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Taking on the world's best runners for 24 hours

A trainee acute medical doctor from the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust has successfully represented Great Britain in the 24-hour World Running Championships – less than a year after breaking her back in a car accident.

Sarah Morwood, who is in her second year of training at the RUH, went up against many of the world's best endurance runners at the event in France, which sees competitors running non-stop for 24 hours, with the winners the team which covers the greatest distance.

Sarah completed a jaw-dropping distance of 186km (115 miles), with the women's team finishing fifth overall.

She said: "It was very hard work but I'm pleased with my distance, although it was still short of my personal best. It was the first time that every member of the team was still running at the end of the race, so I was proud to be part of that.

"The heat during the day made it really tough and I was sick a few times, but I was determined to keep going and make it to the end.

"One of the other biggest challenges was the boredom as you're literally going in circles for 24 hours.

"It could well be the world's most stupid sport and it's probably as tough for the spectators as it is the runners!

"It was an amazing event to be part of though and I enjoyed being treated like an elite athlete for a few days."

In 2015 Sarah was selected to represent Britain in the World Trail Running Championships, which saw runners cover 50 miles over mountains in the Alps.

She took part in the championships again in 2018, however, her running was put on hold following a car accident later that year which broke her back and left her needing spinal surgery.

“I was in a bad way. I couldn’t do any exercise, especially running, for three months,” she said. “Once I was fit enough to start running again it quickly became clear that I couldn’t run downhill anymore because of the stress it put on my back and that’s when I got into 24-hour running.

“I plan to continue to enjoy my running, but I might now look to enter more races where the prizes are food and drink!”

Ends

Notes to Editor:

The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust provides acute treatment and care for a catchment population of around 500,000 people in Bath, and the surrounding towns and villages in North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. The hospital provides healthcare to the population served by four Clinical Commissioning Groups: Bath & North East Somerset CCG, Wiltshire CCG, Somerset CCG and South Gloucestershire CCG.

The Trust provides 759 beds and a comprehensive range of acute services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

In 2015 The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust acquired the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust. The RNHRD treats patients from across the country offering services in rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME, cancer related fatigue and fatigue linked to other long term conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

The RUH is changing - we have an exciting programme of redevelopment underway transforming our site and further improving the services we provide. The Trust has opened the purpose-built RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre and is now working towards the new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit_for_the_future

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk