

Funds for the fight

'I can't quit because these kids aren't quitting,' T.O. cancer cyclist says

By SANDY NAIMAN, TORONTO SUN

Wheeling around on his starter bike yesterday afternoon, little Sam Lack couldn't wait to meet his hero, one-legged cyclist and cancer survivor David Visschedyk.

The three-year-old Burlington boy is in remission from neuroblastoma, but relapse is inevitable with this often fatal childhood cancer.

And Visschedyk -- 4,600 km. into his 6,950-km. ride across Canada -- is Sam's hope for the future.

"Sam knows David is raising money for the James Fund for Neuroblastoma Research and helping him to get better," said his aunt, Jill Davies. "We've been following David's adventures all summer."

When Visschedyk finally rolled into the parking lot of the Ontario Power Commission building on Lakeshore Blvd. E., Sam's mother, Andrea Lack, pushed her son, holding a blowup of a \$25,000 cheque, towards the cyclist.

"Wow, this is amazing, really amazing," the six-foot-three cyclist said, visibly touched by the largest one-time donation he's received this summer.

"I can't quit because these kids aren't quitting."

Lack said when Sam was undergoing chemotherapy and recovering from two major operations, the family had a fundraiser.

"When we found out about the James Fund," we decided to throw our support into a research fund that will help kids like Sam -- thankfully in remission -- but facing relapse," Davies said.

The Lacks held a Family Fun Day on June 10 that brought together 500 friends, family and "the whole Burlington community," and raised \$25,000 in one day, Davies said.

With the spirit of the fun day alive at Visschedyk's stop yesterday, another little girl with neuroblastoma stood back from the crowd around Lack.

All summer, selling lemonade and handcrafted keychains, 10-year-old Krystiana Laurence has single-handedly raised \$320 for Visschedyk's CanadaWide for Cancer campaign.

Diagnosed five years ago, the Scarborough girl had "three clear years and then she relapsed," said her mother, Lillian.