

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**23 October 2009**

**MARATHON EFFORT IMMORTALISED IN PRINT**

A Sydney businessman and father of four who conquered what is arguably the world's most grueling event – The Comrades Marathon in South Africa– has launched a book detailing his motivation and training.

Justin Gallagher, a 36 year old Director of Sydney Sales Trading at RBS Equities, launched his book titled, "***The Comrades Marathon - Not Just a Race***" at the Aurora Bar in Sydney last night.

Father to four girls under the age of seven, Justin was awarded the Bill Rowan medal for completing the 87 kilometre event in less than nine hours. His achievement is even greater when you consider that the first 47 kilometres is almost all uphill.

Justin's book is predominantly a diary of his preparation for, and participation in, The Comrades Marathon in 2008. The event attracts more than 11,000 competitors each year.

The book covers his intense training leading up to the marathon and concludes with an update seven months after the race finished.

"What makes Justin's feat even more amazing is that he participated in the marathon to raise money for the Cerebral Palsy Foundation," said Mr Rob White, CEO of the Cerebral Palsy Foundation.

"The book is a great read and tells much about what can be achieved with persistence and determination. For people interested in marathons, it provides a great insight into the preparation required for a race of this calibre."

Some amazing statistics from the 2008 event include:

- More than 11,192 entrants started the race and 8,613 finished.
- Justin drank 7.5 litres of fluids during the event (with only one successful pit stop).
- Justin trained for nine months prior to the event, running 1,928 kilometres which is about the distance from Sydney to Townsville.
- Justin finished in 1,705<sup>th</sup> place, which put him in the top 16%.
- Justin's heart rate hit 185 and averaged 155.
- During training, Justin went through six pairs of runners.
- Russian twins won the women's division, finishing within a minute of each other.

Justin's hero, Robert de Castella MBE, sent him a note of congratulations which is included in the book. It said, "Like anything worthwhile, satisfaction is amplified by the effort, and I cannot imagine much that requires as much effort as Comrades – how lucky you are to have indulged in such an abundance of satisfaction."

Justin's participation in The Comrades Marathon raised \$88,000 for the Cerebral Palsy Foundation. He is also donating 50% of book sales to the Foundation

"Without doubt, the biggest challenge was balancing training with three (now 4) little girls under six years of age, working 55 hours a week and maintaining a healthy relationship with my very understanding wife, Stephanie – to whom the book is dedicated," Justin said.

Books can be purchased by contacting Erin at the Cerebral Palsy Foundation on 02 9479 7286.

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### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Janine Jones – Marketing and Communications Manager - 9479 7245 / 0407 066 813

Jennifer Durante - Media Coordinator - 9479 7257 / 0419 802 602

### **The facts of cerebral palsy**

- Cerebral palsy (CP) is the most common, physical disability in childhood
- CP is a permanent disability that affects movement
- CP results from damage to the developing brain, usually before birth
- In Australia, 1 in 400 babies is diagnosed with CP
- There is no known cure and, for most, the cause is unknown
- People with CP may also have seizures, and sensory and intellectual impairments