

Double Dutch courage for the Ben Nevis Race

TWO runners from Holland – Europe's flattest country – are in the line-up for the Ben Nevis Race on Saturday, September 4.

But, make no mistake about it, Paul Luyf and Anton Brugman have qualified to take part in this, the toughest of mountain races.

Paul's story, however, is a salutary one. An optician from Haarlem, he has dedicated most of his free time to help poor people in Albania who are visually impaired.

Indeed, last year, in recognition of this, he was made a 'Knight of the Order of Oranje Nassau' – equivalent to the British MBE.

And last year, thanks to his campaigning for the poorly-sighted Albanians, he reached the finals of the Hero 2003 competition on Dutch TV.

Paul's prize – selected by himself – was "a return ticket to Glasgow and a start-certificate in the Ben Nevis Race". All his life Paul dreamed of "conquering this 1343 metres

mountain in 3 hours 15 minutes".

Now his dream is being realised, he is turning his participation into a charity run for his Albanian project.

His running mate, and best friend, Anton, has five marathons under his athletics vest, and will be giving Paul moral support in the Ben.

"We are serious in training," said Paul earlier this summer.

"We shall be preparing for the big day on Saturday, the Fourth of September."