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Six of the best launch into an epic challenge

Corporate: From arch to arc, teams will battle for the bragging rights

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SOME people like to spend their bank holidays just kicking back and chilling out.

But 36 triathletes from Canary Wharf and the City will spend the August break taking part in one of the most gruelling sporting events on the calendar.

The hardy souls will be competing in the Arch to Arc Enduro Challenge, a 500km jaunt from London to Paris involving a run, a swim and a bike ride – and it's all for charity.

The event, sponsored by Bloomberg, was officially launched on Thursday, with former Arsenal goalkeeper Bob Wilson doing the honours in Cabot Square.

Wilson's own charity, the Willow Foundation, will benefit from the fundraising and the ex-TV presenter was impressed with the level of commitment.

He said: "It's extraordinary. The events grown from when the two firms initially competed in 2005 and now Tudor Capital are coming on board to make it six teams.

"Quite simply every one of



Cup glory: Bob Wilson, above, thanks the teams taking part, left

these charities represented today could not exist without people like this. But it's fantastic support, especially from such leading financial services."

Wilson is fortunate enough not to have to put himself through the challenge but one person who is Deirdre Ward from Morgan Stanley.

She said: "I did it last year and the team spirit was amazing, even though we came second. We're determined to go for gold this time. It will be tough but we're all looking forward to it."

Credit Suisse spokesman Keith Garbutt, who helped organise the Challenge, was delighted

with the level of support, but revealed the numbers had to be limited.

He said: "This is the first year the race will start from Marble Arch and crossing the line at the Arc de Triomphe provides a neat symmetry. It promises to be the most thrilling race with a world record at stake."

Brian Smith of Barclays Capital said: "We very pleased to be taking part again this year, especially with the new format of running the clock from start to finish.

"The added competitiveness should spark more interest both for the teams and the support for the charities."

The challenge

Setting off from Marble Arch on August 22, teams of six will run in relay from London to Dover, a distance of 150km. They then take turns on the 40km swim across the channel, an hour at a time each until they reach land. This is followed by a 300km cycle ride, again in relay, from Calais to Paris, where they will finish in the shadow of the Arc de Triomphe. The winners will set a new world record time for a team relay over the

course, as well as having bragging rights over their rivals for the next year:

The teams and who they are raising cash for
Credit Suisse: The Place2Be
Barclays Capital: The Willow Foundation
Morgan Stanley: Great Ormond Street Hospital
Deutsche Bank: Angus Lawson Memorial Trust/Chicks/Teenage Cancer Trust
UBS: The Bridge Academy
Tudor Capital: The Royal Marsden Hospital