

THE "JAMIE BRUNNING" NEWSLETTER

15th September – 22nd October 2014



Welcome to the second edition of my newsletter which covers from the period from 15 September through to 22 October 2014 (wow that reminds me of writing press releases for work!!). During this period I have covered about 1300km and nearly managed to run all the way across California. Mexico is getting close and the adventure is really about to kick off. In the last edition there was a lot of talk of injuries and I am glad to report that there is very little to report on that front today. The worst I can complain of is some peeling from sun burn. The scenery has been awe-inspiring and has changed dramatically along the way, from the Great Redwood Forests of the north to the desert like land of the south. The weather continues to be amazing and apart from a couple of slightly damp days in the Avenue of the Giants the tan continues to develop. The only problem with that is that some unfortunate tan lines appear.



Tan lines due to my gloves – super attractive!

When I first sat down to write this I struggled to remember what I had done and what could possibly be included. I took myself aside with a piece of paper and slowly pieced together each step and day and within a few minutes I had too many stories to squeeze in. Now I know that most people like to read about the misfortunes that befall

someone undertaking an adventure of this scale and while I am sure I will experience more than my fair share I am glad to report that in this edition it is all about how amazing everything and everyone has been. There has only be one occasion when things have not gone according to plan and that was in Gualala where I was attacked by a posse of raccoons who successfully managed to alleviate me of my bagels. I am just glad they didn't manage to steal the peanut butter and strawberry jam that had been dislodged during the raid.

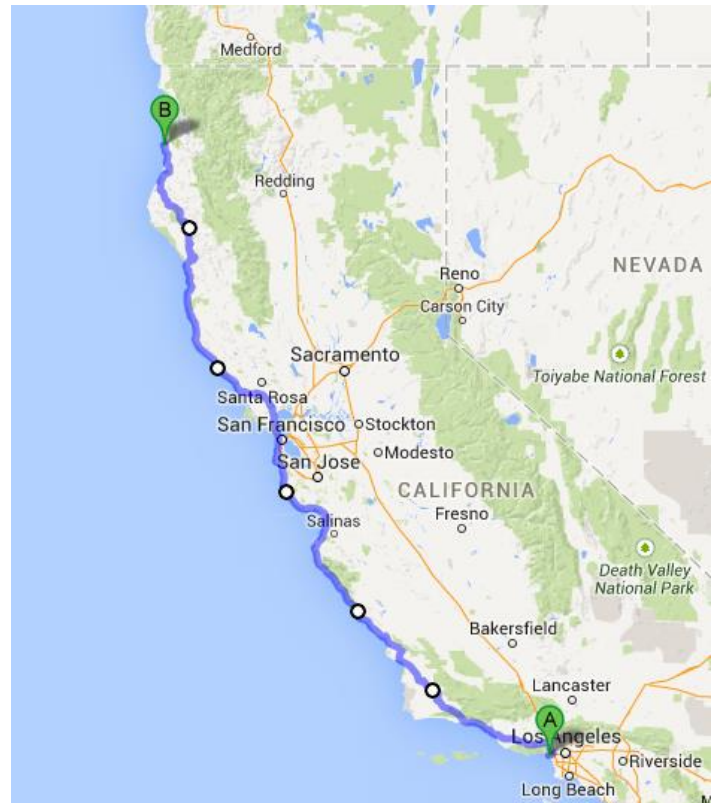
One thing I am really enjoying about this expedition is the positivity that surrounds it. I love that people are interested and engage with what I am doing and try their hardest to get involved be it through donating to the charites, sharing my webpage or just spreading the work. The further I go the more momentum builds and there is a sense that together we may just make a difference, even if it is just a small one.

The Route:

This particular stage of my expedition started at Patrick's Point State Park in North California and followed the coast all the way down through the Avenue of the Giants, San Francisco and Big Sur until I finally arrived in Santa Monica, Los Angeles. The main feature has been the hills, lots of hills. I had to climb the 4 mile rise at Leggett and tackle the rolling hills of the famous and beautiful Big Sur region. But there is something sadistically pleasurable about conquering these obstacles and the views you are rewarded with make it worth all the effort.

A Few Stats:

- Distance run in this 37 day period edition: c1300.km
- Total distance covered in 67 day period: 2500km
- Longest day: 70km
- Daily average: 44km (excluding days off)
- Total days off: 11
- Longest time without a shower: 6 days and 280km
- New addiction – Ice Cream!!



A few events from along the route

There are literally so many different events and scenarios that would qualify for inclusion but I have to be selective and pick just a few, so here goes.

Avenue of the Giants:

Just after the last newsletter I arrived at the Avenue of the Giants. This is an area just south of Arcata where the old highway winds through the immensely impressive Redwood Forest. To give you an idea of the size of these monsters the campsite I was staying at had a cabin that had been carved out of the tree trunk of an old Redwood and inside you could walk around, sleep and there was even space for a coffee table. Before I embarked on this particular section of my expedition I had to take part in a TV interview that was organised by my new friend Jon. You can watch this by clicking [here](#).

While nothing particularly happened in the Redwoods apart from rain, a very rare occurrence here, the sheer scale of the trees and the sense of being at one with nature has left a bit of an impression on me. These trees have withstood the tests of time and no matter how much the world changes around them they stand proud and unfazed.



Standing in the root structure of a huge Redwood in the Avenue of the Giants

Soul Camp: On day 36 I left Benbow and was making my way south (like every other day). It was hot and I was tired. Motivation was being sapped from my very core and the will to continue was diminishing. I crossed over a bridge and passed a campground but something was not quite as it should be. There was a sign outside saying "Soul Camp" and music was pounding from the depths of the forest. At first I continue to run but then the "experience everything" alarm went off in my head and I turned around intrigued about what was going on. At the entrance to the campground there was a registration table and some very fashionably dressed people, not your traditional campers. I approached and enquired about what was going on and they explained that "Soul Camp" was an annual event which takes place in a campground and the organisers arrange for DJs and bands to come and perform over a three day period. Everyone brings their tents, food and drink (plus other recreational substances) and enjoys a weekend of dancing, eating and frivolity. This was something I had to be part of. After sorting out a slight cash flow problem (basically they let me in for free) I set up my camp, bought some beers and settled into a weekend of decadent enjoyment. Everyone was so accommodating and went out of their ways to make sure I had a good time. One particular Mexican lady made sure my sweet tooth was taken care of with gummi bears (soaked in something) and chocolate brownies (with secret ingredients). A highlight was watching the [Bayonics](#) perform at the pool party! Probably not the best preparation for the biggest hill of my expedition but well worth the time!



My first pool party

San Francisco – I had been told by a lot of people that I would love San Fran and everyone was spot on. I loved everything about it (apart from the few occasions I was turned away but let's not dwell on the negatives – that's not what this expedition is about.) I first arrived in Sausalito and was taken care of by my friend Vicky. As well as her excellent hospitality and generosity she also became my tour adviser and what a list of things she

recommended. On my first day I caught the boat to Alcatraz and spent a whole afternoon exploring the once high security prison. They have done a fantastic job of making this a tourist attraction and the audio tour is absolutely fantastic and worth every minute. How they manage to coordinate all us tourists around without confusion is remarkable. I was also lucky enough to have visited the island at the same time as Ai Wei Wei has an [exhibition](#) open to the public. His installation was addressing the subject of freedom while highlighting all those who are denied freedom for standing up for their beliefs - a real eye opener. One thing that was particularly clever was that visitors could write to those being held around the world. After Alcatraz came a bit of a foodie tour. I popped into The [Buena Vista café](#) for an Irish Coffee – literally to die for – and followed this with a ridiculously large chocolate ice cream from [Ghirardelli's](#).



The view of The Golden Gate Bridge from Alcatraz

Scenery – There are no words that can explain the beautiful scenes I have seen along the way. Every day I am treated to some of the most spectacular coastlines and the weather has been so kind to me. One of the great things about running is that it gives you time to really look around and appreciate everything and unlike being in a car you have the sounds and the smells that just enhance the experience. I sometimes feel sorry for the people who wizz past in their cars doing drive by photo shoots when possible, however I appreciate not everyone can take the time to spend as much time as I have.



One of the spectacular views from Big Sur



And another Big Sur moment



Foxen Canyon

My dad's webpage:

While I have been pounding the pavements of North America my dad has been following my route day by day and has created a webpage that shows you exactly where I have been, if I slept in a bed or my tent and gives a number of other statistics such as KM per day, number of rest days etc. Please check it out by clicking [HERE](#), I think it is amazing. Thank you Dad.

POWERED BY Google

How's he going?

NB:- A Marathon is 42.195 kilometres (26 miles and 385 yards), a mile is 1.61 kilometres

Unfortunately Google Maps will not allow the Street View facility in a map on a web page - to see this map in Google Maps click [here](#)

Days so far **68** Running days **57** Kilometres run **2488** Kms per running day **43.6** Rest days **11**

Acts of kindness:

The thing that has been the most amazing part of this trip is the number of people who have gone out of their way to make my life that little bit easier. These include, and this is by no means definitive:

- Jon from Fernbridge has been amazing ever since I met him. His first act of kindness was to give me a cold brewski. He then sorted out beers at the hotel near my end of day campsite. He then became my self-appointed PR man and contacted all the news outlets south of Ferndale and managed to get me coverage on television and in the newspaper! And can't forget the countless beers and the amazing burger!
- Joe Ray for looking after me in Davenport. One of the nicest men I have ever met and definitely wins the prize for the coolest shed ever. Loved sharing stories and really appreciated breakfast.
- Maryam and her lovely flatmates for taking me into their home and allowing me to stay for two nights. They also took me out for dinner and got me to take part in a two hour yoga class.
- Ben and Paula for their continued support. Ever since they spotted me on highway one they have made sure my computers and batteries have been charged and I have been well hydrated. They have even put me in contact with others further down the route where I will hopefully get to stay in the near future.
- Eric in Pismo Beach for taking me in, feeding me and being genuinely interested in what I am undertaking.
- KG in Santa Barbara for hosting me at such short notice and letting me stay on your dive boat. An interesting night of drinking, dancing and general misbehaviour – suffered the next day!
- Vicky for the amazing hospitality in Sausalito, the best tour suggestions for San Francisco and making sure that all the parcels that arrived after I left made their way to me before I hit Mexico. (Also thanks for the candy!!!)
- Thank you to the lovely couple who bought me lunch in Carpentaria
- Lori and Phil for making sure I found my way south from Santa Barbara
- To everyone who has slipped me a few dollars to buy a meal. I have made sure I have spent the money wisely and enjoyed it every time.

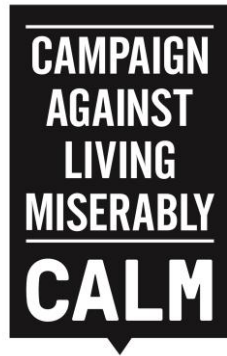


Jon and I enjoy beers and burgers – essential carb loading!

Charities:

There is obviously a serious aspect to this trip and that is to raise money and awareness for the charities I have chosen. So far we have together raised about £7000 for all the charities. While this may not all show up on the Justgiving page it is sitting in a paypal account. As stated on my website a small proportion of monies may be used to help fund the cost of the expedition. I am pleased to say that at this time it is looking increasingly likely that none of the monies will be used for this and will all go to charity. Thank you for all your donations so far. Hopefully by the end of the expedition we will have got closer to the £20,000 I would like to raise.

Click on the logos for a reminder of the charities:



To donate please click [here](#)

Thank you to my sponsors:

I'd also like to thank all those who are making my trip possible by providing equipment and support. Thank you for your patience in dealing with my requests. Your involvement is key to me getting through each day.

[Rollei](#) – For the amazing video cameras that help me capture this expedition. I've just received the [7s](#) and really excited about using it

[Powertraveller](#) – For providing me with all the power I could possible use through my [SolarGorilla](#), [PowerGorilla](#) and [SpiderMonkey](#)

[OverBoard](#) – For keeping everything I have dry all the time.

Microsoft/Nokia – For my [Lumia 1020](#). All my photos have been taken with this phone...

[Force Ten](#) – I love my [tent](#) and my [sleeping bag](#). I spend so much time in both that to have the best is very important. I want one of their new [rucksacks](#) that are released next year. They look awesome!!!

[Trangia](#) – We all lovingly remember the [Trangia stove](#) and no matter what new cooking set ups come along nothing beats one of these!

[Rudy Project Sunglasses](#) – I think this was the first bit of kit I received and despite being an idiot and scratching them on day one I still wear them every day – even when it's raining (but as a hairband!)

Where you can follow:

- I am trying to update my blog as often as possible: www.jamieisrunning.com
- Photos can be found [here](#)
- Video can be found at www.youtube.com/jamieisrunning
- GPS tracking can be found [here](#)
- I am on [Twitter](#), Instagram and [Facebook](#) with the name jamieisrunning

A Quick Beard Update:

As many of you know I am trying not to cut my beard while on this expedition. Here is the latest on its progress:



Some photos from the road:



AT&T may have no reception in the North West of America but they do have a good slogan!



Some fellow Macmillan fundraisers Check out their journey [here](#)



“Highway to the danger zone” – I hope that isn’t actually the case



My friend the Tarantula

To see more visit my Microsoft OneDrive photo page by clicking [here](#)

THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

And sorry for typos and grammatical errors – I am always very tired when I write this and my blog!