



Firefighters step up for challenge

FIREFIGHTERS from Silverdale join others from 121 stations on a race up 51 flights of stairs to the top of Auckland's Sky Tower tomorrow.

A record number of firefighters and brigades are taking part in the cardio challenge to raise funds for the Leukaemia & Blood Foundation.

Now in its eighth year the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge is a New Zealand tradition.

The event attracts hundreds of firefighters from around New Zealand and overseas who race to the top for the chance to be the fastest man, fastest woman and fastest team.

The firefighters run up 1103 Sky Tower steps – wearing full fire-fighting kit and breathing apparatus

weighing up to 25kg.

In addition to the physical test the competition is just as fierce for the spot of top fundraisers.

Last year Paihia's volunteer fire brigade seized the fundraising trophy for the fifth consecutive year, raising \$24,000 and contributing to the record \$200,000 raised for the foundation.

Auckland Airport Rescue Fire raised \$20,000. Five brigades raised more than \$5000 each.

The Silverdale crew will be Aniko Knight, Ben Capstick, Daniel Capon, David Capstick, Shanan Fraser, Natasha Thompson, and Sarah Ord.

Helensville volunteers include Chris MacDonald, Dan Kelly, Darren

Clent, Phillip Cox and Richard Limmer.

Leigh volunteers are Errol Murray, Mark Borich, Martin Lefley, Michelle Maclean and Reece Hunter.

Kumeu volunteers Aimee Murray, Dene Jonkers, Eugene Sparnon, Gavin Rauner, Graham McIntyre, Jeremy Butler, Josh Wright, Mark Barton and Mike Hutchins are also competing.

Mangawhai volunteers are Aiden Shirley, James Shewan and Francis Meagher, and Wellsford volunteers include Kevin Derby, Peter Bowmar, Shane Baker and Trent Jones.

Muriwai rural fire volunteer Lucas Webb will also compete.



Stairway challenge: Kumeu volunteer Mike Hutchins takes part in last year's event