

2014 Westport Sea 2 Summit Formguide

The final race of the 2014 National Adventure Races series is in Westport this Saturday where a sell-out entry of 1700 will compete in the Expert class Supreme and the Sport class Spirit events.

Expert men's champion is Dessie Duffy and Moire O Sullivan has secured the ladies Expert win as has Mary Daly in the Sport ladies.

The Sport men's title is still up for decision and this race will prove decisive in its destination.

In the Supreme race the newly crowned National Expert Champion Dessie Duffy will seek to cap a super year with his 5th win in a row.

The man most likely to challenge him most closely is his Cavan Kayak club mate Killian Heery who was 3rd in Achill ROAR and a close 2nd in Moxie pro behind Duffy.

Duffy has the confidence that winning brings and as long as the effects of a long season and a recent marathon in Dublin do not take their toll he should confirm the placings with Heery who follows a sparser racing schedule which might prove valuable here if Duffy shows any signs of end of season fatigue.

The newcomer to the AR scene that might challenge this pair if in the sort of form that saw him compete at a high level on the triathlon scene previously is Art Mc Manusa. He will of course have to have developed his mountain running skills as the Reek is no place for beginners as we saw in last year's race but Mc Manusa is a competent mountain biker and may indeed have good all round skills that translate into mountain running if he is in good shape which he will need to be if he is to figure here.

There is likely to be tight battle for top vet here with Peter Cromie showing good form and Kieran Cosgrave moving up to the Expert class after a dead-heat win at Achill ROAR sport.

It will be interesting to see if he can overcome the severe cramping problems he had in Gaelforce West when he faded badly after being in contention whilst Cromie showed improved form with his mountain descending in particularly at that race and again more recently at Killarney.

These pair will be battling it out for top 6 placings with Lonan O Farrell who recently was 2nd in Connemara Rough Diamond and triathlete Tim Downing and next best may be Gareth Bracken and possibly Barry Cronin if he has returned to early season form after a very disappointing race in Killarney.

3rd in that race was Peter Tuohy and he will be suited by the biking nature of this course but his mountain descending skills will need to improve to figure up front whilst 2013 Series winner Chris Caulfield will be aiming for a top 10 placing in this strong field.

The ladies contest looks to have a strong favourite in Fiona Meade who looks to make a winning return to form after a disappointing 3rd at Killarney after a facile win at Waterford early in the season.

After a season where she won the national road biking crown her priorities will have changed but making the long trip up from Cork shows serious intent and she looks to be the one to beat here.

Likely podium contenders include Christina Mc Kenzie who should prove strong on the bike and Patsy Winters who won at Connemara Rough Diamond after 3rd at Achill ROAR whilst Anne Marie Egan could also figure if she has returned to decent form after a long layoff with injury.

Emma Mc Gee who was 2nd at Gaelforce North, Joanna Cullen are others who will be aiming for 6 placings here.

2011 and 2012 Sport Series champion Jerry O Sullivan leads the series but needs a good result here to secure it here as it can still be won by Damien Kelly and these pair have a win apiece in the two head to head encounters so far this season.

Essentially if either of these win on Saturday then they will take the National Series.

If Kelly wins and O Sullivan is 2nd then Kelly will take the title even though they will be level on points.

It is not however going to be a 2 horse race and the presence of the veteran Des Kennedy in the field will make it a likely intriguing 3 way battle with Jonathan Caulfield another one likely to figure in the race for the podium.

Kennedy is in good running shape and has yet to win a series race but is usually well matched with O Sullivan and this pair will be best suited by the running biased nature of the Sprint race.

Next best in the race for top 6 is likely to be Jimmy Lawlor with others like Brendan Gill, Derek Middleton, Brendan Ward and Martin Nee all aiming for top 10 finishes and former soccer international Kevin Kilbane will be another being watched for signs of potential form ;-)

Ladies Sport Series champion Mary Daly looks set to cap a fine season with a 4th win in 5 races and is a strong favourite here.

Niamh Garvey and Mairead Durkan look most likely contenders for the other podium sport whilst top ambitions will be harboured by others like the mother and daughter pairing of Louise and Sara Jan Cullen, Breeda O Hora and Sinead Weldon.

Prize for the Series as provided by [Cranmor Pottery](#) will be presented to the winners at the after race party at the [Castlecourt Plaza](#) on Saturday night