

Corkmans' Chilean Challenge for Cystic Fibrosis

It's across the driest desert in the world, it begins at 11,000 feet, it is the equivalent of six marathons – this is the challenge facing Corkman Rob O'Brien as he strives to raise money for Cystic Fibrosis in Ireland.

Rob is the sole Irish competitor taking part in the '**The Atacama Crossing 2009**' in Chile this March. In this **extreme ultra marathon** event, competitors must cover a distance of 160 miles over some of the harshest terrain imaginable. The Atacama Crossing is one of the toughest footraces on the planet. Competitors must carry all their own food, clothing and survival gear with them in their backpacks.

A native of Cobh, Rob's quest is for the charity **Build4Life (Cork Cystic Fibrosis Appeal)**. While watching an RTE *Prime Time* programme early this year on the plight of cystic fibrosis patients, Rob was stunned to find that facilities for patients in Ireland were abysmal and grossly underfunded! **Shockingly, the life expectancy for a CF patient in the Republic of Ireland is only 21**, whereas it is 33 in Northern Ireland and up to 60 in America! In light of this, Rob has chosen to run the Atacama Crossing 2009 for Cystic Fibrosis sufferers in the Cork & Kerry region. The aim of this Charity is to create awareness of Cystic Fibrosis in the region and to raise enough funding to develop Ireland's first dedicated CF treatment unit within Cork University Hospital.

Rob has competed in many marathon events and always links his runs with a chosen charity. He pays his own costs so that all funds raised go entirely to the charity. Races he has participate in include the Cork City Marathon, Dublin Marathon, New York City Marathon and the 'Marathon de Sables' (Sahara Desert). However, the Atacama Crossing race will be his toughest physical and mental challenge yet.

If you would like to support Rob in his daring challenge, please visit www.mycharity.ie or contact Build4Life at info@build4life.net or www.build4life.net.

Note: 100% of the funds raised will go directly to the Charity 'BUILD4LIFE' as this is a self funded event

