

Team DefeatMS competes for cure at Pacific Crest Sports Festival

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Portland's David Kelleher Leads a Team Dedicated to Racing and Raising Funds for MS in sports event held at Sunriver

SUNRIVER, Ore. - Award-winning Portland business owner and multiple sclerosis (MS) fighter David Kelleher will lead more than 20 other Team DefeatMS members as they walk, run, ride, swim and splash their way to raising funds for MS research at the Pacific Crest Weekend Sports Festival. The three-day, multi-sport festival takes place June 22-24, 2007, at Sunriver Resort near Bend, Oregon. In their inaugural year at Pacific Crest, Team DefeatMS anticipates raising nearly \$50,000 and 100 percent of the proceeds will go directly to fund MS research.

"We formed this team to race at Pacific Crest for a number of reasons, but the primary objective was to increase awareness of MS and raise money for research," said Kelleher. "The need to bring MS to the forefront of people's minds is extremely important, as more than 400,000 people in the United States and 2.5 million worldwide currently live with the disease. As of yet there is no known cause or cure for MS."

The Team DefeatMS members range from casual racers to people with MS to Ironman triathletes, and will converge on Sunriver from all corners of Oregon and the country, including Philadelphia, Washington DC, Dallas and New York City (home of the event's top fundraiser, Kate Milliken, who has single-handedly raised more than \$20,000). All are united with the sole purpose of raising funds for MS research in hopes of finding a cure and increasing the quality of life of MS patients.

"I know what you're thinking: How can I possibly complete a triathlon when I can barely run two miles?" continued Kelleher. "While MS has certainly affected me both physically and emotionally, I am able to do almost anything I want" including participating in a triathlon."

Team DefeatMS invites everyone to participate, whether it's through donating or racing. Race participants can register individually or as a relay team for any number of the weekend's events, from 5K and 10K walks to a marathon, duathlon and triathlon.

While in the Army, David was a Ranger and platoon leader in an airborne battalion in Vicenza, Italy. Prior to deployment in Bosnia in late 1995, he woke up one morning with severe double-vision. After a few months of tests, David was diagnosed with MS.

"I've had plenty of exacerbations, including temporary paralysis of each arm and each leg, temporary blindness, and chronic numbness," said David. "These flare-ups were treated with high-dose steroids. As

a result of the steroid treatments, I suffered from a debilitating hip disease. Rather than have total hip-replacement surgery, I went through a fairly revolutionary surgery involving the removal of a 4-inch section of my lower leg bone and grafting the bone to my hip. After the surgery, I was told that I would never run again. I was on crutches for a full year, and more motivated than ever to get back into some challenging athletic endeavors. Needless to say, this initiative has great personal significance to me and my family.â€•

To form a team, donate or learn more, please visit www.PacificCrestDefeatMS.com today.

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