



Bould and his wife Vivian in Aspen 2 Sept. 2023.

- Photos: Supplied



Martyn Bould on Mount Kilimanjaro in 2019.

Fundraiser Bould set sights on Mt Aconcagua

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Some 78-year-olds might opt to enjoy a more leisurely pace of life, but not local adventurer, Martyn Bould.

Bould, who climbed Tanzania's 20,000-foot Mount Kilimanjaro in 2019, is gearing up to scale Mount Aconcagua in Argentina to raise funds for the Red Cross.

He said he wanted to continue his 'Climb for Red' campaign to raise awareness about the work the organisation does in Cayman and around the world.

Bould explained that the essential life-support work undertaken by the Red Cross doesn't get as much publicity as it should.

He highlighted witnessing the Red Cross in action, particularly in the aftermath of natural disasters, "where we go and inspect buildings and negotiate settlements with people that have suffered damage following hurricanes," the local surveyor said.

He wanted to reignite what he started before COVID, bringing attention to its disaster relief work, through his climbs, he added.

The 22,841-foot Mount Aconcagua is the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere.

He said the 18-day trek to the peak climbs gradually, in order to acclimatise to the decreasing oxygen levels. It includes rest days along the way, with the summit day requiring a 12-hour climb.

Bould, together with his wife Vivian, have climbed such peaks as Blue Mountain in Jamaica, Pico Duarte in Dominican Republic, and Mount Sopris in Colorado.

In 2019, Bould reached the summit of Kilimanjaro, "so, Aconcagua was a natural progression," he said.

As for a fundraising target, he said the goal is "to raise as much money as possible".

Set to depart Cayman on 11 Jan. to begin preparations in Argentina for the climb, Bould said he had originally prepared to be part of a group of from four to six climbers, accompanied by other guides and porters.

"I now found that I am the only one climbing," he revealed, explaining that there is only a "small window" when it's possible to climb the mountain.

"It's the middle of summer in Argentina at the moment, so you can climb in December, January and possibly a little bit into February. But that's the window; beyond that you cannot climb it," he said.

Training for the trek

Bould said he has been training for months to prepare to take on the ascent of the world's tallest mountain outside of Asia.

"I'm not worried about [the climb]. It's key that you train for it. One of the issues, of course, is the lack of oxygen. By the time we get to the summit, the oxygen level is about 40% of what it is at sea level. So training at sea level is not the greatest way to train," he admitted.

To help, he used a programme developed by Patrick McKeown, called Oxygen Advantage, which he had also used to climb Kilimanjaro.

It involves training at sea level by breathing out and seeing how long you can walk, run, or



Bould is preparing for ascent of Mt Aconcagua in Argentina this month.

climb before having to take a breath.

He said he has done altitude training in Colorado and Utah, as well as continuing a daily workout routine with Dottie Rau, using Igor Burdenko's programme which he has done for the past 20-plus years. According to its website, this method relies on training on both land and water to hone balance, coordination, flexibility, endurance, speed and strength.

"I feel great," he said.

Cayman Islands Red Cross Director Jondo Obi lauded Bould's commitment and efforts.

"Climb for Red is a bold initiative by the Cayman Islands Red Cross, designed to raise awareness and vital funds for the organisation's disaster preparedness and response programs. By scaling Mount Aconcagua, Martyn Bould embodies the spirit of resilience and preparedness we aim to cultivate within our community," Obi said in a statement.

She said people can follow Bould's journey on the CIRC's social media accounts, and "hopefully while they are cheering him on and donating to our cause, they are also engaging with the information which we will be providing".

Donations will go towards supporting community programmes such as disaster management, first aid/CPR and AED training, aquatics training (water safety and lifeguard training), child protection and sexuality education, and the thrift shop referral centre.

Anyone who wants to donate to the campaign can do so through the Cayman Islands Red Cross at redcross.org.ky/donation.



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