Brave Mimi Inspires Cyclists to Raise over £45,000

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A little girl who has an incurable brain tumour has inspired a team of 11 cyclists to pedal over 1,000km from Geneva to Venice to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust.

Seven year old Mimi Clarke, from Bishop Stortford, will be cheering on her Dad and his friends as they cycle over the Dolomite Mountains to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust which has supported her family. Over the last three years, brave Mimi has been battling a life-threatening brain tumour – undergoing three major brain surgeries and 18 months of chemotherapy which has left her with weakness down the left side of her body, meaning little use of her left leg and no use of her left arm, and with partial vision.

Throughout this time, Mimi has been treated at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, over 30 miles away from home. Her parents Yvette and Matthew Clarke have been given a 'Home from Home' at The Sick Children's Trust's Acorn House during her time in hospital. Acorn House is located just minutes away from the paediatric intensive care unit (PICU), which meant Yvette and Matthew never had to leave Mimi's side while she was on PICU.

Mimi's has inspired 'Team DoloMIMItes' to take on the six day challenge to help the charity continue supporting more families with seriously ill children. Mimi's Dad Matthew, along with the rest of the team has already raised over £45,000 which will be added to £100,000 which the team raised in 2014. **Mum Yvette, says:**

"Acorn House was a lifesaver. It meant that Matthew and I could stay as close to Mimi as possible during her time in PICU. It gave us a sense of normality in a time of utter chaos and disbelief. When Mimi became slightly better, she was able to come over to Acorn House and watch Snow White – something she still remembers.

"To see everyone come together again for Mimi is just amazing. And for my husband to participate this time is fantastic, as in 2014 Mimi was still undergoing chemotherapy so Matthew wasn't able to ride with the team.

"This ride is so, so tough, and I think Matthew will get a real feeling of achievement afterwards - the feeling of doing something positive. When your child is ill you often feel helpless and you stand on the side lines while the doctors are trying their best to make your child better. It's a horrible feeling."

Mimi – described as super positive and confident – is still undergoing treatment at Addenbrooke's Hospital. Although her tumour is now stable, she attends the specialist hospital for regular scans and meetings with different departments. **Yvette continues:**

"Mimi takes everything in her stride and is always happy. She is the light in our lives. She is very aware of what she can or can't do and always tries her hardest to overcome some of her disabilities.

"It's every parent's nightmare to hear your child has cancer. But Mimi is so strong and brave and helps us through the toughest times."

'Team DoloMIMItes' will set off on Sunday 11 September; they will ride over the Southern Limestone Alps to the Adriatic Sea. The challenge will take in 16 major mountains and the team will be climbing over 21,000 metres. **Matt Lee, a friend of the family and Executive Director at Julius Baer international, who will be cycling alongside Mimi's Dad, says:**

"The Sick Children's Trust is an amazing charity helping families to be close by. As with Yvette and Matthew, they support families with free 'Home from Home' accommodation, alongside emotional support, to enable families to cope with the massive upheaval that's caused by having a child in hospital. This is so vital.

"Our fundraising is going really well at the moment, but The Sick Children's Trust relies solely on voluntary donations to keep its ten 'Homes from Home' running. It costs the charity around £30 to support a family for one night, so the more we raise, the more families we can help stay together during these traumatic times."

For further information and to support Team DoloMIMItes, please visit: http://bit.ly/2bPpGwS

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