

Linlithgow cyclist conquers 'Everest'

A young Linlithgow Bridge cyclist set out on Sunday (17th Oct) to make an attempt on the Scottish record for cycling the height of Everest in support of a Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy charity.

Alex Ball, (19) took up the challenge of riding up and down the local Kingscavil hill, just outside Linlithgow, to reach a total of 8,848m, the height of Mount Everest, to help raise funds for the Project GO charity.





Before and after. And still smiling. © 2021 J.L. Preece

Prior to the attempt, Alex said “‘Everesting’ is a challenge in which a person rides up a climb of their choice until they reach the accumulative height of Mt Everest. Kingscavil has an elevation of 70* meters so I will need to ride up and down 122 times!”

The teenage ace grew up as a member of his local cycling club, West Lothian Clarion, but now rides for the Vanelli-Project G0 racing team. And that’s where his inspiration to attack the

leg busting record and raise funds at the same time came from.

Alex said “Half of the money raised will be donated to Project GO {<https://www.duchenneuk.org/project-go/>}, a charity which is associated with my current team Vanelli-Project GO. Project GO was set up by Nick and Kirsty Ohly, and aims to raise awareness and funds towards finding a cure for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy after both their children were diagnosed with the disease.

“I’d love to help such an important cause, while also showing my gratitude for the support my team has provided this year. The other half will go towards covering the costs of me living and racing in Italy with Zappi Racing Team next year.”



It’s a quick descent. © 2021 J.L. Preece

The Scottish record for Everesting prior to Alex’s attempt was 10 hours 11 minutes, and Alex hoped to better that time on the day, saying “I chose Kingscavil because it’s steep and gains height in a short distance, plus it’s got a reputation of being the toughest climb in the Bathgate Alps!”

And, on the – rather wet and miserable – day, the record was trashed. Alex rode the ‘distance’ in a, rounded, time of 9 hours 57 minutes. However, to ensure the record stood, he had ridden an extra four ascents. This meant that his time for the, required, ascent was (pre-ratification) 9 hours 39 minutes 57 seconds. That was for a mere 130* laps of an approximate 69 metre ascent.

It was noted that his fastest lap was lap 41 at 4:06 and his final lap was 4:14, so was so consistent throughout. (*Kingscavil needs to be seen to understand how impressive this feat is – JLP*). This was not just a feat of physical endurance, but one of incredible mental strength as well.



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2022 is set to be a big year for the Linlithgow lad, a move to Italy is the next step up for Alex after spending the summer racing in there country as a guest rider for the Zappi Racing

Team.

Alex says "The racing in Italy was much harder than I'm used to with races as long as 180 km in 40 degree heat, but I enjoyed the experiences and learnt so much about the tactics of road racing So I was so excited to be asked to join the team for next season."

Donations are still welcome and can be submitted here:
<https://gofund.me/0e1a1bf0>

Original press release and data supplied by Alex's Dad and cycling correspondent Matt Ball.

**The height of the course came in for some minor discussion and it was thought that riding more than sufficient extra laps would ensure the desired result.*