

43rd Across Wales Walk

2 September 2006



43rd Across Wales Walk in summary:

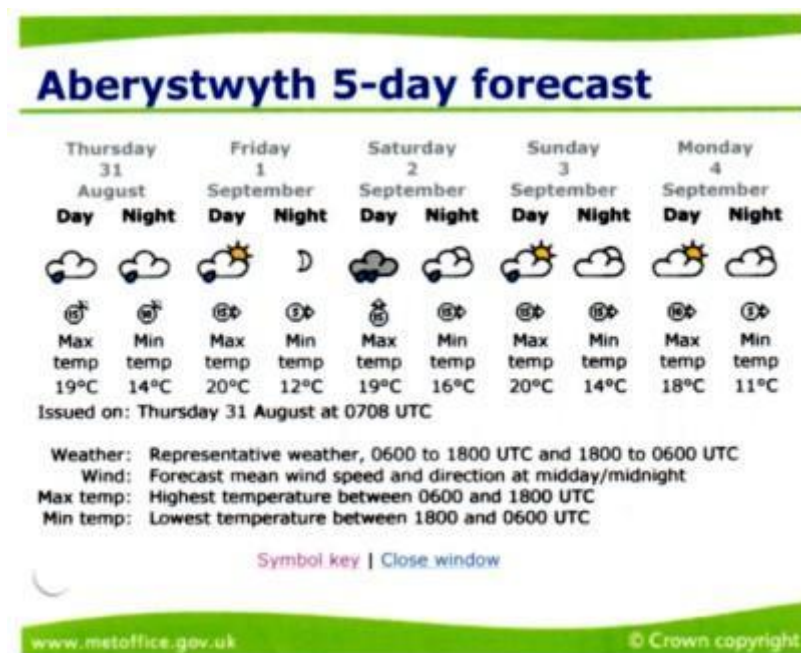
High winds and heavy rain led to suspension of the event at CP3 after half the field had passed through the checkpoint. Entrants were then taken to CP4 by coach where the event was restarted.

- 101 starters, 88 finishers.
- 2 successful double crossings.
- Fastest time 8 hours 39 minutes.

This page provides reports and timing information for the 43rd Across Wales Walk.

1. [Photographs of this year's event](#)
2. [Entrants and completion times](#)
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2006 Photo Gallery:



Guess which day the 43rd Across Wales Walk took place?



Bob Attwood, Clive Lungmuss, Richard Rosser and Tony Grimes at the start



Kathy Tytler, The SMERFS, Bill Lancashire, The Wellingborough Runners and others at the start



Miserable conditions at CP2



Pat Meredith and Judith Lamb do their best to serve refreshments.



Wellingborough Runners Julia Cooke-Simmonds, Louise Godfrey, Sarah Geddes and Tracy Stacey at CP2



Shelter area at CP3



Organiser, Stuart Lamb and Peter Stevenson discuss suspension of the event at CP3 as a result of the appalling weather conditions.



Debbie Murphy departs CP4. Michael Pinner, Ann Tandy and Bob Bills remain on the checkpoint.



The only two entrants to complete double crossings in 2006: David Hooper and David Griffith with a combined age of 140!



First home Mark Lewis



Mark Lewis, Tim Elwood and Jon Kemp at the Finish



Peter Stevenson at the Finish



Julia Cooke-Simmons at the Finish



Phil Stevens, Faye Taggart and Robert Bills at the Finish



Catharine Gregory, and Irena and Nicolas Souroup



Judith Lamb hands a certificate to SMERF Steve Hooper



Stuart Lamb thanks Peter Stevenson for his vote of thanks at the end of the presentation ceremony



On one of the coaches back to Clun

43rd ACROSS WALES WALK: entrants and completion times

[To view a table of entrants and times in Excel format Left click here. To Save the file, right click here and follow the instructions.](#)

43rd ACROSS WALES WALK: an Organiser's view by Stuart Lamb

As the organiser of a long-standing event such as the 'cross Wales', there are certain years that remain indelibly within one's memory. 2006 will, without doubt, be one such year!

As the 101 starters lined up at Anchor at 0500 the morning was calm and dry. However, since the beginning of the preceding week, the forecasts had warned that Saturday would potentially bring tempestuous weather. And so two hours later the rain began, at first gentle, but then at a progressively increasing rate. By checkpoint 2 the rain was periodically lashing both entrants and checkers, propelled by violent gusts of wind. The exposed gazebo shelter, supplemented by tarpaulins, repeatedly pulled its pegs from the loose ground as checkers struggled valiantly to keep stoves alight, provide refreshments and log times.

Sensing that we were likely to encounter difficulties, I decided to delay my departure for checkpoint 5 and visit the critical checkpoint 3 from where the ascent of Plynlimon commences. The road from Llanidloes to Hafren Forest was already strewn with twigs and branches from the trees caught still carrying their leaves in this early autumn gale. The first entrants arriving at checkpoint 4 reported conditions as potentially dangerous over the summit and, after a short debate with the many entrants sheltering on the checkpoint, I took the decision to suspend the event. Approximately half of the field had already commenced the ascent of Plynlimon. Nevertheless, conditions showed no sign of improvement and so, 1½ hours later, our back-up coach arrived from Clun to take the majority of entrants around Plynlimon to checkpoint 4 at Nant-y-Moch dam from where the event was re-commenced.

Those who crossed Plynlimon prior to suspension of the event confirmed the severity of conditions. Bob Gilks reported: *"It was quite frightening at the top and almost had to be experienced to be believed, at one stage John Newman was pinned against a fence like the plastic bags you see from time to time"*.

Bill Lancashire's impressions were also typical: *"I have been in some bad mountain conditions but I can say that these were the worst for me ever."* *"I took the route which avoided the very last bit of the summit and dropped down to the small reservoir on the North side. This was not in fact any easier than the reports I heard about on the summit. When I got to the top of the small cwm of the reservoir, the wind was in fact being accelerated up the cwm and I literally had to hold on the fence post to prevent being blown along the ground. Even though it was a very steep drop into the cwm, it was very hard to walk down against the wind!"*

Under such conditions, we were even more relieved than usual when the last participant had finally arrived at checkpoint 4! From that point onwards, the event progressed satisfactorily to its conclusion at Clarach Bay.

First home in an amazing 8h 39m was Mark Lewis closely followed by John Kemp and Tim Elwood in 9h. It was also an extraordinary year for attempted 'double crossings': ten entrants set off from the Welsh coast on the preceding Friday, six of whom retired on their outward leg. A further two entrants partially completed either their outward or return legs. This left just two of

the original ten, David Hooper and David Griffith, to complete the double. Notwithstanding the interruption of the event over Plynlimon, this was a remarkable achievement under the conditions, particularly as these two gentlemen have a combined age of 140 years! Once again, the high rate of attrition showed the severity of the 'double crossing': the comment "harder than the Hundred" was heard from those attempting this challenge.

Though particularly difficult from an Organiser's standpoint, the forty-third Across Wales Walk was, in retrospect, enjoyable and a success principally due to the efforts of West Birmingham Hostelling Group and the welcome band of walkers-turned-checkers who prevailed under such atrocious conditions. RAYNET also provided superb communications which proved vital in managing the safety of those who crossed Plynlimon. I would also like to thank those entrants who supported the difficult decision I had to make in suspending the event.

A date for your diary: the forty-fourth Across Wales Walk will take place on 1st September 2007 when the weather *will* be better – it can't be any worse! See www.acrosswaleswalk.co.uk for details in early May.

Ode to the 43rd ACROSS WALES WALK by Viv Millard, Checker at CP3 & CP5

This 43rd walk won't be forgotten
The weather it was pretty rotten
At 3 a.m. it was dry enough
But a few hours later it was pretty rough
Checkpoint shelters were blown over
Quite a problem to find cover.
Though checkers at 3 were pleased to find
(surely with our walk in mind)
A brand new shelter by the loo
What a generous thing to do!
Tarpaulin tied in trees up high
Kept bags and walkers fairly dry.
But the gusty wind, it did get stronger
Could this walk go on much longer?
Rain was pouring horizontal
To walk in this you must be mental!
Walkers arriving at Checkpoint 4
Confirmed conditions very poor
Atop Plynlimon things were shocking
Mist, rain and hail, the view was blocking
Gusty blasts blew you right off course
It sounded rather treacherous!
Poor Stuart, he could take no more
A coach would go from 3 to 4
The bus was ordered from Newcastle
The route to 3 should be no hassle
Some walkers, they did carry on
But walked around mount Plynlimon
Check 3 became a social gathering
With tea and soup and a lot of chattering
Where is this transport? Is it lost?
Yes, a wrong road from Llanidloes.
So Maggie drove Stuart down to town

In order that the route be shown
At last the coach, it did appear
Greeted by the loudest cheer
Take comfort all you noisy lot
We're taking you to Nant-y-Moch.
No sooner were they at check 4
The walkers poured out through the door
Quickly they marched off from the dam
Keen as mustard, to a man
The barn was home to checkpoint 5
Bread pudding 6 hours late arrived
And now there are only 7 miles more
A memorable walk – that's for sure!!
With all that weather thrown at us
Still this country we did cross
Well done Stuart, you have proved,
From our course we won't be moved.