

Edinburgh cyclists leave for Athens on Friday

☒ After months of training and fundraising, the time has come for Chris Strother and Stuart Doyle to commence their 3,000 mile journey from The Parthenon in Athens back to the National Monument on Calton Hill, Edinburgh – by bicycle.

Since The Edinburgh Reporter [interviewed the pair](#) back in March, the two friends have blogged about their progress and now, just days before their adventure, Chris Strother tells us about their experience so far.

Where did you get your bikes from and how has the company supported you?

We have been hugely supported by [Freeflow Bikes](#) – an excellent online retail company based just outside Glasgow. They have helped us out with some fantastic gear, our kit and of course the bikes. We contacted them about possible sponsorship and after a couple of phone calls we managed to have them on board. They're a great bunch of guys who have been a massive help to us and have offered some really useful advice too.

How has your training regime developed since *The Edinburgh Reporter* interviewed you in March?


☒ We have eased off training the last few weeks, as we don't want to be tired before we've even started! Our football season has ended so we have kept up with running and daily cycling to keep us ticking over until we leave. I (Chris) have tried to put on a little weight without too much success. I had hoped to, as it will undoubtedly come back off due to the amount of calories we will be burning every day.

What has been the hardest part of your training?

The hardest part has probably been finding time to get training done together. Although we both play in the same football team, we haven't actually been out cycling together too often, which sounds strange to say, but that's been the

reality. We have different work schedules, family commitments etc so it couldn't have been totally avoided. We have done what we can though and we have two months to spend together so it's maybe just as well we haven't seen too much of each other!

How useful have you found blogging and Twitter to promote your project?

Twitter has been invaluable for us. It's a great way of gaining contacts with people who have similar interests or are in a field of work where you think it might be beneficial to you. We have quite a following now and the support we have had has been great. It's really spread the word about our trip in ways we wouldn't have thought possible. We enjoy blogging aswell and plan to keep this up as much as possible while we're away. I think if you keep it fairly lighthearted and enjoyable to read, then people will respond to it. The videos we filmed with our supporter and partner Ben McNeil at  Elevator Video were great fun to do and we've had some great feedback about them.

How are you feeling about the entire fundraising and training experience so far?

We've both enjoyed the fundraising a great deal. We have met some great people and gained incredible support from the events and fundraisers that we've organised. The team at [St Columba's](#) have been wonderful to us. I think they've probably helped us out more than we have them to be honest. As for the training, I guess maybe we could have done a bit more, but it's sometimes been difficult always finding the time as we've had a fair bit going on the last few months what with full-time jobs, trip organising etc. We are both young fit lads though, and ready to meet the challenge head on. The training as a whole has also been a great learning experience. Not just the physical training but also through our meetings with Craig Ali at Total Health UK.

We've had some great advice and information on food and nutrition and learned about flexibility and mobility. Exercising and eating properly while we're away is hugely important and something we may not have fully considered without the help of Craig and his Team.

You can still support Chris and Stuart by going to their [fundraising website](#), where you can also read their blog.

