

The 26 for 26 challenge

Since 1992, a team of rhino runners have come together for the London Marathon each April. But, for the first time in history, our team were faced with a postponed race. As devastating as the news was, they did not give up. Instead, they spent Sunday 26 April running, jumping, cycling and baking to mark what would normally be our favourite day of the year!

Darion Moore | Michael Hearn Intern

Lockdown may have prevented our amazing group from charging through the streets of London, but it didn't stop them from coming together as a team to tackle different challenges, wherever they were in the world. As part of our 26 for 26 challenge, we saw our runners complete a range of activities in whatever socially distanced space they could find, representing the 26.2 miles that they would otherwise have completed. It was a phenomenal day full of smiles, team spirit and virtual cheers.

It's fair to say that we have an exceptionally creative team. There were stair climbs, step counts, cycles, miles covered by roping in family members, and even rhino cakes! Some of the team put themselves to the test as they ran a huge number of laps in their gardens to complete a full marathon, doing their best not to get dizzy. A few even managed their garden marathons in full rhino costume! The most creative challenge was Chris Green's unique Kilimanjaro ascent, in which he climbed up and down his stairs 550 times (in costume) to reach the summit.

However, our most adorable participant and youngest challenger was David Tyrell's son, an honorary member of our team, who, at age three, showed incredible determination by joining his dad for 26 exercises, for 26 days!

It may not have been the real thing, but the day was a huge success.

Everyone supported each other, lifted the team spirit and shared their love of rhinos. Thanks to the support of countless family and friends, the team raised nearly £10,000 during the challenge, a phenomenal amount during these difficult times.

Unfortunately, as training programmes began to shift up a gear during the summer, the news came that there would no longer be a mass-participation 2020 marathon in London, with the next in-person race taking place in October 2021. Whilst it was the news that many had expected, it was heart-breaking nonetheless. Still, our runners did not falter. Many completed their training to finish on a high, tackling a virtual London Marathon on Sunday 4 October.

All of our rhino runners are exceptional, doing exceptional things and raising exceptional funds. This has definitely not been the marathon journey they signed up for: the phrase "It's a marathon, not a sprint" has never been truer. But they have shown that they are just as resilient as the rhinos that their funds are helping to protect. Our thanks to the whole team for their phenomenal support. Bring on 2021!



ANDY HUMPHRIES



TREVOR'S CAKES



DAVE WARDLE



CHRIS GREEN



DAVID TYRELL



JOANNA MAINGARD

From top, clockwise: Andy Humphries finishing his garden marathon.

An impressive rhino cake made by Trevor Cudmore and his daughter.

Dave Wardle on his garden London Marathon!

Chris Green during his Kilimanjaro summit.

David Tyrell and his son Alfred, with their well-earned 26 for 26 medals!

Joanna Maingard completing her run!