

24 HOUR SPONSORED CYCLE

THE TARKA TRAIL

250 MILE CHALLENGE!

MAY 2023



A message from Trevor

They say that, 'Only mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun', and I am unsure which category I fall in to as I sit here planning a 24 hour sponsored cycle ride to support Vine Youth Ministry.

The current men's world record for a 24 bike ride is 1026 km (637 miles) and the women's record is 824 km (512 miles), fortunately for the current holders I will be nowhere near these distances.

However, having cycled an Audax ride of 306 km (190 miles) in 20 hours last October which included the Blackdown Hills and Exmoor, I would like to think I could reach 400 km (248 mile) or more, especially as I will be riding it on the off road section of the Tarka Trail in Devon. The Tarka Trail is a 50 km (30 Mile) section of the old Okehampton to Ilfracombe railway which has been converted into a walking and cycling trail and goes through places like Braunton, Barnstaple, Instow, Bideford, Great Torrington, passes Petrockstowe and ends in Meeth on the A386. Though an old railway line, it is not flat, but is not hilly either, climbing nearly 100 metres over 13 km from near sea level as it crosses the River Torridge near Bideford up to Meeth; which means it's down hill the other way, yeah!

I will be riding unsupported on the trail with a team stationed at some point along the route to provide food, water, spares and encouragement, as I will need to ride light if I want to achieve 400 km plus. 403 km equals 250 miles, allowing 4 hours for eating and comfort breaks, etc, would require me to maintain an average speed of 20 kph or 12.5 mph for 20 hours and as the Tarka Trail can be busy, especially around the urban areas, I will need to maximise my average speed during the night hours when only foxes, badgers, owls and idiots like me will be out and about; just me then!

I hope to take on this challenge during the third week of May, 15th - 19th, 2023 and probably starting in Braunton at about 7pm, and as with all things outdoors, praying for good weather; rain would be manageable, strong winds not so!

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