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## Brain Tumour Research cyclist arrives in Worcester

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Brain Tumour Research cyclist arrives in Worcester, Wednesday 28th April on his way to Australia Darren Gough – former England, Essex and Yorkshire cricketer – will be one of many well-known personalities supporting Henry Brydon this week. Henry (25) has set himself a challenge few would relish. On Wednesday (28 April) he plans to cycle from his home town of Shrewsbury, through the beautiful countryside to Bridgnorth, then Kidderminster and on to Worcester,



finally arriving at Tewksbury for his evening stop-over, at the beginning of his epic journey to Sydney, Australia - a journey of 25,000 Km, through 25 countries, taking up to 18 months and raising £25,000 for Brain Tumour Research.

Wishing Henry success in his endeavours as he passes through Worcester will be members of the Worcestershire Brain Tumour Support Group (WBTSG), a local organisation working closely with people with brain tumours and their families across the region. People can find information about the route Henry will be taking and follow his progress via the website [www.theblazingsaddles.com](http://www.theblazingsaddles.com)

It was his brother Jack's diagnosis with a brain tumour in 2003, when he was 17, which has prompted Henry to set himself the challenge of cycling to Australia to raise desperately-needed funds for Brain Tumour Research.

Following a seizure, Jack was referred to The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital for a CT scan and then for an MRI scan at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, which confirmed that he had a brain tumour. He underwent surgery to remove the tumour and is now thankfully fit and well, although he does have to be scanned every six months.

Through consultations with Professor Garth Cruickshank, his neuro-surgeon, Jack and Henry have learned that 16,000 people are diagnosed with a brain tumour annually in the UK and that more children and people under the age of 40 die of a brain tumour than from leukaemia or any other cancer, yet brain tumour research receives less than 1% (0.7%) of cancer research spending in the UK.

Darren Gough - popular winner of the 2005 series of Strictly Come Dancing - stated: "As a sportsman and lover of competition, I applaud anyone who sets themselves up for a challenge and Henry Brydon has certainly set himself not one, but two awe-inspiring challenges: to cycle to the other side of the world AND to raise a huge sum of money for Brain Tumour Research.

"We must remember the greatest challenge is the one faced by all those thousands of people who each year are given the diagnosis of a brain tumour. Please sponsor Henry and raise funds for research into this dreadful disease."

For his part Henry says: "Together with various other fundraising events, I hope to raise at least £25,000 for Brain Tumour Research. This is a cause I feel really passionate about, not least because we know we are so lucky still to have my brother Jack around. Please sponsor me and help me reach my target and bring hope, rather than despair, to the thousands of patients diagnosed each year with a brain tumour".

To sponsor Henry and raise funds for Brain Tumour Research you can donate via [www.justgiving.com/HenryBrydon](http://www.justgiving.com/HenryBrydon) or send a cheque made payable to Brain Tumour Research and marked Henry Brydon to: Brain Tumour Research, The Business Centre, Padbury Hill Farm, Padbury, Buckingham, Bucks MK18 2BN

### Jack Brydon



In 2003 and aged 17 Jack Brydon discovered he had a brain tumour. Today he is fit and well and leading a normal life. He counts himself as one of the few lucky ones.

**Here is Jack's story...**

**"I feel so lucky not only to have survived a brain tumour but also to be fighting fit and able to continue to pursue my passion for sport."**

It happened totally out of the blue in 2003, when I was in the first year of 6<sup>th</sup> form at school and aged 17. One minute I was fine, having a great time on a cricket tour in Sri Lanka and then, without any warning, I was having an epileptic fit, arriving at one of the hotels we were staying in.

I just brushed the incident under the carpet until I was back in England, putting it down to the humidity. But when I went to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital for a CT scan something showed up as a cause for concern. It was very difficult to take in and everything happened so quickly. I was referred to Professor Cruickshank at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham where I had a MRI scan which was to confirm that I had a brain tumour. Later, I discovered that my tumour was a Grade II Astrocytoma which could have been there for a few months. When I had the surgery a couple of months later, the tumour had grown bigger, but Professor Garth Cruickshank managed to remove most of it.

As soon as I could, after the operation, I was back at school preparing to take my A'levels the following summer. Nine months after my surgery I cycled from Lands End to John O' Groats and raised £6,000 which was split between the Neurological departments at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham.

I really haven't had any problems since and the worst I had to put up with was not being able to drive for a few years. I am now as fit as a fiddle, working in London and still playing a high level of sport (including representing Shepherds Bush at cricket who play in the Middlesex Premier League) as I am very competitive. The illness hasn't stopped me from doing anything, but it has brought everything into perspective.

I feel very lucky because of the nature and position of the tumour and because I had such a wonderful neurosurgeon in Professor Cruickshank. He has done fantastic things for some people and I was fortunate enough to be one of them.

Jack Brydon - January 2010

#### Henry Brydon



Henry Brydon's younger brother, Jack, discovered he had a brain tumour in 2003 when he was 17 years old. Fortunately he survived as it was caught in time. Now Jack is fine and living a normal life, although he has to have regular check-ups every 6 months.

#### Here is Henry's story...

**"I have been stunned and shocked at how desperately under-funded brain tumour research is and how much of a killer it is, particularly among young children and adults under 40."**

I was in Australia on a gap year, millions of miles away from home, when Jack had an epileptic fit while on a cricket tour in Sri Lanka. We thought it was a result of the humidity and over-exertion, not thinking for a minute that it was anything so serious.

By the time Jack went for his scan and discovered it was actually a brain tumour I had returned home. It was a very worrying time for all the family, but thankfully he is alive and kicking and as irritating as ever!

Our family wanted to give something back as we know Jack is one of the lucky ones. Brain tumours claim more young lives than any other cancer so I have chosen to raise money for Brain Tumour Research ([www.braintumourresearch.org](http://www.braintumourresearch.org)) as something has to be done to improve survival rates and ultimately find a cure. We have Professor Garth Cruickshank, the neurosurgeon at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, who performed Jack's surgery, to thank for putting us in touch with the charity.

A long distance self-supported bicycle ride is something that I have wanted to do for a few years, and I feel that a desire to raise money for a cause I feel very passionate about is the final impetus I need to stop making excuses and do the trip! Leaving in April 2010, I will be cycling 25,000 kilometres from Shrewsbury to Sydney, taking 15-18 months to reach my destination. Together with various other fundraising events, I hope to raise at least £25,000 for Brain Tumour Research.

My route will take me through a huge mix of landscapes and cultures between here and the other end of the planet. Once we have crossed Europe, and after a few weeks in Istanbul organising visas, we will head through Iran and over the very hostile regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan, through a string of 'Stans' before entering China. Crossing China will be long and extremely tough cycling, but once we enter Thailand, it'll all be downhill from there! Having tackled the tropical rainforests of South East Asia and Indonesia, we enter Australia via Darwin before crossing the Aussie Outback from top to bottom, and then cut east along the coast until we roll into our final destination - Sydney!

During the trip I plan to meet up with brain tumour support groups who I am contacting through IBTA and also talk to schools in order to raise awareness and funding for brain tumour research.

I have been stunned and shocked at how desperately under-funded brain tumour research is and how much of a killer it is, particularly among young children and people under 40.

Henry Brydon - January 2010

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