

# THE "JAMIE BRUNNING" NEWSLETTER

2<sup>nd</sup> April – 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015

**Days Run**                      **193**                      **KM Run**                      **8125**                      **Money raised**                      **c. 10,000**

PLEASE CLICK [HERE](#) TO VISIT MY FACEBOOK PAGE AND "LIKE" IT – IT HELPS WITH SPONSORS!

Find PHOTOS from the expedition [HERE](#)

Find lots of VIDEOS from the expedition [HERE](#)



A view from the road

**THE INTRO** - This has been an amazing month and arguably my favourite so far. In the space of 30 days I have been in four different countries, running completely across two of them, and during that time the people and landscapes have changed so much. From the seaside town of La Libertad in El Salvador to the tropical forests of Manuel Antonio National Park in Costa Rica, I have received nothing but kindness and support from the amazing people I have met. Every country has their own way of helping me on my way and the support has been tremendous. This month has had its share of downs as well as I have suffered from two bouts of illness. Firstly a stomach upset in El Salvador and then more recently an infection in Nicaragua. However, despite these hurdles I have managed to make huge progress, running over 1000kms. I have run so far that I am actually in danger of getting to Panama a little ahead of schedule – a nice problem to have. This is allowing me to take a little more time to appreciate everything that these great countries have to offer. In Nicaragua I went boarding down a volcano and took a detour to the beautiful colonial city of Granada. Right now I am sitting in a hostel with a beautiful view of the Pacific and am actually going to take two days off in a row so I can enjoy the wonderful Manuel Antonio National Park. My little sister said in jest that I should thank her for making me slow down and she is actually spot on. It is all well running huge distances each day but if I don't enjoy the surroundings then what is the point.

**A MORE SERIOUS BIT** - CALM is one of the charities that I am trying to support on this expedition. Their name stands for the Campaign Against Living Miserably and it exists to prevent male suicide in the UK. In 2013, male suicide accounted for 78% of all suicides and remains the single biggest cause of death in men aged 20 – 45. Over the last few weeks I have had some interesting conversations with people about suicide. There have been people who have lost friends and neighbours and those who have lost brothers and family members. In one hostel they actually had to deal with a suicide in their establishment. The stories about how people have dealt with suicide

have been so different. In one occasion the loss of a son led to a father tragically taking his own life and in another the loss of a brother has inspired a young man to make sure he gets the most out of his life. There have been people who have opened up and told me that they have been to a dark place where they have considered taking their own lives. What is consistent in all the stories I have heard is that the people in question have never shown any signs of depression or unhappiness. Their tragic suicides have been completely out of the blue.

I obviously don't have any answers but raising the awareness about suicide and working to remove the stigma around men asking for help has to be a good start. People should feel able to seek help without feeling that they are being judged. Offering a confidential phone line is one many things that CALM does and a third of the money raised from my expedition will go to CALM to help maintain and hopefully expand their great work.

To learn more about CALM click [HERE](#)

**IT'S A SOUTH WEST LONDON THING** – I am not sure why but there seems to be a movement in South West London. Granted it's a small movement (only includes 4 people) but it's a positive movement nonetheless. There are four young adventurers/athletes undertaking expeditions to raise money for different charities. What connects us? We are all on foot!!!

Representing Chelsea we have Ed Lloyd Owen and his "Short Walk Home" - <http://www.shortwalkhome.co.uk/>

Representing Fulham – Me!

Representing Richmond – Anna MacDuff is running the length of NZ - <http://annamcnuff.com/2014/09/20/running-the-length-of-new-zealand/>

Also representing Richmond (I think) - Rob Young has just completed 370 Marathons in 365 days - <http://www.marathonmanuk.com/>

### **ANY FINANCIAL SPONSORS OUT THERE????**

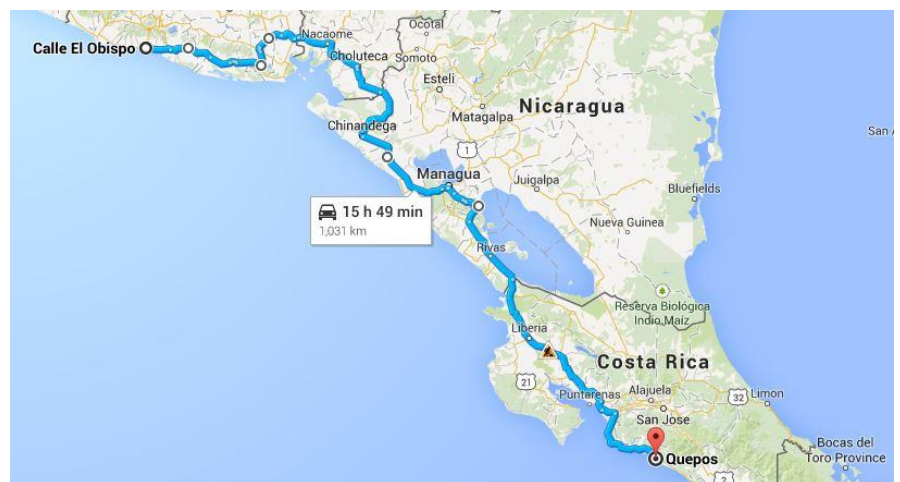
*"How am you financing this expedition" is a question I get a lot. I have been very fortunate to have some amazing kit providers who have supplied the most amazing equipment but when it comes down to everyday costs it is mostly coming from my savings and they are by no means limitless!!!*

*In June, I will be getting five fresh running shirts all with a nice space on the front for anyone who would like to sponsor a shirt. I will need to get them printed before June so there is a one month window!! If you know anyone that might be interested in financially supporting my expedition please let me know....*

*If you would like to donate a few pennies to the costs I would also be hugely appreciative! This can be done by clicking [here](#)*

### **The Route:**

This month I have run over 1030km through four different countries. I started in La Libertad, El Salvador, ran across Honduras and Nicaragua and am now in Costa Rica. During that time I have run down coastal roads, around volcanoes and across beautiful plains. I think I can now officially call myself a "Cross Country Runner" on a literal basis!!!!



### **A Few Stats:**

- Distance run in this 32 day period: 1030+km
- Total distance covered in 261 day period: 8125km
- Longest day: 70km (a couple of times this month)
- Daily average: 42.1km (excluding days off)
- Running Shoes – Currently rotating pairs 7, 8 and 9 – All NIKE!
- KM covered in a 5 day push: 260km



## 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.

**Event 1:** Volcano boarding in Nicaragua – While in Leon, Nicaragua, I heard about Volcano Boarding. This relatively new sport takes place on an active volcano called Cerro Negra and is number 2 on the [CNN thrill seekers list](#). The concept is pretty basic. You lug a wooden board up a volcano, sit on it and then slide down as fast as possible. The fastest speed recorded on our trip was 74km/h and was done in spectacular fashion by the very last person to slide down. My speed was a little less than this and I put that down to the fact that I recorded the whole experience on my [Rollei](#) Actioncam – Click [here](#) to view! The whole experience is quite expensive but it is definitely worth it. The actual slide down is hugely entertaining but only lasts a minute or so (depending on how quick you go!). For me climbing the actual volcano was more interesting. The volcano is quite new in volcano terms and is made up of black lava/rubble, hence the name – Black Hill. The route up takes you past one of the openings which is multi-coloured and smoking. When you get to the top you can walk to the edge of the main crater and look down. The black rubble/rocks are still warm and if you dig a small hole you can feel the heat. The team that operate the tour actually brought food up and managed to cook a potato by burying it.



*Me and my volcano board, Leon, Nicaragua*



*Junior and his family*

## **Event 2:** The Overwhelming Generosity of Costa Rican People

I have received amazing generosity from people from the very beginning of this expedition. On my very first day in Costa Rica a group of waitresses did a whip round and made a donation and acts like this have occurred in every country. But in Costa Rica it has been overwhelming. Every day people stop and try to help in any way possible. They go out of their way to make my expedition more comfortable and give without thinking. I have had hotel rooms paid for and even a 9 year old girl donated a teddy to my expedition –

Charlie the Bear now has a dog!!! Each and every one of these acts of kindness add up and create such a positive impression of Costa Rica. I am in no way saying the other country's weren't as kind it just here it is different. I have tried to include as many of the people as possible in the Thank You section below.

**Event 3:** Good Friday Procession in El Salvador – I am not a religious person but I do love it when I get to experience religious celebrations in different countries. It is a time when people get together and are at their best. Obviously Central America is very Catholic and they take religious holidays very seriously. I arrived in Zacatecoluca unaware that it was Easter weekend but knew something was happening when I stumbled across people creating huge street images made from coloured sand. I asked one of the locals what was happening and he explained that that evening there would be a procession around the town and the images marked the route. I returned at about 7 in the evening to find the once deserted streets full of families gathering to watch the procession. Street stalls had been set up and were selling fried bananas, coffee, churros and sodas. Everyone was smiling and happy and eagerly pushing to get a place near the designated route. The



*People creating street art from coloured sand in preparation for the Good Friday procession*

The local TV station had their cameras set up and were constantly fighting to keep people from getting in the way of their camera. To my amusement and the cameraman's annoyance a young boy found never-ending enjoyment from jumping in front of the camera. At 8 o'clock the procession started at the huge white cathedral situated on the south side of the central square. The procession was made up of a huge glass coffin carrying the bloody body of Christ. This was carried on the shoulders of about 40 white robed men who shuffled along, constantly changing position under the direction of a minister. A party of men with large wooden poles walked ahead and manually raised the telephone wires to allow the procession to proceed. Behind Christ were two more statues, that of the Virgin

Mary and that of St Peter. This was all accompanied prayers amplified on a tinny speaker. Following were hundreds of people holding candles. It was a great site to see and share with the local people.

Procession video 1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdMVknlhdKE>

Procession video 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0T8FIIFY6E>

Procession Video 3 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPocpPuICi8>

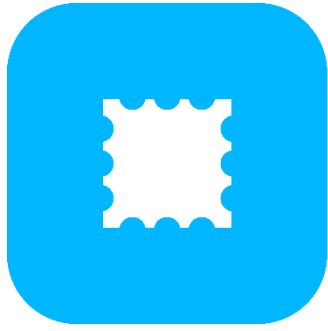
**Event 4:** Meeting an Equally Mad Adventurer – I can't say it enough but it is lovely meeting like-minded travellers along the road but this month I got to meet someone special – Nacho! Nacho is an amazingly nice Spanish chap from Madrid. He has been on an expedition that has seen him walk all the way around the world. Every day he walks about 50km and then finds somewhere to sleep. Like me he pushes all his equipment in a stroller. We had the fortune to meet each other in Chinandega, Nicaragua, and have dinner together. It was awesome to be able to discuss everything we had each experienced and to learn that all the issues I had experienced were mirrored in his expedition. I regret is not being able to spend more time with Nacho and wish I had taken a day off to spend more time with him - 3 hours of chatting was not enough. Please read about his adventure [HERE](#).



*Two guys who love their lives!!!*



## Focus on a sponsor – Touchnote



# Touchnote

When I was setting up the incentives for donors and contributors I thought postcards might be a nice give back. The idea was that if anyone (and to be honest I didn't expect many) donated £100 to my charities or contributed £100 to my costs then they would receive a postcard from each country. Amazingly over 20 people signed up for this and together have helped raise over £2000 for my three charities – [CALM](#), [Macmillan](#) and [WaterAid UK](#).

In America, Mexico and Guatemala fulfilling my end of the bargain was easy, though it did take up a lot of time and cost more than I had previously anticipated. However, when I reached Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua trying to find postcards became near impossible. While making excuses to a friend she mentioned that people would be happy with a Touchnote card. At that time I hadn't heard of Touchnote so I took to my computer to research them.



*One of my self-designed postcards*

Touchnote provide an awesome online system that allows anyone to send postcards from anywhere to anywhere for a fixed price (includes printing the postcard and postage). The online tool or app allows you to completely personalise your postcard and send from anywhere you have access to internet be it by computer or phone. It's no wonder that they are the world's most popular online postcard company, having sent over 5 million cards)

I contacted Touchnote and told them what I am doing and they generously supplied me with free credits to help me out. Now, rather than sending whatever dodgy postcards available I can edit my own expedition photos and send them direct to the awesome people that have assisted me as beautiful postcards.

If you'd like to receive a postcards visit my website and donate or contribute £100 – [www.jamieisrunning.com](http://www.jamieisrunning.com)

Computer: [www.touchnote.com](http://www.touchnote.com)

iPhone/iPad: <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/touchnote-best-postcards-greeting/id325525543?mt=8>

Android: [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.touchnote.android&hl=en\\_GB](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.touchnote.android&hl=en_GB)

## Reminder about Dad's webpage:

Please check it out by clicking [HERE](#)

### Jamie is running

You can contribute to Jamie's supported charities on his web site



How's he going?

Days so far:- **261** Running days:- **193**

Kilometres run:- **8125**





## 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:

- Carla and Fred – Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity. I was recommended [Casa de Olas](#) by a friend I made in Leon, Nicaragua, who described it as a home away from home and his description couldn't have been more spot on. Fred and Carla have created an amazing hostel that is laid back and homely where you can mix relaxing with partying. Every night a delicious communal meal is served and everyone eats at the same time which makes it feel even more homely. They have big plans for this place and I am sure they will deliver on all of them. Thank you again.
- The surf dude in Costa Rica – Thank you for stopping and giving me a cookie and generous donation to my expedition.
- Ricardo – Thank you for being an absolute legend. This guy pulled over and gave me a Gatorade and then proceeded to sort out lunch and a hotel in Jaco, Costa Rica. The food at [The Green Room](#) was amazing and [Cabina Victoria](#) was perfect.
- Jorge – Seeing a post about the above Jorge then provided me with an amazing meal at [Restaurante Rafaylita](#) in Parrita, Costa Rica
- Federico – I never got to meet Federico but after being introduced via email he bought me lunch at [Mercato del Porto](#), Quepos, Costa Rica
- The lovely family who gave me iced water outside Liberia, Costa Rica
- The couple who gave me a huge bottle of ice cold Te Frio outside Parrita, Costa Rica
- The fruit vendor who gave me mangos
- Richard and Raquel – Thank you so much for your awesome hospitality in San Jose and for being a courier service and delivering my bankcard and camera from London (Thanks go out to your brother too!)
- Chris – Thank you for taking awesome photos in Leon, recommending Casa de Olas and for just being super supportive!
- The lorry driver who pulled over, waited for me and then gave me a nice bottle of water outside Puntarenas, Costa Rica
- Restaurant Vista Del Mar, Costa Rica – Thank you for letting me set up camp at your restaurant
- The two awesome guys in Costa Rica who stopped and gave me water, a can of Canada Dry and a donation
- Junior and Family – Thank you for the avocados, apples and a new teddy!!!



Fred and Carla from Casa de Olas, San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua



## 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 **£10,000** for all the charities. While this may not all show up on the VirginGiving page it is sitting in a paypal account or I am waiting for cheques. As stated on my website a proportion of monies may be used to help fund the cost of the expedition. 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 the companies that have helped me:



To find out what products I am using go to: <http://jamieisrunning.com/companies-that-have-assisted-me/>

## Where you can follow:

- I am trying to update my blog as often as possible: [www.jamieisrunning.com](http://www.jamieisrunning.com)
- Photos can be found [here](#)
- Video can be found at [www.youtube.com/jamieisrunning](http://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:**



San Miguel Volcano – El Salvador



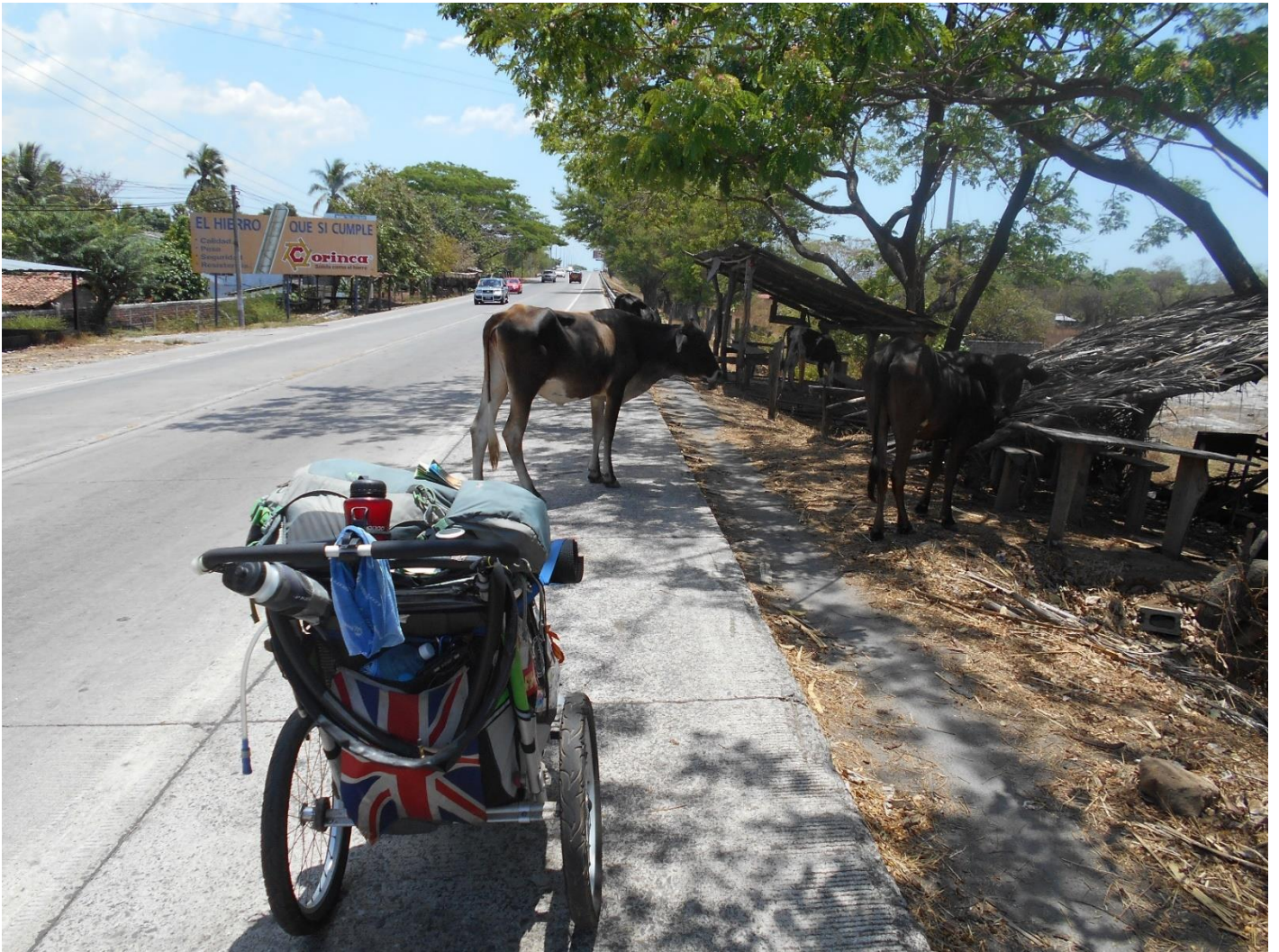


An El Salvadorian Cowboy – North West El Salvador



A house built out of plastic bottles – El Salvador





Cows blocking my path – El Salvador



Running passed a volcano in Costa Rica





A lady making pupusas – Zacatecoluca, El Salvador





A fishing boat being hoisted ashore – La Libertad, El Salvador



Some friendly people in a street market – Nacome, Honduras





Young guys with their horse and cart – San Lorenzo, Honduras



Watermelons for sale – Choluteca, Honduras





Iguanas for sale on the side of the road - Honduras



More cows - Honduras





Amazing street food – Nacome, Honduras



The cathedral roof – Leon, Nicaragua





The Cathedral – León, Nicaragua



Cerro Negro – León, Nicaragua





A lady with her street stall – Granada, Nicaragua



Food for sale in the market – Granada, Nicaragua





The cemetery – Granada, Nicaragua



A road side fruit stall - Nicaragua





Cows and cart - Nicaragua



Statue of Jesus – San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua





A menacing bus - San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua



A house in Somotillo - Nicaragua





A beautiful waterfall – Costa Rica



The National Theatre – San Jose, Costa Rica

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 the blog!!**