



Daniel Foster, Jesse Chittenden-O'Leary and Aria Hart cheer on their Ross Intermediate classmates

Life goes on – and so does the Relay

By Rob Mildon

The Cancer Society's Relay for Life is so popular that teams can have trouble getting in. The kids at Ross Intermediate solved this problem easily: they would have their own Relay! A massive effort culminated in the Relay itself on June 26, with the whole school taking turns to circle the track, from dawn 'til dusk.

It's an event that's been two school terms in the making, says teacher and event overseer Selena O'Leary. The kids split into groups to cover every aspect of the Relay's organisation, from making sponsorship cards to surveying the track and writing newsletters.

"All the teachers have been really impressed with the effort," says Mrs O'Leary.

That effort didn't just go into the organisation. 12-year-old Daniel Foster was on the starting line at 8am, and by 10am had run 40 laps. It cost him three blisters, but he raised a massive \$211. Each pupil ran for as long as they wanted, but only one hour was counted for sponsorship purposes – otherwise the city's sponsorship coffers would be drained dry!

Marshals lined the rain-soaked 250-metre track, making sure no-one cut corners. The Relay was mostly run in sunshine, although it began in a downpour.

"I was hoping for hail!" enthused Jesse Chittenden-O'Leary, drawing dirty looks from his classmates. It's worth the sacrifice, though: at the end of the day there's a prize-giving, with jewellery boxes and piñatas up for grabs.

Mrs O'Leary says that the response from the Cancer Society had been really positive. Indeed, when Society manager Sue Foster came along to see how it was all going, she was most impressed.

"It blew me away," she said.

As the afternoon passed into evening, the sausage sizzle fired up, providing much-needed fuel for the exhausted runners. Not all the money has been collected yet, but Mrs O'Leary is hoping the Relay will raise somewhere in the vicinity of \$3000. So if, in future, the official Relay for Life is full, don't let that be a barrier – go ahead and organise another one!