

MEATH FIREFIGHTERS GEAR UP FOR CHARITY CYCLE

Eight firefighters from Meath are putting final preparations in place to take part in the 'Race Around Ireland' – the ultra marathon cycling event – in August to raise much-needed funds for suicide and bereavement counselling service SOSAD (Save Our Sons and Daughters).

Starting on Sunday 27 August from Trim, the 2,200km cycle race must be completed within 96 hours! As the first emergency team to enter the international race in 2015, Meath Fire Blazers completed the event in 84hrs 39mins – finishing fourth in their category and 10th overall out of 30 solo riders and teams.

According to team captain Richie Faulkner, Meath Fire Blazers is now asking all emergency services colleagues for their support by making stations available to both crew and riders to use facilities such as showers, changing facilities, toilets, and a rest area along the race route.

"We would appreciate if they can also donate to the fund through sponsorship cards or by making donations online via our GoFundMe page," Faulkner told 'Emergency Services Ireland'.

"The 'Race Around Ireland' is the toughest endurance cycle race in Europe and second toughest in the world after 'Race Across America'. Starting in Trim on 27 August the race takes in some well-known landmarks such as Newgrange, the Causeway Coast, Malin Head, Cliffs of Moher and Ring of Kerry to name a few," he added.

LESSONS LEARNED

The team, he said, learned a lot of lessons from the race in 2015. "With just 14 weeks to prepare we were told that it was madness to take on the challenge. We had two training sessions, and mistakes cost us a lot of time, but our goal was to complete the race in under 96 hours. And with great public generosity, we raised €20,000 for two deserving charities."

This year Meath Fire Blazers are raising money for SOSAD



To make a donation on 'GoFundMe' visit www.facebook.com/meathfireblazers/



Meath Fire Blazers (back row l-r): Kevin Flanagan, Tommy Ayton, Gary Ayton, Barry Quinn and Thomas Nelson (front row l-r): Brian Rogers, Matt Smyth and Richie Faulkner.

– the charity that aims to increase awareness of self-harm and suicide in Ireland – which first opened in Louth. SOSAD has since opened new counselling service centres in Monaghan, Cavan, Meath and Offaly to date, in response to the growing rates of suicide in this country.

'Race Around Ireland' is the team's second fundraising event for SOSAD this year, following their fourth-place finish in the 555km Donegal Atlantic Way Ultra Race on 23 June. The Meath firefighters completed the cycle in just under 21 hours. "This was an excellent training opportunity for the 'Race Around Ireland' as we have new support crew this year," concluded Faulkner.

sosad
Save our Sons and Daughters

Emergency Contact 24/7
Ph: 041 98 48754
Email: info@sosadireland.ie

For information on SOSAD Ireland, visit www.sosadireland.ie/