

## **Kiwi Adventure Trust GO-4-12 Youth Adventure Race**

Last weekend saw some exciting racing at the Kiwi Adventure Trust GO-4-12 Youth Adventure Race, which for the last five years has doubled as the New Zealand Secondary Schools Adventure Racing Championships.

Residents of Moore Road in Haumoana had a strange scene forming at the end of their road as a candle started to glow in the dark at 5:25am on Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> April. The single candle's glow was soon joined by that of another 123 candles making a spectacular site. Complementing the lights was the excited buzz of 124 participants about to compete in the annual Kiwi Adventure Trust GO-4-12 Youth Adventure Race. With a 3! 2! 1! GO! The youth (with some being only 13 years old) disappeared into the dark creating a weaving snake of light that could be seen for miles. Race Director David Tait said "It truly was an impressive site and many commented that it was the coolest start that they had ever seen." One could spend much time pondering the symbolism of the candles (perhaps a metaphor?), but that would take far too long and possibly head off on some sort of tangent. Time and print far better spent reflecting on the impressiveness of all those present, because at the ungodly hour of 5:30am (an hour that most adults are fast asleep let alone a stereotypical teenager), these young people were being anything but stereotypical.



Easily described as intrepid these amazing individuals were starting out on a journey that could take over 12hours to complete. Divided into teams of four from the length and breath of New Zealand they would face a run of 10km, a Mountain Bike more than 35km long, a challenging 18km Climb of Te Mata Peak and an energy sapping raft of 7km and then in addition to all of this, they would build a candle lantern, construct a rock cairn, climb a cave ladder, shoot arrows, plant a tree, abseil and orienteer. They would do all of this in some of the most beautiful Hawke's Bay Countryside around with towering peaks, rushing waterfalls, forests and farmland. "We had so much positive feedback about the scenic symphony that competitors were treated to and I need to publicly say that we are so indebted to landowners for access for this race. Access is a privilege sometimes not often given as many of the areas that we go are private oasis's known by only a few. We are also blessed to have amazing volunteers (some traveling from as far afield as Rotorua), we really could not pull this off without them. It was also heartening in these difficult financial times to have the support of some great businesses

and organizations. This year we were able to give some great prizes to these kids who truly needed acknowledging. So I would be amiss not to acknowledge the following sponsors, Hastings District Council, Infinity Foundation Ltd, More FM, Trust House, Southern Approach, Sea to Summit & Osprey, Macpac, Kathmandu, Rasdex and Tightlines." Mr Tait said.

The racing was exciting with the first teams completing the first two legs over an hour faster than expected. Out in the front New Plymouth Boys A and New Plymouth Boys B were having a great tussle. "We have seen these boys perform well every year, well OK they have won every race that we have staged" Mr Tait said with a smile. But as the race unfolded it was evident that the recent fine weather had dried out the course to allow teams to move considerably faster through the race. "When I did the recon I had to stop several times on the mountain bike and carry my bike because the wheels were so caked with mud they would no longer go around." Mr Tait noted. But little slowed the top teams down and in a stunning display of decision making and athleticism New Plymouth Boys A finished a staggering three hours before the Twelfth Hour deadline to be followed by New Plymouth Boys B. "We all had a nervous time for the next 3 hours as it was still possible that a team could finish just on the deadline but have collected more skill points in an area such as the archery and win over the New Plymouth teams, but in a display of dominance by New Plymouth Boys the first three spots were filled with NPBHS Teams with B edging out A by a minuscule 50 points and E sneaking into third. Team Dora and the Explorers from St Cuthbert's College in Auckland won the girls with Garin College (Nelson) Girls second and New Plymouth Girls (Team G) in third. With the extra time to complete the course Team Hannsome from Onslow College (Wellington) used the extra hour and a half to their advantage and slipped into second

overall and comfortably won the Mixed section with Opunaki Tanks from Opunaki High School in second and Taradale High Schools Team WLME in Third. The best performing local team was Taradale High Schools 4 Guys One Race. Dunstan High School Junior Boys Team in Central Otago won Junior section.



So remember that candle metaphor at the beginning of the article? Well we are still going to leave that with you, but think about this, on Saturday (the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2012) as most of the population slept 124 youths started what was for many of them the toughest challenge that they have ever done. Amongst the starters were the accomplished of the sport and the complete novices such as the Trust House Flaxmere Falcons from Flaxmere College and after twelve and a half grueling hours they had returned and by doing so should be an inspiration to us all.

Full results

<http://kiwi-adventure.co.nz/default.asp?PageID=22465>