

GUTLESS KAYAKING



Justin Hansen plus 6 friends



What were the main objectives of the project? To raise awareness of TPN, Crohn's disease, intestinal disease, ostomy & St. Mark's Hospital, Harrow, UK

What we did: Justin and various friends (Mitchell Gordon, Julian Parke, Paul Parke, William Parke, Stephen Cassidy and Stephen Mason) took 20 days to paddle 240 miles along the canals from Manchester to London. Taking in the following canals: Bridgewater, Trent and Mersey, Coventry, Birmingham and Fazeley, North Oxford and Grand Union. In all, the team had to portage around 166 locks and 6 tunnels.



Barriers and how they were overcome: Due to complications relating to Crohn's disease, Justin has had most of his intestines removed and now suffers from short bowel syndrome. He needs to be attached to a life support system to stay alive. For this journey, Justin had to wear a rucksack at all times containing his life saving intravenous nutrition. This nutrition was feeding him as he paddled. Justin carried out sterile procedures twice a day on a support vessel (provided free by NABO) to ensure he was being fed correctly.



Results and the future: Justin is well on the way to his fundraising target of £20,000 in support of St. Mark's Hospital Foundation - a charity dedicated to research and education into bowel disease.

Any additional Info: Justin's consultant, Dr Simon Gabe said: It is people like Justin who can show other patients that life is still possible and dreams are still possible despite intestinal failure. This is something that is truly inconceivable for a patient at the beginning of the road: when they are in a hospital bed coming to St Mark's with bags on their abdomen, in pain, losing weight and having repeated infections. Justin is an inspiration to us all and is the very reason that I do the job that I do.

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