



COL DE LA CONCERN: Tom Evans, COO of VesselsValue and Seasure Shipbroking, summits the steep Graigwen Hill during the Graig100 ride
Photos: Graig Shipping

Rare bit of interaction has Graig Shipping providing the power for charity cycle in Welsh hills

TradeWinds staff

More than 100 people from the shipping industry got on their bikes in early September to cycle 100 km, raising over £66,000 (\$91,311) for Cardiff's Velindre Cancer Centre and The Mission to Seafarers.

The ride is the brainchild of Chris Williams, commercial director of Cardiff-based Graig Shipping. "Velindre Hospital, the Hospital of Hope, is Wales' leading cancer hospital and has been providing specialist treatment and supportive care to cancer patients in Wales for over 60 years," he said.

"Regrettably, many of the Graig

company and wider families have been in one way or another affected by cancer."

But Williams felt it was also important to add The Mission to Seafarers as a charity for this year's challenge.

"Covid has affected us all but some sections of society more so; seafarers particularly have been hard hit with extended tours and in some extreme cases in appalling conditions," he said.

Graig was founded by the Williams family in 1919 and was a shipowner for its first 100 years, but today focuses on ship management and Idwal, its ship inspection business.

Cyclists took a route north from Cardiff to Pontypridd, where they hit a wall — Graigwen Hill, which has a 13.4% gradient at its steepest part.

Two more challenging hill climbs followed (eased slightly by a lunch stop at the Penderyn whisky distillery), before cyclists headed back to the Welsh capital.

There were more than 20 teams of riders from companies such as Ardmore Shipping, AM Nomikos, VesselsValue, Clarksons, the Isle of Man Ship Registry, law firms Stephenson Harwood and Campbell Johnston Clarke.

TradeWinds was represented by reporter Holly Birkett.

Ardmore chief executive Anthony Gurnee hit the nail on the head, describing the event as "an amazing amalgamation of challenge, charity and chat".

"The cycling was certainly a challenge at each level, the two charities we supported are vitally important to their communities, and it was amazing to be at an in-person shipping event again after 18 months," he said.

Williams has already set a date for next year's ride — Saturday 3 September — and aims to raise £100,000.

More information can be found at www.graig.com/100 for those keen to take on the challenge.



COOL AS YOU LIKE: Emma Skakle, a partner at law firm Stephenson Harwood in London, made the Graig100 look easy



REFUELLING STATION: Jamie Freeland (front), director of sale and purchase for shipowner AM Nomikos, takes a break alongside fellow cyclist Ross Walton



PUB AND PELOTON: Early starters on the Graig100 bike ride line up for the event



ROUTE MASTERS: Some folks (above left) chose to do a 60 km route, while others (above right) opted for the 40 km 'Garden Route'



LEAN MACHINE: Steve Laybourn, head of energy transition for tanker owner Ardmore Shipping, cruises over the half-way mark