

COMEDIAN IN A Diabetic on funny

MARATHON BID Ed's off run

THE MIKE WARD INTERVIEW



ED GAMBLE

IF police received reports last night of a giant duck scuttling around the streets of central Nottingham, let me assure them the public were perfectly safe.

That was no duck. That was Ed Gamble, comedian and regular on TV's *Mock The Week*, visiting the city for his latest gig and out for his routine jog.

Duck-like is the way he just happens to run. "Yes, that's how a friend of my girlfriend once described it," he tells me. It's like my feet don't leave the ground and my legs are completely straight.

"In my head I look majestic, Mike, but in truth I look utterly bizarre."

The thing is, Ed has to run an awful lot. Not to flee hostile audiences – quite the reverse: he's so popular right now that he's extended his latest stand-up tour, *Blizzard*, to a whopping 80 dates – but to make sure he's in shape for the London Marathon, less than a fortnight away.

This'll be his second, running once again for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund, as in 2017, and he'd love to beat his previous time of 3 hours 39 minutes.

Success

"I wasn't planning on doing it again," he admits, "but they called to ask after I'd had two to three glasses of wine. There's a slight amount of regret in accepting it but it's too late now. I'm locked in."

And Ed is a guy who does like to set himself targets. Comedy-wise, there's one he's particularly focusing on in 2019 – namely, to fully humiliate his father, whose strange ways have become a regular feature of his stand-up routine.

"That's my main aim," he jokes. "That's why we've extended the tour. I need these extra dates to truly destroy his dignity!"

His commitment to the diabetes charity arises from the fact that Ed himself is a Type 1 diabetic.

That, too, has been a big part of his comedy for some while. He's thinking of easing off on it – "but then it's nice to have your

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own little subtitle: Ed Gamble, diabetic comedian. I mean, I'm just a fairly bland chap, I don't have an edge, so having that thing is quite useful."

Ed's other big current success is *Off Menu*, the hit podcast he hosts with comedy mate James Acaster.

It's an ingeniously simple format, like *Desert Island Discs* for food nuts, where guests chat about their perfect menu, but it's already topped the iTunes podcast chart.

He says: "We don't talk to people about what anyone else would normally talk to them about. That's half the fun." Dream future guests, he says, would include Heston Blumenthal, Jamie Oliver "...and all of the Avengers".

What, all at once? "I'd love that. It'd be chaos but I'd love it..."

Ed's fascination with food, mind you, wasn't always this healthy. A few years back he tipped the scales at 19st. Remarkably, he shed six in as many months.

"I didn't do a crazy crash diet. I just changed my lifestyle – stopped the binge eating, stopped



Pictures: HUMPHREY NEMAR

BACK
ON THE
ROAD: Ed is to
run marathon
a second time

boozing for a while – and it just fell off. Then I started getting into exercise and found I enjoyed it."

So had he felt lousy when he was large? "No, I didn't really have self-esteem issues. I don't want to paint this as: 'Oh, I was really down about myself.' I was perfectly happy. But when I got booked for TV, I thought it might be nice to shed a few pounds."

So could he ever see himself going to the other extreme, becoming one of those full-blown exercise addicts?

"Oh, definitely. I've got a hugely obsessive-addictive personality. If I go more than two or three days without exercise, I get quite edgy."

"But I don't do it to look like some

sort of ripped muscle boy. I do it because it makes me feel good."

So there's the buzz he gets from all this exertion, the buzz from making people laugh – does anything else leave Ed Gamble mildly euphoric?

Yep, there's heavy metal. Ed's nuts about it. "It surprises people but I'm really into loud, extreme music. I love going to gigs when I can."

"That's absolutely one of my happy places, having my ears battered out by some awful, horrific band."

● **Ed will record his first stand-up special at London's Leicester Square Theatre on May 12. For tickets for this and his other UK tour dates go to edgamble.co.uk.**

ED'S FAVOURITES

FILM: *The Shining*
BOOK: *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running* by Haruki Murakami
TV SHOW: *It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia*
ACTOR: Olivia Colman
COMEDIAN: Patton Oswalt
SPORTSPERSON: Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson
SONG: *Subtle Hustle* by Clutch

SINGER: Neil Fallon (Clutch)
BAND: Clutch
FOOD: Anything at Shack-Fuyu
COLOUR: Grey
DRINK: Red wine
CITY: London
HOL DESTINATION: New York
GADGET: Dexcom G6 continuous glucose monitor
APP: Spotify
SUBJECT AT SCHOOL: Philosophy

