



RUNNING

S

oon after our family moved to London from the United

States, we were watching the London Marathon near the start in Blackheath.

My children, Serena and Isaac (pictured right), were delighted to see several happy rhinos high-fiving the cheering fans lining the course as they set off en route.

Fast forward a few years, we encountered the happy rhino once more, this time collecting donations at London Bridge train station for World Rhino Day.

On the spot, my six-year old Serena made me promise to run my next race as a rhino.

If you are interested in using a rhino costume

Our rhino costumes are familiar sight to the millions of spectators watching running events such as the London Marathon, drawing in cheers and adulation from the crowds as they pass as if they are celebrities – sounds fun right? But what is it really like to be inside one of the iconic costumes?

Gregg 'Rhino Gregg' Lemos-Stein, a spectator-turned-costume-runner, shares his experience...

LIKE A ROCKSTAR

Now, I had already run close to 40 marathons and nearly as many half marathons. I even host a podcast devoted to distance running called Cloud259, Running on Air. But I was serious about my times and never interested in carrying around 10 kg of metal and foamy rhino skin!

If I'm honest, running the Hackney Half Marathon in the costume was very difficult physically. It wasn't so much the weight as the bulk of the costume, the limited visibility, and the lack of air circulation. On the outside I was a tough rhino: on the inside I was a sweaty mess.

Other challenges – speed bumps! Since it's hard to see over the rhino's prodigious snout, it's easy to miss a big hump in the road and take a nasty spill, one that would certainly shock the crowd. Thankfully I managed to stay on two hooves the entire race.

Despite the above, I'm so glad I agreed to my daughter's demand. The challenge of the costume is more than made up for by the incredible crowd support which went on every moment of the race. "Go Rhino Gregg!", "Look at the rhino", "You're a legend". If you ever want to experience what it's like to be a rock star, the rhino suit is your ticket.

All credit to Serena for getting me into the rhino costume – and for helping me have the most fun I've ever had in a running event. Sometimes it takes children to get us out of our comfort zone!



On the spot, my six-year old Serena made me promise to run my next race as a rhino...



ALL IMAGES GREGG LEMOS-STEIN

for your own fundraising race, please get in touch at fundraising@savetherhino.org for further advice.