

2014 Gaelforce North Formguide

With entries not due to close until early Friday morning the formguide is based on those entered up to Wednesday morning only.

The winner of the last two years Adian Mc Moreland is not listed currently and in his absence it looks like we will have hotly contested battle up front for the men's Expert level race.

Shaun Stewart is a local race specialist and will be looking to improve on his 3rd place here last year.

He is a good all rounder and will no doubt be well practiced on the tricky off-road bike section which can certainly be an advantage.

Galway's Lonan O Farrell was 4th here last year less than a minute behind Stewart having had a 4 min lead over his rival coming off Errigal. With a safe bike spin this year and his improving form and knowledge of the course he will be hopeful of keeping his likely lead on the final bike leg.

Peter Crommie from Limavady was 4th here in 2012 with a time quite a bit slower than Stewart and O Farrell posted last year but he is a good competitor with great bike handling skills that can improve his position If his downhill running skills have improved as this is vital for this course with it's challenging Errigal descent.

A new comer to this race is the improving Barry Cronin who finished 21 seconds ahead of O Farrell in a very competitive field in dingle a couple of weeks ago.

He is likely to improve again but Dingle's long road running section suited him and O Farrell might just have the edge with local course knowledge and a more evenly balanced course though Cronin may have a slight stamina advantage that may prove vital here as the pace is sure to be fierce in the likely close contest up front.

There are always a few dark horses in the pack in this event and one to watch this year may be Aidan Murphy.

Better known as a very talented swimmer and triathlete he is in great shape this year after a long cycle trip last year to Australia. If he handles the rough terrain well he should make the top 5 and join in the likely close fought battle for the podium.

In the ladies contest there is a clear favourite in the line up with Derry's Moire O Sullivan hoping to improve on her close second to Emma Donlon in Dingle.

She has good technical skills off road and is in good form currently so she will be hard to beat.

Marie Timoney will be hoping to take her first Expert series win also after a good performance behind Mary Daly at Connemara Adventure Challenge in May and her 3rd place in the Sprint event here last year but may have to wait for another day to top the podium if O Sullivan has a safe race and performs as expected and makes the top 15 or possibly 10 or 12 overall.

Last year's 3rd placed Sinead Boyle will no doubt be hoping to at least repeat her performance and placing of last year though some of the dark horses might pose a challenge to herself and Timoney for podium spots.

In the Sport Series Sprint races the know adventure racing form is somewhat scarce and the contest looks wide open for both men and ladies based on the current entry list though no doubt some of the serious Sports Series points hunters and previous podium sorts will be toeing the line with a late entry between now and when entries close on Friday morning.