



Australian ultramarathon runner, Donna Urquhart, is embarking on an incredible journey to achieve a Guinness World Record for the longest ultramarathon (aiming for 1300km) in a polar region - Antarctica, the coldest, windiest and driest desert on earth.

The attempt will take place at Union Glacier Camp in Antarctica, beginning on December 4, 2023, and aims to surpass Pat Farmer's impressive 1200km run from Union Glacier to the South Pole in 2012.

Donna will battle sub-zero temperatures and winds up to 100km/h as she attempts to run over 1,300km in 30 days on the world's harshest continent. Donna, who is a pain scientist, is working closely with her team to prepare for the conditions and acclimatise, from training in a freezer, running in alpine regions and enduring ice bath sessions.

"We will be drawing on evidence-based strategies around physical training and psychological mindset to get through this challenge, but my understanding of pain science will also help me to prepare and deal with the discomfort that will inevitably arise."

However, Donna said her Run Antarctica expedition is about more than breaking a world record. "It's a mission to educate and empower young girls and women to develop a love of sport and discover what is possible, by integrating mental and physical skills."

"Research shows that girls can find sport stressful and 50 per cent stop participating during adolescence," Donna said. "One of the major reasons for this includes a lack of confidence in themselves, their abilities and skills, coupled with feelings of self-consciousness, including about their appearance."

Run Antarctica team will raise awareness and charitable funds for their charity partners, Danny Frawley Centre and Stars Foundation, through the World Record attempt, but also through speaking opportunities at grassroots community sports clubs, schools and businesses, and building an online community showcasing inspirational female role models.

The long-term vision is for programs to be developed that integrate mental strategies into sporting environments including clubs and schools, so girls are fully supported to reach their full potential through a holistic approach. "These resources are often available at an elite level but are not as readily available in schools and community sports clubs," Donna said.

Donna said these lessons could also be applied to life outside sport. "When we step into sport, we learn about ourselves and how to deal with the tough stuff in life," Donna said. "We learn how to deal mentally with the lows."

For media interviews or speaking opportunities contact Donna Urquhart
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Total distance

1,300km

Winds up to

100km/h

Number of days

30

Temperatures down to

-24°C