Dad’s 300km cycle challenge in memory of son’s brave battle

Monday 30 July, 2018

The dad of a little boy who lost his valiant health battle last year is gearing up to cycle 300km around London to raise money for The Sick Children’s Trust which kept his family together throughout years of hospital treatment.

Throughout his entire life, Rio Rutter was in and out of hospital, often many miles away from his Chesterfield home, undergoing treatment for a rare heart defect – hypoplastic left heart syndrome. Rio underwent much of his treatment at Leeds Children’s Hospital and Newcastle upon Tyne’s Freeman Hospital, where after a ten month wait in 2016 he received a lifesaving heart transplant. Despite this, Rio had numerous complications post-transplant, one of which was kidney failure. Tragically in 2017, after fighting courageously for five years, Rio passed away.

During his treatment at Leeds Children’s Hospital and Freeman Hospital, The Sick Children’s Trust supported his parents Jaydan Redhead ,26, and Kersha Rutter, 24, and his little brother Jai with free ‘Home from Home’ accommodation at its Eckersley and Scott Houses, both just minutes away from Rio’s hospital bedside. Rio’s parents are now fundraising for The Sick Children’s Trust to thank the charity for keeping their family together throughout these years. Jaydan will be taking on The London Orbital Audax cycling race on Saturday 11 August, covering 300km around London in 20 hours to raise vital funds for the charity’s ‘Homes from Home’. Kersha, also Mum to four year old Jai and four week old Orla, says:

“My son really did fight so hard. He faced so much more than most during in his life.

“I was given the news no mother ever wants to hear. The news so painful that every inch of you breaks into a million pieces. Rio needed palliative care. To be told that this was the end for us after such a long time fighting was heart breaking. I knew life without Rio would be soul destroying.

“We waited for a second opinion from another hospital and in the meantime we went back to Freeman Hospital for a cardiac catheter. Rio seemed very well and he was really, really excited to go back to his Geordie Aunts and Uncles on the paediatric intensive care unit and ward 23! Sadly Rio didn’t make it out of the procedure and in our hearts remains a hole. We only have memories to cherish.

“I cannot express how grateful I am for The Sick Children’s Trust, especially Scott House. We could create those memories because the charity kept us together. We developed such a loving relationship with the staff at Scott House and the team on the hospital.

“I’m so thankful to Andrew, the House Manager, for the last night that Rio, his Dad and I got to spend together. Because Andrew did his utmost to make sure we had a room to facilitate Rio’s needs, it meant we could spend that night all together as a family.

“Rio touched everyone’s hearts. Everyone adored him. He was very funny, charismatic and strong. And every day he makes me proud.”

The Sick Children’s Trust runs ten ‘Homes from Home’ across the country, supporting around 4,000 families every year. It costs the charity £30 to support a family for one night. Jaydan hopes to raise £500 to help other families like theirs. Andrew Leadbitter, House Manager at The Sick Children’s Trust, says:

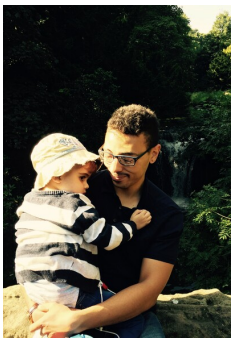
“Rio bravely fought every day of his little life. Everyone who knew Rio is so proud of how he coped with all that was thrown at him. Our staff really got to know Rio and his family, he will never be forgotten and he remains in our hearts.

“We’d like to thank Jaydan, Kersha, Jai and Orla so much for thinking of us. By fundraising, we will be able to be there for more families with seriously ill children in hospital, giving them a ‘Home from Home’ where they can be together and support one another through unimaginable situations. We wish Jaydan the best of luck with his cycle. We can’t wait to hear all about it!”

To support Jaydan’s cycle for The Sick Children’s Trust, please visit:
https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jaydan-redhead

Media:







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