

British woman makes marathon history in bionic suit

May 8 2012

A paralysed British woman became the first person to complete a marathon in a bionic suit as she crossed the finishing line in London on Tuesday 16 days after the race began.

Claire Lomas was in tears but said she was "over the [moon](#)" as she completed the 26.2-mile (42.2 kilometre) course in her bionic ReWalk suit, which mimics the response that the wearer's [joints](#) would make if they were not paralysed.

Hundreds of people lined the streets and three mounted members of the Household Cavalry gave the 32-year-old a guard of honour as she finished the course on The Mall in central London.

Lomas, a former [chiropractor](#) who was left paralysed from the chest down following a horse-riding accident five years ago, said: "There were times when I questioned whether I would make it when I was training.

"Once I started, I just took each day as it came and every step got me a step closer."

She walked about two miles a day, cheered on by her husband Dan and their 13-month-old daughter Maisie, and her parents.

Lomas will not appear in the official results and did not receive a medal when she finished as competitors have to complete the course on the day of the race to qualify for a medal.

But a dozen other [runners](#) in the race have given her their own medals in recognition of her achievement.

Lomas, who now works as a jewellery designer, raised more than £86,000 (\$140,000, 107,000 euros) for a charity which funds research to develop treatments for paralysis caused by a broken back or neck.

"I have had tremendous support since my accident which I am so grateful for, some don't have that," she said.

"Some people lose the use of their arms as well. A cure needs to be found."

The £43,000 ReWalk suit, designed by Israeli entrepreneur Amit Goffer, enables people with lower-limb paralysis to stand, walk and climb stairs through motion sensors and an onboard computer system.

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Citation: British woman makes marathon history in bionic suit (2012, May 8) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-05-british-woman-marathon-history-bionic.html>

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