

# A GRAND DAY OUT IN FRANCE

by Neev Renton



*Neev Renton*

Hi, I am Neev. I like to help children like me with Type 1 Diabetes in SE Asia who don't have insulin. I wanted to climb a 4000m mountain and my Dad gave me some options and I chose Dôme de Neige des Écrins because I liked the shape of it.

On Sunday we slept in the van outside Jerry's and then yesterday, on Monday morning, we went up to Pré de Madame-Carle at the car park at the end of the road. Packed lots of mountain things for the challenge, including a special stone which I will talk about later.

I had a problem with my blood sugar equipment 30 minutes after starting the walk. One glucometer said I was high, the other said I was low. I didn't know what I was. So, went with the high because I was very, very thirsty and gave myself one and half tiny drops of insulin. We then walked up to the first refuge at 2500m. Had a drink and checked my blood sugars. Then off to the glacier where we had to put on crampons, helmet, ice axe and rope. There was a danger of crevasses and rock fall. It was very warm walking up, but once on the glacier it was really cold.

The glacier was in really bad shape. Normally there is a trail, but it had melted through. We saw the Dôme and Barre des Écrins had huge crevasses. And the ice wall to start the route was now a vertical section of ice 3 metres high with an overhang. We thought the route looked a bit sketchy. We would have been fine but if Dad fell in, I could not have stopped him. He's heavy. We spoke to a guide at the bottom of the glacier and he said it was icy and only he could get up the steep section.

After a long hike over 4 hours we reached the Refuge des Écrins at 3170m. We were shown our bunk room. Then I played Uno and scrabble with Dad. After that we had dinner. I didn't feel that good because I had been in the sun all day. It was just the difference from warm to cold and the really strong sunshine. I just told my dad and he said after I ate something, I would be fine. And I was. It was a great meal including a huge chocolate brownie with white snow on top!



*At the foot of the glacier*

We spoke to the guardian and he said the same as the guide. He said the trail was in really bad condition. After that it was already late but I made some friends including an American/German girl called Sophie. We played Uno together and I won twice! Then we all went to bed at 9 o'clock. I had a good night unlike my dad who didn't sleep because he was looking after me and my sugars. He told me I went high in the middle of the night. So, he had to adjust my insulin pump and give me some more insulin while I was asleep.



*On the edge of a crevasse*

We all woke up at 3am to check but decided finally not to go for it because it was too dangerous. We got up again at 7am and had breakfast. Blood sugars were ok. Then we packed up and changed the cannula on my pump. That took ages. Then we headed down with the German family. I had already given my stone to Sophie, so she could take it to Germany. It's a stone for Isla who had a tumour in her back, and she passed away at 7 years old. Isla painted lots of stones to keep her memory alive and she is still travelling around the world.

After the glacier I wanted to run down but Dad was a bit slower. At the end of the glacier I had a big hypo. Dad gave me some jelly babies and I slowly got better. We finally got back to Jerry and Jackie's house at 5pm. Anyway, we are going out for a lovely dinner now. I had a good experience, but dad kept moaning about the weight of his rucksack – wimp! My little sister, called Iona, was really worried, but she was excited for me. We will all be back as a family tonight – double yippee! I will have another go next year. Conditions were no good this time but I really want to help the A4D children."

### **Action For Diabetics (A4D)**

*Our mission at A4D is to save and transform the lives of young people with Type 1 Diabetes in SE Asia, which is an incurable condition that strikes indiscriminately and if untreated is fatal. A4D provides essential medication and support to disadvantaged young people with Type 1 Diabetes. Neev, aged 10, raised £1,596.08 in her bid to climb the Dôme de Neige des Écrins at the end of August 2019.*