 30-50km apart) before you choose your new horse.

Lameness, sores or high heart rates (over 56bpm) result in penalties against the rider. Too many penalties and you are disqualified. This alone was my greatest test of horsemanship and ability to rate my horse.

As the week went on the other riders and I rode on, sometimes together, mostly alone with only our Mongolian horses for company. Riding through torrential rain, high mountain passes and scorching heat across sand dunes, our small but mighty Mongol ponies powered on- the toughest horses I've ever come across.

As the days rolled on I battled the aches in my body and chaffing on my thighs with one constant thought- finish. I was incredibly thankful to the amazing nomadic families on the steppe for their mutton soup, mares milk and hospitality.

The connections I made with those families even without being able to speak their language, is something I'll never forget. On the morning of the 11th of August I had 3 legs to go. With the end in sight (not really, about 120km left) I pushed on as careful as ever to avoid penalties. By the end of the day I crossed the finish line alongside another Aussie to receive a cold Russian beer as my prize. And there we had done it, 1000km across Mongolian steppe on semi-wild horses, the longest and toughest horse race in the world!

The Mongol derby seriously taught me to make the best out of any situation you are in and to embrace the new people you meet. The race was one of the greatest hardships of my life but the experience of a life time and to those who supported me and donated to the cause, I would like to extend my greatest thanks.

Elise Stables



Lot Number 313



Lot Number 313 at the NZ Bloodstock Yearling Sales holds very special significance for spinal cord injury research. As she is led into the sales ring by the handler from Valachi Downs Stud, all eyes will be on the final amount that brings down the auctioneers hammer.

Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of Jo and Kevin Hickman, this money will be donated to CatWalk for spinal cord injury research. The Stepanover/Brazen Beau filly is looking a picture as she heads to the sales with her expected presentation time being approximately 1pm on Monday 27th January 2020.

Preparation of the filly has been by the expert team at Valachi supported by Matamata Veterinary Services, Whitehall Farriers, NRM Equine Feeds, BetaVet Supplements, Mark Old Dentistry, and Savvy Touch Chiropractor/physiotherapist who have all donated their time and services to ensure the filly is in peak condition

“As she is led into the sales ring by the handler from Valachi Downs Stud, all eyes will be on the final amount that brings down the auctioneers hammer. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of Jo and Kevin Hickman, this money will be donated to CatWalk for spinal cord injury research.”

come sales time. NZ Bloodstock have also waived the entry and commission fees on the sale and all of this support ensures that as many valuable dollars as possible will go to SCI research. The sale will be a culmination of a story which started in 2018 with a donation of the Brazen Beau service fee by Godolphin at the CatWalk Remarkable event. The service was purchased by Jo and Kevin Hickman with the Stepanova mare producing the lovely filly, and the offer of the sale proceeds was made by Kevin to an incredibly emotional CatWalk founder, Catriona Williams, at the 2019 NZB Sales.

We look forward to seeing as many supporters as possible ringside on 27th January and following the beautiful filly as she starts the next chapter of her life.





Leave your Legacy

A few words in your Will can give those with spinal cord injury paralysis hope.

Leaving a gift in your Will could benefit spinal cord injury in a special way. Your charitable legacy may well ensure that the vital research necessary to cure spinal cord injury paralysis endures, no matter what the cost.

CATWALK
NEVER SAY NEVER

SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH TRUST

“The reason I chose CatWalk was because many years ago I had a skiing accident and fractured a vertebrae in my spine very nearly putting myself in a wheel chair - ever since I have felt extremely grateful that I can walk. I think it would be so exciting if a cure could be found.”

“I would like my [chosen] charities to be continued on when I am no longer here and I know they will carry out my wishes.”

A gift for the future

Our vision is a world free from spinal cord injury paralysis. We fund the best research in NZ and internationally, to find treatments to restore movement and sensation.

We want to reach the day when spinal cord injury is no longer the devastating event it is today but a routinely treatable condition.

You can help to create this future – with a gift in your Will.

After you’ve looked after family and friends, would you consider leaving a gift in your Will to CatWalk?

If you want to leave a legacy gift, we would welcome the opportunity to talk with you to ensure we fulfil your wishes and make the most impact in the areas you care about.



LINDSAY FOUNDATION



Andrew Higgott, Catriona Williams, and Emeritus Professor Louise Nicholson

The Lindsay Foundation's mission is to support Kiwi individuals and organisations who aspire to make a positive difference in New Zealand. As the first anniversary of the Foundation approaches, the evidence is clear that the mission is being fulfilled.

If you take a moment to visit the Lindsay Foundation's website, you'll see the number of varied groups who are being assisted in their endeavours. From health research, disability support, and animal welfare, the Lindsay Foundation has already been incredibly generous in their support of New Zealanders who are striving to improve the lives of others.

CatWalk and the Spinal Cord Injury Research Facility are extremely grateful to be the recipient of a grant from the Lindsay Foundation to fund spinal cord injury research.

CEO of the Lindsay Foundation, Andrew Higgott, was recently 'walking the talk', or rather, 'running the

talk', when he completed the 11km Traverse Run at the ASB Auckland Marathon on Sunday 20 October, all while raising funds for spinal cord injury research as part of Team CatWalk.

Andrew and the Lindsay Foundation Trustees truly take the time to understand the causes that the Foundation is supporting. The Lindsay Foundation is so much more than a funding body, they are passionately involved with all of their beneficiaries.

For more information on the Lindsay Foundation and the causes they are supporting please visit their website www.lindsayfoundation.co.nz



Alice and team

Lands End TO JOHN O'GROATS

9 days, 950 people, 990 miles! It always promised to be a challenge and it didn't disappoint. It really was a bloody long way.

The first day was a bit like the first day at a new school. We arrived the night before and I ate dinner by myself and went to bed at 9pm. I woke up, ate breakfast (again a solo experience), packed up my tent, located my bike and stood on the start line having said less than 100 words in the last 12 hours. I was very apprehensive, surrounded by 950 people, but very much alone!

Day one was 105 miles and with the startling realisation that if I didn't make a concerted effort to talk to people it was going to be a very long 9 days, I started chatting away to people as we cycled away from Lands End bound for John O' Groats. The first 15 miles was like a strange version of speed dating. Cycle up to someone, strike up a conversation, and then the decision whether this new relationship was going to work or not was determined by two factors...did they cycle at a speed that suited and was their chat going to sustain your interest and numb the pain of the hill in front of you.

15 miles in a guy biked past me with what looked like radioactive liquid in his drink bottles. I asked if he was carrying window cleaner the whole way to John O' Groats. His name was Ben and we chatted away for the next 15 miles to pitstop one where I immediately reverted to the first day at school feeling. I wanted to cycle with Ben to pit stop 2 but I most certainly was not going over to him to ask, no, I was going to behave like a 13 year old school girl and spend the next 8 ¾ days waiting for him to ask me. Thankfully, this was not Ben's first day at school, and he wandered over to me as I was preparing to leave the pitstop and asked if I would like to cycle the next bit with him and two friends. Of course, being cool and composed (and not the least bit desperate for friends) I casually accepted this invitation in an off-hand 'well I suppose that would be alright' kind

of way. Now a group of four we set off towards Pit Stop 2. Arriving at pit stop 2 the first day of school feeling continued. I had to be ready to leave when Ben was in a sort of nonchalant, 'oh we are ready to leave at the same time, we may as well cycle together kind of way.' Thankfully I timed this to perfection, and our group of 4 left pit stop 2 together and cycled on towards our final destination for the day in Okehampton. Between pitstop 2 and the end we cycled past two more men who had clearly had a less successful morning speed dating than I had and were still looking for the relationships that were going to see them through the next 8 ¼ days. We scooped them up and ploughed on towards our final destination as a group of 6.

With 20 miles to go we kept cycling past a very small girl on a badly fitted bike. We would drop her on a flat and then she would appear again on the hills. After we jostled for positions with her about 4 times Anthony, (one of my new friends) decided perhaps it was worth taking her a bit more seriously and struck up a conversation with her. Her name was Cydney, she cycled the final 10 miles with us and didn't leave my side for the next 8 days.

105 miles down, 6 new friends, 8 days to go. Proud member of a whatsapp group "RAB Link" with my new friends. 'RAB link' agreed to meet at the start at 6.30am and cycle together on day 2 (Okehampton to Bath). This was familiar territory for me as for, the most part, it ran through parts of Somerset I had cycled often in training. By pit stop 1 on day 2 we were a pretty good unit. By pit stop 2 the fact that Cydney and I were girls was no longer considered a reason not to discuss the effect energy gels and electrolyte caffeine tablets were having on the boys' bowel movements and by the time we crossed the finish at Bath University we

were establishing that we were all going to eat dinner at 7pm. Day 3 was considered an easy day...1 mile short of 100 miles, it was the shortest day of the whole trip, taking us from Bath to Ludlow via Wales. Once our group had established itself it didn't take long to figure out everybody's preferred morning routine. I liked eating breakfast solo and was very happy to cycle the first 30 miles to pit stop 1 in total silence.

I had a love/hate relationship with pit stop one each day. It came with the promise of a proper cup of coffee from the coffee van that stayed one pit stop ahead of us the whole journey. However, it also came with the strangest selection of 8.30 am food. A scotch egg, pork pie or a Cornish pasty are not my favourite items of food at any time but at 8.30am none came near qualifying as my second breakfast of choice.

The fear of bonking was so great that regardless of hunger levels, energy levels or the distance to the next pitstop you would fill your pockets to the point that the energy promised by the extra weight was probably expended carting it up the hills.

Bonking for anyone unfamiliar, is not the activity you may think is suggested by the name. It is the cycling equivalent of hitting the wall. The most instant cure is sugar. Cydney and I lived in fear of the bonk and at every pit stop pocketed every piece of sugar in sight. When we emptied our pockets every afternoon it was like emptying a Santa sack on Christmas morning. No idea what was going to come out next. On day 4, Cydney pulled 6 Soreen Malt Loaf bars out of her pockets. Fear of the bonk had really got in the way of her decision making.

Day 5 started in Haydock and ended in Carlisle. I had been told there would be a day when my sense of humour ran out and at mile 90 on day 5 it happened. I finished in Carlisle with a mental note to give Andy, the guy who organised the route each day, a piece of my mind for sending us down a really shitty main road for 20 miles before delivering his final blow, a 5 mile ride into the back of Carlisle racecourse along the "grippiest" route imaginable. "Grippy" was the organisers' euphemism for hilly and by now we knew that "a bit grippy" meant bloody steep. Needless to say I was not in a good mood. I had organised to meet my sister's best friend, Abby and her fiancé Sam at basecamp that evening. They are incredible endurance athletes and I knew they would understand my bad mood so when they wandered across a field in the middle of Carlisle with another person in tow I could only think, 'oh god now I have to make an effort.' The person who appeared was none other than my mother who had sent me a whatsapp two days earlier telling me she was going on a 'two day yoga retreat, she didn't think there was any cell service and my father and sister would be available to chat in her absence.' I remember thinking at the time, 'Charlotte this is the worst timed yoga retreat you have ever been on, surely your path of self discovery could have waited a week so that you could be at my whatsapp beck and call.'

If I'd thought I was low on Day 5, the 105 miles on Day 6 really was another level below 0. It was wet and miserable all day. At pit stop 2 they had to call an ambulance for someone who was wrapped in 2 hypothermia blankets when I left. I got two punctures and somehow, even in this misery, there is still a photo of me laughing on the side of the road somewhere between Carlisle and Hopetoun. 30 miles from home my right knee was so painful I didn't think I would be able to finish the day and I cried for the last 10 miles. Cydney and the boys slowed their

pace and cycled the last 10 miles with me even though they were equally cold and miserable and we all just wanted the suffering to end.

One of the guys broke his phone by dropping it out of his pocket whilst trying to find some ibuprofen for me. He finished the day with me and then turned around and cycled a 10 mile return trip to Tesco's to buy a new phone so that he could contact his parents who were meeting him in John O' Groats.

At the end of Day 6, I racked my bike without cleaning it. As far as I was concerned I probably wasn't getting back on it. When Mum turned up that evening I was so exhausted I couldn't even speak, I couldn't cry, I couldn't eat, I basically couldn't function.



Day 7 dawned and it was painful but I could walk. And if I could walk I could definitely make an attempt at cycling. I went to collect my bike only to discover I had another puncture. When we finally got away I crossed the start line, unceremoniously slipped on the rubber mats and fell off. It was 6.35 am and I had already had a puncture and fallen off. If Day 6 had been bad, Day 7 was not looking any better. I don't think I spoke for the first 75 miles that day but with every pedal stroke my knee loosened. Cydney did not leave my side and by the time we got to pit stop 2 at the top of Glenshee Ski Station in

the sun the day didn't seem quite so bad. When we rolled into Strathdon that afternoon having covered 120 miles I was very happy to spend 20 minutes cleaning two day's worth of muck off my bike.

The start of day 8 involved climbing the Lecht 8 miles in. It kicks up 4 times at 20% which necessitated standing up in the lowest gear and riding a slight zigzag across the road to keep forward momentum. Some people were downing tools at the bottom of the hill, getting off their bikes and pushing them up. Others came round the corner, saw the hill, turned round and cycled the 8 miles back to base camp to get on the broom bus. There were very strong head winds and by pit stop 3 we were huddled under wooden picnic tables wondering whether it was possible to order an 8 man uber with the capacity to take bikes.

Day 9 dawned and we had been warned that the winds from yesterday we not going to let up until we changed direction at mile 60. The first 30 miles were the strongest crosswinds I hope I ever cycle in. They blasted across us at 65mph, and without the boys who sat beside us and took the wind the whole way, Cydney and I would certainly have been blown off our bikes. We changed direction at mile 60 and with the wind behind us we cycled 45 more speedy miles up to John O' Groats.

I got introduced to the concept of two types of fun during the week. Type 1 fun is instant fun, type 2 fun is where you look back a few days or a few weeks later and you think that was the most amazing time. This was definitely type 2 fun. It was one of the best weeks of my life and I am beyond grateful to The CatWalk Trust for the opportunity to do it. What started as a mad idea in March by someone who didn't even own a bike turned into the most incredible adventure that raised over \$9000 for an amazing cause. I have been amazed by the generosity of all those who donated so freely for this wonderful cause. From the bottom of my heart thank you all so much.

- Alice Montgomery



BARENBRUG
agriseeds

Equine pasture mix

collaboration to support spinal cord injury research

The CatWalk Spinal Cord Injury Research Trust is thrilled to announce the partnership with Barenbrug Agriseeds is not only continuing but expanding to include another partner – Farm Source.

Following on from the success when Barenbrug Agriseeds donated a specially-formulated equine pasture seed mix to the CatWalk Trust's fundraising efforts in 2017, Farm Source have joined to become the distribution partner. This will enable the seed to be available throughout the Farm Source stores located nationwide making it more accessible to a wider market.

The new partnership will see a \$25 donation from both Barenbrug Agriseeds and Farm Source for every bag of seed sold – a direct donation to CatWalk.

CatWalk Trust Relationship Manager Chris Lovelady says the charity is thrilled to once again partner with Barenbrug Agriseeds and to welcome Farm Source.

“Farm Source has an extensive network of stores and personnel throughout NZ and to have them join together with Barenbrug Agriseeds to support spinal cord injury research is such a boost to our work towards finding a cure for SCI. After the incredible support we received from Barenbrug Agriseeds in 2017, and the high demand for the pasture mix, we are aiming to raise a further significant amount in 2019/20 and having Farm Source join us will help us to achieve this.

The CatWalk Trust is committed to a world that's free from paralysis caused by spinal cord injury, and with Barenbrug Agriseeds and Farm Source generous support we can continue to fund research projects that cannot advance without financial investment.”

“The Trust has strong ties with the equestrian and agricultural industry, so partnering with Barenbrug Agriseeds and Farm Source is a natural fit. When they offered to partner with us to enable this project to continue, we were over the moon,” says Mrs Lovelady.

Barenbrug Agriseeds Marketing Manager Graham Kerr says he’s very happy to be able to support the CatWalk Trust and the important research it funds, and on top of that, he thinks it’s also a great opportunity for horse owners.

“We have a great deal of respect for the Trust’s pursuit of a cure for spinal cord injury-caused paralysis, and very pleased to make this donation to further the incredible research that The CatWalk Trust supports.

“The seed selection for the horse pasture mix has many potential benefits, and a range of applications from large scale horse properties to smaller lifestyle blocks.”

“We’ve designed it with the Trust to directly reflect horses’ specific dietary needs. It’s high in fibre, low in sugars and contains negligible safe endophytes, making it an ideal mix for grazing horses.”



About the Specialist Horse Pasture Mix

Most pastures in New Zealand are dominated by perennial ryegrass and white clover, largely sown for sheep and cattle. Such pastures are not ideal for horses. As well as having relatively low fibre, ryegrass also tends to be high in sugars, particularly during spring and autumn. This can have negative behavioural impacts on some horses and also cause serious problems such as contributing to laminitis.

The Barenbrug Agriseeds-CatWalk Trust Specialist Horse Pasture Mix contains brome, cocksfoot and a small amount of low endophyte ryegrass. Brome and cocksfoot contain no endophyte and are higher in fibre content than ryegrass. Bags are available at \$200+GST per 25kg bag (recommended sowing rate for 1 hectare).

For more information visit www.catwalk.org.nz, www.agriseeds.co.nz and to place orders please contact your nearest Farm Source store <https://store.nzfarmsource.co.nz>.





SPECIALIST HORSE PASTURE MIX

25kg
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Specialist horse pasture mix
\$200 +GST per 25kg bag

Support a great cause. Purchase yours now!

1 bag/ha recommended sowing rate. Limited stocks.
Seed available from your local Farm Source store.

Kiwis conquer the Pacific Crest Trail



For more
photos and
videos head to:
[facebook.com/
kiwisthruamerica](https://facebook.com/kiwisthruamerica)

We introduced you to Tom Winlove and Brent Thurlow in our July magazine. Tom and Brent started the PCT on May 5th.

The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) is a 2,653 mi (4,270 km) long-distance hiking and equestrian trail which for us [Brent and Tom] began at the southern terminus on the U.S. border with Mexico, just south of Campo, California, and finished **144 days and 4 pairs of shoes later** at its northern terminus on the Canada-US border on the edge of Manning Park in British Columbia.

The trail follows along its corridor through the western U.S. in the states of California, Oregon, and Washington. It ranges in elevation from just above sea level at the Oregon-Washington border to 13,153 feet (4,009 m) at Forester Pass in the Sierra Nevada.

An epic effort –
thank you Brent
and Tom – hiking
for those who can't,
and raising funds
for spinal cord
injury research.

The route passes through 25 national forests and 7 national parks. Its midpoint is near Chester, California (near Mt. Lassen), where the Sierra and Cascade mountain ranges meet.

Tom and Brent have many great stories to share and they will continue to do so via social media and guest speaking.

The photographs and videos that are available to view via their facebook showed the amazing country they travelled and the people they met along the way – here are just a few of them.

An epic effort – thank you Brent and Tom – hiking for those who can't, and raising funds for spinal cord injury research.





“Spinal cord impairment is not a fate worse than death and for many it launches people into extraordinary fulfilling and rewarding lives.”

Catriona Williams, Hamish Ramsden and friends

New Zealand Spinal Trust Celebrates 25 Years

On a balmy October night in Christchurch the New Zealand Spinal Trust celebrated 25yrs of supporting positive futures with their friends and colleagues from the Burwood Spinal Unit who were celebrating 40yrs of Spinal service. The joint celebration in a packed venue saw a diverse group of ex patients, staff and physicians share stories from the decades. It was a joyous affair with a lot of laughter and plenty of dancing.



Allan Bean and Ngaire Hunt

Both organisations have grown together and side by side make a profound difference in the lives of those affected by spinal cord impairment. Sponsorship from our good friends at Permobil allowed us to offer very cheap tickets to ex patients and their carers and ensure everyone had a great night. There were many, now retired, living legends of the Spinal Unit attending, Allan Bean and Ngaire Hunt being just two. CatWalk was well represented and it was an honour to have Catriona Williams lead a party of CatWalkers to celebrate with us. The evening corresponded with the unveiling of

the NZ Spinal Trust Icon and Logo especially created with the next 25yrs in mind. The clean, simple, accessible design speaks of new beginnings, support and connection on the journey. The subtle stylised representation of a spine and new colours declare a refreshed vision from a long established and trusted organisation.

Every year there are 160 new faces in the spinal units of NZ all facing an uncertain and at times fear filled future. Spinal cord impairment is not a fate worse

than death and for many it launches people, albeit unwillingly at first, into extraordinary fulfilling and rewarding lives.

If you need some help to we are here to support your positive future. www.nzst.org.nz



Our Wonderful Journey 2005 - 2020

We warmly invite you to a special night, celebrating 15 years of CatWalk's wonderful journey.

Prepare for an evening of fare and fundraising, with inspiring people and stories, as we reflect on our successes and look forward to a cure for spinal cord injury.

So, don't be late, don't be late for our very important date!

When:

Saturday 25 July 2020, from 6:30pm

Where:

Guineas Ballroom, Ellerslie Event Centre, Auckland

Dress code:

Black tie with a touch of wonderland

Tickets:

\$320 pp or \$3,200 for a table of ten

Buy from catwalk.org.nz/event/our-wonderful-journey
call 06 377 5430 or email info@catwalk.org.nz

"One of the deep secrets of life is that all that is really worth the doing is what we do for others"

- Lewis Carroll

CATWALK
NEVER SAY NEVER

SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH TRUST

Equidays Review

Equidays is held annually at Mystery Creek Events Centre Hamilton. It's mission is to Educate, Equip and Entertain.

In October, three days of competition, clinicians and shopping at the 150+ businesses in attendance kept the large crowd busy.

CatWalk were fortunate to be supported by Mitavite/Hygain who pledged 10% of all sales at the event to spinal cord injury research.

Also in attendance was Michelle Morland from Magnum Industries and Kate Lambie from Hit-Air Vests who continue to be strong supporters of CatWalk with their generous regular donations.



Team Mitavite



Michelle Morland (left) Magnum Industries

Land Rover Horse of the Year supports spinal cord injury research

CatWalk are thrilled to be supported by the 2020 Land Rover Horse of the Year Show held in Hastings 11th – 15th March 2020.



Land Rover Horse of the Year is the premiere event for all things equestrian with many prestigious titles being decided in various competitions including eventing, dressage, show jumping and showing.

CatWalk founder, Catriona Williams, was a regular competitor at Land Rover Horse of the Year winning both Pony of the Year and Lowry Medallion Rider of the Year amongst many other accolades, and father, Stu McLeod, is a familiar voice on the microphone as he expertly commentates the main show jumping arena. Last year the ESNZ Hall of Fame evening was a wonderful event where friends and supporters joined together

for a night of great stories and laughter – and to see MC Kerre McIvor parading a Richie McCaw signed All Blacks jersey! Bidders were generous with a total of \$13,600 raised for spinal cord injury research.

This year the Land Rover Horse of the Year management team are planning a very special evening event with the opportunity to once again bid on some exciting auction items. There is also an opportunity for competitors to support through an entry donation, and more details on will be available on the CatWalk website and the Land Rover Horse of the Year website www.hoy.kiwi early in 2020.

Thank You

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VIP HOSPITALITY

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CATWALK + LITTLE WOLF

SUNDAY 8TH DECEMBER

SATURDAY 7TH

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INCLUDES:
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COMPLEMENTARY BEVERAGE
RING SIDE SEATING
CROSS COUNTRY TOUR
\$10 DONATED TO CATWALK PER TICKET

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Mangatangi Magic - SJ Training Day

Sunday 27th OCTOBER 2019

Cheleken Equestrian - Mangatangi - All levels welcome
Jump Quality SJ Courses with Course walks, tips and assistance from professional Trainers

For bookings and info please contact us
via PM or tamahu@xtra.co.nz
Text or phone - 021929833

10% of all proceeds go to CATWALK
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Name:

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Yes, I want to donate to spinal cord injury research.

Please accept my gift: (all donations of \$5 or more are tax deductible)

One-Off Donation

OR

Regular Donation

I authorise CatWalk to make automatic deductions from my credit card until further notice.

Amount: \$ Frequency: Weekly Monthly

Payment Method:

Please debit my credit card: VISA MasterCard Amount: \$

Card Number: Expiry Date:

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Signature:

OR I have enclosed my cheque to
The CatWalk Trust

OR Via our website
www.catwalk.org.nz/help-us/#donate

OR Direct Credit to ANZ account number
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Please ensure the following details are provided so we can track and acknowledge your details accurately:

- In the Internet bank field called "particulars" put [YOUR NAME]



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