

The 25th Welsh Castles Relay



For Les Croupiers RC and
Welsh Castles Relay information, please visit:
www.lescroupiersrunningclub.org.uk

Programme

2007





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This year all the money raised by the Air Products team will go to Cancer Research Wales.

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Introduction

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Hello and welcome to the 25th Welsh Castles Relay. Way back in July 1982 when the first pioneering run was held, the 21 athletes that ran through the night could surely not have envisaged the institution our race has now become. Despite the 'Castles' blossoming into one of the major team events in the athletics calendar it appears that very little has changed. Rob Cole a journalist with the Western Mail who accompanied the team on that first bold attempt, wrote:

"For me, the outstanding memory, at least whilst I was awake, was the chorus of raucous runners' voices"

Isn't it amazing how little the spirit of the Welsh Castles Relay has changed in 25 years? It's equally remarkable how those years have just flown by. We now find ourselves in 2007, a little older and a little wiser, but no less excited about the prospect of celebrating our very own silver jubilee. Of course, the last time I attended a silver jubilee celebration, I was wearing a floor length cape, a full and bushy beard and an oversize pointy hat. The year in question was 1977, I was seven years old and dressed as Merlin the wizard for a street party (which gives me away as a fairly recent Castles devotee). Though this time I will not be so grandly attired, I will certainly be far more animated. Like the rest of us, I am planning to celebrate the 25th edition of the best race on the planet (no bias there then) with the other 1180 runners gathered at Cardiff Castle on June the 10th after two days of intense racing through the centre of some of the most beautiful parts of our fair land and even better than that (for me at least), this time there will be no need to don my wizard's beard and cap, despite the Arthurian surroundings!

For this special occasion, we welcome 59 teams from the UK and beyond, reserving an extra special welcome for Interval M-2000 from Madrid, reigning champions in the 'Trees and Castles Team Relay Race' an event inspired by our own. Judging by our late April weather they should feel right at home! We hope that the extra special finish planned for the end of this year's race will lure all of these teams to sojourn at Cardiff Castle and enjoy the grand finale.

Before I go I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank all of our sponsors for their continued and valued investment in our event and in particular to Air Products who have continued to improve their support both through increased sponsorship and by submitting a team each year since 1993. Without the backing of our sponsors (a full list of acknowledgements can be found towards the rear of the programme) the event would be impossible to organise. This year we also extend a warm welcome to Mizuno who join the rich Castles tradition.

Good luck everyone.

Simon Nurse

Les Croupiers RC



Jeff Wood

Castles stalwart.

Much loved, sorely missed.

The barmen, swaying, says "W-What W-Would S-S-Sir L-L-Like?". The Croups gang, apart from Howe, exchanged glances and realising that World War Three might well break out when Howe answered – they scattered to safety behind tables and chairs.

"T-Twelve P-P-Pints of L-L-Lager, P-P-Please" answered Howe.

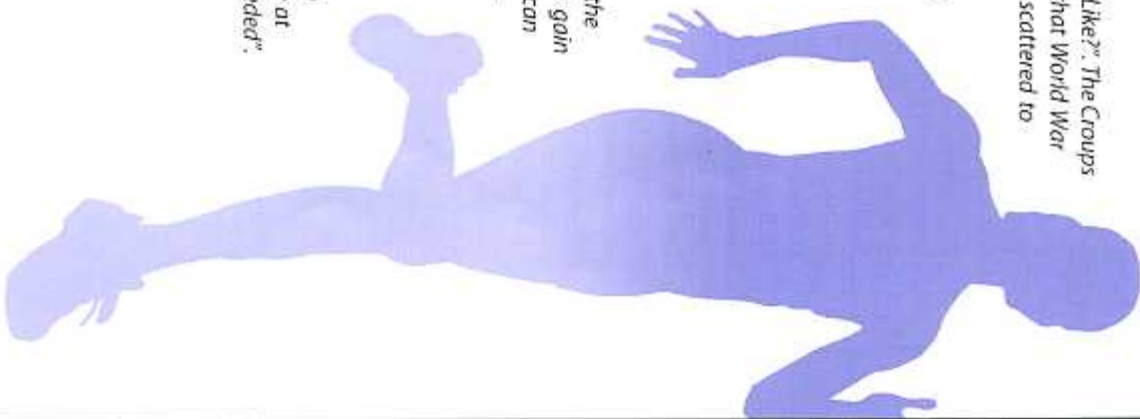
The locals stopped talking. The pianist stopped playing. Even Clint Eastwood, who had called in for a pint, decided that discretion was the better part of valour and left. The only two who seemed oblivious of what was going on were the double act on centre stage. The Croups boys emerged from their hiding places but kept silent "lest normal speech should draw attention to them".

Woody's Personal Philosophy: "To me the Castles is like the Olympics and the London Marathon combined. If I can't gain selection for the Castles because the number of teams we can accept is limited it will break my heart, but I will still help to organise the event. I will still be there on that magic weekend.

Any club member should be proud to be involved in "The Castles" in any capacity. When I'm too old to hold a clip-board or watch and the journey from Caernarfon to Cardiff is too arduous for my frail, ageing limbs, I'll be there at the end of the relay to make tea for the runners if I'm needed".

Mike McGeach

Les Croupiers RC



6 Castle Relay Roll Of Honour

Overall Result

Year	Team & Time	Teams
1982	Les Croupiers 20:38:06	1
1983	Les Croupiers 18:59:33	6
1984	Les Croupiers 18:57:53	10
1985	Les Croupiers 18:46:07	22
1986	Newport Harriers 17:43:19	25
1987	Newport Harriers 18:05:25	27
1988	Swansea Harriers 17:51:16	32
1989	Les Croupiers 18:46:08	35
1990	Les Croupiers 18:59:23	36
1991	Les Croupiers 19:12:23	36
1992	Cardiff 19:52:41	37
1993	Cardiff 19:39:42	40
1994	Swansea Harriers 20:26:20	45
1995	Bridgend AC 19:16:16	45
1996	TA Land Command 19:37:58	45
1997	Bridgend AC 19:42:38	44
1998	Swansea Harriers 19:52:23	50
1999	Les Croupiers 20:01:27	51
2000	Swansea Harriers 20:07:39	54
2002	Swansea Harriers 20:34:05	55
2003	Salford Harriers 20:44:52	55
2004	Thames BH 20:57:12	54
2005	Thames BH 20:36:51	57
2006	Les Croupiers 22:05:02	57

Business Houses

Year	Team & Time	Year	Team & Time
1987	Rockwool 23:49:44	1988	Norwich Union 23:39:30
1989	Rockwool 23:41:32	1990	Rockwool 23:56:41
1991	PowerGen 22:36:20	1992	British Steel 21:47:23
1993	British Steel 20:55:46	1994	PowerGen 21:53:08
1995	British Steel 20:45:14	1996	British Steel 20:27:49
1997	British Steel 20:47:47	1998	Police Athletic Association 21:03:52
1999	British Airways AC 22:31:10	2000	Corus Group PLC 22:44:59
2002	Corus Strip Products 23:21:26	2003	Police Athletic Association 22:18:26
2004	Corus Strip Products 23:17:41	2005	Corus Strip Products 23:05:49
2006	Corus Strip Products 25:01:28		

7 Castle Relay Roll Of Honour

Ladies Team Winners

Veterans

Year	Team & Time	Year	Team & Time
1986	Les Croupiers 26:27:57	1989	Les Croupiers 21:30:25
1987	Serpentine / Stragglers 25:44:55	1990	City of Bath AC 21:00:16
1988	City of Bath AC 24:26:34	1991	Newport Harriers 21:42:35
1989	Les Croupiers 25:52:34	1992	Newport Harriers 23:07:36
1990	City of Bath AC 24:50:08	1993	City of Bath AC 22:48:36
1991	Les Croupiers 24:59:12	1994	Bristol AC 23:33:02
1992	Les Croupiers 26:55:43	1995	Poolc Runners 21:54:54
1993	Les Croupiers 26:11:30	1996	Wirral AC 21:44:30
1994	City of Swansea 25:55:53	1997	Wirral AC 21:18:56
1995	Les Croupiers 26:05:54	1998	Wirral AC 21:57:26
1996	Cardiff AAC 26:25:36	1999	Wirral AC 21:43:11
1997	City of Swansea 25:25:23	2000	Wirral AC 21:40:47
1998	Cardiff AAC 25:25:30	2002	Police AA 22:00:44
1999	Police Athletic Association 24:52:23	2003	Wirral AC 23:41:43
2000	Police Athletic Association 25:11:10	2004	Swansea Harriers 23:58:52
2002	Cardiff AAC 26:37:23	2005	Bristol & West AC 22:02:01
2003	Les Croupiers 27:05:29	2006	Wirral AC 25:07:24
2004	Serpentine RC 25:44:57		
2005	Serpentine RC 25:47:15		
2006	Winchester 26:07:20		

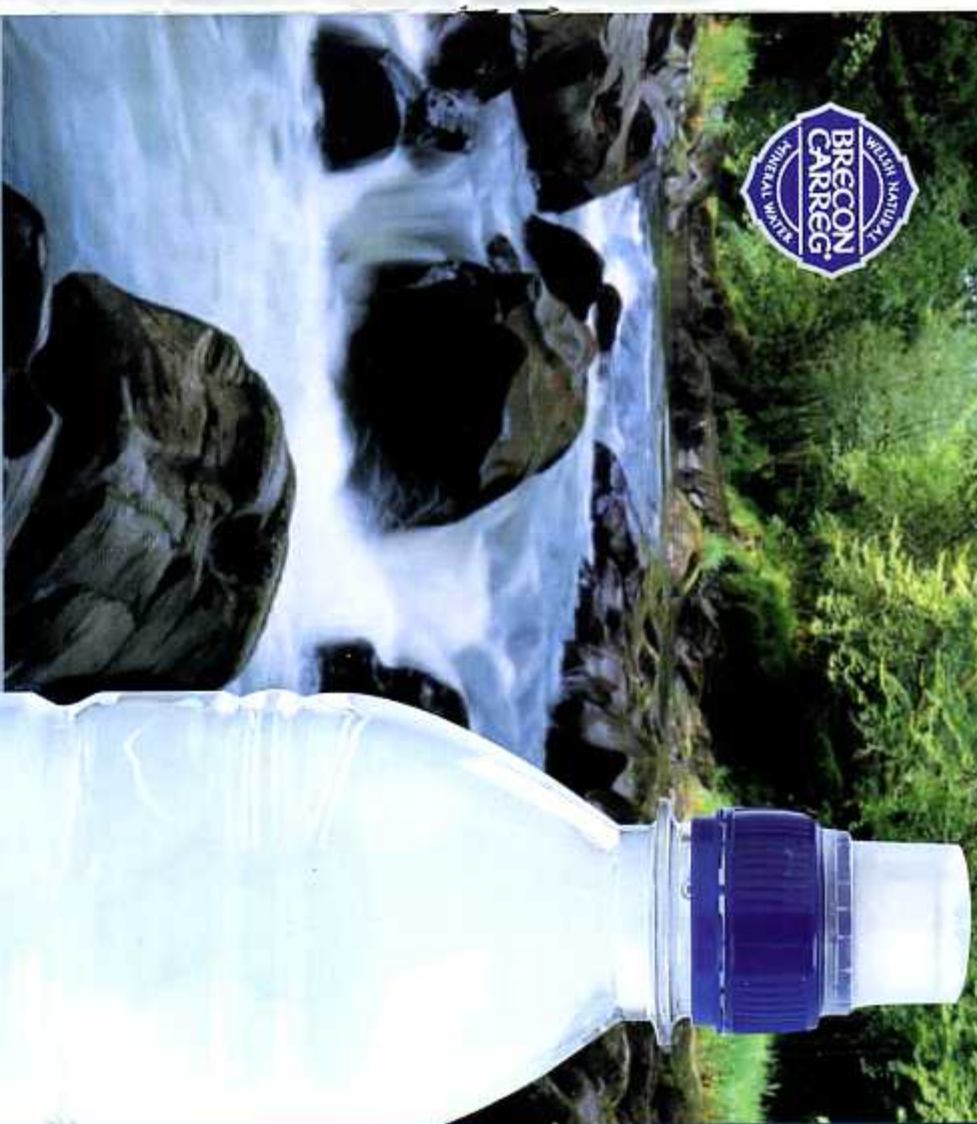
Kings Queens & Monarchs of the Mountains

Year	Kings & Time	Queens & Time	Monarchs & Time
1990	Newport Harriers 3:33:58	Serpentine Ladies 7:28:05	Wirral AC 7:07:13
1991	City of Bath 4:40:40	Les Croupiers 8:08:50	Middleton Harriers 7:21:22
1992	Newport Harriers 4:59:04	Cardiff AAC 7:59:18	Bristol & West 7:04:59
1993	Bridgend AC 5:49:40	City of Swansea 7:56:36	Bristol & West 7:15:07
1994	Swansea Harriers 6:05:14	Les Croupiers 7:51:26	
1995	Bridgend AC 6:08:19	Police AA Ladies 7:43:18	
1996	British Steel 6:16:57	Police AA Ladies 7:48:48	
1997	Bridgend AC 6:10:25	Serpentine RC 8:20:45	
1998	Bridgend AC 6:18:51	Cardiff AAC 8:44:16	
1999	Swansea Harriers 6:25:18	Serpentine RC 7:48:54	
2000	Salford Harriers 6:22:11	Serpentine RC 7:57:42	
2002	Salford Harriers 6:37:22	Wirral AC 7:38:04	
2003	Salford Harriers 6:41:44		
2004	Thames HBH 6:15:51		
2005	Thames HBH 6:13:57		
2006	Haarlem Globetrotters 6:39:37		

Route, distances, records and start times

Stage	From	To	Stage Mileage	Stage Record	Cut Off Time (mins)	Estimated Start
1	Caernarfon Castle	Penrygroes	9.1	52:37 (2005)	91	10:30
2	Penrygroes	Criccieth Castle	10.7	55:34 (2005)	107	11:30
3	Criccieth Castle	Maentwrog	12.1	62:23 (1996)	121	12:25
4	Maentwrog	Harlech Castle	9.4	50:07 (2003)	94	13:30
5	Harlech Castle	Barmouth	9.6	55:38 (2002)	96	14:20
6	Barmouth	Dolgellau	10.7	59:03 (2004)	107	15:10
7	Dolgellau	Dinas Mawddwy	9.75	55:07 (2005)	98	16:05
8	Dinas Mawddwy	Foel	11.2	55:14 (1992)	112	16:55
9	Foel	Llanfair Cereinion	8.6	45:08 (2004)	86	17:40
10	Llanfair Cereinion	Newtown	13.3	70:51 (2006)	133	18:20
Overnight stop at Newtown Leisure Centre				Approx. 9.00 pm - 6.30 am		
11	Newtown	Llanbadarn Fynydd	12.3	64:14 (1995)	123	07:00
12	Llanbadarn Fynydd	Crossgates	11.2	53:33 (1993)	112	08:05
13	Crossgates	Builth Wells	10.6	52:19 (1999)	106	09:00
14	Builth Wells	Droevys Arms	11.0	58:00 (2005)	110	09:55
15	Droevys Arms	Brecon	12.4	66:05 (2005)	124	10:55
16	Brecon	Beacons Reservoir	9.0	44:35 (1988)	90	11:55
17	Beacons Reservoir	Glyfathfa Castle	9.2	47:53 (2005)	92	12:40
18	Merthyr (Rhyd-y-Car Centre)	Abercynon (Navigation Park)	9.1	50:07 (2005)	91	13:40
19	Abercynon (Navigation Park)	Caerphilly Castle	10.4	62:07 (2002)	104	14:25
20	Caerphilly Castle	Cardiff Castle	10.4	55:02 (2005)	104	15:10

Mountain stages highlighted in Red. 4pm approximate finish time at Cardiff Castle.



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Enjoy! Mwy'nwedd!



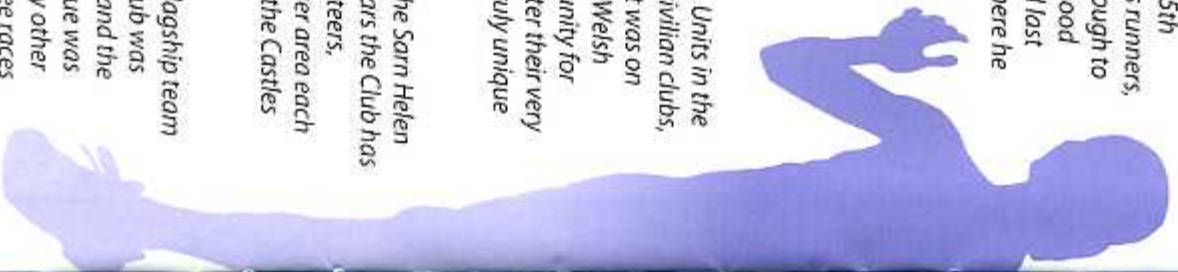


e welcome five new teams – including one from Spain – to the 25th running of the Welsh Castles Relay. Interval M-2000 comprises runners, mainly veterans over 40, from Madrid. They have experience enough to run this type of long distance event, and some members produced very good performances when younger. Jesus Castello, their President, participated last summer in the Mountain World Championship in the Czech Republic, where he met a representative of Les Croupiers Running Club and learnt about the Welsh Castles Relay. In June 2006, 13 runners participated in the 'Trees and Castles Team Relay Race' in the area around Valencia, Spain. It was the first running of the event, which was inspired by the Welsh Castles Relay, and Interval-M2000 won it. Since it was such an exciting experience, the decision was made to run in the Welsh Castles Relay and see Wales as tourists.

The Royal Air Force Athletic Association is made up of athletes from Units in the United Kingdom and Overseas. Many of their runners also compete for civilian clubs, some of which have previously participated in the Welsh Castles Relay. It was on their recommendation that the Royal Air Force AA entered a team in the Welsh Castles Relay. With current operational commitments it is a rare opportunity for them to get together. Although it is unlikely that they will be able to muster their very best team, they are going to do their very best to make the most of this truly unique event.

Sarn Helen was formed in Lampeter in 1978 and put on their first race the Sarn Helen Hill Race, a 16 mile multi-terrain event, in the following year. Over the years the Club has catered for fell, road, track and cross country runners, as well as for orienteers, tri-athletes and cyclists. The Club currently holds five races in the Lampeter area each year. Sarn Helen members like a challenge, and an endurance event like the Castles Relay has whetted their appetites.

Tattenhall Runners decided to enter the 25th Welsh Castle Relay as a flagship team event as part of their own 25th Anniversary celebrations. The Cheshire club was formed in 1982 by Phil and Pat Matthews, Cecil Lynch and Neil Forshaw and the club received their AAA's accreditation in January 1983. The Border League was formed in 1984 and Tattenhall Runners has had more members than any other club that have competed in over 100 races. Tattenhall Runners hosts three races each year, Christleton 5k, which is one of the fastest 5k's in the UK, Tough Team Challenge and Llanysillo Fell Race. [\(Continued on Page 12\)](#)



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Wigan Phoenix was formed in the summer of 1987, when a group of Wigan

Harriers decided to create a new Club to concentrate on road running. Over 300 runners have been associated with the Club since then and membership is currently at an all time high of over 100. The Club is now based at the Hesketh Arms, Shevington Moor and Thursday night is club night when 40 or more runners of all abilities turn up. The Club competes on the roads, over the fells and cross-country. They also organise trips to places as far flung as Dunfermline (the 35 mile 2 Bridges), Benidorm (half and full marathon) and Woodstock 12 miler. For many years they have sent a large party to the Grasmere Gallop in June (and usually take most of the spoils home), but on the occasion of their 20th anniversary they thought they would try something different and enter the 25th Welsh Castles Relay.

On 1st April 2007 City of Bath AC formed a partnership with TeamBath (Bath University) and changed their name to **TeamBath AC** (potentially a very strong team!)

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As if he's not loud enough already, race starter Paul Stillman is foolishly equipped with a loudhailer by race organiser Alan Thomas.



Why not run the whole distance in one hit? Race co-organiser and seasoned ultra runner Richard Brewer.



Programme Editor Simon Nurse displaying his best grimace.



The Gaffer: Les Croupiers Chairman John Griffin, enjoying a well earned break.

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Open Section

Team No	Club
1	3M Gorseion Road Runners
2	Abergele Harriers
3	Bitton Road Runners
4	Beackla Harriers
5	Bridgend A C
6	Bronsgrove & Redditch A C
7	Cheltenham and County Harriers
8	Crepstow Harriers
9	Clevedon Athletic Club
10	GSA Wanderers
11	Dulwich Runners
12	Eastleigh Running Club
13	Great Western Runners
14	Haarlem Globetrotters
15	Interval M - 2000
16	Les Croupiers R C (Senior Men)
17	Llisswerry Runners
18	Lytham St Annes Road Runners
19	Manchester YMCA Harriers
20	Middleton Harriers A C
21	Mornington Chasers
22	Neath Harriers A C
23	Penarth & Dinas Runners
24	Pontypridd Roadents A C
25	Poole Runners
26	Prestalyn R C
27	Salford Harriers A C
28	San Domenico/Club 69
29	Sam Helen Club
30	Serpentine R C (Senior Men)
31	Sospan Road Runners
32	Stragglers
33	Stroud & District A C
34	Tattenhall Runners
35	Teambath A C
36	Telford Harriers
37	Thames Hare & Hounds (Senior Men)
38	TROIS
39	Vale Royal A C
40	Western Road Runners
41	Westbury Harriers
42	Wigan Phoenix
43	Winchester & District A C (Senior Men)
44	Wirral A C

Ladies Section

Team No	Club
45	Les Croupiers R C (Ladies)
46	Serpentine R C (Ladies)
47	Teambath A C (Ladies)
48	Winchester & District A C (Ladies)

Masters/Veterans

Team No	Club
49	Blackpool, Wyre & Fylde A C (Veterans)
50	Bristol & West A C (Veterans)
51	Les Croupiers R C (Veterans)
52	South West Road Runners (Veterans)
53	Swansea Harriers (Veterans)
54	Thames Hare & Hounds (Veterans)

Business House

Team No	Club
55	Air Products
56	Corus Strip Products
57	NetRegs
58	RAF Road Runners
59	South Wales Police

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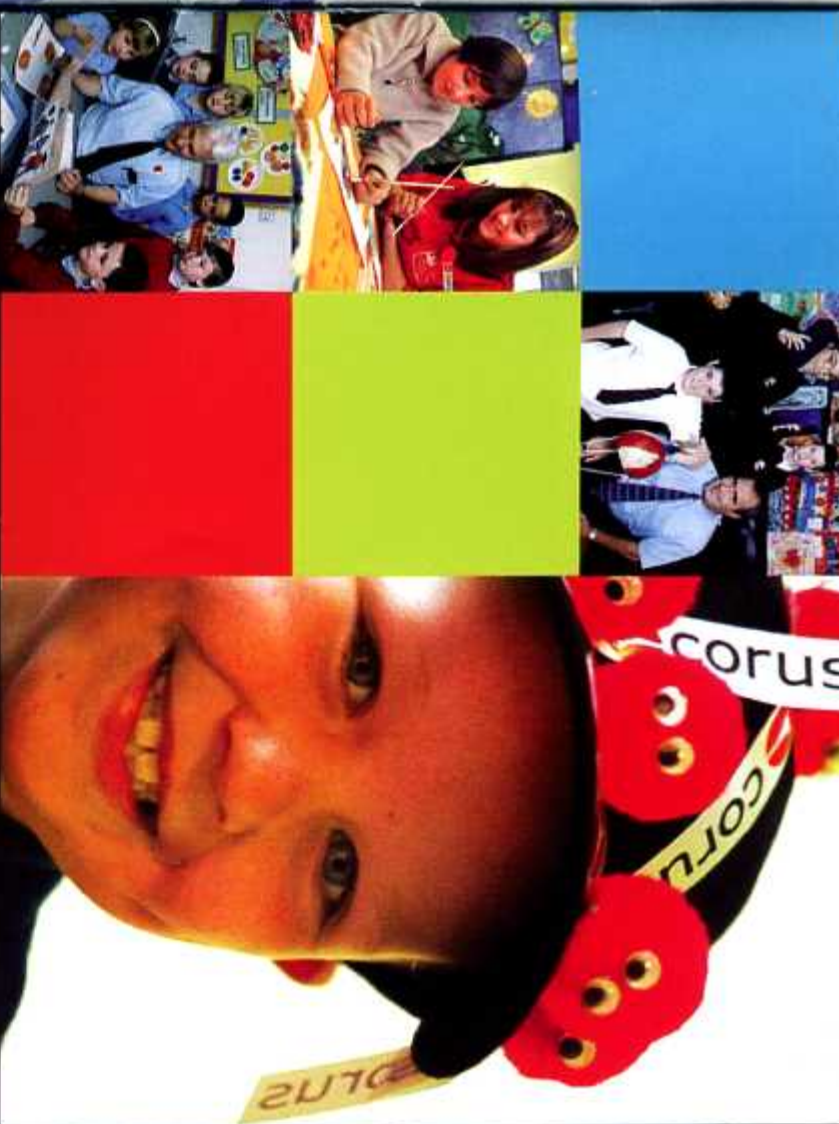
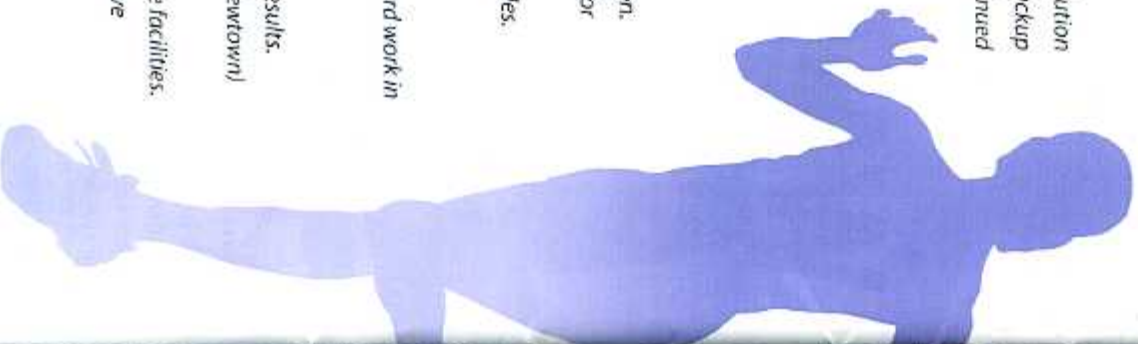
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Acknowledgements

A *race of this duration and complexity cannot function without a number of significant contributors. Thanks, therefore, to the following...*

- Air products Medical Gases division for their very generous contribution towards race materials and the oxygen supplies for the Medical Backup teams. Their continued support has proved invaluable to the continued survival of this prodigious event.
- Corus Plc for their continuing sponsorship of the 'Kings and Queens of the Mountains'.
- Air Products Bulk Gases division for their continuing sponsorship of the leading veteran on each stage and a special award on each of the mountain stages, as well as the team prize for the Monarchs of the Mountains'.
- Brecon Carreg for re-hydrating our runners.
- Mizuno for race materials and their support of the 'Castles' tradition.
- Run and Become for the supply of energy bars and other goodies for all the runners.
- Rhys Davies Freight Logistics for their sponsorship of Castles vehicles.
- The runners, without whom there would be no race.
- Les Croupiers Castles Relay sub-committee.
- The timekeepers, marshals, umpires and supporters for all their hard work in ensuring a smooth-running event.
- The British Red Cross for supplying their race medical expertise.
- John Upstone for his professional expertise in computerising the results.
- Arfon Leisure Centre (Caernarfon) and Maldwyn Leisure Centre (Newtown) for providing overnight facilities for runners and support crews.
- Llandaff Rugby Club for their hospitality and provision of post race facilities.
- Many thanks to all the County Councils and Police Forces who have enabled the event to take place.



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