

Media Release

17/07/2007

Headline: Running A Race Against Time.

Subheading: Tasmanian 'Devil Islanders' Run In The Mercure Launceston Ten As Time Runs Out For The Tasmanian Devil.

News Facts:

Sunday the 22nd July 2007 at 10.00 am the Mercure Launceston Ten Fun Run and Walk will start from Lindsay Street, Inveresk for a fast, flat, out and back, traffic-free 10 km race.

. The Tasmanian 'Devil Islanders' are a group of Tasmanian individuals who have formed a team to run in the London Marathon next year to raise money to build a secure, disease free "island" where Tasmanian Devils can breed in a natural habitat. With an average age of 56 they are putting their bodies on the line in the fight to protect their Tassie Icon.

. The "Island" is to be called "Devil Island" and is the brain child of Bruce Englefield of Natureworld Wildlife and Ecology Park on the East Coast of Tasmania near Bicheno.

. The team will use the Mercure Launceston Ten as their first public appearance, a training run, and a chance to raise awareness of their aim and goals and the plight of the Tasmanian Devil. On April 13th 2008 the team will run the 42 km London marathon. The group has to raise \$130,000 to build the secure environment needed to house up to thirty disease free devils to be taken from the wild and housed on 28 acres of land donated for this purpose by the owners of East Coast Natureworld.

. Tasmanian Devils are facing extinction in as little as 10-15 years due to a Facial Tumour Disease that is currently being researched by a team of dedicated scientists so time is quickly running out for the species. Bruce Englefield, an animal psychologist, is deeply concerned that all the insurance populations being maintained at present are being held as captive animals learning captive behaviour. It is well researched that captive bred animals released to the wild have an attrition rate as high as 95%. By taking wild bred animals and keeping them wild in the 28 acres of 'Devil Island' they will retain their natural survival behaviors. Breeding will ensure they pass them on to their offspring ready for release back to the wild at some future date.

This project has strong in-principle support from DPIW and a promise of first call on any devils taken from the wild in a January 2008 capture season.

. Amongst the team of 12 runners is Launceston's internationally acclaimed celebratory chef Fiona Hoskin from the multi-award winning restaurant "Fee and

Me” who will swap her chef’s uniform for a running outfit and step outside her comfort zone to run the race to help our Tasmanian icon in it’s hour of need.

Others in the team include an accommodation owner, art gallery owner, retired midwife and nurse, fish biologist, artist, machinery business owner, Sydney restaurant manager, headmaster, and the captain Bruce Englefield, retired TV executive, animal behaviour counsellor, farmer, international sheepdog handler and judge, and now owner of the multi-award winning East Coast Natureworld at Bicheno.

Spokespersons and Contact Details:

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Logo:

