

CatWalk

*Your pathway to
information and
support for a cure*



Ahipara Game Fish Club	
Date	06.03.2012
Angler	KEV GRIFFITHS
Species	STRIPED MARLIN
Weight	134.2 KGS
Line	60 KG
Boat	WILDCAT
Skipper	GINTY M

The official magazine of The CatWalk Spinal Cord Injury Trust

The CatWalk Spinal Cord Injury Trust

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DECEMBER 2012



COVER IMAGE: SCI Achiever Kevin Griffiths

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Founder's

Footnote

Dear CatWalk Supporters,

The hot topic of the moment is the **New York Marathon**. I've been contacted a lot recently by people who have done it as part of **Team CatWalk** in the past and also many who have supported our runners and the theme was consistent...they really felt for our 28 strong team. Led this year by **CatWalk Patron Dion Nash** and **CatWalk Chair Sam Howard**, the Team had committed a full year to their training with the goal of ticking that marathon off their bucket list. They got to the final hurdle and, believe it or not, the fun part was not to be.

Our thoughts were naturally with the New York and New Jersey residents who were affected so badly by Super Storm Sandy. Here in NZ, we are all too familiar with the devastating effects of natural disasters. The controversial decision of whether to run the event or not will be discussed for a long time and there is a very interesting letter on The CatWalk Trust Facebook page, forwarded to me by a good friend Sarah Biss who is an ultra-marathoner, that I would encourage you to read. www.facebook.com/thecatwalktrust

Consuming my movements at the moment is **The BIG Cycle**. The training is vast and varied taking me and my cycling buddy **Penny Barnett** all over NZ as we plan to tackle mountain climbs but also enjoy the preparation leading up to a trip of a lifetime. **Neil Cudby**, my partner in crime and fellow wheelie on this adventure, is a constant source of enthusiasm and it's really great to have his companionship as we go forward into the unknown of preparing our bikes and ourselves for cycling to Everest base camp.

Scott Malcolm, CatWalk Trustee, has taken a month out of his busy schedule next year to be an important part of the team as we aim to raise awareness about SCI research and funds towards a cure. Scott, you may not realise it but you inspire me every day to believe that getting off my butt and onto my feet is always a real and achievable goal.

I would like to make a special mention of **Tim, Trish and Alex Pearce** who recently lost their son and brother, **Cam**, tragically. Dealing with the curve balls that life throws at us can be daunting and a real rollercoaster of emotions but nothing, nothing, is more important than the special relationships of family and friends.

As Ellen DeGeneres would say '**Be kind to one another**'



a message from our International Patron

Dear CatWalk Supporters

With the end of 2012 fast approaching, it's fantastic to hear of the progress CatWalk continues to make in the race for a cure for SCI.

And what a year it's been. For many of us, the **Olympic Games** proved an **unforgettable highlight**. I was proud to be **part of the British eventing team**, and thrilled to be able to share the medal ceremony with **my Kiwi friends** who **collected the bronze**.

Greenwich Park and it's wonderful London backdrop gave us the chance to showcase our sport at it's best. Our partners, the horses who give us so much and ask for so little, were celebrated in the style they deserve.

Yes, the Olympics were something I will never forget and I know I was privileged to take part.

But for me, and the millions who watched in the stadiums and on television, the **Paralympics** just a few weeks later **delivered equally strong messages** about the **triumph of the human spirit**.

I was humbled to watch the performances of the world's Paralympic athletes - the motto of those Games was "**Spirit in Motion**," and that is something we can all **try to live by**.

Best wishes to you all for 2013

Zara Phillips, MBE

NATIONAL PATRONS

Aaron Slight, MNZM

Dion Nash

Lance O'Sullivan, ONZM

Richie McCaw

Sir Brian Lochore, ONZ, KNZM, OBE

Mark Todd, CBE

Sarah Walker

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Sam Howard (Chair)

Dr Rick Acland

Rebecca Scott

Pip McCarroll

Ben Petro

Scott Malcolm

Derek Lindsay

FOUNDER

Catriona Williams



THE NEW YORK REPORT..... surviving Sandy and keeping on running!

TEAM CATWALK RAISES A PHENOMENAL \$232,000 For SCI Research!

The lead up to this year's **ING New York Marathon** was unique to say the least. **Hurricane Sandy** hit New York on **October 28th, two days before Team CatWalk was due to arrive**. With flights cancelled, the subway flooded and information coming out of New York limited, it's fair to say the team was apprehensive! We all departed as planned, none of us sure if we would get any further than LA or San Francisco, but still full of optimism. Some of the team had an unplanned stop-over on route, but by Thursday night the bulk of us were safe and sound in our hotel rooms in New York.

We woke on Friday to a surprisingly pleasant day. With the subway closed from flooding, orientating ourselves in New York required a lot of walking. Our Icebreaker cocktail party, scheduled for that night, was unfortunately cancelled due to the storm. Like all of Soho, the Icebreaker store was without power. No problem, the team was delighted to finally be in New York and we agreed to meet at the hotel bar that evening as an alternative. The Mayor of New York, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, made an announcement at mid-day Friday, confirming the **ING New York Marathon** will definitely **go ahead** as planned. This was a great relief to the team, as rumours of the marathon being cancelled were rife. However, as I was getting ready to catch up with the team that evening, my phone starting running red hot. **Breaking news!** Only a matter of hours after announcing the marathon was definitely on, Mayor Bloomberg was back on TV announcing, due to public backlash, the **marathon had been cancelled**. I watched each team member arrive at the hotel bar, each looking more distressed than the last. Some were angry at the last minute change of plans, some were upset, all felt completely gutted. However, we did understand, and knew that cancelling the marathon was the

right thing to do. The **devastation to New York was huge**. Thousands of people had no power, many lost their homes, and some lost lives.

That night, after one or two drinks to commiserate, the team agreed on two things; we would help in the clean-up, and we would also do what we came here to do - run.

Sunday morning (Marathon day) was a gorgeous, crisp day. As we left our hotel, there was a definite hum of activity. Thousands of runners found themselves at Central Park ready to run a make shift marathon. The **vibe was amazing**. People ran anything from one lap to four. Four laps around Central Park is a full marathon, and was the original course up until 1976. The team was delighted to get out and run. While it wasn't the run they planned, it was brilliant. The atmosphere was fantastic, and the crowds watching were beyond enthusiastic. The run done, the team turned its focus to the night ahead.

That evening we all met at a gorgeous restaurant in Soho called Public. We had a truly fantastic evening, with an impromptu speech by **CatWalk Patron, Dion Nash** and surprise prize giving for the team. The celebration went on into the wee small hours.

The team was truly amazing. They remained **optimistic, positive** and **enthusiastic** throughout the trip. They all trained hard, fund raised brilliantly and absolutely **earned their medals!** We left New York with only fond memories and a huge admiration for New Yorker's. New Yorker's were suffering terribly in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, yet were so welcoming and genuinely delighted to host us.

Will we be back next year? You betcha!



CATWALK TEAM 2012



New York 2012 Emails

A RUNNERS PERSPECTIVE

This email from Neil Anderson of Team CatWalk illustrates the rollercoaster ride of emotions and drama that was NY2012!

"A few wines last night drowning our sorrows [Saturday night, after the official marathon was cancelled]. A plan emerged to get up early and run a marathon around Manhattan. The initial flurry of enthusiasm soon waned, but two especially stubborn punters stayed in there - me, and my mate Mark Jones - Jonesy - with his knackered calf. So we got up at 6am and ran our own NYC marathon. We ran together to the 28km mark and then we agreed I would make a run for it to try to dip under 4 hours. I abandoned him shortly before our somewhat intuitive route turned to custard. As I leapt the median barrier in between two sets of 5 lane freeway traffic to get myself up on to 1st Avenue, I couldn't help but think I might never see Jonesy again.

Anyway, I dodged 65 streets worth of NYC traffic up 1st Avenue and then scooted across to the top of Central Park where I traced the last few miles of the official course, albeit unofficially. A gazillion other punters were doing ceremonial laps and partying hard. It was pretty awesome. Looked at my watch and with 1 mile to go, had to run pretty fast to get under 4 hours. This challenge was somewhat amplified by having to weave through the aforementioned masses, none of whom were in any great hurry. My watch clicked over to 42.2k in the chute formerly known as the official finishing chute, about 50 metres from the finish. My time: 3:59.12. And my beautiful wife was there waiting for me with coffee!

Jonesy got waylaid trying to negotiate free Gatorade from a street vendor and then got a bit lost, but cruised in later, calf intact and looking chuffed. Photo attached. In the end, we turned this into a great day. Off to the pub."

Hi All,

As you will know the NY marathon was cancelled on the Friday eve prior to the race, just 36 hours before we were due to get under way. This was the right decision given the conditions for the locals in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, but hugely disappointing for those of us ready to run and already in NYC.

As a result, the plan is now that I will have a crack at the NYM's sister marathon, otherwise known as the Wanganui 3 bridges marathon, in 3 weeks' time on Dec 8th. This will be both to get the distance done in an official race environment, and also to fulfil the task I pledged to you all as sponsors of the CatWalk spinal cord injury trust, which you all gave so generously for.

Thanks again for all your support - they say getting to the start line of a marathon is the greatest challenge, and I've certainly found that to be the case!

Andrew Crombie



Hi everyone,

Seems a long time since the Andiamo Long Lunch, which you all generously supported, with a view to me doing the pain of the New York Marathon.

As you are probably aware, the marathon this year was cancelled due to Hurricane Sandy and to say the least all the competitors were gutted. All that training!

I wasn't alone in deciding to go out and drink Martinis on the Saturday night I would otherwise have been carbo loading and tucking up early.

The next day on my way to the Met I noticed a few people running around Central Park about 20,000 actually, so I decided to join them for a commiseration lap of the park.

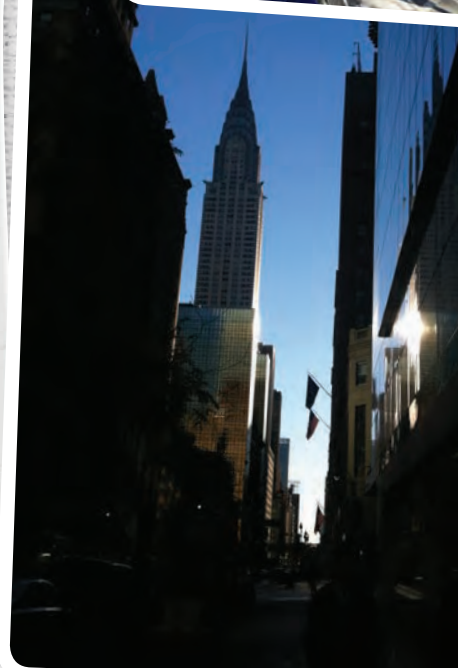
I then thought of all you girls and the Catwalk Trust and just kept running, and 4 and a bit laps later (at 10km a lap) I ran the the whole 42, the "Unofficial" NYC Marathon of 2012. My time was 3 hours and 58 minutes.

Couple of things I might do differently next time, like wear a sports bra, get to bed before 2am, have breakfast, not be hungover with last night's makeup on and take some water.

Thanks again for supporting me.

Cheers

Keitha McLaren xx



New York 2012 Events



24 hour Tennis Marathon

by Lucy Mackenzie.

Team CatWalk member Justin Mackenzie ticked two important boxes when coming up for an idea with his fundraiser; it was innovative and it was based around what he knew. As a tennis coach, it made perfect sense to plan and host a 24 hour tennis marathon. It was a great success **raising \$5500 for CatWalk.**

Justin, who is from Westmere in Auckland and is a father of 4, started his marathon at 4pm on 28th September at the West End Lawn Tennis Club in Westmere, Auckland. His first opponent was **Russell Jones** who is a local parent, friend and also a quadriplegic. Russell proved very worthy to kick off the event and played an hour of tennis with Justin in the rain!

The next few hours went along well as the crowds started gathering in the club rooms to eat, drink and watch. At 6pm it was Mr Cricket vs Mr Tennis as **CatWalk Patron Dion Nash**

arrived for a bash. He was actually pretty good..... for a cricketer!

As more people turned up and had a few drinks, the tennis was pretty easy for Justin. Several of his regular businessmen and midweek tennis ladies had a hit with him after a few wines which made it less challenging for him!

11pm arrived and the party was rocking. The auction prizes were selling well and the bar was doing a brisk trade! The lovely girls from our generous sponsors Red Bull

arrived with some freebies and posed for a picture. Midnight came and went and Justin was still not finding it too taxing as

he usually coaches 8-10 hours each day.

Pizzas came and went. TV 1 came and filmed him (he made it onto the late news). I even remembered to feed and massage him at some stage! The really serious friends turned up throughout the night – what support and dedication!

Jamie (Justin's 4 year old) fell asleep under the table tennis table - even with a tournament going on above him - and sometime around 2am the 11 year olds finally went to sleep as well! Mr Tennis was still going strong though and just kept hitting those furry yellow things back to his lucky opponent in the small hours.

His devoted team of organizers crashed out at about 4 am only to be woken rudely by the 6am hitters demanding breakfast - ugh, we were regretting the drinks party earlier in the marathon! Anyway, we produced bacon and eggs (and lots of coffee!) before swinging into the next 12 hrs.

Lots of fresh faced tennis players hit with Justin through the day, and then at 3pm, in the final hour.... we had some fellow Team CatWalk Marathon runners appear! **Miranda Burdon, Keitha McLaren** and **Dom Harvey** from **The Edge Radio Station** joined Justin for an amusing hour of doubles, playing a real game and enjoying the atmosphere build amongst the 60 spectators who turned up. The rain came but so did the cheers! It was all great fun and at 4pm as Justin threw his racquet into the air, we fired champagne everywhere to celebrate!



In the Swing

Team CatWalk 2012 members Andrew Crombie, Neil Anderson and Mark Jones got 'In the Swing' of it at their fundraising golf day on September 14th at **Shandon Golf Club** in **Lower Hutt**. Despite tough weather conditions, it was a great day which raised a fabulous **\$15,000 for CatWalk**. **Stephen Fleming's team** topped the competition, **Jesse Ryder** won the **long drive** and current touring pros **Gareth Paddison** and **Nick Gillespie** were on course assisting and advising. Andrew, Neil and Mark would like to **thank everyone who donated auction prizes** as well as **event sponsors JBWere, Yealands Estate Wines** and **Titleist**.





Bledisloe Cup Lunch

Four guys organizing a lunch at Euro on the day of the Bledisloe Cup... recipe for disaster? Probably. But did they pull it off? Absolutely!

With tickets to the lunch sold out, anticipation of what to expect was growing. The boys; **Ollie Bradshaw, Dan Dale, Mark Francis** and **Nick Ross**, were hosting the lunch as part of their fundraising for being part of **Team CatWalk, running the 2012 New York Marathon**.

Guest speakers, **Murray Mexted** and **Nick Farr-Jones** provided the entertainment - and entertain they did! Much banter between the two about their friendship now and their not so friendly relationship when they first met kept the audience amused. The rivalry between New Zealand and Australia was touched on, and in typical Australian fashion, expectations were high about Australia's inevitable win that night?! As we all know, the game didn't quite follow that plan with a convincing win by All Blacks.

An auction followed which was enthusiastically run by **auctioneer John Bowring** from **Colliers**. John was brilliant with the crowd, which was growing louder as the afternoon progressed. Some amazing items were auctioned on the day, including accommodation at **Rathmoy Lodge, a round of golf at Wairakei International**

Golf Course, and a **ToraTora Mountain Bike experience**.

Among the more interesting items to be auctioned was a vasectomy by **Peter Gilling** at **UroBOP**. This was purchased by **Bridget Mathewson** who enthusiastically bid on behalf of her husband. Apparently he was delighted with the surprise when she returned home! A date with the gorgeous **Anna Hutchison** at the stunning **Mudbrick Restaurant** on **Waiheke Island** was fought over by many men in the room. Anna, who attended the lunch, was very happy with the final winner. The grand finale to be auctioned was **dinner for four with John Key** at **Botswana Butchery**. The raucous crowd grew quiet as the bidding got serious. **John Bowring** finally threw down the hammer at **\$19,000**. The winner was thrilled!

The boys raised a fantastic \$40,000 on the day - all of which goes directly to **The CatWalk Trust** so we can fund **research to find a cure for spinal cord injuries**. Thank you to the boys for organising such a wonderful event, and a huge thank you to all the hugely generous supporters who provided auction items, and everyone who attended. And the AB's win on the night was the icing on the cake!



Top Fundraisers

Well done to **Team CatWalk 2012** who raised a phenomenal **\$232,000**
CatWalk is absolutely thrilled! The **Top Fundraiser** was **Ollie Bradshaw**,
who raised a staggering **\$21,242** followed by **Sam "Chairman" Howard** who
raised **\$20,110** and **Brendan O'Sullivan** who raised **\$15,355**



You Guys
ROCK!

A HUGE **Thank you**
to our **Major Sponsors.**

Your continued support of CatWalk and our New York
Marathon Team is FANTASTIC.... Thank you!!



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Team
CatWalk

The CatWalk Trust is now accepting applications to join **Team CatWalk for the New York Marathon in 2013.**

WHAT?

The **ING New York City Marathon** is one of the world's greatest road races. With 2 million people lining the streets to support you the experience will fly by as you run 42km through all five boroughs of The Big Apple. It is truly a once-in-a-lifetime, bucket list event!

WHEN?

Sunday 3rd November 2013

Travel from Auckland on Wednesday 30th October, returning Wednesday 6th November.

WHO?

Anyone who would like to support **The CatWalk Trust** while ticking off a huge goal on their life to-do list at the same time. You don't have to have any previous experience of long distance running, we just look for enthusiasm, dedication, motivation and a desire to support **CatWalk**. All Team CatWalk members must pay for their own entry, airfare and accommodation package which must be purchased through our approved marathon partner travel agent. In addition to this, all Team CatWalk members will be asked to fundraise for the Trust.

Full details of expectations can be viewed at www.catwalk.org.nz. All funds raised go directly towards research for a cure for spinal cord injuries.

HOW?

Application forms can be downloaded from www.catwalk.org.nz. If you have any other questions please feel free to call **06 377 5430**.

POST OLYMPIC PARTY.....



CatWalk celebrated its Olympic champions in style, as our all-conquering team returned to New Zealand for their 'welcome home' tour of the country in September. **Thanks to the ongoing support of Bell Tea and Icebreaker**, both of whom back SCI research and equestrian, our **bronze medal winning eventers** were up front and centre all the way, with **CatWalk Patron Mark Todd** and teammates **Andrew Nicholson** and **Jock Paget** joining supporters for a 'thank you' party in Wellington.

Of course, their Olympic successes proved that **CatWalk** sure knows how to pick them: as well as Toddy, two of our other Patrons - **Sarah Walker** (silver, cycling BMX) and **Zara Phillips** (silver, team eventing) - were also on the podium in London.

Kindly hosted by **Chris Parkin** at the **Museum Hotel**, the Wellington gathering proved a great opportunity to mix and mingle with Mark, Andrew and Jock, all of whom were happy to chat and sign autographs. A panel session hosted by **Stuart McLeod** gave the audience the chance to ask questions about the behind the scenes happenings in and around the London Games - with some very revealing answers! The trio of boys were in agreement that the success of the London Games will ultimately rest with the way they presented equestrian sports in a more accessible way. Initial doubts about how Greenwich Park would cope were well and truly put to rest as the fans flocked to watch and learn from the world's best.

And speaking of the best, there's no doubt New Zealand's equestrians ARE just that. **Thank you to Mark, Andrew and Jock** for your support of and enthusiasm for CatWalk. **We couldn't do it without you!**

NEWS & VIEWS

On Yer Feet

Our girl, **On Yer Feet**, is a growing teenager! On Yer Feet is still the feisty redhead that **Ian Macdonald** and his son bought from the **Karaka Sales** back in 2010 but she's maturing into a stunning young lady. **Ian** and co-owner **Peter Hart** have very generously donated an amazing 50% of the gross profits from her racing and breeding career to The CatWalk Trust – in her 2yr old season

that was over \$6,500! Bred by **Sir Patrick Hogan**, she certainly has the pedigree to go far. Her trainer **Lisa Latta** is happy with the way she's been working recently, she's showing good speed and the team are starting to make some plans for the rest of the season.

If you would like to receive alerts about when **On Yer Feet** is racing so you can go and show your support for getting people back on THEIR feet, please email info@catwalk.org.nz



DONATIONS

When **Don Freeman** wrote his memoirs, "*When I First Came To This Land*" he very generously asked his friends and family to make a donation to **CatWalk** instead of 'buying' the book. So far, Don's book has generated over **\$7,700 in donations** – what an incredible legacy. **CatWalk** is touched and honoured by such a generous gesture. Thank you to all the **Freeman family**.

We would like to make a special mention to those amazing supporters who make regular donations. These weekly or monthly sums may be small or large but they are important for helping us plan for the future effectively and efficiently, ensuring we can fund the essential research when it is needed. We really appreciate people making the commitment to set aside that regular donation for our cause, thank you. If you would like to set up a regular donation, please email info@catwalk.org.nz

Thank You!

VAN and LINDA HOWARD for donating 2 nights at their gorgeous accommodation, **Tom's Cottage** in Hawkes Bay as a prize to our top fundraiser for NY Marathon.

URLAR WINE for your continued support and donation of your divine wine.

SABATO for providing CatWalk with your amazing Gift Baskets filled with tasty treats.

Farmers Back CatWalk

Over **100 farmers from all over Australasia** make up the **Platinum Primary Producers Group (PPP)**. In March 2012 their annual meeting was held in Masterton and **Catriona Williams** was invited to speak. Farming is a high risk industry for spinal cord injuries and **Catriona's** talk was very well received. Following this, **PPP** have selected **The CatWalk Trust** to be their **chosen charity for this year** which is fantastic news. A number of activities have already occurred to support CatWalk, including the recent **Good Taste Cocktail Party** held in

Brisbane as part of the **EKKA celebrations** to help spread the word along with the **Allflex luggage tags** that you can order with your name and telephone number on. A great Christmas present or stocking filler! Just email nicola@catwalk.org.nz and that can be organised for you. The PPP team have also donated to **The BIG Cycle** as a '**Peak Sponsor**'. **Catriona will be speaking at the 2013 conference in Brisbane** where the swanndri's and moleskins will be traded for dinner suits and the real farming fun begins!

A special thanks to PPP and Allflex for their generous support.





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Sabato is a stockist and supplier of fine foods from Italy, France and Spain as well as New Zealand's finest products. They have been extremely generous to CatWalk, donating divine hampers and goodies which are always in great demand at auction and are received with delight and greedy anticipation! A huge thank you to Phil and Jacqui and the Sabato team for their wonderful support.

6x6 Explorer

Advertorial

If you want to go for a 'walk' along the beach or across a paddock or through rugged bush in your manual or power chair then you are in trouble as generally they are only made for the smooth dry concrete of town. For **Kemcare Ltd's** engineer, **Dave Griffiths**, this was the problem his Tetraplegic brother came to him with, how to get out of the confines of town, into the countryside and down and on to the beach, and more importantly get back home again afterwards.

Kemcare's solution was an **electric wheelchair** that is incredibly **powerful** and **effectively waterproof**. That is not to say you can drive it through the river, however it can **go through puddles** plus **wet sand** or **mud** without any **detrimental effect to the aluminium and stainless steel chassis and bodywork**.

With fold up armrests and a **low front foot rest area** the **6x6 Explorer** is deliberately set

up so that it is as **easy as possible** for a user **get into from a wheelchair**. Once seated in the **6x6 Explorer** the user can be **securely belted in** with the **full four point harness** and **leg restraints** can be **fitted** if needed. The armrests and

the seat itself can also be folded down for transporting the **6x6 Explorer** in the **back of a van or station wagon**.

Sitting in the **6x6 Explorer** the first thing you notice is how comfortable the seat is, effectively it **feels like an armchair on wheels**. The Chair comes standard with a **low profile suspension seat** that is **adjustable to 150kgs**, a **powerful spot light** and a **2500LB winch**, which is simple and easy to unplug and can **fit both in the rear and in the front of the chair**. On the mudguards there is enough room for pair of small carry trays if wanted, although some people have requested fishing rod holders or rifle holders, all of which are optional extras as is a **full waterproof canopy** which can be made in a variety of colours. Each **6x6 Explorer** is **made specifically for an individual owner** and is **set up especially for that person's specific needs**.

The **6x6 Explorer** has **two large 100 amp gel batteries** under the seat giving you a **full days driving** (roughly 25kms depending on the terrain) when fully charged. Weighing in at **230 Kilograms plus the user**, the **6x6 Explorer** has a **low centre of gravity** backed by **twin high torque electric motors** which make it very **versatile** for around the farm, lifestyle block, in the **bush or down on the beach**. **Top speed is a comfortable walking pace**.

For more information check out the following website: www.kemcare.co.nz or contact Kevin on 09 4094973 or 021 555094.



New Ambassador



CatWalk is delighted to introduce our **newest Ambassador, Dr Carolyn Beaver**. You may remember Carolyn as our **SCI Achiever** in the **Dec 2011 CatWalk Magazine**. Carolyn's knowledge, first hand experience as a **C5/C6 incomplete tetraplegic** makes her a brilliant person to have on board.

From Carolyn, "I have decided to pursue a career in spinal cord injury research with the aim of being able to use my experiences to help smooth the way somehow for those people who, like me, one day suddenly find themselves needing to adjust to life with a spinal cord impairment. There are many exciting areas of research, from basic science research in animal models looking for the 'cure' to spinal cord injury, to qualitative research to find ways to make the rehabilitation experience as positive as possible for someone learning to live life following SCI. SCI throws many curve balls along the way and despite not being able to walk, run and jump being the most obvious disabilities one would think of, it's also the other effects such as muscle spasticity, pain, bowel and bladder dysfunction that actually makes day-to-day functioning more tricky and tiring. Any rigorous research that can be done to add to the body of knowledge to help improve understanding of all of those things surely can only be a good thing."

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CQ bring you a day of golf & dinner in support of **CatWalk**



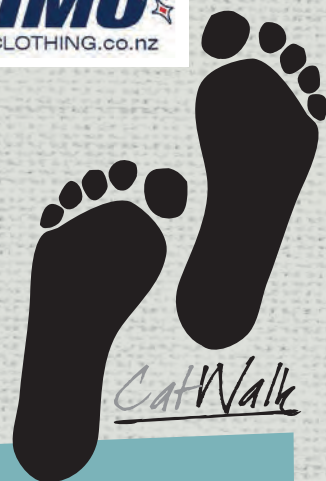
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Dinner: Hilton Lake Taupo

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Dinner, guest speaker and auction **\$110**

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5. Unisex socks \$6



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6 months To Go and counting!!!

The BIG Cycle Team is still training hard, with minor tweaks being ironed out. Catriona's bike has just arrived home after being worked on by the fantastic team at Metalform (Dannevirke) Ltd. They are trying a new technique of changing the foot pedals to be more like that on a go-cart, and are connected to her hand pedals. This means Catriona's legs move as she pedals. When asked what the benefit of this was, she was quick to list them: better blood circulation, coping with cold by keeping legs moving and finally stimulating the legs to possibly encourage any tingles or maybe even more movement...a long shot but not totally unrealistic! A number of the team completed the Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge in November, which was great training for the trip ahead.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

The BIG Cycle team would like to thank Shane McManaway and PPP for their hugely generous donation of \$10,000 - thank you so much!! PPP have purchased the first 'peak'. Shane and the PPP team will continue their support of CatWalk by holding a fantastic event for us at their annual conference in Brisbane in April 2013. It is the support and generosity of people like Shane and the PPP team that make a REAL difference. With your help, we will get people out of wheelchairs and back on their feet! Thank you.

MEET THE ONE OF TEAM....NEIL CUDBY:

"I am a handsome 39-year-old", originally hailing from the central North Island where mountains, rivers and lakes were integral in my upbringing. I now live the dream of wife, kids and a house near a coastal beach - Papamoa. In life I like balance of the heart, head and body. How about a Tibetan handcycle tour to the top of the world to lift the balance bar! Oh yeah - a lot of people ask me how I ended up like this when I first meet them - I questioningly refer them to the italic word first line of this bio - they giggle and ask again. Ohhh - I broke my neck playing rugby when I was 17. The label reads C5 Tetra.

Here is Neils update...

"This has been a great journey already. I've learnt so much about my body, nutrition, sleep, Nepal/ Tibet/the Himalayas, altitude sickness and I haven't even paid for my plane ticket yet!

With the training the body is getting more efficient and better at coping with everyday things.

Pushing the limits out a little certainly makes old challenges easy. Plenty of clichés there - benefits of exercise, nutrition, lifestyle etc though what I do truly believe is getting this right for my broken ass (and other quads/tetras) is exponentially beneficial to ones being. At times I feel like I can conquer the world - which sure helps when playing big bad wolf, monsters, princesses and save the day princes with my little daughters. Then there are rides without enough food in the system, trying to exert after a tough night with the little ones or training at the end of 3 week intense stint and I just want to sleep! Good hard lessons that bring me back down to earth.

At this stage of my training I'm working on strength, and increasing endurance with one longer ride. I increase the distance and time in the saddle each week. This means 3 weights sessions and 4-5 rides varying from 1 to 4 hour sessions. The long bike session is up to 3-4 hours and about 40 kms with plenty of hills at the mo. Targeting events as milestones test my mettle as well as adding variety in the scenery and getting amongst the different communities which is great. Biking round Lake Rotorua and Lake Taupo have certainly tested this wolf's huff and puff to blow your house in!

So far the things I am enjoying are the scenery, being faster and stronger, my food(!), precious time, the learning, early morning session and having an epic event to focus on. What I don't enjoy so much is not having enough food (hypoglycemia is no fun!), late night sessions, time away from the family which plays on the guilt pangs. **I am really enjoying what having an epic target brings to your life. The focus, the fear, the lessons and generally getting better at everything to ensure the success of this adventure. The journey has long begun and it continues to grow. Thanks a million to everyone who has supported us thus far - it certainly helps lift us to the 'roof top of the world.'**

Follow the team and their progress on Facebook (www.facebook.com/TheCatWalkTrust) and Twitter (@NeilCudby @CatWalkTrust and @CatWalkBigCycle) If you would like to receive regular email updates or to make a donation to The BIG Cycle, please contact emma@catwalk.org.nz

SCI Achiever

Kevin Griffiths



In **1978** I obtained a **SCI of C5/C6** after I dove into a Para Pool. I had swum along the bottom and misjudged the side and hit my head breaking my neck resulting in Tetraplegia. I was 13 years old at the time and back then no-one had the luxury of today's modern aids, appliances or light weight wheelchairs etc, you simply made do with what was available.

I spent 6 months at the Otara Spinal unit before going back home. Whilst it was a big change in life for me I was still young so I went back to complete High School at Mt Roskill Grammar in Auckland, with one of my favourite subjects being Art. During my school years, I obtained my drivers license and became interested in CB and Ham Radios, afterwards I spent the rest of my youth being a typical teenager hanging out with my mates.

I really wanted to travel so when I was 21 I went to Europe with a couple of friends and spent 3 months living in various Youth Hostels and staying in the back of an old VW van we had bought in London. A couple of years later I met Emma, (now my partner of 26 years) who encouraged me to participate in wheelchair sports, namely track and field events run by ParaFed New Zealand and it was during this time that we heard about a game called Murder Ball being played in Canada and the USA. Curiosity got the better of us and in 1988 we went to The Ranchos Los Amigos Spinal Rehabilitation Unit in Los Angeles to see how the game was played, this was to be a turning point in my life. On our return I managed to get a few other Quads interested in playing the game and over the next 14 years I competed, both Nationally and Internationally, in what is now known as Wheelchair Rugby. Some of my achievements within this awesome sport include winning the best 0.5 player at the first World Champs in 1995 in Switzerland, playing a 6 month season in Houston for the Gulf Coast Hurricanes, and whilst there making three all tournament teams as the best 0.5 and also to date I have been the only New Zealand low pointer to have played a season in the USAQRA League.

Prior to my accident I had always been interested in drawing and painting so over the years whenever I was visiting the Otara spinal Unit I used to watch Grant Sharman and the late Alex Craig painting with their mouths. They both suggested that I should try painting with my mouth so in 1991 I submitted some of my paintings to the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists and the following year I was awarded a Scholarship as a Student Member. Since then I have been sending the originals of my paintings to the Head Office in Liechtenstein for consideration for them to be reproduced into either greetings cards, gift paper, bookmarks, jigsaws or even placemats. In 2001 I became an Associate Member of the Mouth and Foot Painting Artists Association, which is now my full time job. Many of my paintings have been reproduced, not only in New Zealand and Australia, but all over the world and I have won several art awards when my paintings have been exhibited at National and International competitions.

I have always loved the outdoors and Emma and I spent every holiday every year for 10 years at the local campground in Ahipara at 90 Mile Beach, towing our off roader behind us so we could play in the sand dunes before finally buying our home there in 1998.

I love living up at 90 mile beach as there is so much to do but I needed a wheelchair that would allow me to get down onto the beach and explore the amazing coastline. I searched the net and found something I liked but it was not as good as I thought it was going to be so my brother, who is a fitter by trade, said he could build something better to suit the NZ terrain. After a few years of trying different options he built an outdoor electric all terrain chair that goes where my regular power chair could never go, it works extremely well for all the things I love doing namely fishing, hunting, bush walks etc. The chair is called the 6x6 Explorer.

Emma and I run our own company called **Kemcare Ltd**, we are the NZ agents for the Uppertone gym, which was designed by a C4 Quad in the USA, and is made for people with limited or no hand function to be able to do the 16 upperbody exercises unassisted. Kemcare Ltd are also the manufacturers of the **6X6 Explorer Electric wheelchair**.

I have never let the fact that I broke my neck get in the way of my life. I have always believed that if one door closes another one will open. It is up to us all to make the most of every situation. I certainly have never felt sorry for myself and I can honestly say that I am thankful for all the experiences I've had since my accident 34 years ago.



Research Updates

Research Update from CatWalk Trustee, Dr Rick Acland

Having recently attended the **51st Annual Scientific Meeting** of the **International Spinal Cord Society** meeting in **London**, I am excited with developments that are occurring in 'repair' of SCI.

The novelty of stem cell therapy is waning; not that any stem cell implant to date has ever achieved mobility. At CatWalk, we have not supported this approach to cure. We do have a keen interest in other avenues of '**repair endeavour**'. The work that the Auckland team are doing is certainly looking promising for halting the early progressive damage following the initial cord insult; this was supported by some of the presentations in London.

Our support of the intensive exercise programmes seems to be appropriate as there is more evidence being presented about improved independence with such an approach. The Christchurch team are exploring the use of **epidural electrical stimulation below the level of cord damage to improve function**. This approach (neuroprosthesis) was highlighted as another worthwhile therapy in SCI at the London meeting. One speaker from Zurich also raised the topic that the spinal cord should be renamed '**the spinal brain**'. He compared it to being the engine of the car, and that the fuel/accelerator/steering comes from the brain stem. The spinal cord is part of the brain, not it's servant! The use of exoskeletons to enable paraplegia people to stand and walk has progressed dramatically since this approach was first launched by NZ's **Rex Bionics**.

CatWalk is keen to support these NZ initiatives which are being intensely considered by the world.



PEPTIDE PROGRESS IN THE TREATMENT OF SPINAL CORD INJURY.

By Professor Louise Nicholson, Professor Colin Green and Dr Simon O'Carroll.

After spinal cord injury the lesion spreads and swelling and inflammation exacerbate the injury. Regulating the abnormal opening of gap junction membrane channels has already proven to be an effective means of dampening down the inflammation and swelling, and significantly sparing neurons in several wound models including spinal cord injury. The gap junction team at the University of Auckland has two gap junction channel regulators under development. Their antisense oligodeoxynucleotide approach is well advanced in clinical trials for skin and eye wounds, and baseline data for spinal cord injury treatments has been obtained. This treatment is in a gel form that needs to be applied topically but the team is now focusing on a peptide that can be delivered by injection directly into the blood stream (most spinal cord injuries are closed, not open wounds). We have been able to demonstrate that the peptide is efficacious in protecting following spinal cord injury and this data has been submitted for publication. The peptide has also shown further treatment efficacy with two important papers describing use in central nervous system injury already published this year. The first of these was on perinatal brain ischemia and the other central nervous system (retinal) stroke. Both have been published in high impact journals (Annals of Neurology and Brain).

Whilst we have shown that the peptide can be very effective for treatment of central nervous system injury, regulatory authorities are likely to require a better understanding of both where and how the peptide acts. Two new studies to provide important preclinical data to help facilitate clinical development will commence in November this year. Peptide site of action assays will be undertaken by a CatWalk Trust funded summer student Kate Burgess. Kate was our North Island and National New Zealand Brain Bee Champion in 2009 representing New Zealand at the International Brain Bee Challenge in San Diego in 2010. Kate's work will enable the team to determine which parts of the peptide are involved in peptide-gap junction protein interactions and which parts are essential for function.

A new PhD student will also begin work with the peptides later this year. We wish to expand our dose response studies and determine peptide stability in serum and the effect of peptide modifications on stability (and function) to ensure optimum delivery. Identifying binding kinetics of the peptides by analysing channel opening properties (and peptide interaction) under injury conditions will also be undertaken.

The aim of these two studies is to determine mechanisms as well as to optimise delivery and functional efficacy. This work underpins the spinal injury studies being undertaken in the CatWalk Spinal Research Facility within the Centre for Brain Research at the University of Auckland.

CatWalk funding coming to fruition: Kate Burgess in 2009, winning the Brain Bee challenge which is sponsored by The CatWalk Trust. She is now a summer student at the CatWalk Spinal Research Facility at the University of Auckland and is working on projects which will provide preclinical data to help facilitate clinical development of the peptide.



SPINAL CORD INJURY NETWORK CONNECTS GLOBAL RESEARCH



The **Spinal Cord Injury Network** hosted **Connections 2012** at the **Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre** on Monday 13th August. The highly anticipated conference brought together researchers, healthcare professionals, decision-makers, and community members from Australia, New Zealand and around the globe to discuss the future of spinal cord injury Down Under. More than 220 people attended the conference.

Experts from home and abroad outlined developing advances in spinal cord injury research with topics including:

- Will stem cells deliver on their promise?
- Neuroplasticity after spinal cord injury?
- Where are we going with pain treatments?
- Can we do better with clinical trials Down Under?
- If you could...? Priorities of people with spinal cord injury.



The late **Superman** actor **Christopher Reeve's** son, **Matthew Reeve**, ran in the **City2Surf** to raise awareness of spinal cord injury research the day before **Connections 2012** and was a **Keynote Speaker** at the conference. He told the audience his father would be proud to know his legacy continued to inspire developments in spinal cord injury research since his visit to Australia in 2003.

Dr James Guest from the **Miami Project to Cure Paralysis** in Florida showcased plans for a first-in-human clinical trial using **Schwann cells** to repair acute spinal cord injury. The study had just been given the **go ahead by the Food and Drugs Administration** only two weeks before **Connections 2012**. The Phase I safety trial led by Dr James Guest and his team will recruit eight study participants within 3-4 weeks post-injury at the University of Miami.

In her talk, **Professor Sarah Dunlop** from the **University of Western Australia** spoke about spinal cord injury clinical trials in Australia and New Zealand. **Professor Dunlop** stressed the importance of developing a **bi-national strategy** that included a mechanism to **coordinate recruitment of participants in clinical trials**.

The **Spinal Cord Injury Network** is further refining its strategic plan and developing a bi-national strategy following **Connections 2012**. Plans are currently underway for **Connections 2014**.

To view the conference photo gallery or watch presentations visit <https://spinalnetwork.org.au/connections2012>

The **Spinal Cord Injury Network** is an alliance of leading scientists, healthcare professionals, community members and other key stakeholders who are working together to improve treatments and find a cure for spinal cord injuries.

For more information about the **Spinal Cord Injury Network** visit <https://spinalnetwork.org.au>

Chairman's Chat

The growth of **CatWalk** has continued in the year to March 2012. The vast majority of our income (85%) again came from the generous commitment and donations of our supporters. Our second New York Marathon campaign, a wonderful black tie dinner in Auckland, a share in two racehorses (one fibreglass and one real!) and the proceeds from a book illustrate the wide range of activities, ideas and projects we, and our dedicated supporters, utilise to help **CatWalk** meet our goal of finding a cure for spinal cord injuries. With no grants received or government funding, the rest was raised through corporate partnership and sponsorship, prudent investment and merchandise sales.

In the financial year ending March 2012, **51 cents of every dollar raised went directly to funding research projects around New Zealand to find a cure for spinal cord injury**. This is an **8c increase on last year**. We have made regular payments to the dedicated **Spinal Cord Injury Research Facility** within the Centre for **Brain Research** at the University of Auckland and have also granted further funds to the research work by **Professor Louise Nicholson**, **Professor Colin Green** and **Dr Simon O'Carroll** which is making great progress with the development of their peptide. For the fourth year, **CatWalk** has sponsored \$10,000 towards the

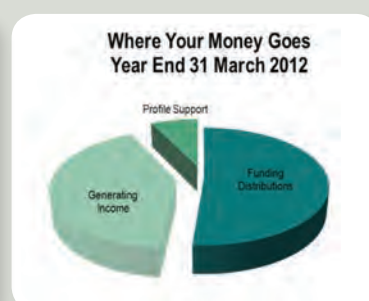
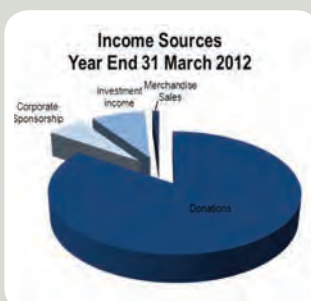
Brain Bee Challenge encouraging young scientists into careers in neuroscience.

8 cents in every dollar was used to increase profile and awareness about spinal cord injury repair with the remaining income used to operate the Trust and generate funds.

Thank you all so much for your continued support, we are extremely excited about the progress that is occurring globally in the area of spinal cord injury repair and are proud to be part of the strengthening collaborative approach internationally. **CatWalk** could not be a part of it without your help.

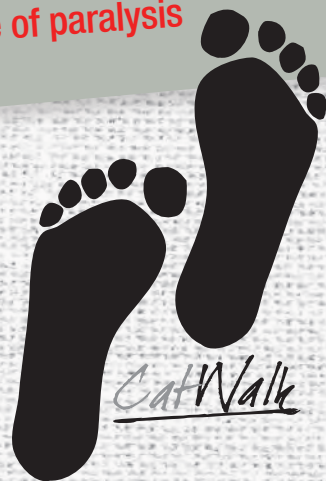
We continue to work towards our ultimate vision of a world where a spinal cord injury does not mean a lifetime of paralysis. Thank you for helping us.

Sam Howard | Chairman



The **only** current cure for SCI is prevention.

Our vision is a world where spinal cord injury does not mean a lifetime of paralysis



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A regular gift (from as little as \$10 a month) can help to provide us with the kind of steady income we need in order to plan ahead and make sure our vital research doesn't stop. If you would like to set up a regular gift please download a form from the 'How You Can Help' page on our website. If you would prefer us to send you a form please contact the office on **06 377 5430** or **info@catwalk.org.nz**



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Thank you for supporting us to get people out of wheelchairs and back on their feet!



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