

Sunday, March 20, 2011

## NEWS RELEASE

### Canadian breaks stairclimb record, wins third straight Seattle Big Climb title

#### *Bellevue's Kourtney Dexter wins third straight women's title*

SEATTLE – Canadian Shaun Stephens-Whale broke his own stairclimb record with a 7-minute, 8-second climb up 69 floors of Seattle's Columbia Center on Sunday to capture the overall title for the third consecutive year at Seattle's 25th annual Big Climb benefiting The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Stephens-Whale, 21, a senior cross country runner at the University of British Columbia, reached the 73<sup>rd</sup> floor observation deck of Seattle's tallest building 26 seconds ahead of the nearest climber. His record-breaking time was 5.35 seconds ahead of his 2009 record time and 9 seconds ahead of the 7:17.35 he clocked to win the event in 2010. Kevin Crossman, 27, of Snohomish, Wash., finished second - 26 seconds behind with a 7:34.0. Jesse Berg, 38, of Chicago, the 2008 winner, reached the finish in 7:39.0.

"This sport is all mind-games. Once you hit that level where your legs are completely lactic, all you can do is maintain the quickest pace possible. You're going all out at that point," said Wales, who collapsed to the floor three times after crossing the finish line. "The last few floors were the hardest. I was trying to survive – everything hurt. By the time I swiped my chip, all functions stopped. It was definitely a position that I had never experienced before. I had never pushed my body that far."

The women's competition was won for the third consecutive year by 30-year-old Kourtney Dexter of Bellevue. Dexter clocked a 9-minute, 16-second ascent, besting her 2010 time of 9:19.0 by 3 seconds. She finished 30<sup>th</sup> overall, 22 seconds behind the second women's finisher, Sandra Nunez, 38, of Mexico City. Nunez, a late entry in the event, clocked a 9:41.0. Kacie Fischer, 26, of Irvine, Calif., was third among women's competitors with a 10:05.0.

Among the 6,000 Big Climb participants were 41 members of the University of Washington men's rowing team climbing in support of a 1974 Husky oarsman who is undergoing treatment for chronic lymphocytic leukemia.

"This is a tough climb. The mental toughness is similar to rowing. You have to keep pushing yourself the whole way," said Jeff Gibbs, a UW junior from Cincinnati who finished 65<sup>th</sup> overall with a time of 9-minutes, 48-seconds. "This city provides so much for us. This is one way we can give back," he said. Seven Huskies finished among the top 30 of the event.

Over 6,000 climbers aged 5 – 86 from 23 states and communities throughout Washington state competed in the annual benefit climb. With fundraising continuing through April, Big Climb competitors have already raised \$1.4 million for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. In 2010, the Big Climb raised a record \$1.6 million for the LLS.

The 2010 climb honored 9-year-old Lydia Anderson of Lake Stevens, Wash. Lydia was first diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), the most common form of blood cancer in adolescents, at just 4-years-old. After successfully completing an initial two years of treatment, Lydia again began experiencing back pain and other symptoms similar to what led to her first diagnosis. Lydia is just finishing her second round of treatment. To learn more about Lydia please visit <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/lydiaanderson>

An estimated 912,938 Americans are living with leukemia, Hodgkin and non-Hodgkin lymphoma, myeloma and myelodysplastic syndromes. According to the National Cancer Institute, an estimated combined total of 137,260 people in the United States will be diagnosed with leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma in 2011 with one person in the US being diagnosed with a blood cancer approximately every four minutes. New cases of leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma will account for 9 percent of the 1,529,560 new cancer cases diagnosed in the US this year alone.

**Washington/Alaska Chapter** 530 Dexter Ave N, Suite 300 Seattle, WA 98109  
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Our mission: *cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma and improve the quality of life of patients and their families*

**How to Help:** The public can still contribute to a local climber or team. To contribute, please visit [www.BigClimb.org](http://www.BigClimb.org).

The Big Climb is sponsored by CAC Real Estate Management, Pyramid Brewing, McCormick's, Genentech, Biogen Idec, Talking Rain, KJR 95.7 FM, Titan, Alaska Airlines, Blue Nile, Columbia Tower Club, Lake Union Wellness, Road Runner Sports, Lake Quinault Lodge, Kalaloch Lodge, Brooks, Outdoors NW, Service Master Clean, Jamba Juice, Qdoba, Rite Aid Foundation, Pop Chips, Yami Yogurt and Minuteman Press.

### **About The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) is the world's largest voluntary health agency dedicated to blood cancer. The LLS mission: Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. LLS funds lifesaving blood cancer research around the world and provides free information and support services.

### **About the Washington/Alaska Chapter**

The Washington/Alaska Chapter ([www.lls.org/wa](http://www.lls.org/wa)) is one of 60 local chapters across the U.S., with an additional 11 chapters in Canada. Located in Seattle since 1984, the Washington/Alaska Chapter is close to the treatment facilities where patients and families come for lifesaving therapies. Major annual fundraising campaigns include Team In Training®, Light The Night® Walk, School & Youth Programs<sup>SM</sup>, the Scott Firefighter Stairclimb, Big Climb, Winter Pineapple Classic and The Leukemia Cup Regatta.

### **2011 Big Climb**

#### **Benefiting The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**

**Sunday, March 20, 2011**

**Columbia Center – Seattle**

**69 Floors / 1,311 Steps**

### **Top 30 Overall Finishers**

1. Shaun Stephens-Whale, 21, Roberts Creek, Canada 7:08.0; 2. Kevin Crossman, 27, Snohomish, Wash., 7:34.0; 3. Jesse Berg, 38, Chicago, Ill., 7:39.0; 4. Tim Van Orden, 42, Bennington, Vt., 7:53.0; 5. Paul Kimball, 27, Spokane, Wash., 8:03.0; 6. Chris Tremonte, 30, Redmond, Wash., 8:05.0; 7. John Osborn, 37, Rochester, Ill, 8:09.0; 8. Brian Crossman, 27, Snohomish, Wash., 8:19.0; 9. Lawrence Beck (second attempt), 47, Carnation, Wash., 8:24.0; 10. Allen Beddome, 46, Seattle, Wash., 8:42.0; 11. Matt Zapel, 21, Vashon, Wash., 8:43.0; 12. Paul Yetter, 47, Mukilteo, Wash., 8:45.0; 13. Wayne Kragt, 50, Redmond, Wash., 8:46.0; 14. Blake Hansen, 15, Federal Way, Wash., 8:47.0; 15. Lawrence Beck (first attempt), 47, Carnation, Wash., 8:47.0; 16. PJ Glassey, 44, Seattle, 8:51.0; 17. Austin Brooks, 20, Seattle, 8:51.0; 18. Tom Lehmann, 23, Seattle, 8:54.0; 19. Lawrence Beck (third attempt), 47, Carnation, Wash., 8:54.0; 20. Jeff Pozarski, 43, Shoreline, Wash., 8:58.0; 21. Ambrose Puttman, 21, Seattle, 8:58.0; 22. Tristan Rother, 26, Yakima, Wash., 9:00.0; 23. Bryce Niskanen, 25, Monroe, Wash., 9:03.0; 24. Jonathan McDonald, 38, Nampa, Id., 9:06.0; 25. Ryan Goldstein, 30, Seattle, 9:06.0; 26. Maxwell Weaver, 23, Seattle, 9:10.0; 27. Mike Walter, 41, Bothell, Wash., 9:11.0; 28. Sean Pender, 39, Seattle, 9:14.0; 29. Robert Munn, 20, Seattle, 9:15.0; 30. Kourtney Dexter, 30, Bellevue, Wash., 9:16.0.

### **Top 10 Women's Finishers**

1. Kourtney Dexter, 30, Bellevue, Wash., 9:16.0; 2. Sandra Nunez, 38, Mexico City, Mexico, 9:41; 3. Kacie Fischer, 26, Irvine, Calif., 10:05.0; 4. Darcy DeFrees, 27, Puyallup, Wash., 10:26.0; 5. Janice Spray, 44, Bellevue, Wash. 10:46.0; 6. Martha Ways, 52, Seattle, 10:57.0; 7. Sheila Klein, 52, Seattle, 10:58.0; 8. Dawn Brent, 38, Seattle, 11:09.0; 10. Kristen Holman, 33, Bellingham, Wash., 11:11.0.

**[www.BigClimb.org](http://www.BigClimb.org)**

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