



ACTION MAN Ivan Hollingsworth running through Newcastle in training for his fundraising events

Daredevil dad's on the run again

More than a marathon effort for heart unit

ANNABEL WALTON

HE'S skied down a mountain in a mankini, run 100 miles in less than 24 hours and got celebrities to back his charity drive.

Now daredevil dad Ivan Hollingsworth is planning another sporting challenge to raise cash for the hospital which saved his son's life.

The highlight of the former professional athlete's year is normally the Coast to Coast challenge, in which he annually treks from Cumbria to North Tyneside in a bid to encourage donations.

But Ivan, 36, is now planning a four-day epic which will involve cycling, swimming and running from one side of the country to the other. Best of all he will have his close friend, TV presenter Ben Shephard, with him along the way.

The Sky Sports presenter had to pull out at the 11th hour due to work commitments last year, but is looking forward to lacing up his trainers alongside Ivan this time around.

Their inspiration is Ivan's four-year-old son Seb, who was diagnosed with the heart



INSPIRATION Seb Hollingsworth's life was saved by the heart unit

condition tetralogy of fallot hours after being born. Ivan, a pharmaceutical rep, and his business manager wife Nadine, 35, anxiously waited as medics at the children's heart unit, based at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital, carried out heart surgery when Seb was 16 weeks old.

As Seb recovered from the operation in the children's intensive care unit, the Whitely Bay couple decided to set up a fund – Seb4chuf – devoted to putting money back into the miracle-working unit. Since then,

they have raised an amazing £286,000 for Chuf, the Children's Heart Unit Fund, which will pay for a state-of-the-art play facility for the young patients, some of whom spend months in the unit, based on Ward 23.

This July, Ivan hopes to break the £300,000 barrier with the C2C4 challenge, which will see him, Ben and a team of other athletes cycle 75 miles on the first, swim a mile across Derwent Water and ride 65 miles on the second day, run 35 miles to Close House Hotel in Northumberland on the third day, then run a marathon into the sea at Tynemouth on the final day.

"I've come up with a challenge that will be really testing," said Ivan, who is now a Chuf trustee.

"It will be good to have Ben back. He's one of my best mates and it's important to have him there because he's such a strong character, and is great at helping to co-ordinate everything.

"During the cycle ride we will be taking on four of the toughest climbs in the UK, and two of them are in the top 10."

For information visit www.seb4chuf.org.uk

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