

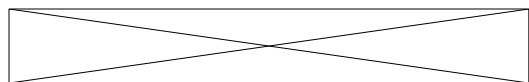
Monday, March 24, 2008

NEWS

Got a story? **63000**



Iron mighty ... Lloyd Scott with robot suit



Hero's wacky stunts

April 1989 - London Marathon (three weeks before bone marrow transplant).

Oct 1992 - Snowdonia Marathon.

Aug 1995 - Abseiled down Blackpool Tower.

March 1996 - Completed firewalk over burning coals.

March 1996 - London Marathon in polar gear.

April 1996 - Saharan Marathon des Sables (150 miles).

Dec 1996 - Scott II: The South Pole Expedition.

Sept 1997 - Climbed Mount Kilimanjaro.

July 1998 - 135-mile Death Valley Ultra Marathon.

April 1999 - Expedition to North Pole.

Feb 2001 - Climbed Mount Aconcagua in Argentina.

April 2002 - London Marathon in deep sea diving suit.

Nov 2002 - New York Marathon in deep sea diving suit.

Sept 2003 - Underwater Marathon in Loch Ness, Scotland.

Oct-Dec 2004 - Penny farthing ride across Australia.

May 2005 - John O'Groats to Land's End challenge.

September 2005 - Great North Run in Apollo 17 space suit.

April 2006 - London Marathon as St George & Dragon.

August 2006 - London Triathlon using diving suit, penny farthing and armour.

April 2007 - London Marathon as boulder-pulling Indiana Jones.

Win £20k for charity

IF IT took you more than five days to complete the London Marathon you might feel like quitting for good – but not Lloyd Scott.

Then again, he did “run” the 2002 event in a 130lb diving suit – raising £100,000 for a kids’ cancer charity in the process.

In fact, over the past 20 years Lloyd’s barmy but big-hearted stunts have raked in more than £5MILLION for a host of causes.



Trek ... on Argentine peak

And the Marathon has helped earn a big chunk of that.

Besides the diving suit, over the past five years Lloyd has completed the course in a suit of armour, and pulling a 23st mock boulder while dressed as movie hero Indiana Jones.

For this year's race on April 13, he plans to wear a 9ft robot costume weighing 70lb, while walking on stilts, for the entire 26 miles and 385 yards.

He says: "I am chuffed to bits with the suit. The idea came from my favourite film, The Iron Giant.

"A designer built it for me – it has flashing eyes and looks fantastic.

"I have been training hard and it has been pretty gruelling because I had a hip replacement last October and was pretty out of shape. But I have been practising on the stilts.

"My neighbours used to give me odd looks when I walked past their window in deep-sea diving boots. After that, stilts are perfectly normal."

And just when you thought life could not get any weirder for Lloyd, he reveals he is planning to try to break the world altitude helium ballooning record later in the year.



Marathon ... in diving gear

For that he will be lifted by around 1,200 small balloons while sitting in a deckchair ... dressed as a clown.

Lloyd, 46, says: "I have wanted to do it for ages. I think it will be really spectacular.

"I thought I'd be able to lower myself down at the end by gradually popping the balloons but I have been told it would be safer to parachute down.

"So I will take a parachuting course and have specialist high-altitude training. I hope to do it in Cambridge or Norfolk in September."

Lloyd's amazing achievements are just the kind of wacky stunts which inspired The Sun, in conjunction with search engine Everyclick.com, to launch a hunt to discover Britain's Most Inspiring Fundraiser.

The winner of the title will scoop £20,000 to give to a charity of their choice, and full details are on the right.

Lloyd started his fundraising after beating chronic myeloid leukaemia 20 years ago.

Next year will see the 20th anniversary of his life-saving bone marrow transplant and he says: "I thought it would be a good moment to do something really ambitious that would raise around £1million for the charity I am currently supporting, The Autism Trust.

"I have started work on plans to build a giant tyrannosaurus rex which I could wheel along from the inside, standing in one of its legs. I like the idea that to spectators it would look like the dinosaur was creeping along of its own accord.

"I would probably take it from Land's End to John O'Groats. It would need two people to push it so I am thinking I could have volunteers to help me do a leg in a leg."



Tough ... polar trek

Lloyd, from Rainham, Essex, adds: "I like to come up with the ideas myself because that means when I am in the middle of trying to carry them out, I can't blame anyone.

"I think some people imagine I just turn up on the morning of an event ready to go, but it can take more than six months of planning.

"I find one of the most satisfying moments of any event is standing on the start line because I feel I have already done a marathon in preparation."

Lloyd was just 27 when he was diagnosed with leukaemia.

A former professional footballer for Blackpool, he was working as a firefighter at the time. He recalls: "It was very hard to cope with at first. I was fit and healthy and still playing for Dagenham FC." After finding a bone marrow donor through the Anthony Nolan Trust, Lloyd decided he wanted to do something to show his gratitude.

He ran his first marathon just three weeks before the transplant, and after he was medically retired from the fire brigade he began to take on more ambitious projects.

His fundraising events are usually daft – and often dangerous.

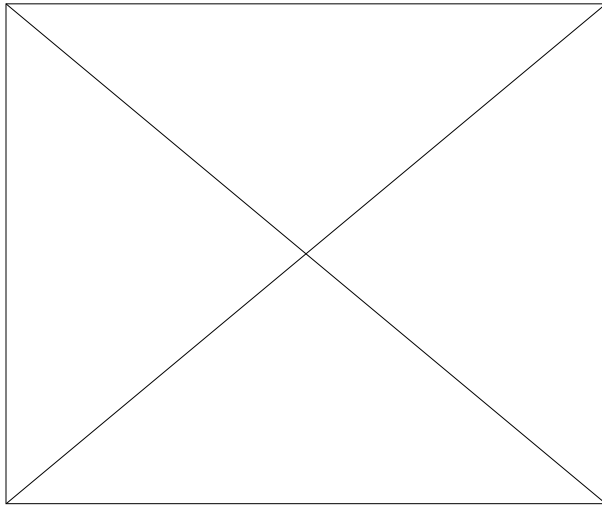
In 1994 he was nearly killed when he slipped down a ravine while trekking to the South Pole.

He has also had 20 operations, including two hip replacements, due to the stress that his fundraising has put on his body.

Lloyd says: "I think the fact that not all the events have gone smoothly gives them added credibility. When I undertake something I genuinely don't know if it will work.

"The walk to the South Pole was a disaster. I was in over my head.

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"But the hardest challenge I have done was a penny-farthing ride across Australia. After the first couple of days my support team and I were all wondering how the hell I was going to do it.

"The temperature reached 40°C, the terrain was rough and the Victorian bike had no suspension. It was tough but I took it day by day and after 50 days completed it."

Charity work has also taken an emotional toll. Last year Lloyd got divorced from Carol, his wife of 19 years. Now he is also kept busy as single father to children Amy, 19, and 14-year-old twins Luke and Elliot who live with him.

He says: "My events may seem wacky but between them my life is normal. I work from home so I get to spend a lot of time with the kids."

Lloyd has three golden rules for his fundraising and says: "I always want something that is a real challenge.

"The event has to have the potential to raise a lot of money and it has to put a smile on people's faces."

Lloyd is planning to wind up his barmy fundraising soon and instead is looking to raise money in a slightly more orthodox fashion.

He says: "I am not getting any younger and I need to support my kids, so last year I took a job as director of fundraising for The Autism Trust. It is good to make practical use of the skills I have learned organising my events, and it is a fantastic charity."

Lloyd may well be looking forward to slipping behind a desk to begin a new, more sedate chapter in his life, but first he has the small matter of a robot suit and an adventure with 1,200 helium balloons.

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