

## Facts and Trivia #33

### Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling and Wake



The Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling and Wake is an annual event held on the **Spring Bank Holiday** at Cooper's Hill, near **Brockworth** in **Gloucester**, England. The Guardian newspaper has called it a 'world-famous event' listing winners from all over the world – the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Nepal.

The event has been a tradition for a long time, and owes its name to the steep hill on which it takes place. Until recent years, it was managed in a semi-official manner by nominated locals, but since 2010 the event has taken place spontaneously and without any management whatsoever. From the top of the hill, a **9-pound** (tantamount to 4.1 kilograms) **round of Double Gloucester cheese** is sent rolling down the hill, and competitors then start racing down the hill after it by rolling the exact same way as the cheese does. The first person over the finish line at the bottom of the hill wins the cheese.

In principle, competitors aim to catch the cheese; however, this has around a one-second head start, and can reach speeds up to **110 kilometers per hour**, which is fast and heavy enough to knock over and injure a spectator. In the 2013 competition, a foam replica replaced the cheese for reasons of safety. The winner was given the prize of an actual cheese after the competition. The nearest pubs to the event are The Cross Hands and The Victoria, both of which make the perfect place for competitors to pluck up some **Dutch courage** (see Idiom of the Month) before the event – most competitors, in effect, end up stitched and mended at the ER with several injuries and broken bones.

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