Pedalling with Purpose: Matt Obeng's Journey with Bike the UK for MS

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From the Battlefield to the Bike: Meet Matt Obeng

Life is full of unexpected paths, and for **Matt Obeng**, cycling became the road that led him to healing and connection. A former serviceman with two active combat tours in Iraq in 2004 and 2008, Matt dedicated nearly a decade to the army before transitioning to civilian life in 2010. Now working as a **Security Administrator for Oxford University NHS Foundation Trust**, he resides in Banbury, Oxfordshire, where he raises his three children—Olivia, Melissa, and Zack.

For Matt, cycling isn't just a hobby; it's an escape, a mission, and a way to make an impact. Affectionately known as *Chicken Man*
among his Bike the UK for MS family, Matt has found meaning in every mile he rides.

Finding an Escape: How Cycling Became Therapy

Leaving the military presented Matt with new challenges, particularly in regard to his mental health. He struggled to find an outlet that could help him reconnect with people and regain a sense of purpose. That's when a friend stumbled upon **Bike the UK for MS** and suggested he check it out.

"I think she knew I wouldn't follow it through," Matt laughs, "so she went ahead and reached out to James from the organisation. Before I knew it, I had his details, and something about the mission just clicked. I signed up for my first ride."

What made this ride different from his previous charity cycling events was the opportunity to meet **MS patients and their families along the way**. "In past charity rides, I raised money, but I never really saw who benefited from it. With Bike the UK for MS, I got to meet the people whose lives we were directly impacting—that changed everything for me."

Why MS? A Cause That Deserves More Awareness

Before joining Bike the UK for MS, Matt had little knowledge about **multiple sclerosis**. But as he dug deeper, he was struck by how **severe and life-changing MS can be**, yet how little attention it receives compared to other illnesses. The more he learned, the more passionate he became about using his cycling to raise awareness and support for those affected by MS.

More Than Just a Ride: The Power of Connection

What keeps Matt coming back every year isn't just the cycling—it's the people.

"Not often do I find myself around people with the **same passion and purpose**. The teamwork and the way we look out for each other during rides inspire me to return, year after year."

Through Bike the UK for MS, Matt has forged deep friendships with fellow riders and **the MS community itself**. Seeing the joy and hope that the rides bring to MS patients has been a profound motivator for him.

Riding Year After Year: A Tradition

For Matt, participating in Bike the UK for MS isn't just an event—it's a **yearly tradition that fuels his soul**.

"Riding with Bike the UK for MS is the most **therapeutic experience** I look forward to each year. It gives me a sense of purpose, knowing that my passion for cycling is making a real difference."

The Strength of Community: A Team Like No Other

Each ride feels like a **reunion of family**, with riders coming together from all walks of life. Matt describes the alumni network as a **global community of individuals who inspire and uplift one another**. Every year, he walks away with not only new memories but also new lessons that enhance his life outside of cycling.

Media:











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Unforgettable Moments: Riding Alongside MS Fighters

Out of all the moments on his many rides, one experience stands out: riding alongside **Mark Sinclair, an MS patient who tackled** Land's End to John O'Groats **on his trike despite having MS**. Seeing Mark's determination and resilience made Matt reflect on his own struggles with **PTSD**.

"Hearing the stories of MS patients and seeing their strength first-hand—it's an eye-opener. It makes you realise how much people endure and how important it is that we keep raising awareness and funds."

Changing Perspectives: What the Ride Has Taught Me

Every year, Matt gains a deeper **understanding of MS and the importance of ongoing research**. "The more we ride, the more people become aware of the condition, and the more we show newly diagnosed patients that research is still ongoing."

He has also learned something invaluable about himself: **his ability to make a difference**. "I've realised that I have a purpose, and even a small contribution can touch lives in ways I never expected."

Advice for Future Riders: It's Not a Race, It's a Journey

Matt encourages anyone considering the challenge to take the leap.

"It's not about being the fastest or the strongest. It's about the impact you make and the people you meet along the way. This journey will change you—just like it has changed me."

Matt's journey with **Bike the UK for MS** is a testament to the power of **resilience, connection, and finding inspiration through giving back**. Whether he's pedalling up steep climbs or sharing stories with MS patients, his commitment remains the same: **to ride for those who can't and to inspire those who can.**

Are you ready to take on your own adventure? Join Bike the UK for MS and be part of something truly life-changing.

Scan Me:

Company Contact:

Bike the UK for MS

T. 07854620166
E. info@biketheukforms.org
W. https://www.biketheukforms.org/

Additional Contact(s):
James Whateley - james@biketheukforms.org
Felix Young - felix@biketheukforms.org

View Online

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