

2013 Dingle Adventure Race - Expert Series Report

As expected the high class field produced some super performances and intense racing in the sunshine of Dingle last Saturday.

From the off the field was well strung out with top triathlete Eric Wolfe in the company of a relay team's cyclist setting a hot pace up the Connor Pass with pre-race favourite and 2012 Expert Series and Dingle race winner Tim O Donoghue and Adrian Hennessy next to cross the Pass about a minute down with another minute back to the chasing group of four. The leading two stayed clear and Wolfe had a lead of almost 2 mins into TA1 with O Donoghue and Hennessy being caught on the road by the chasing quartet which included triathletes David Power and Paul Hyde.

Next group in, a further 2 mins back, included vet contenders Chris Caulfield and Paul Mahon along with Robert Patterson, Nigel Keane and the ladies race favourite Fiona Meade.

Behind this group last year's 3rd and 2010 winner Diarmuid Collins notably had an improved bike leg compared to previous years to be less than 4 mins down on O Donoghue and Hennessy.

On the long climb up Brandon, O Donoghue set off at a relentless pace in pursuit of Wolfe, who he passed on the final third of the climb to the summit. He continued to pile on the pressure and by then end of the mountain run stage had amassed a 10 min lead over Wolfe in 2nd with Power moving into 3rd as Hennessy slipped out of podium contention with an uncharacteristic poor climb.

Collins made significant gains with the 2nd fastest climb of the day to take him into 4th overall by the summit and on the descent he overtook Power and closed the gap on Wolfe to just over a minute.

Mahon was next to the summit and maintained his 5th position off the mountain but was passed early in the road run section by Christopher Murnane who had a good climb after being well off the pace on the bike leg.

On the long hot road run section back to the kayak stage in Dingle Wolfe recovered somewhat to increase his margin over Collins to over 2 mins but O Donoghue continued to increase his lead to over 13 mins by the start of the kayak stage.

Power was feeling the effects of the heat and early pace as he was passed by Murnane and then Mahon close to the kayak stage to drop back to 6th.

On the water and short final run legs O Donoghue showed his class as he extended his lead to take another impressive win in a new course record time of 2h 57' 47" which was over 14mins clear of his nearest challenger Wolfe who held off the challenge of Collins in 3rd.

Mahon moved into 4th on the water but newcomer Murnane showed good running speed to re-take 4th on the final run leg with Mahon just behind taking the vet win in 5th overall ahead of Power in 6th.

In the ladies race Fiona Meade was well clear of her rivals with a huge 9 min lead over Suzanne Kenny and Denise Casey after the bike leg to Cloughane with Cathy Keneally and Sarah Mulcahy next best.

On the Brandon climb Meade showed good form to increase her lead to over 11 mins over Casey with Kenny a further 4 mins back in 3rd ahead of Mulcahy and Alma Murphy.

Kenny did close the gap on Casey on the mountain descent and then moved into a clear 2nd on the road run but by then Meade had an unassailable lead and was never in danger of being caught.

Meade took her maiden Series victory in 3h 50' 40' with a margin of 9 mins over Kenny who was well clear of Casey in 3rd, Mulcahy next best in 4th with Bernie Condron having a steady race throughout to take the vet win by a considerable margin in 5th overall with Murphy 6th.