

Monster MAC 2013 Formguide

The 2013 National Adventure Race Series kicks off this weekend with the Monster MAC in the Boggeragh Mountains near Millstreet, Co Cork.

The Men's Expert course could well see the welcome return to adventure racing of the 2012 National Series Expert champion Tim O Donaghue who has recently been competing on the competitive road racing scene with good success. If he togs out he will take all the beating given his peerless performances in 2012.

In the absence of last year's winner Adrian Hennessy due to work commitments, local man Brian Murphy, who was 2nd last year and 4th in 2011, will be looking to go one better this time round and is sure to benefit from local knowledge and previous course experience. He will however have to deal with the challenge of Wicklow's Derrick Evans who won the sport race here last year and has moved up to give the Expert lads a run for their money this year. Others likely to feature include Chris Caulfield who could reach the podium if back to his best form of last year and Nigel Keane. Others that will be looking to be in the top 10 include Pat Downey, Cathal Keohane, Richard Meaney, Willie Rock, Barry Mc Dermott, Mark Walker and last year's vet winner Ciaran Dillane who will have to work hard to regain his vet winners title this time round with Murphy, Caulfield and Rock all in the same category now.

In the ladies Expert race, both last year's winner and second are unable to return due to family commitments but a good quality field is headed by last year's Sea 2 Summit winner and podium regular Anne Marie Egan. She is the formguide favourite with another podium regular Yasmin Kenny and Killarney (57k) winner Linda O Connor the obvious others with known form. A newcomer to the adventure racing series this year however is Dubliner Siobhain Duggan who comes with an impressive triathlete pedigree and should make the battle for the podium places an interesting one whilst Sinead Colreavy and Siobhain Healy also will be aiming to make the top 5. The vets title looks likely to go Susan Godwin's way.

The Sport races generally are harder to call with many promising new recruits to these adventure events but the standout favourite would seem to be 2012 National Series winner Jerry O Sullivan.

Apart from O Sullivan the podium positions will be hard fought for with primary candidates likely to be Series regulars Brain Mac Donnacha, Brendan Ward and Patrick Fitzgerald who seeks to repeat his vet win here last year. Others likely to make keep these contenders honest include Andrew Hamilton, Paddy Kelly and David White.

In the ladies Sport section it is again hard to apart from the favourite Bernie Condron who seeks to improve on her second place here last year. Podium contenders in the field include Lucy Curtayne, Michelle Campbell and Karen Cambell