

Reading Time: 7 minutes

UPDATE 1: [24th March 2026. Good, Bad, Ugly!](#)

The Short Intro

I guess it's time to do something nice for Charity, but this one has some personal meaning. I'm walking 13 miles around Central London, to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society, in honour of Dan Wheldon, his family, my neighbour, and everyone who's suffered because of this horrible disease.

[TLDR: To visit my JustGiving Fundraising Page, all you need to do is follow this link.](#)

Wil Vincent's JustGiving Page



The Back Story

15 years ago this year, Dan Wheldon won the Indianapolis 500 for the second time in one of the most dramatic finishes of all time. In a twist of irony, he took victory out of the final corner of the final lap after JR Hilderbrand crashed into the SAFER barrier, driving the same car Wheldon had to 2nd place the two years prior.

Sadly, we lost Dan Wheldon at the final race of the 2011 season at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. To this day I try not to remember that crash or the circumstances afterward, however it's worth noting that without a 'full time' contract for the 2011 season, Wheldon was intensely involved with the testing of what became known as the DW-12, a safer car to lead the IndyCar series into 2012 and

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beyond.

In the post race coverage of the 2011 Indianapolis 500, both ESPN and Wheldon himself made reference to the fact that his mother had been recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's, and ended his interview by mentioning the support he had from charities including Alzheimer's Association, and by extension the Alzheimer's Society in the UK. It's primarily for this reason that I'm embarking on this walking challenge, to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society, and hopefully raise more awareness about the disease, and the impact it has on people and those around them.

Whilst I'm proud to say that I was born in Camden, London, I spent much of my childhood living in and around Milton Keynes. Aside from the 1999 European Grand Prix win by Stewart Ford, there was little motorsport success whilst I was growing up, except for this kid called Dan Wheldon who was racing in America, and whom in 2005 won the Indianapolis 500 for the first time. Due to the two largest TV providers in the UK having a little spat, combined with living in an area served by only one TV provider for the most part, I was lucky enough to have Sky Sports 3 for zero cost, so I was able to hear the line 'The Checkered Flag is out in Indianapolis and the pubs are open in the UK; Dan Wheldon has just won the Indianapolis 500'

I would often pass Emberton en-route to Olney, famous for the pancake race and also one of the last decent sweet bakeries before the Greggs invasion of everything dough & pastry based! At one point I delivered newspapers around Emberton as well as the odd Betterware catalogue, and when time and circumstances permit, I visit Emberton and lay a bottle of milk at the memorial in the middle of the village. I'm sure some locals are still confused by this, but with Dan buried in St Petersburg Florida, this is the closest I can get to a tribute of sorts.

As much as I hate to admit it, Dan's passing helped me not only connect with new people, but also provided a launchpad for my commentary career (Which, unlike Texas' College Football team proclaiming every year, I'm actually 'back' as of this year). I've been lucky enough to go to the Indianapolis 500 on 5 occasions, see one of my closest friends marry the woman of his dreams, and hear stories about the speedway, the 'Hoosier Hospitality' culture, and unforgettable memories. They say sometimes you find something out of tragedy, and I was lucky to in this case.

Ambition Vs Reality

A couple of weeks ago, a sponsored walk for the Alzheimer's Society came up on a social media feed. Having a look through the options, one stood out to me the most; going back 'home' to London, along a route which has so many memories for me. The other options are frankly too difficult for me at this time due to some physical health issues which largely limits some of the things I can do, but from the second I saw this challenge, I was determined to at least try.

There's the option of either 13 or 26 miles, and whilst I would very much love to try and do the full 26 miles, I've been strongly advised against doing so by doctors and consultants. See, I have a mixture of diabetic neuropathy affecting my feet and lower legs, spinal issues including a degenerating disc, a slipped disc and a messed up coccyx, along with Ketosis Prone Type 1 Diabetes. Oh, I also have Plantar fasciitis, which because of my T1 Diabetes causing me to have extreme high arches, places

I'm Walking 13 Miles in London For The Alzheimer's Society (UK)

pressure points on two parts of my feet. In short, painful!

There would therefore be a number of risk factors both during and after the challenge, and whilst I'm certain I would drag my sorry carcass as far as I could over 26 miles, it's likely that I'll be making friends in either St Thomas' Hospital or University College Hospital, which I really don't want to have happen! I believe that there's a difference between challenging yourself and being completely stupid, and not only do I have to consider my own limitations, but also the impact of me getting ill / needing medical attention by not listening to medical professionals on those volunteering and trying to make the event as 'fun' and welcoming as possible.

Committing, Using A Couple of Brain Cells

With this in mind, I've committed to the 13 miles, which I believe is a challenge, but achievable. Whilst the 13-mile route misses out one of my most important parts of London in the Southbank skate park, I'm sure I can make time to visit it the day before when I get into London. When I say that place has saved my life and been an inspiration to me, I mean it, but that's another story for another time.

With the 13 mile route, I do get to mainly stay on pavements which is important, and I'm lucky enough to have just received some useful orthopaedic insoles to help with the plantar fasciitis issue. Anyone who knows me well enough will know that I always carry a backpack with a wider variety of 'stuff' than a warehouse flash sale, and so long as I wear my back brace and have all my meds and sugar boosts in the right place I should be OK. Also, by doing the 13 mile route, it's almost certain that I'll actually finish the thing before the 'cut off time', so there'd be proof of me actually doing it, and I get an extra hour in bed before setting off!

The End Goal

I'm doing this walk to honour Dan Wheldon's legacy in raising awareness for Alzheimer's, along with the personal connection it had to his family. I'm also doing this for all those affected by Alzheimer's, and those who support and care for people of the disease. I'm a bit ashamed to say that I've had more inpatient hospital stays than most people, and as a part of that have witnessed first hand people fighting against the impacts of Alzheimer's. I've seen how hard it can be on their families, knowing that a lifetime of memories is almost erased, and my neighbour has just been moved from his home of over 30 years into a care home, with his apartment sat empty, with a life of memories and experiences just fading away behind dust.

Of Course, A Thank You!

[To make a donation, and / or to learn more about the Alzheimer's Society in the UK, please follow this link, which will take you to my Just Giving Page.](#) This is a well known fundraising portal in the UK and beyond, and ensures that your donation can be made securely. If you have any questions about how your data will be handled, and ensuring that money actually goes to the Alzheimer's Society, please check out the relevant pages on the JustGiving site.

Thank you in advance to anyone considering donating. If you were considering buying me something for my birthday in April, or sending a card etc, then I'd much rather you made a donation instead. I'm

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certain that the charity will have better uses for anything you'd buy for me, and you can leave me a nice message when you donate should you so choose. I will also be running an AMA in April, as well as giving away a couple of copies of the first volume of my book Behind Brown Eyes, so look out for more information soon!

Please remember that if you are in the UK, you can claim Gift Aid for any donation so long as you are eligible, this provides 25% extra money to the Alzheimer's Society at no additional cost to yourself. JustGiving do not take a platform fee, but does encourage you to leave a tip to them for running the service. You can remove this by selecting 'Enter Custom Amount', then entering 0 in the tip field.

Please note that I have no access to any donations made via this site, as JustGiving will handle all donations and ensure that the Alzheimer's Society receives what you donate. I will be doing a couple of supplementary events to raise more money where I can, however will always encourage people to use this site for all donations where possible.

Please contact me if you're having trouble donating. And again, wherever you are. Thank you!

Peace, Rage And Love xx