

Tuesday July 25, 2006

Teacher's epic charity bike ride makes a stop at UWIC

Photocall: 5pm, Wednesday 2 August

National Centre for Product Design and Development Research
(PDR), Llandaff Campus, UWIC

The University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC) is welcoming ski-accident survivor Gavin Rees on the first leg of his epic 1,000 mile bike ride in aid of Morriston Hospital, Swansea.

Teacher Gavin sustained horrific injuries when he collided with a colleague during a skiing trip to France, which has resulted in him having the highest number of screws and plates fitted used in surgery in Europe as part of his reconstructive surgery.

The 29-year-old is now ready for the cycleGENEVA challenge which will see him and friend Duncan Edwards ride a gruelling route from West Wales to France to raise money for the Maxillo-Facial Surgery at Morriston Hospital, who worked closely with Gavin during his recovery.

He was put under the expert care of Adrian Sugar, consultant cleft and maxillofacial surgeon, who worked closely with the Medical Applications team at the National Centre for Product Design and Development Research at UWIC, using cutting-edge 3D scanning in the planning of Gavin's surgery.

"The accident happened in February 2003 when Duncan and I were among a party of teachers from Reigate Priory School in Surrey reconnoitring the Les Gets resort for a school ski trip," explained Gavin who lives in Cardiff.

"Our recollections of what happened are unclear, but it appears that we collided while traversing a ski run. Thankfully, Duncan's injuries were not too severe, but I underwent a 19-hour operation at the Hopitiaux Universitaire of Geneva.

"My head injuries were so extensive that 130 screws and around 21 plates were used during the surgery. A month later I was fit enough to return to Wales, where the follow-up surgery and aftercare I received from the hospital was exceptional and, I believe, instrumental in my recovery.

More follows...

Teacher's epic bike ride cont:

“cycleGENEVA is a huge challenge, but a way of celebrating my recovery and to thank the hospital for the support and ongoing care that I have received.”

(Ends)

Notes to Editors:

cycleGENEVA Route Details

Leg 1, August 2 – Milford Haven to Cardiff

Start: 9am - Milford Marina – Outside the Dockside Gallery

Stop: 1pm - Morriston Hospital, Maxillo-Facial Department (meeting with hospital representatives)

Arrive: 5pm - National Centre for Product Design and Development Research (PDR) at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (meeting with PDR representatives)

Leg 2, August 3 – Cardiff to Marlborough

Start: 9am – PDR, UWIC Campus

Arrive: 5pm - Marlborough

Leg 3, August 4 – Marlborough to Reigate

Start: 9am - Marlborough

Arrive: 5pm – Reigate Priory School (met by parents, children and staff)

Leg 4, August 6 – Reigate to Calais

Leg 5, August 7 – Calais to Cambrai

Leg 6, August 8 – Cambrai to Charleville Mezieres

Leg 7, August 10 – Charleville Mezieres to Chalons en Champagne

Leg 8, August 11 – Chalons en Champagne to Chaumont

Leg 9, August 12 – Chaumont to Dijon

Leg 10, August 14 – Dijon to Lons-le-Saunier

Leg 11, August 15 – Lons-le-Saunier to Geneva

Leg 12, August 16 – Ascent of Alpe D'Huez

All monies raised by cycleGENEVA will go towards the purchase of a £42,000 3D digital scanner for use within the Welsh Centre for Maxillo-Facial Surgery at Morriston Hospital, Swansea. To make a donation visit the website (www.cyclegeneva.co.uk) where they can make a secure donation via Paypal or alternatively send a cheque made payable to cycleGENEVA to the following address:

cycleGENEVA
PO Box 433
Cardiff
CF11 1EF

**For further information contact Sarah Narusberg, Press Officer, Tel: 029 2041 6221, or e-mail: snarusberg@uwic.ac.uk
Web: www.uwic.ac.uk**