

New York Marathon — Charity Thanks Their Sponsors

UK Humanitarian Charity, Operation Florian sent a running team of 11 firefighters to join over 50,000 runners to run the ING New York City Marathon on 3 November 2013. The challenging course starts on Staten Island continuing through Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and the streets of Manhattan. This memorable marathon took in spectacular views of the Empire State Building and a run through Central Park; magnified with the atmosphere of up to two million spectators made a truly unforgettable experience.



The Operation Florian running team had the unique opportunity to join FDNY's entourage in a blue light escort to the race start line, and an invitation to join FDNY's after marathon bash celebrations at a Central Manhattan hotel. FDNY treated team Operation Florian with a visit to The Rock, which is the FDNY Training Academy on Randall's Island, located between the Bronx, Queens and Manhattan.

2013 marks the 4th year the charity has run the NYC marathon to raise money for Operation Florian, which provides training and firefighting equipment to less well-off countries. This year the team raised more than £6000 with a donation being made to Manchester firefighter Stephen Hunt's Memorial Fund. Stephen tragically died in active duty on 13 July this year, while fighting a fire at Paul's Hair World on Oldham Street, Manchester.

The fastest team runner Rob McDonagh from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue completed the challenge in an impressive 3 hours 32 minutes. Leon Dally, also from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue finished 2nd in a speedy 3 hours 58 minutes. Third finisher, Mike McNab from Scottish Fire and Rescue swiftly followed in a time of 4 hours 7 minutes. Leon said 'A once in a lifetime trip and humbling experience, you will never see anything like the crowds in New York. To be able to run that for Steve was something really special.' Mark Haslam added 'this was a chance in a lifetime experience. If you're going to run a marathon, make it the NYC marathon, the company and crowds made it unforgettable.'

Mark Evans who partnered colleague Andy Webster both from Wiltshire Fire and Rescue service ran the course in full firefighting gear, a picture of them running the course even featured in New York Magazine. 'We were running for a fallen Brother Stephen Hunt of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue and finished in 5:53, we would have been quicker if we had not stopped for so many photos, but the people of New York were amazing, thank you so much'.

Cathy Clark, fundraiser at Operation Florian said 'The New York Marathon is the fundraising highlight of our year. The atmosphere makes for an incredible experience, enjoyed by all who took part. A big thank you to everyone for their hard work and dedication, to make it a success. I would also like to thank our sponsors, Vimpex, Pbi, WL Gore, Primetech, Gerda, Ballyclare, Supply+, Plastisol and Angloco.'