

PRESS RELEASE



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TREK ETHIOPIA: THE TOUGH GET GOING

Colin Burman spends his working life focused on the logistics strategies of lingerie brand Ann Summers – but he'll leave all that behind in February 2011 to take part in a gruelling charity trek of over 60 km through the harsh climate of the Simien Mountains in Ethiopia.

He and up to twenty more hardy participants will face the extreme daytime heat and freezing nights of the 4,000-metre peaks – dubbed the “Tibet of Africa” – for five long days of challenging physical exertion at altitude, in a bid to raise over £100,000 through sponsorship.

The cash will be used by international development charity Transaid to provide Africans living in poverty with safer, cheaper, and more efficient transport, facilitating their access to healthcare, education and work.

Transaid CEO Chris Saunders says: “It pleases us no end that there are people out there willing to take on this kind of challenge for charity – and if anyone’s considering it I urge them to contact us.”

He warns that the trip is not for the faint-hearted though. It requires motivation and preparation.

Preparation is something Colin, 43, has in abundance. In spite of a spinal operation two years ago, he cycles twice a week, and runs five times, clocking up about 80 miles in total. And how about motivation?

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“I come from an under-privileged background,” he explains. “Having known what it’s like to struggle to survive, and then managed to leave that behind, it’s now really important to me to give something back.

“I chose Transaid because, as a charity, it has to work particularly hard to raise awareness – and its cause is second to none.”

The grassy peaks Colin will encounter in February are populated by gelada baboon, Simien fox and endangered species walia ibex, and should offer some magnificent sights to temper the hard work he’ll put in.

Apart from these wild animals, though, Colin and his fellow adventurers will be alone to face their challenge – aided by a pack donkey, a doctor and a group of local guides to set up camp and cook the meals when they’re roughing it.

“Personally, I can’t wait,” says Colin, who has been involved in many similar physical feats in the past, and has lined up the September marathon of the Jungfrau in Switzerland as training.

“It’s going to be tough, but I love being put to the test. And anyway, what’s this compared to the things the people of Africa go through? While I’m training, I think about the help people will receive from the kind donations my friends and family will make.”

Chris Saunders comments: “We’d love to hear from anyone keen on getting involved. Trek Ethiopia’s guaranteed to be a pretty life-changing experience – and who knows how many more it will save?”

Trek Ethiopia runs from 4-12 February, after which there is an additional option of staying on to explore the country at a more leisurely pace. Visit www.transaid.org to download a registration pack. Alternatively, call 020 7387 8136 or email april@transaid.org to request an information pack.

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Note to Editor:

Transaid (www.transaid.org) is an international development agency that aims to improve people's quality of life in the developing world by making transport more available and affordable. It was founded by Save The Children and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK) and works by sharing skills and knowledge with local people to enable them to put in place and manage efficient transport systems.

Transaid's core work includes creating transport management systems for the public sector and assisting with the provision of professional driving qualification development and the training of driver trainers. It also assists with teaching preventive vehicle maintenance management and introducing local, low cost transport solutions including its innovative bicycle ambulance. Transaid also helps promote HIV, AIDS and road safety awareness and shares its specialist knowledge with the humanitarian aid sector.

Transaid enjoys strong backing from the transport and logistics industry and the active involvement of its patron, HRH The Princess Royal.

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