

BOG-SNORKELLING BECOMES A HIT IN WALES



Britain's smallest town hosts Britain's weirdest event. Crazy event brings fame to Welsh Llanwrtyd Wells.

Britain's smallest town is Llanwrtyd Wells in Wales (601 inhabitants), yet the town is not satisfied with being famous only for this fact. It is now mostly known for the bizarre invention and hosting of **the World Mountain Bike Bog Snorkelling Championship**.

The term, naturally, needs a short introduction. It is staged in a 60-yard pit, which must be at least wet and preferably full of water. The contestants, ranging from the homeless to men in business suits, are equipped with flippers, a snorkel and a mountain bike. The aim is to get to the other side of the bog in the shortest possible time using only flipper power, grit and determination. First held in 2000 the championship takes place annually every July.

This may not be everybody's cup of tea yet certainly puts the town on the map. The current record stands at 48 seconds, yet this is likely to improve in the sport's infancy as contestants continue to get better. The event is taken very seriously from a safety point of view as medics are always on hand to save people who get stuck in the mud.

Special mountain bikes are used as the event organisers realised that they should be weighted down for maximum effect. If a contestant does not quite make it across the finishing line, this only adds to the fun. The event is, of course, accompanied by celebrations and social events ranging from drinking to business meetings nearby. It is difficult to not agree with the opinion that this is a great way to make use of an unused bog area.

Llanwrtyd Wells also lays claim to being the 'home of green events'. Apart from the bog snorkelling, which is brown at best, there are a host of other nearby events relating to nature. These events include man versus horses racing, Morris dancing in the forest or beer festivals. Perhaps Britain's smallest town is well worth a visit not only due to its size.

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