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Runners have a smashing time

Charity 10k run record-breaker

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MORE than 1,000 runners set a record on Sunday morning – as the biggest entry yet in the annual Chestnut Tree House 10k Run.

The huge field was well up on last year's total of 600 runners and now organisers are hoping the money raised for the children's hospice, near Angmering, will itself be a record, smashing through the £20,000 mark in 2008.

Littlehampton mayor Mark Butler, helped by stand-in carnival princess, Collette Clear, and carnival mascot, Hampton the Hedgehog, started the seafront run at 9.30am and the first runner back was Ed O'Brien from Littlehampton, in a speedy 34min 5 sec. The fastest woman was Jo Hesketh in 39min 37 sec. Both repeated their victories of last year and were presented with trophies by the mayor.

Former Wales and Southampton goalkeeper Paul Jones, and his wife Annette, wearing bright yellow vests, were among the many individual runners and there were several teams taking part, including one from sponsors, Thesis Asset Management and others from Kate's Cakes in Ashington, Angmering Sixth Form College, NatWest in Lancing, and a group of firefighters.

"We were overwhelmed to see so many runners – it's our most successful 10k Run to date," said Chestnut Tree events fund-raiser, Tanya Hunt.

"We would like to say a huge thank-you to everyone who took part, all our volunteers, Thesis Asset Management for their generous sponsorship, Arunners Running Club for doing the timing, our REAC marshals, Malcolm Gray from Retrospect Event Sound, Littlehampton Swimming & Sports Centre for providing a water stop, Jo Clark for warming the runners up and Toni James from Sussex Massage for cooling them down!

"We are hoping to smash last year's total of £20,000 and all the funds raised will go directly towards helping the children and families who need our vital care."

● Full results: www.chestnut-tree-house.org.uk