

11th March 2010

Newbury Weekly News



Ben Jarvis and Paul Homersham – preparing for the gruelling 125-mile canoe race

Pair embark on 125-mile challenge for charity cash

TWO men are tackling a gruelling 125-mile non-stop charity event this Easter to raise funds for three worthy causes.

Paul Homersham and Ben Jarvis are taking part in the international canoe marathon from Devizes to Westminster on the weekend of April 3 and 4.

The event is regarded as one of the ultimate tests of endurance, pushing competitors to their physical and mental limits.

With this in mind, the West Berkshire team have undertaken a punishing practice schedule and intensive training since last September to prepare for the race which they expect to take around 26 hours to complete and which passes through Newbury on the way to the finishing line.

As well as raising charity funds, their aim is also to actually complete the course – since it is known that between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of participating crews to fail to finish each year.

Back home and practising hard, the team took part in a race over a 23-mile course at the weekend, which they completed in four hours and 35 minutes, securing them 26th place.

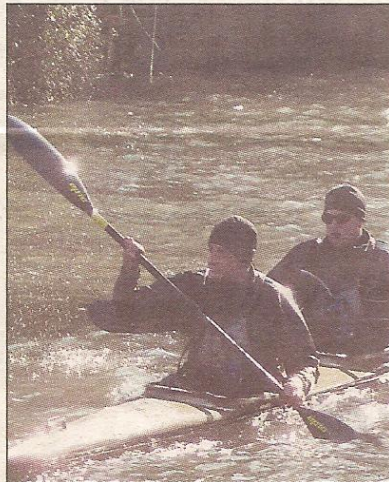
Unforeseen weather conditions provided an additional challenge in that the first eight or so miles of the course were frozen over so the team were forced to carry their boat for most of that way. Taking the extra challenge on the chin, they saw this difficulty as yet more good preparation for the Devizes to Westminster main event – the longest non-stop

race in the world – in a month's time.

Charities benefiting from their Devizes to Westminster race will be New Life (special baby care), Sue Ryder (hospice care) and Leukaemia Research.

Some corporate sponsorship has been received from Wadworths, but much more is needed and the canoeists would warmly welcome additional donations and sponsorship to maximise their efforts for the charities.

All those wishing to support the charities and sponsor Paul Homersham and Ben Jarvis can do so now by making a donation online at: www.devizestowestminster.co.uk



The team on the water training for the challenge