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**For immediate release**

**RUNNER TAKING ON TOUGHEST FOOTRACE ON EARTH FOR CHARITY**

Runner Rebecca Drackley is taking on the Marathon des Sables – known as the toughest footrace on earth – to raise funds for working animal charity SPANA.

Thirty-seven year-old Rebecca from Birmingham will begin the ultra-marathon on 10 April and over six days will cover 156 miles of the Sahara desert, in temperatures up to 48˚C. The rules of the race means that she will have to be self-sufficient, carrying everything that she will need to survive, in her backpack.

Rebecca is taking on the challenge to raise funds for working animal charity SPANA, which provides free veterinary care to working animals – such as horses, donkeys and camels – in some of the world’s poorest communities. She is a keen supporter of SPANA’s work and took part in the Brighton Marathon in 2014 in aid of the charity.

The combat medic technician and student paramedic has been an avid horse rider since she was young and will be taking the ashes of her beloved family horse, Dorzac, to scatter in the Sahara desert.

Rebecca said: “I have a very soft spot for horses and that extends to all working animals, they deserve to be treated with the utmost respect and care. I chose to raise money for SPANA as they provide emergency care as well as education to areas of the world that need it most.

“Training for the race has been really tough, mentally and physically. I’ll be relying on some heat training in saunas and trying to keep myself fit and healthy before I set off.”

Jeremy Hulme, chief executive of SPANA, said: “We’re completely in awe of Rebecca for taking on this gruelling challenge to raise funds for SPANA. The money she raises will enable us to help even more working animals in many of the world’s poorest countries. These animals – which do the job of trucks, tractors and taxis – are relied upon completely by the owners for their livelihoods, but without SPANA they would have no access to much-needed veterinary treatment.”

Rebecca is also raising money for assistance dog charity Canine Partners.

To support Rebecca visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/Rebecca-Drackleymds/>

For more information about SPANA, visit: [www.spana.org](http://www.spana.org)

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors**

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About SPANA (the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad)

SPANA has been the charity for the working animals of the world since 1923, providing free veterinary care to horses, donkeys, mules and camels in some of the world’s poorest countries. The charity improves the welfare of working animals in three ways: free veterinary treatment, education and training, and emergency and outreach projects. It is estimated that there are around 200 million working animals worldwide that do the jobs of trucks, tractors and taxis, many of which work to support impoverished communities in developing countries. Please see the charity’s website, [www.spana.org](http://www.spana.org) for more information.