

Going the distance for cancer

By Emma Gunst

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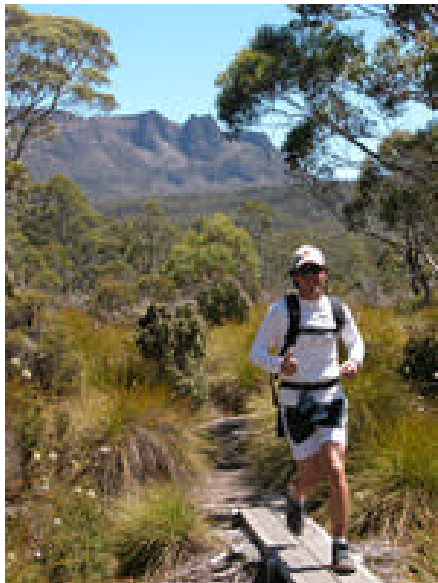
On March 25, 2008 a man born and bred in Portland will begin an amazing challenge that includes running 370 kilometres to raise money for cancer. Shaun Brewster will begin the "Long Run Home" from his existing home in Melbourne and is aiming to reach his hometown here in Portland within five days. Shaun is running the distance with the aim of raising at least \$10,000 to go towards cancer research in honour of his family members and close friends who have been affected by cancer.

At just 16 years old Shaun's life was touched by tragedy when he lost his father to stomach cancer and then only three months later he lost his grandfather to leukaemia. Since the loss of these two men Shaun has wanted to do something to help find a cure for cancer and put it on his list of things to do one day. According to Shaun, it was late last year when that 'one day' arrived and although he is still unsure what triggered it he said now seemed like the right time to do something. "Now is all we have, this was one of the last things my dad taught me," Shaun said.

Shaun began running about six years ago and despite it being something that began as quite a struggle, with the constant training and sense of accomplishment becoming a larger part of his life, Shaun began to improve and found that he enjoyed long distance running. Shaun believes the act of running is symbolic "in that it is only you and the seemingly endless road ahead; just as someone faces a fight against cancer." Shaun was taught from an early age by his parents to never give up, it is the importance of this simple yet important philosophy that he hopes to show others through his run.

There is no doubt in Shaun's mind that running from Melbourne to Portland in five days is going to hurt more than anything he has previously done but said "that's the point – cancer sufferers endure fights that most of us could never even imagine." Shaun said that although the \$10,000 he hopes to raise may not be much by today's standards "if it is simply a miniscule step in the grand scheme of things, it is still a step in the right direction and we have made a difference." "In no way am I a professional runner, I am not even a good runner, but sometimes you need to do something that is a bit nuts to get people's attention," he added.

To celebrate the final day of the run in Portland, final celebrations will be held as an additional fundraising effort and a way to mark the completion of Shaun's amazing five-day marathon. A party will be held at a hotel within the city with live music and lots of prize give-aways on the night. Specific details are yet to be confirmed. To help Shaun reach his \$10,000 target, donations can be made online at www.longrunhome.com.



SHAUN Brewster tackles the 82 kilometre run at Cradle Mountain in Tasmania earlier this year before he takes on the huge 370 kilometre journey to raise money for cancer next year.