

Johnson runs to raise funds for children

•Continued from page 3

The wishes range from meeting celebrities to trips to famous locations.

As for the race itself, it followed three cards of horse racing, after which the build up began.

When Johnson was sighted sifting through the crowd to reach the track, he was met with an enthusiastic response, as were all the other participants.

Despite less than stellar conditions (the pouring rain made for a muddy track), over 4000 people jammed into the CDP to see the event.

Prior to the race itself, Johnson granted the wish of eight year old Ryan Kelly.

He offered Ryan the opportunity to ride around the track with him in the back of a red convertible prior to the race. Ryan accepted the invitation.

Originally, Johnson was to start 80 metres from the finish line, the horse and sulky from 100 metres, the Morgan horse from 120 metres and the stock car from 140 metres, but by the time race time came the participants, with the exception of Johnson, were pushed closer to the finish line on account of the poor weather.

Both the horses took off prior to the starters pistol sounding. Johnson noticed this, and exploded out of the blocks in his trademark style.

For the first 40 metres or so Johnson had the lead, at which point the Morgan horse passed him, and under 10 metres from the finish line the horse and sulky passed him as well.

Despite coming in third, Johnson seemed upbeat after the race.

"It was for a good cause," Johnson said. "It was for the

kids." He added that he was happy to help "bring some happiness to the kids."

After the race, Johnson signed over one thousand autographs.

For the most part, audience response was positive.

"Ben didn't lose. He won the hearts of the people," said Jared Stretch, a UPEI student who attended the race.

Lea Gauthier, general manager of the Children's Wish Foundation of PEI revealed that over \$9,500 dollars were raised at the event, with significant contributions coming from Wally Hennessey, a racing fan from Glace Bay, the Charlottetown Driving Park and Atlantic Lottery.

The remainder of the funds were raised through a special "donation bet" on the race. Tickets of \$2 each were placed on the four participants, with winning tickets rewarded with a stuffed animal.

Many at the park felt that Johnson was not a hero, but that he was just doing good work.

They maintain that he let so many of them down ten years ago when he tested positive for banned anabolic steroids-- which, ironically enough, are derived from horses-- and caused Canada so much embarrassment.

But it was clear that these people were willing to forgive Johnson for what he did on account of his charitable work.

Due to the overwhelming enthusiasm Johnson found on the Island, he decided to extend his visit.

Originally he was to leave on Friday, the day after the race, but opted to stay an extra day to participate in the Children's Wish Foundation Parade on Saturday.

ROYAL CREDIT LINE[®]
FOR STUDENTS

Financing that makes the grade.

We control our finances with a Royal Credit Line for Students! It's not a loan, it's a line of credit. We can withdraw the money we need, when we need it, up to our credit limit, using Royal Bank's extensive ABM network.

- Pay interest only at Prime + 1% on the portion you use for up to 6 months after completing your full or part-time studies.
- Connect to your accounts through Royal Direct[®] PC, Internet or Telephone banking.
- Customize your re-payment schedule.

To find out more about Royal Credit Line for Students, visit a Royal Bank branch.

Personalized
Royal Credit Line for Students,
Customized

one
on
ONE[™]



® Registered trade-marks of Royal Bank of Canada
™ Trade-mark of Royal Bank of Canada



ROYAL BANK

MEMBER OF ROYAL BANK FINANCIAL GROUP[®]

Birds are entangled by their feet, and men by their tongues...

-anonymous

The Cadre, Main 06