

*For live updates from 'Radio 1's Gregathlon: Pedal to the Peaks for Sport Relief', follow @SportRelief, @BBCR1 and tune into BBC Radio 1 throughout the day*

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

## **'BEAST FROM THE EAST' ARCTIC WEATHER HALTS RADIO 1'S GREGATHLON: PEDAL TO THE PEAKS**

- **Dangerous snow blizzards and worst weather in decades forces BBC Radio 1's Gregathlon: Pedal to the Peaks for Sport Relief to a halt**
- **Defiant Greg James declares this is not the end of the challenge and he will be back to conquer Ben Nevis**

BBC Radio 1 DJ and presenter **Greg James** has today been forced to halt his incredible Sport Relief challenge as Storm Emma sweeps the nation. With Britain on red alert, travel conditions have become too dangerous for the DJ to reach Ben Nevis for his final climb, suspending the ascent until it is safe to return.

Unpredictable heavy snowfall and icy roads have prevented Greg completing the challenge, on day four of his expedition. The extremely tough decision was taken on the advice of experts in Greg's specialist team, and in the light of national safety warnings as weather conditions continue to worsen.

The presenter has raised an incredible £513,949 in just four days, fighting the 'Beast from the East' every step of the way. Pushing through snow up to his knees and plummeting temperatures of -20C, Greg has contended with the most brutal weather in Sport Relief challenge history.

Fighting back the tears on his Radio 1 show today, a frustrated but defiant Greg James said: "I don't really know how to talk about this...we can't continue this challenge at the moment. It's been a really horrible day, I've never felt more gutted. I am going to come back and do Ben Nevis. I've got to do it now. I've already done two peaks and 200 miles on that bike, in snow. I just want to come back and do it.

"This has turned into something much bigger than a bike ride and a couple of mountains. It's been incredible to see our listeners sharing with us the issues they've faced – it's more than the challenge now. We're talking about important issues, really openly. This is just the beginning and there is so much more we can do."

Nicola Maxey, spokesperson at the Met Office, said: "Travelling from Greg's base of Moffat today to his destination of Fort William, he would face plummeting temperatures of -7C, with widespread heavy

snow showers forecast falling nearly 25cm of snow. Cycling against headwinds of nearly 35mph, this is some of the most extreme weather we have seen in the UK for many years.”

Event Director Hannah Clark said: “All day we’ve been consulting with the authorities and following weather updates. We tried to reroute, but there isn’t an option safe for a bike or the support team. Although we want to get to Fort William, we have to put Greg’s safety first.”

BBC Radio 1’s Gregathlon: Pedal to the Peaks has seen the DJ attempt to scale three of the UK’s highest peaks and cycle the immense distance between them, over 500 miles. Greg is surrounded by a qualified and experienced team who have taken all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the DJ.

Listeners have been keeping up to date with Radio 1’s Gregathlon: Pedal to the Peaks for Sport Relief throughout the day on BBC Radio 1, and support has flooded in as the DJ broke the news of the delay to the challenge finale. Listener Tammy texted, “I have never felt so proud of someone that I’ve never met before.”

Greg’s epic challenge is raising money for Sport Relief, to help vulnerable people across the UK and the world, to live happier, healthier and safer lives. Throughout Greg’s challenge, BBC Radio 1 have also been taking a special look at projects which use Sport Relief cash to help support young people living with mental health issues here in the UK.

Greg has asked that people continue to donate vital funds as the weather frustrates the final climb. You can sponsor Greg at [SportRelief.com/SponsorGreg](https://SportRelief.com/SponsorGreg).

For the first time ever Sport Relief 2018 is asking the entire nation to take on a huge collective challenge – beating a billion steps a day, every day, from 17th-23rd March. For more information on how to get involved with this year’s Sport Relief campaign, download the Sport Relief App or go to [sportrelief.com](https://sportrelief.com).

**-Ends-**

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

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#### **Notes to Editors**

Sport Relief brings the nation together to get active, raise money and change lives. Since 2002, Sport Relief has raised over £335 million. The money raised by the public will be spent by Comic Relief to tackle the critical issues affecting people across the UK and the world. This year, Sport Relief

culminates in a week of activity from Saturday 17th to Friday 23rd March, leading to an unmissable night of TV on the BBC.

Comic Relief is a UK charity which aims to create a just world, free from poverty - where everyone is safe, healthy, educated and empowered. Since 1985, Comic Relief has raised over £1 billion. That money has helped, and is helping, people both at home in the UK and across the world. For information about Comic Relief and the work it carries out, please visit [www.comicrelief.com](http://www.comicrelief.com) Comic Relief, registered charity 326568 (England/Wales); SC039730 (Scotland)