

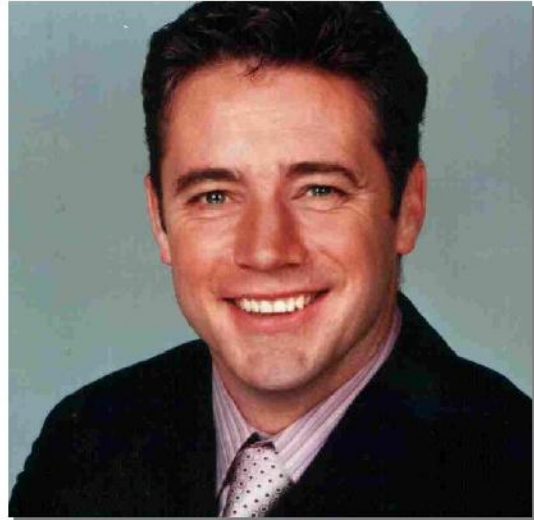
FOOTBALL LEGEND URGES CYCLISTS TO SADDLE UP IN CHARITY BIKE CHALLENGE

Ally McCoist appeals for families to get on their bikes for children with cerebral palsy

29 January 2009: Football legend Ally McCoist is urging Scottish families to get on their bikes in support of a charity that provides vital therapy for children in Scotland with cerebral palsy.

The Rangers FC assistant manager is appealing for hundreds of people to register for Bike for Bobath - an annual sponsored cycle in support of Bobath Scotland's Children's Cerebral Palsy Therapy Centre.

Said Ally: "The annual Bike for Bobath event is an important generator of funds for the charity, providing income that allows them to reach out to as many children as possible across Scotland.



"I'd urge as many people as possible to register for this event. Start now to enlist the support of sponsors and help Bobath Scotland to continue to provide their unique therapy."

The fun family cycle challenge - to be held on Saturday, August 22 - follows a scenic but flat 20-mile route from the SECC in Glasgow to Lomond Shores at Balloch.

Around 300 cyclists from all over Scotland took part in last year's sponsored event, which raised over £20,000 for the children's charity.

Ally hopes this year's Bike for Bobath will be the biggest and most successful yet.

Bike for Bobath is a fantastic way to get some exercise, enjoy the freedom of the open air, take in some stunning scenery along the National Cycle Route No. 7, and raise money for children with cerebral palsy. Cyclists - who don't have to be particularly fit to enjoy the ride - can go at their own pace.

Bobath Scotland community fundraiser, Val Crawford, said: "We're thrilled that Ally is helping us to raise awareness of this fun event, which is such an important source of funding for Bobath Scotland's Children's Cerebral Palsy Therapy Centre.

"It's one of the best events on the family summer calendar, and knowing that each of the participants is making a difference to children with cerebral palsy, makes it an even more rewarding experience."

The route is fully marshalled, with free refreshment stops and first aid stations.

There is free car parking at the start of the ride, and Bobath Scotland will provide coaches to return cyclists and their bikes to the starting point at the end of the day.

To request an entry form or seek advice about organising your own event in your own area, please call community fundraiser Val on 0141 949 0022, or e-mail events@bobathscotland.org.uk.

Cyclists who find the West of Scotland inaccessible needn't miss out.

Supporters in other areas of the country are encouraged to organise their own bike for Bobath events. Last year, 120 cyclists took part in separate bike events in Eskbank and Dumfries, while an additional 44 cyclists got on their bikes for Bobath in a Clydebank to Loch Lomond cycle in 2007.

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Notes to editors:

Cerebral palsy is an incurable condition, caused by brain damage, which occurs before birth, around the time of birth or within the first two years of life.

Although its effects vary widely, impaired movement, visual and speech difficulties are the most common and obvious results. Cerebral palsy affects approximately one in every 500 children, as it is detected in approximately 2.12 per 1000 live births in the western world (Hagberg et al. 2001).

Bobath Scotland - which is based in Glasgow - provides a holistic approach to the treatment of cerebral palsy, which involves the family, carers, therapists, teachers and other service providers who participate in the child's therapy.

Bobath was developed by and is named after Mrs Berta Bobath and husband Dr Karel Bobath, who developed this concept of therapy in London 50 years ago.

Reference: B. Hagberg, G. Hagberg, E. Beckung, P. Uvebrant; 2001; Changing panorama of cerebral palsy in Sweden. VIII. Prevalence and origin in the birth year period 1991-94; **Acta Paediatrica** **90** (3)

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