Beastly challenge in aid of hospice for local cyclists

Wednesday 27 June, 2018

A team of local cyclists will take on a beastly challenge to raise funds for St Andrew's Hospice.

Lincs Velo, based in Healing, feature Dr Tony Salisbury, a doctor at the hospice on Peaks Lane in Grimsby and they will travel to France to take on the Cingles de Mont Ventoux to raise funds for the charity.

Mont Ventoux is a mountain in the Provence region of Southern France, near Marseille and Montpellier, which is 1,912 metres high and nicknamed the "Beast of the Provence".

The mountain is a famous challenge for cyclists and has been included in the Tour de France several times.

"Mont Ventoux is an iconic mountain, it is on every biker's check list," said Dr Salisbury.

"The Cingles de Mont Ventoux is a challenge that the French run every year and it is particularly popular amongst British cyclists.

"A lot of cyclists see the mountain as something as a pilgrimage because British professional Tom Simpson lost his life there during the Tour de France of 1967.

"You have to climb the mountain three times in one day – it is 90 miles in total but there is roughly 15,000 feet of climbing involved in that, so it is a very tough challenge."

There are three routes to climb Mont Ventoux, south from Bedoin, northwest from Malaucene and east from Sault – many cyclists challenge themselves to climb the three routes as fast as they can in 24 hours.

But the routes are extremely steep and, as the name Ventoux, which means windy in French, suggests, the conditions can play their part too.

"Each climb is 25km with the average gradient being 1 in 10," explained Dr Salisbury.

"Around half of the challenge is uphill and it can get quite windy.

"In fact the mountain only opens for cyclists in mid-May and then closes again in early-October, the rest of the time it is usually covered in snow!"

Having taken on previous challenges on behalf of the hospice, the Lincs Velo team are looking forward to their most difficult test to-date.

Dr Salisbury said: "We're a small team of four and we've done some fundraising for the hospice before but this is our undoubtedly our biggest challenge.

"It will be a whistle-stop tour too; we're leaving for France on Wednesday, hoping to take on the challenge on Friday and then will be back home on Monday – we just have to hope that the weather is in our favour."

To find out more about the Cingles de Mont Ventoux, please visit: http://www.veloventoux.com/?c=cingles.

If you would like to support the Lincs Velo team, you can sponsor them online at: https://standre.ws/lincsvelo.

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