

The Big Four Fundraiser

In times of doubt and fear which the Covid-19 pandemic brought to our shores, four young men from Lismore Co. Waterford decided it was about time to do something positive, brave and charitable. Those four lads are Gavin Moloney, Jack Coffey, Keith Power and Tadgh Lyons.

The event came about when Gavin approached the lads in March 2021 about organising a charity event involving the four peak challenge. The four peak challenge involves climbing the highest peak in each province of Ireland. The respective mountains are:

- 1) Lugnaquilla Co. Wicklow (Leinster) at a height of 925 meters.
- 2) Slieve Donard Co. Down (Ulster) at a height of 850 meters.
- 3) Mweelrea Co. Mayo (Connaught) at a height of 814 meters.
- 4) Carrauntoohil Co. Kerry (Munster) at a height of 1039 meters.

Each of the lads quickly jumped at the opportunity and as a group they worked out what the event was going to be. At the time, Gavin and Jack were both in the midsts of their final year undergraduate degrees at University College Cork. Gavin studied Economics and Geography and Jack studied Geography and History. Keith is working in GSK Dungarvan as a packaging operator and Tadgh is well drilling with Frank Seery.

They felt that since there was a growing theme of four within the event (i.e Four Mountains, Four Provinces, Four lads..) it was fitting for each of the lads to pick a charity and they decided to call the fundraiser 'The Big Four Fundraiser'. The four charities they chose are:

- 1) Parkinson's Association Waterford
- 2) Cope Foundation
- 3) Solas Cancer Support
- 4) Jigsaw Youth Mental Health

The event took place on Friday the 16th of July and finished on Sunday the 18th of July. The lads HAD given themselves a window of 72 hours to complete the event.

Day 1)

The team left Lismore at 12:30am in Gavin's car on the Friday morning. They started their first climb of Lugnaquilla at 3:45am and reached the peak at 6:55am. The team experienced excellent conditions on Lugnaquilla with temperatures reaching 20 degrees Celsius at 8am! Upon returning to the car the team travelled to Newcastle Co. Down to take on the second mountain of the day Slieve Donard. The climb started at 2:45pm and they reached the summit at 4:45 pm. Conditions there were so favorable that they could even see the coast of Scotland in the distance! They then arrived in Co .Mayo at 11:45pm in anticipation of Mweelrea on Day 2.

Day 2)

The team started the ascent of Mweelrea via the ramp at 11:30am on Saturday the 17th of July. With tired legs from the day before and temperature of 26 degrees Celsius the team summited at 3:00 pm. Although it was arguably the toughest day they were greeted by the picturesque scenery of the west coast of Ireland at the top. Upon reaching the car again the team set off for Killarney Co. Kerry where they would spend the night before tackling the Final Mountain of Carrauntoohil the next day.

Day 3)

The team started their final ascent on Carrauntoohil at 9:45am from Cronin's Yard. They scaled the Devils Ladder route and summited the final mountain and highest point of Ireland at 12:30pm bringing the event to a close.

They suffered sunburn and tired legs, drove nearly 1000km and they finished it in a mere 56 hours 45 minutes beating the 72 hour limit, but endured everything in the quest for success for their chosen charities!

Over the 3 month period of the GoFundMe being live The Big Four Fundraiser raised a massive €6,328 in total. This works out at a final total of €1582 for each of the four charities!

The team would like to sincerely thank everyone for the incredible support they received throughout their fundraising efforts.