



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Derek Cowan – Half Marathon Man

A friendly bet in a pub 12 years ago over who could finish a half marathon, led Derek Cowan to take up running.

And it's safe to say that Derek, a process maintenance co-ordinator on the business team at ExxonMobil's Fife Ethylene Plant, won the bet comfortably.

Last year he completed not just one, but SEVEN half marathons – as well as two 10k runs – to raise funds for Prostate Scotland. And he is about to hand over a cheque for over £1000 to the charity.

Derek (40), who lives in Dunfermline with partner Natalie and son Murray (14 months) completed all of the events between April and October 2019, raising money for the charity which is close to his heart.

"I have had a few family members and friends who have either had prostate cancer or suffered from prostate problems, and just recently a work colleague told me he had just been diagnosed and said he was delighted someone was doing something to help raise awareness about it.

"One in two men will have some kind of prostate problem at some point, and the most likely time for a diagnosis is during their 50s, so I wanted to do something to draw people's attention to this. Also I now have a son and if it can help his generation by improving detection and cure by the time he grows up then it's good for everyone."

Derek completed the Stirling half marathon in April, Edinburgh in May and Aberdeen in August, followed by the Great North Run on September 8, the Scottish Half Marathon around Edinburgh and the East Coast, on September 22 and Glasgow just a week later – a massive three runs in four weekends!



He then completed his challenge by taking part in the Aviemore 10k in October and the Men's Edinburgh 10k on November 3.

"You get hooked on running," he said.

"I originally did it as a bet among friends, but I loved it and kept on going. It really helps keep me fit.

"The Aberdeen half marathon was tough because it was so hot – up to 27 degrees – but I had a respectable time of 1hr 56 which I was pleased with. I lost around 9lbs in sweat!

"My favourites were Stirling because I did my best time and it was a nice, scenic route. It

was my first one of the year and my legs were fresh.

"It was my first Great North Run and it was quite an experience running alongside 40,000 people of all ages, shapes and sizes. There was a great atmosphere, with people offering drinks and support all along the route.

"I set myself quite a challenge, especially with the three runs in September, but I am proud of myself for doing it. By the end I was exhausted and when I ran the last race I was suffering from the start of a virus which ended up with me developing a serious lung infection.

"This year I plan to take things a bit easier and build up my health and fitness. I won't be doing any charity runs, but I might do a few nearer the end of the year just for fun."

A spokesperson for Prostate Scotland, said: "One of Derek's aims in undertaking his running challenge was to champion awareness of men's health issues, and we'd like to thank and congratulate him for his initiative and for raising much needed awareness about prostate cancer and disease.



“The funds he has raised will support our work to tackle prostate cancer and disease, and will help us to take forward and extend our work across Scotland.”