

DRIVING HOME

A Project in aid of The Colin Javens Spinal Injury Trust



Driving Home is a pioneering overland expedition from London to Cape Town, led by Colin Javens who is tetraplegic. Driving Home will raise funds towards spinal research and welfare of the spinally injured, and will promote disability awareness in the UK & Africa.

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Launch of the website

Due to illness of the web designer the launch has been delayed by a week. Many apologies but we will send a further email when it is up and running.

Newsflash

£1,520 has been donated by Anne Griffiths from Monmouth who held a sponsored canoe & bike ride in aid of Driving Home. If you would like to hold an event please let us know.

Butchers Pet Care has kindly donated £2,000.

Next month

- How Colin re-learnt to drive
- Why it is called Driving Home
- Vehicle specifications
- Trivia quiz
- Expedition equipment still needed

Watching the Weather

Being paralysed removes all feeling from below the spinal break. This is not just external feeling, like someone prodding you, or an ability to move your legs, but also internal feeling.

Colin is not able to 'feel' temperature. His body does not sweat or shiver. He is therefore exposed to the risks of heatstroke or hypothermia because the nerves near the skin that monitor temperature and send messages to the brain to cool down or warm up do not work.

Limited circulation and inability to move also means

a greater risk as it takes much longer for the body to react to temperature and for it to stabilise.

Colin has to be extremely careful to avoid getting into this situation and it was essential that the expedition would not pass through the Sahara in mid summer, with very hot days (42°) and high humidity. Modern technology and synthetic fleeces have made the cold temperatures easier to overcome.

After consideration, the expedition will depart in November. This will mean passing through the Sahara region during the coolest



Avoiding the midday heat will be essential for Colin's health

months, and exposing themselves to moderate highs of 33° and lows of zero° in Europe.

Additionally there will be enhanced air conditioning in the vehicles and a water spray (like a plant spray) which is the best method to keep Colin cool and away from danger.

Beneficiary projects in the UK

Stoke Mandeville Hospital, home of the National Spinal Injuries Unit is looking to build a specific Research Centre, the Centre of Excellence. It is an exciting progression and will allow more space for patient treatment. Driving Home aims to raise funds towards the cost of this building (currently estimated at £1.5million).

Additionally we aim to support current research into spinal cord repair by funding a clinical initiative due to begin in 2005. This will be an exciting three year programme to develop better ways of analysing the effects of injury and

therapies on the human condition. This is a crucial element before trials on humans can begin. The estimated cost for this is £250,000.

There is the hope, that within the next 5 years, there will be clinical trials in place for spinally injured patients

Both these projects have been carefully selected for the Trust by our Trustees.

Introducing the expedition team

The current expedition team will consist of five members, led by Colin. Each member has a specific role.

Colin is the Expedition Leader and is responsible for all prior planning. He will make key decisions regarding the route and day-to-day running of expedition life.



Ben Matthews is a qualified mountain leader and outdoor instructor and will be the Deputy Expedition Leader, in charge of safety and team training. He will also video the trip.



Kiko Matthews (not related to Ben!) is the communications



and logistics officer. She will keep us up to date with progress en route, ensuring visas arrive on time and all kit is prepared and in order.

Richard Wood (Woody), engineer by trade, will train to be the team



mechanic, in charge of the maintenance and repair of vehicles and equipment.

Finally there is a medic who is still to be recruited, to act both as a daily assistant for Colin and to deal with all team medical needs.

