

# DRIVING HOME

A Project in aid of The Colin Javens Spinal Injury Trust (charity number 1107143)



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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## Contact details

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## Win a prize!

Win the chance for a weekend break by answering the question below and emailing it to info@drivinghome.co.uk

What is the estimated £ cost to the UK taxpayer to treat spinally injured patients each year?

## Expedition Medic wanted— Applications welcomed



We are now accepting applications for the role of the expedition medic. They will be responsible for the daily assistance of Colin and general medical welfare of the team.

The position requires a medically qualified person, (either Doctor, Registered General Nurse or Paramedic) with a minimum of two year's experience post-qualification. Experience of working with spinally injured patients and of working in Africa is desirable.

If you know of anyone who would be interested please mail Jo on jo@drivinghome.co.uk

## Next month

- Colin's diary goes live
- Obtaining and adapting vehicles
- Why customised wheelchairs are so important
- Expedition grant results

## Keeping Colin's strength up

It is essential that Colin is able to build his strength and fitness before embarking on the Driving Home expedition.

Along with the rest of the team it is imperative they all have the extra strength and stamina to cope with tough driving conditions on the uneven roads and long mileage.

Colin, knowing that it takes him longer than the average person to get fit, is training already. He spends up to an hour every day on his hand bike. It is something he enjoys; it keeps him warm, his blood moving and helps to build up his arm muscles

(also essential for wheeling himself).

The bike can also manually exercise his legs which is done as often as possible to keep them flexible and to avoid muscle wastage.

Three times a week Colin uses a 'standing chair' to



Colin on his hand bike

stand him up. This is a frustrating and difficult exercise. It takes long to achieve and is awkward. Colin has to be strapped into the chair and then lifted into a standing position by an electric motor. The benefits however, of improving his posture, bone density and circulation, make the effort worthwhile.

If Colin doesn't maintain his body strength it will never be possible to walk or stand even if medical science allows it. In the meantime Colin focuses on the expedition to ensure he is fully prepared to cope with whatever physical challenges lie await.

## Disability in Africa

In Africa, the life expectancy of a paralysed person is only 2-3 years, compared with normal life expectancy in the UK. The isolation and lack of medical facilities makes rehabilitation very difficult.

Colin en route will be visiting a few organisations that work to alleviate this. These have been set up through the charity Motivation.

The first in Zambia is called Discare. Colin hopes to fund 10 wheelchairs for children which will enable them to attend school, integrate with their peers and access an education.

Colin will visit and talk to the Kilimanjaro Association of Spinal Injuries which is run by and for wheelchair users. They do advocacy and counselling work in the

region as well as run income generation projects.

Also Colin hopes to visit TATCOT which is a centre in Tanzania training students in wheelchair technology.

More on the website soon



Motivation trained technicians teaching at TATCOT

## Charity Ball—Friday 18th March

Please support the Colin Javens Spinal Injury Trust at a Charity Dinner/Dance at the Radisson Hotel, Marble Arch, on Friday 18th March.

The evening will start at 7.30pm with a champagne reception, followed by a three course meal and half a bottle of wine.

Ascot tickets, a flying lesson and many more. It will be a fun evening ending with dancing to Orange Discotheque.



There will be a speech from Colin, a raffle and auction with some fantastic prizes on offer. They include weekend breaks, Wimbledon and Royal

All profits will go directly to the Trust. If you are interested in tickets (£75 each or £750 for a table of 10) please contact Caroline on 01483 898 840 or caroline@drivinghome.co.uk