

RESILIENT WELSH CHEFS COOK UP OLYMPIC SILVER MEDALS

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A resilient team of Welsh chefs has overcome a catalogue of problems to win a silver medal at the Culinary Olympics in Germany.

Graham Tinsley, manager of the Welsh National Culinary Team, was delighted by the silver medal in the hot kitchen element of the competition, which was the target he set for the chefs before leaving Wales last week.

Now he's hoping for a similar result in the second and final part of the competition, the cold platter show tomorrow (Tuesday), when the chefs will create a range dishes including appetizers, main courses, complete menus, desserts, cakes and showpieces for a table display with a weddings theme.

"This is the fourth time we have competed at the Culinary Olympics and a silver medal is the team's best ever result," said Tinsley, co-owner of the Castle Hotel, Conwy and Nant Hall, Prestatyn. "The hot kitchen went really well and the silver medal was a great reward for our efforts.

"We have yet to receive the debriefing to discover how far off we were from winning a gold medal."

Now the team is racing against the clock for the cold platter show, with the chefs expecting to work through the night to get the dishes ready for transport at 5am tomorrow.

"It's very tiring work because we have managed on average only three hours sleep a night since we arrived on Friday. Considering all the obstacles that we have had to overcome, we have done fantastically well."

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The catalogue of problems has included the late withdrawal of two senior chefs, a ferry strike that delayed a lorry carrying the team's food and equipment and the delayed arrival of chef Chris Owen from the Castle Hotel, Conwy whose passport was mistakenly put inside his knifebox on the team lorry.

The lorry was forced to divert to Cologne airport where a courier was waiting to fly the passport to Manchester to meet up with Owen on Friday morning. The young chef then flew to Frankfurt before catching a train to Erfurt to finally join up with the team.

The problems did not end there, however. Since arriving in Erfurt, the tailgate on the team's lorry has developed a fault, making it difficult to unload heavy items. The team hopes the lorry will be repaired by a hydraulics specialist this afternoon (Monday) ready to transport the display to Erfurt tomorrow.

The Welsh team comprises Tinsley, captain Wayne Roberts, head chef Portmeirion Hotel, Lee Jeynes, group development chef for English Lake Hotels, Dave Kelman, of Lower Slaughter Manor, Stow-on-the-Wold, Toby Beevers, freelance and Sally Owens, a tutor at Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, Rhos on Sea.

The support team includes Gennaro Adaggio of La Dolce Vita, Shrewsbury, Tom Middleton, of Hotel Maes-y-neuadd, Talsarnau, Harlech, Chris Owen, Kevin Williams and Mark Jones.

The Welsh National Culinary Team is sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government, C&C Catering Equipment Ltd, Brakes, Unilever Foodsolutions UK, Hybu Cig Cymru/ Meat Promotion Wales, Gourmet Classic Ltd, Villeroy and Boch, Friedr. Dick, Germany, Metcalfe Catering, All Clad and S. A. Brain and Co.

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