



Founder's friend's 40,000-mile fundraising flight

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An old school friend of our founder will next month set off on an ambitious round-the-world flight in his single engine aircraft, in part to raise awareness of and funds for the charity.

Thirty-five-year-old Ross Edmondson, a former classmate of our founder at Tonbridge School, hopes to cover more than 40,000 miles in his 1981 Cessna over six, one-month periods – returning to work as a project engineer in Iraq in-between legs – as he sets out to complete a long-held dream and become one of only 200 small aircraft pilots known to have circumnavigated the globe.

Ross's epic challenge will begin in Pittsburgh, USA on 6 May and his route will take him across the Atlantic to the UK and Europe, through the Middle East and India into south-east Asia, onward to Australia and New Zealand and finally across the Pacific back to the USA to complete the circle, if all goes to plan, by the end of April 2020.

Although an experienced pilot, Ross is expecting the adventure to present a number of daunting challenges.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of navigating airspace in a light aircraft in many parts of the world and the extreme and unpredictable weather he is likely to encounter, Ross will also face a single leg of 2,400 miles from Hawaii to California that will require him to take off at 10% over the aircraft's usual weight in order to hold the extra fuel required and then to spend the next 17 hours over sea, far from anywhere to land in the event of an emergency!

Ross is using his challenge as an opportunity to fly the flag globally for African Promise to raise awareness of our work and of the issues we are addressing in Kenya, and is aiming to raise at least £5,000 from family, friends and the wider aviation community.

Ross tells us: "I attended secondary school with Charles (African Promise's founder) and have watched with interest as he discovered his passion for Africa and developed the charity. In 2013, I had the opportunity to act as pilot on a four-month medical flight through Africa with a British Obstetric surgeon, visiting 26 African countries to provide medical training to combat maternal mortality in childbirth. This further developed my interest in Africa, and desire to do more to contribute to its development when the opportunity presented itself."

To find out more about Ross's flight and to track his progress please visit his website at katamarino.co.uk or to support him please donate* via his fundraising page at justgiving.com/round-the-world.

**The cost of the flight will be 100% borne by Ross, meaning that 100% of donated funds (less JustGiving processing fees) come directly to us.*

For press and media enquiries in relation to Ross' trip please contact Sarah@bluebirdpr.com or download our press release and media pack [here](#).