

Climbing K2 will raise funds for SOS charity

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DNG Presentation Staging's Allan Dickinson (centre) with Duncan Riley and Robert Izzett from DWR Distribution.

DNG Presentation Staging's Allan Dickinson and three friends plan to be the first South Africans to summit the K2, also known as Savage Mountain. Each climber is raising funds for a charity and having seen the devastating effects Covid-19 has had on the live events industry, Allan will support the SOS Charity. The two-month trip commences in mid-June.



At 8,611 meters above sea level, the K2 may be the second-highest mountain in the world but it is considered the ultimate mountain challenge. Located on the border of Pakistan and China, the mountain is a collection of daunting natural challenges aptly named House Chimney, Black Pyramid, Shoulder and Bottleneck, and is infamous for violent weather. To put things into perspective, while over 9 000 people have reached the summit of Mount Everest, the earth's highest mountain above sea level, only 377 have reached K2.

With over 60 years combined experience on some of the world's most demanding peaks, John Black, the driving force behind the trip, Robby Kojetin, Warren Eva and Allan were the first South Africans to ascent Ama Dablam (6 812m) in the Himalay while two members of the group have summited Mount Everest. While these friends have climbed ranges in Africa, Europe, Russia, North America and South America, this will be the pinnacle of their climbing career.



Allan Dickinson is pictured here on a summit on one of his many adventures.

“It’s a long story, but the four of us were all Springbok Scouts together and then we started climbing,” Allan explains, who at the age of 19 made his way to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro. For eight years, Allan focused on building a career, working hard on conferences and events as a lighting designer and AV technician while his friends continued to climb and by 2009, he rejoined them.



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The four mountaineers planned the K2 trip for 2020 was it on hold with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. "My last climb was in Alaska and I was unsuccessful, so at first I thought that K2 would be a bit too hectic," said Allan. "Then I realized that I wouldn't have another opportunity as the others would unlikely be going again. Mountaineering pushes you to the absolute limit.

While the mountain has its beauty, there's always anxiety with such a big task ahead. "We try to climb most of the mountains privately and with that comes challenges and logistics like carrying heavy loads," says Allan. "On this route, it's difficult not to have some sort of assistance, and while we are not being guided, we are contracting a company to help us to base camp especially as each person will have a load of 300kg which includes fuel, food, ten tents and fifteen stoves for the next two months."

In the meantime, the men are keeping fit and it's not unusual to see the group doing 10 laps of the Westcliff steps in Westcliff with 10kg on their backs or to see Robby pulling a 25kg truck tyre while walking through his neighbourhood with a heavy rucksack.

Each climber is raising funds, and as the General Manager of DNG, Allan has chosen the SOS, a charity born in South Africa by Duncan Riley of DWR Distribution and supported by the live events and entertainment industry. "I look forward to achieving something significant for this very worthy cause," said Allan.

The SOS is close to the heart of Duncan Riley. "I was so excited when Allan came to us with this unusual initiative to help raise funds for the SOS. He is embarking on a gruelling yet unbelievable adventure and we appreciate the publicity he is giving to the SOS and the lives it will ultimately help in the end. We wish Allan and his teammates everything of the best. Keep safe, reach the top of the mountain and we look forward to hearing about your stories when you come back down again. Thank you for what you are doing."



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There are different ways to support. To help the SOS Charity, please visit <https://www.backabuddy.co.za/k2-sos-charity-fund>.

For information on advertising or sponsorship contact Allan at allan@dngps.co.za

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