

2014 Achill ROAR Formguide

The next Expert and Sport Series events take place this coming Saturday in the idyllic setting of Achill island in Co Mayo where great weather is promised to be matched with some top class racing.

The men's Expert race is a virtual Who's Who if the current season's top racers with the Series's Strongest in depth field of the year so far and a high standard and close race is anticipated.

Last year's ROAR winner Killian Heery returns to defend his title and has to come into anyone's shortlist of likely winners though teammate Dessie Duffy who recently had a comprehensive win at Gaelforce is likely to challenge strongly along with Waterford winner Eric Wolfe and 2013 GFW & GFN winner Adian McMoreland and Adrian Hennessy.

Others looking to make a break into the top 6 include likely vet winner Des Kennedy, Michael Reilly, Mike Casey O Shea and Lonan O Farrell whilst other top 10 contenders include 2013 Expert Series winner Chris Caulfield, Sean Conroy, John Joe Rodgers, Paul Tierney and Nick O Donoghue.

The ladies Expert race looks more straightforward with Series leader and recent GFN and GFW winner Moire O Sullivan expected to make it 3 wins in a row.

Ann Marie Egan has struggled this season with injury but certainly would be a podium contender if back to near her best form whilst Lorraine Horan, Caroline McLoughlin and Niamh Garvey could well battle it out for other podium positions and Rosanne Bell could well celebrate her recently acquired vet status with a good showing here with Patsy Winters likely to provide the main opposition.

The men's sport race is another intriguing content with 2011/ 2012 Sport Series winner and current Expert series leader Jerry O Sullivan dropping back in distance after a good 3rd place finish recently in GFW.

He dead heated here in 2012 with this year's probable vet winner Kieran Cosgrove and these pair are again going to be very closely matched. Cosgrove has greater strength on the bike for the final leg and will be looking to make up for a very disappointing performance in GFW but O Sullivan is one of the toughest competitors on the circuit and is always very hard to beat

These experienced pair might need to watch out however as the strong CavanKayakRun contingent includes Kieran's 16 YO son Sean who is reportedly a man with a great future and he may well come of age in this race if his head matches his undoubted athletic talents.

Mayo are well represented by 2013 Sport Series winner Martin Nee, Jonathon Caulfield and the evergreen Noel Gibbons whilst Jimmy Lawlor, Derek Middleton, 2013 vet winner Tony Gregory and the other father and son Cavan Kayak run pairing of Conor and Phillip Smith plus Barry Duffy are all likely top 10 candidates.

The ladies contest has a strong local favourite with Mary Daly in the field and it is hard to see her being beaten here.

Podium contenders are likely to include Berenice Lambe and Evie Murphy whilst Deborah Meghen, who would generally be expected to podium here, is likely to be a bit below par having completed an Ironman race just last Sunday but could well still take the vets title ahead of Mona Purcell.