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“Neil Clocks up 2,000 Miles” Local Man Proclaims Swimming Success

An East Devon man has proved he can go the distance after swimming an incredible 2,000 miles in a Honiton pool. Neil Brown, 45, from Dunkeswell has been making regular trips to Honiton Swimming and Leisure Centre since 1993 where he swims, on average, 80 lengths of the 25-metre pool each time he visits. By reaching the momentous 2,000 miles mark Neil has swum more than 128,000 lengths of the pool – the equivalent of 91 English Channel crossings.

By recording in detail each swimming session – 1,600 in total – Neil has ensured his records were accurate enough to know when he was approaching his target of 2,000 miles and invited his Dad down to the pool for the first time to watch him achieve his goal, alongside staff from the Leisure East Devon (LED)-managed centre. He can even be sure he never lost count of the lengths he swum, going by the rule that shallow to deep would be odd numbers and deep to shallow would be even numbers.

Neil has raised money for charity along the way, over £1,300 to date, and wants to increase this amount to £2,000 in the future. His chosen charities have been The Anthony Nolan Trust, the Special Care Baby Unit and Kidney Unit in Exeter, British Heart Foundation and Macmillan Cancer, the latter having particular significance as Neil lost his mother to cancer in 2008.

“I enjoy swimming – it’s my main hobby and I believe it’s good for you,” said Neil, who works as a mobile cleansing operator for East Devon District Council. “I started this challenge back on 7 January 1993 with the aim of getting to 2,000 miles and I can’t believe I’ve finally reached my goal, 16 years

later. In fact, I've actually swum more than 2,000 miles as in 2004 I completed a swimathon for charity! My next goal is to swim another 500 miles, bringing my total to 2,500 miles. This means another 32,000 lengths and 400 sessions at the pool and I'd like to complete this in 2013, when I will have been swimming at the pool for 20 years."

"Neil has become a familiar and popular face at the pool over the years," said Simon Davey, manager of Honiton Swimming and Leisure Centre. "We've known about his 2,000 miles target for some time and we're thrilled for him that he's made it. It's rewarding for us to see someone like Neil enjoying swimming so much and keeping fit at the same time – we're looking forward to helping him achieve his next milestone in the pool."

Ends

Notes to editors:

1. Leisure East Devon Ltd was established on 1 January 2006. East Devon District Council's leisure facilities and equipment assets are leased to it.
www.ledleisure.co.uk
2. The facilities are: Axe Valley Leisure Centre; Broadclyst Leisure Centre; Colyton Leisure Centre; Ottery St Mary Leisure Centre (Colin Tooze Sports Centre); East Devon Tennis Centre; Exmouth Swimming and Leisure Centre; Exmouth Pavilion; Exmouth's Phear Park; Honiton Swimming and Leisure Centre; Seaton's Seafield Gardens; Sidmouth's Coburg Road; Sidmouth Leisure Centre and Sidmouth Swimming Pool.

For more information please contact:

Gill Vosper or Sarah Wedlake

Absolute PR and Marketing

Email: gill@absoluteprandmarketing.com / sarah@absoluteprandmarketing.com

Tel: 01392 680740