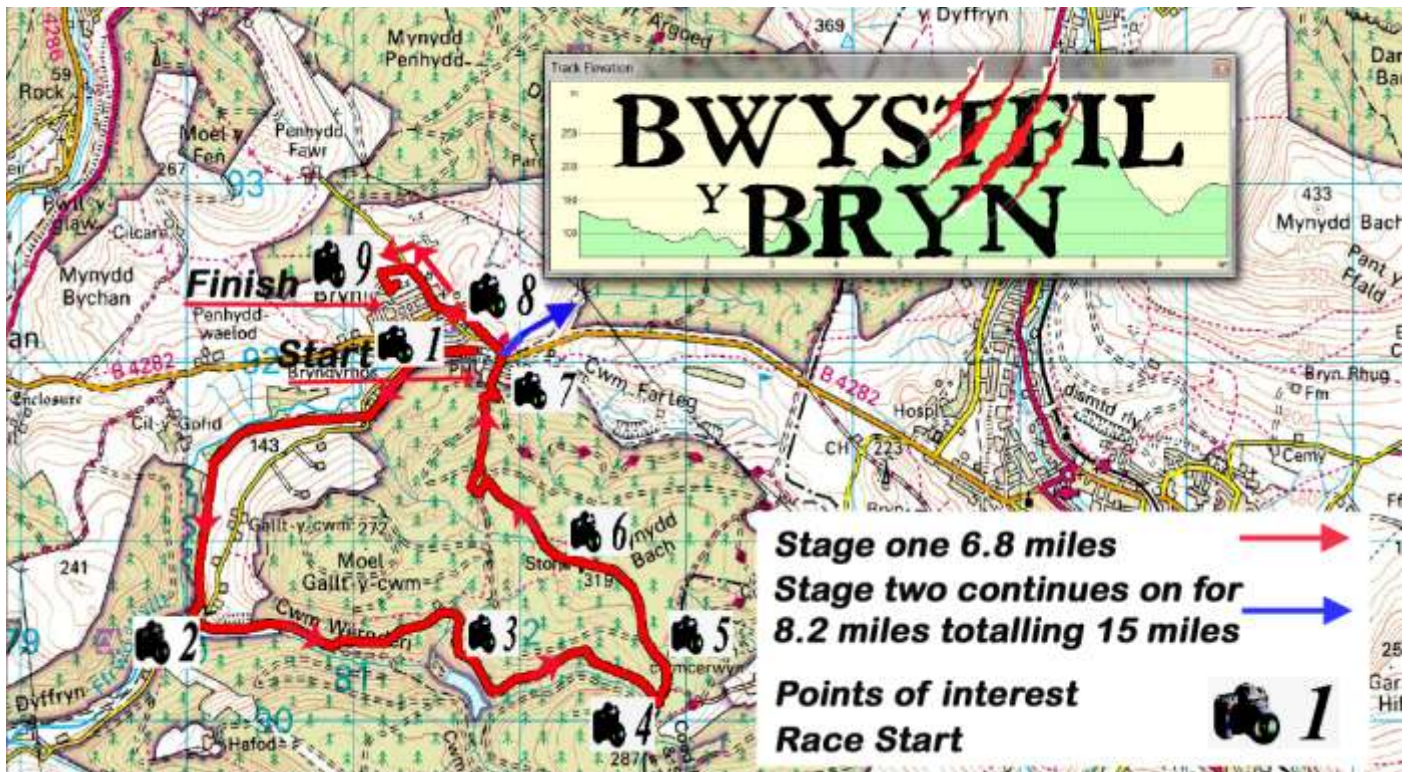




THE BEAST IS HERE



Stage1 race (6.8 miles).

You will begin your run along the old Port Talbot Railway Line (1) that carried coal and passengers from Garw, Ogwr, Llynfi and Ffrwdwyllt valleys to the docks in Port Talbot. The last train ran on this line in 1960.

Prior to the 1840's Bryn did not exist, the Ffrwdwyllt Valley was a rural retreat comprising of many farms, a number of these farms were original granges of the monastery at Margam. It was a convenient area for the Drovers



to collect cattle from the surrounding valleys in the spring and summer. They would then be taken to markets in Hereford and other towns and cities in England. To be fattened for food. You will be running along parts of these Drovers Roads, many of the local farms you will be running past bear names that are a reminder of those days.



Dead Man's Bend (2). Here you will leave the Railway Track and run into the Coed Morgannwg Forest. A little way down the railway line from where you turn off is an area called Dead Mans Halt where the train would stop if they were carrying

coffins that were to be buried either in Goytre Cemetery or the Chapel of Ease Church. You will now run up hill past Cwm Wernderi Reservoir (3) (The valley of the white oaks) this reservoir was constructed in the 19th century to supply water to the expanding villages of Goytre and Taibach.



Bodvoc's Bend, Not far from this bend is a Stone (4) commemorating the death of a Celtic King or Prince of Roman descent, who was killed during a battle against the Danes or Norsemen who raided the South Wales coast during the dark



ages following the Roman withdrawal in 410AD. A British coin of the 6th century found here bears the name of Bodvoc.

Mynedd Bach Sheepwalk, (5)

Prior to the 1940`s, the mountain tops in South Wales were grazed by Sheep during the summer months, after the second world war these lands were taken over by the Forestry Commission on a long term lease to grow trees, they introduced new varieties

that would grow over our natural tree line of 800 feet for example Lodgepole, Pine, Sitka, spruce etc. Here you will pass the ruins of the farm known as Blaencwmcerwyn (The top of the valley) where the early lambs were born.



As you run along this road known as Coed Morgannwg Way, (6) you will run past a stone commemorating the official opening of this section of forestry by Princess Margaret in 1953. A stand of conifers was planted here in different shades of Green from the

rest of the trees and the logo, "ER" was clearly visible from the B4282 road. You are now running back into Bryn and will run past the Royal Oak Hotel (7) built in 1898. Across the road from the Royal Oak was where the old Bryn Railway Station stood.



In 1902 The Bryn Navigation Colliery was sunk, this pit produced high quality steam coal that was sold to the Royal Navy, it is said that when the Mallard steam train broke the record for travelling from Edinburgh to London it was coal from

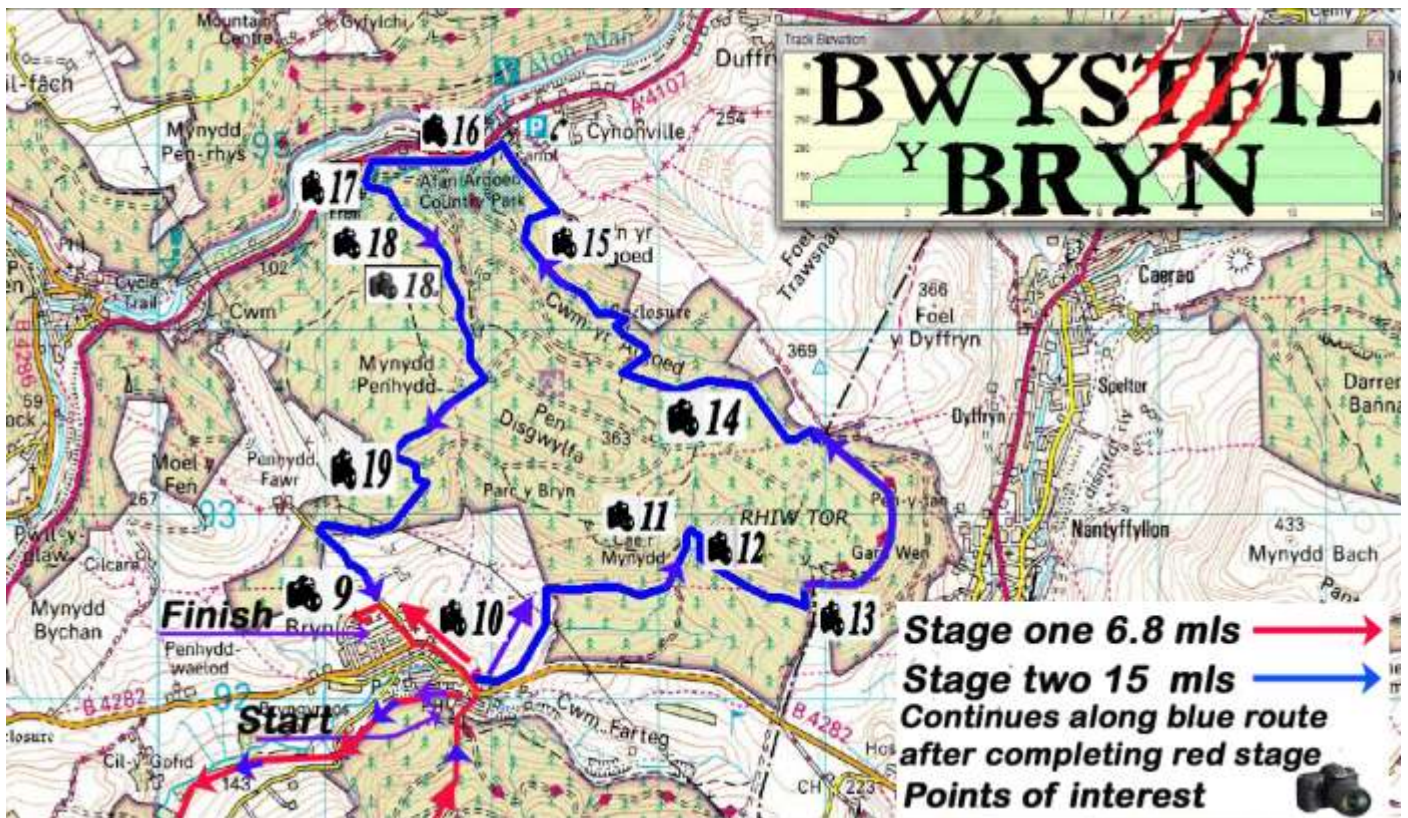


the Bryn pit that fuelled the train. The tip was once a giant slag heap which the locals called Amy, why? because when the Drums travelled up the tip the local's compared it to Amy Johnson taking off in her aeroplane. The tip is now a nature reserve you will be

running up part of the tip. This is where those who choose to run the 6.8 mile race turn left to continue towards the main village where they will run past the old "co-operative ruins" (8) next to the Community centre. Then up Neath Road where the drovers took their cattle to Neath Market, then into the playing fields where their run will end (9).



Stage 2



Stage 2 total 15 miles

The 15 mile race will take you past the old coal tips (10) after completion of stage one, then past the remains of two mines Cefn y Bryn and Drysiog. (11) These mines were opened in 1840 by the Cwmavon Copper Company.



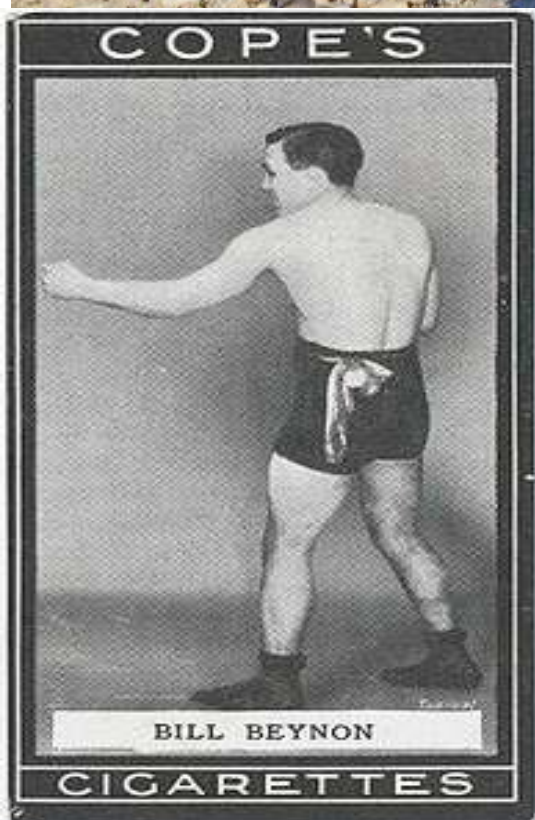
Alongside Drysiog pit is Drysiog Farm (12) this was one of the oldest farms in Bryn and was said to have covered some 3000 acres.



In the 1600's the farm, part of the Margam estate, was rented out for the princely sum of £12:00 a year. Miss Emily Talbot owner of the Margam Estate gave a special dinner for the family to celebrate their 400 years of continuous occupancy.



You will now run up Billy Beynons Hill (13). This hill is named after a boxing legend that worked and sadly died in the Bryn Navigation Colliery in 1932, having pushed his son away from a rock fall to take the brunt of the fall himself.



In his boxing career Billy had 192 professional fights winning the Bantamweight title after fighting 20 rounds against Digger Stanley on 13/6/1913. The next Welshman to hold this title was John Owen (The Matchstick Man). Billy left a wife and 15 children he is buried in Goytre Cemetery, legend has it that after his death he was not transferred to Goytre by train but was carried back home by his fellow miners.



The race will now take you along a track leading to Garnwen Mountain (14) you will be running up hill towards this mountain. Here you will find yourself on parts of an old Roman Road known locally as Heol Y Moch.

There are vast amounts of Black Band Iron Ore found here which was used in the past in the Maesteg Blast Furnaces to produce Iron for countries all over the world.

A change of scenery will see you heading towards Afon Argoed first you will encounter Argoed Farm (15) which dates back to at least 1503 the buildings being vacated by its last resident in 1960.



You will now pass through the Afon Argoed centre (16) and past the Mining Museum which was opened in 1976. If you visit the museum today you will find yourself on a historical journey through which mining can be seen through the eyes of the miner.



The run will now take you through the Amphitheatre (17) and then on through the centre of the old Corn Barn (18) which was built around 1790 to store corn that was produced in the Afan Valley.



The final push will take you towards Penhydd Fawr Farm. Up what has become known as Joes Hill. (A sufferer of Cystic Fibrosis his fighting spirit has become the catalyst for this run. (18a))



This farm in 1861 had a tenant with a most un-Welsh name he was William Marende believed to be either of Portuguese or Swiss nationality, he was credited with saving the life of T. M. Talbot during one of his many visits abroad. Talbot



Joe of Joe's Hill

never forgot and granted Marende a farm at a nominal rent of One Shilling.(19) You will now be on the final hurdle, heading towards the playing fields of Bryn Wanderers Rugby Club (9) the finish line and a well deserved rest (until the next time).



WELL DONE TO YOU ALL.