

# Dad's sensational feat of endurance raises money for children

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**A** FATHER who completed a more-than-marathon effort for charity that helped his ill son has raised more than £8,000 for the cause.

Ivan Hollingsworth last week ran 100 miles in less than 24 hours to raise money for the Children's Heart Unit Fund (Chuf), in thanks to the hospital which saved his son Sebastian's life.

He completed the run from Eyemouth, in the Scottish Borders, to North Tyneside, where he lives, in 23 hours and 35 minutes.

But after 100 miles of hell, he was not a happy man - and not because his feet hurt.

"I told everyone I'd be there at 10.30am but I was five minutes late - I was really annoyed," he told the waiting crowd.

The 35-year-old pharmaceutical rep spent six months training for the run - a seemingly impossible feat only a handful of people have ever achieved - to raise money for Chuf.

A week on, Ivan has revealed his run has raised more than £8,000, and money is still being donated.

That impressive sum more than makes up for the fact that he can't yet wear shoes because his feet are so swollen and sore.

"I'm getting my feet checked out by a GP - I can't wear shoes and the blood blisters are pretty bad," said Ivan.

"I'm having to drive in sandals and I won't run for a while. The next exercise may just be a little swim. It was worth the pain though.

"I've raised more than £8,000 and I'd like to get to £10,000. And while 24 hours running is hard I'd rather do that than 24 hours in in-

# Amazing £8,000 for 100-mile hell

tensive care - there will be dozens of parents sitting in the Freeman wishing they could be anywhere else and this money will go some way to helping them."

Regular readers will recognise Ivan, who has completed several marathons, two Coast to Coast challenges and many other fundraising events with his wife Nadine, 34, to raise money for the Chuf.

Their three-year-old son Sebastian was just hours old when he was diagnosed with a genetic heart condition known as Tetralogy of Fallot, and he underwent lifesaving surgery at the Freeman Hospital when he was

16 weeks old. Three years of fundraising through a charity they set up called Seb4chuf had brought in £177,000 of donations.

But Ivan wanted to do the 100 miles as a personal challenge, to see just how far he could push his body.

At the start line on Good Friday, having spent six months building up his core strength - even going running on Christmas Day - Ivan was physically prepared for the challenge.

But nothing could have prepared him for the emotional battle he then endured, or the fact that almost the whole journey was spent gritting his teeth against an injury he picked up on a leg muscle during training.

He said: "I knew it was going to hurt like hell but I have totally recalibrated my understanding of pain, and I think I've got a high pain threshold.

"Before, I would have given the worst day on the Coast to Coast challenge a 9/10 for pain - but that's now a 1/10 and this run was a 9/10. The pain was horrific but I knew I was never going to bail.

"I had nerve problems before, so I knew it was going to get painful, but it happened much sooner than I expected - half an hour

out of Eyemouth my quads started spasming and didn't stop.

"There were some tough times. Somewhere around 2.30am I was in the middle of nowhere in the dark and I couldn't see anything, so I got lower and lower and lower.

"I stopped, looked at pictures of Seb on the phone, got my iPod on and the tracklist of cheesy pop, dance tunes and emotional songs and got going again."

As he continues to recover back home with Nadine and Sebastian, Ivan said a huge thank you to his friends who joined him on his way, North East people for their support, and also to the celebrities, including his friend Ben Sheppard, Mary Portas and Chris Moyles, who tweeted about his run to encourage more donations.

He said: "I had lots of great support, and now I'm happy to relax.

"My job now is to recruit people for the fundraising I'll be doing in the summer."

To make a donation, text CHUF99 and the amount you would like to donate, to 70070.

For more information about Ivan and Nadine's fundraising work, visit seb4chuf.org.uk or read Ivan's new blog at seb4chuf.wordpress.com



**SHATTERED BUT PROUD**  
Ivan Hollingsworth with Seb and wife Nadine and, left, having a cuddle with Seb

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AT THE BOTTOM OF WHICKHAM BANK

## Cannabis farm raid after public tip-off

POLICE have recovered hundreds of cannabis plants from a house in Northumberland.

At 1.50pm on Thursday information was received about a cannabis farm at an address in Maple Street in Ashington.

Officers attended and executed a search warrant, recovering around 200 to 300 plants, together with heating and lighting systems. The plants have a potential street value of hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Enquiries are ongoing in an effort to trace whoever is responsible for the farm.

DS Don Gibson, from the force's Major Crime Team, said: "We acted quickly on inform-

ation received to execute a warrant and secure the premises. As a result hundreds of cannabis plants were recovered and enquiries are ongoing.

"We'll continue to act on information received to disrupt and dismantle criminal activity in our neighbourhoods and in this case drugs have been prevented from reaching the streets of Ashington.

"As ever, receiving information from the community is vital and I'd urge residents to report any suspicious or unusual activity in their neighbourhood to police so we can investigate."

To report suspicious activity call police on 101 ext 69191.

## Watching the shops to keep them safe

TRADERS and police in South Tyneside are sticking together to deter thieves.

Businesses in South Shields who are part of Shopwatch are being given window stickers bearing the scheme's logo.

Shopwatch members and police share information about active thieves so that store security and staff can be on the lookout for any suspicious behaviour and quickly inform the police if they need help.

Shoplifters or troublesome customers can be excluded from a Shopwatch store.

It's hoped the stickers will make thieves think twice about entering the store,

knowing it's part of Shopwatch.

Acting Inspector Nick Gjoerven said: "The stores in South Shields are enthusiastic about being part of Shopwatch and are keen to provide information to police to stop thieves which should in turn help with their profitability.

"Shopwatch is designed to help staff pass on concerns about problem customers from shop to shop and allows them to contact police if a crime is in progress. We want everyone to enjoy their shopping experience and I hope shoppers feel reassured people who go into shops and make a nuisance of themselves will be dealt with."