

cheered, laughed, offered tactical advice that nobody could possibly follow at speed, and provided that special kind of encouragement that sounds supportive but is actually just beautifully heckling. A huge shout-out goes to Purple Moose Brewery for their sponsorship, because nothing says “elite athletic performance” quite like the promise of a well-earned pint afterwards. Hydration is important. So is morale. Purple Moose, as it turns out, covers both.



But above all, what made the day was the community. From the organisers to the supporters lining the route, it felt like the whole village turned out, smiling, clapping, and reminding us that traditions like this aren't just entertainment; they're the glue that holds a place together. (That and the occasional shared opinion about barrel trajectory.)

This year also saw the crowning of a new champion (well done Cai Price), an achievement that will undoubtedly be remembered for generations, or at the very least until next Boxing Day when someone else turns up with stronger legs, better balance, and fewer scruples about sprinting down Maes-Y-Lan after a runaway barrel.

Special thanks must go to Urien and Namthip for making it happen. Events like this don't organise themselves, despite what the barrel may have believed, and their effort, energy, and good humour helped create another Dolwyddelan day to remember.

So here's to sunshine in December, to international visitors who fully embraced the chaos, to sponsors who understand village sport, and to a community that shows up, every time, with warmth, laughter, and the perfect amount of competitive nonsense.

You bring the running shoes. Urien will deliver the Barrels, I'll keep the contestants aligned, The barrel will bring the drama and afterwards we all return to our community pub, share laughs, spirit and stories.

*Same time next year?*

Mike Hewitt