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Press Release

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NICHOLAS REY FOUNDATION TRUST: NRFT RIDING HIGH IN GAUTENG

[10th September 2007] The Nicholas Rey Foundation Trust is now riding high after their launch in Gauteng on the 1st September 2007. The launch included the “Wild West African Adventure” with teams competing in various cowboy themed activities and a formal Spring Gala Ball at the Diamond X Ranch in Rayton.

The teams assembled at 07h30 at the ranch for the day’s first activity of cattle herding, with 7de Laan actor Ben Kruger acting as referee for the event. The teams included Carnival City (represented by Ricky Smit, Michel Rey, JP Rey, Mickey Rey and Gayle Rey), Jeep Menlyn (Johannes Swanepoel, Dean Shekleton, Keith Burford, Riaan Nel and Jacaranda radio personality Clayton Robbertze), Phumelela Gaming and Leisure (Andrew Bon, Heidi Basson, Felicia Rowan, Natalie Houdalakis and Paul Cowan), Equine SA (Kurt Plooiennik, singer / songwriter Dennis East, Hennie Swart, Lee Naude and Stephanie Lombard) and Loot SA (Tony Chilvers, Devon O’Mally, Cherise Biagio, Dr Craig Springate and Andrew Springate).

After some of the participants had fallen off their horses and got to grips with separating the cattle into different enclosures, Jeep Menlyn were declared the winners of this activity. The teams and spectators then moved over to a disused sand quarry for the 4x4 event. Using the sponsored Jeep vehicles, the teams navigated their way through the course with off road driving champ Douw de Boer at the wheel, performing various tasks throughout the course. After lunch at the ranch, the teams tried their hand at lassoing, attempting to rope a horse to much ribbing and hilarity amongst the crowd.

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The final event of the day was a treasure hunt with team members riding in a relay format through the ranch collecting various clues and avoiding obstacles. Carnival City were winners of this leg, with Michel Rey barrelling across the finish line at high speed.

The formal event of the day was the Spring Gala Ball, which took place in a magnificent white tent in one of the ranch paddocks. The guests included amongst them the Rey family, Ben Kruger and his wife Cheryl Whitlock, Dennis and Yvette East, Clayton Robbertze from Jacaranda Radio and Doug Anderson from Radio 2000. The Zorro theme was evident in the variety of Spanish inspired gowns, masks and capes, and the entertainment reflected this with a performance by horse whisperer and Diamond X principal coach, William Bondesio and his mount Fleur. Dennis East also entertained the guests with some of his original compositions including "The Voice Inside", which was specifically written for Nicholas Rey and the trust. After watching a moving tribute to Nicholas accompanied by Bryan Adam's "Sound the Bugle", Penny Coelen Rey thanked those present for their support. The National Director of The Quadriplegic Association of South Africa, Mr Aril Seirlis, delivered the keynote address, highlighting the courage and strength of character of two (2) of the trust's recipients, Talita van Rooyen and SA Para-Olympiad Marion Milne.

Guests were treated to a delicious five (5) course meal, courtesy of Union Caterers, which featured a smoked trout starter and main dishes of beef, lamb and chicken medallions. An auction of various niche pieces was conducted after dinner by well known racing commentator Mr Clyde Basel. Among the items auctioned was the Gideon designed gown worn by Penny Rey, which went under the hammer at R3 000.00 and an ornate leather and silver saddle donated by Stampede Leather. Also on auction were three (3) paintings donated by KZN based artist Dr Meyer Ernst and three (3) stallion services, including that of the Supreme National Champion Stallion 2005, Arabian "Hasan's Magnifier". A number of sports memorabilia were also snapped up by the guests. The MC, Mr Andrew Bon of Tellytrack and Ben Kruger awarded the champions of the day, the team from The Loot, with a spectacular floating trophy and

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Dennis East provided a grand finale with his performance which had the crowd singing along to the popular numbers.

The events of the day were thoroughly enjoyed by both the participants, spectators and guests. The NRFT's official launch in Gauteng was envisaged to broaden the reach of the trust to enable more individuals to be assisted. The 1st September 2007 events at Diamond X Ranch have certainly left the trust riding high.

ENDS

Words: 710

Notes to the editor:

The Nicholas Rey Foundation Trust was successfully launched in Durban on 15th October 2005 following a freak polo accident in June 2004 during which patron Nicholas Rey suffered a severe brainstem injury, which subsequently left him completely dependent on those around him. Despite his ordeal, Nicholas has remained in high spirits and is still an avid horse lover who is determined to make the most of his life. Inspired by the courage and determination of her close friend, Ricky Smit approached the Rey family two years ago with the idea of creating a Trust in honour of Nicholas Rey, which would offer financial support to individuals who had suffered serious injury while participating in equestrian activities.

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