

Hi all,

My much-delayed annual charity bike ride was, of course, different from those of previous years – but even I was not prepared for the final twist before I even started....

As the drones and missiles were heading in our direction from Iran, on Motsae Shabbat, 13th April, we were all glued to our TV sets wondering what sort of world we would wake up to the following morning.

I was looking a little further forward – would I be able to start my ride the following evening??

TG all was fine on the Sunday morning. I could do the ride but Lesley, quite reasonably, insisted that I stick to main roads especially as a lot of the cycling would be after nightfall.

It meant that I was limited in where I could go and so I planned to ride the same route for all four evenings – heading north on the old coastal road and back, with maybe a few add-ons to increase my distance.

You will remember that I was cycling in memory of Nathanel Young and Roee Negri who fell on 7th October defending our country. The photos of them attached to my handlebars served as a constant reminder and gave me inspiration and strength to make that extra bit of effort. On the first evening, I was asked, at a set of traffic lights, who the soldiers were, and why I had their photos on my bike.

I also attached the yellow ribbon to my handlebars to remind me of Hersh Goldberg-Polin and the other hostages still being held in Gaza.



Like me, Hersh's father, Jon Polin is a veteran of many Alyn off-road rides.



Along the route, as there are throughout the country, there were also many reminders of the hostages and each evening on the way out and on the way back, I passed this sign hanging on the perimeter wall of a large factory complex.

The weather each evening was perfect for cycling - cool and with little wind. On the first evening I

thought I would take a chance and head a little further north than planned and ended up in Or Akiva, over 25km from home. I felt fine when I got home and decided to stretch myself and head to the same park every evening. Each evening I was able to include some add-ons to increase my distances. In total, over the four evenings, I cycled a total of close on 220 km and have to say, I felt really good at the end of it.



But obviously the most important aspect, and the reason for the ride, was to raise funds for HaBayit shel Benji and Alyn Hospital. I have now raised over **NIS15,000**, about **£3,300**, waaay above my expectations as the demands on all of us have been so great.

So on behalf of both of these truly amazing organisations, I thank you all so, so much for your generosity and continued support.

Praying for only good news.

Geoffrey

