

MEDIA RELEASE

23 March 2012

Stars line up for spinal cord injury research

Event: Fools and Horses Spinal Cord Injury Research Fundraiser

Date: Sunday, April 8th 2012

Time: 6.30 pm for 7 pm

Venue: Four Seasons Hotel, Sydney

Lifeguard and star of Channel Ten's *Bondi Rescue* Kobi Graham is stepping out in support of spinal cord injury research next month for the Spinal Cord Injury Network and the CatWalk Trust's black tie fundraiser to be held at Sydney's Four Seasons Hotel on April 8th.

Kobi, who broke his neck in a serious surfing accident in 2010 and is an ambassador for the the Spinal Cord Injury Network, will be attending the fundraiser alongside fellow ambassador and former Wallaby Ben Darwin, who also sustained a serious spinal cord injury that ended his rugby career during the 2003 Rugby World Cup Semi Final against New Zealand.

Although Kobi is still on the road to recovery and Ben was left without feeling below his chin for a number of minutes, both have been fortunate enough to regain full use of their bodies. Kobi and Ben are actively throwing their support behind the fundraiser hoping that the near future will see experiences such as their own become the norm, rather than the exception, for those who sustain a spinal cord injury.

Hosted by Peter Fitzsimons and timed to coincide with the Sydney Autumn Racing Carnival, the theme of the night is "Fools and Horses," attracting key figures from Australian racing as well as Australian Rugby Union, cricket, television and fashion.

The "Only Fools and Horses Work Great Debate" will be central to the evening, with a number of sports and racing personalities taking part, including Black Caviar's trainer Peter Moody, super model Kylie Bax and Ben Darwin.

Aussie Fast Bowler and TV personality Mike Whitney will take to the stage performing with his band later in the evening.

Another key highlight of the night will be the auction, with unique and exclusive experiences on offer, including:

- a "Bondi Lifeguard Experience" contributed by Kobi entailing four hours with a Bondi rescue Lifeguard, a ride on a jet ski and a tour of the tower
- artwork from the Chase Gallery
- a Trelise Cooper styling package, and
- a Champagne Breakfast experience with racetrack sensation Black Caviar, plus service auctions for top quality stallions High Chaparral and Exceed and Excel, as well as Stratum.

Spinal Cord Injury Network Chief Executive Officer Dr Stephanie Williams said she was overwhelmed with the support for the event.

“This is a fantastic opportunity to make a difference to spinal cord injury research. It’s going to be a win – win for everyone,” she said.

For more information visit <https://spinalnetwork.org.au/node/3119>

Each day in Australia one person sustains a spinal cord injury. Life is changed forever with devastating consequences. Paralysis together with a range of health complications impacts on a person’s independence and quality of life. The financial cost to Australia alone is \$2 billion annually.

About the Spinal Cord Injury Network

The Spinal Cord Injury Network is an alliance of leading researchers, frontline clinicians and people with spinal cord injury. We are committed to promoting recovery from spinal cord injury by working together to develop research and facilitate clinical trials. A key goal is to work towards a cure for spinal cord injury. For more information visit www.spinalnetwork.org.au

Enquiries

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