

Moxie Challenge Race Report

The lovely surrounds of Tulfarris House on the shores of Blessington lake in Wicklow was the setting for another leg of the Adventure Race Series recently. The gloomy weather before the start of the race led to fears that Sorrell Hill would have to be excluded from the course though fortunately the clouds lifted and the wind dropped for what turned out to be ideal racing conditions.

In the elite wave of the Expert Series Moxie Pro race John Mollohan had the fastest kayak split but he was quickly overtaken by the chasing pair of Eoghan Carton and Barry Cronin who both kayaked well. Hot on their heels were the Cavan duo and pre-race favourites Killian Heery and Dessie Duffy.

By the end of the first 12km bike leg near Ballyknockan the Cavan duo had a 2 minute lead over Eric Wolfe who had leap-frogged a few places after coming off the water in 7th. Wolfe overcame the 2 minute deficit by the time they reached the top of Sorrell hill to make it into second just behind Duffy at that point. Behind them a fast charging Brian Malone put in the fastest climb of the day to make his way up to 5th at the top. Duffy took off on the descent but with the leading trio taking a wrong turn when coming along by the lake it brought the leaders back closer together. The second fastest run of the day as a result of a good descent by Adrian Hennessy helped him get back to 6th before the final bike leg.

At this point Wolfe had a narrow lead over the Cavan duo, but they both put in a blistering final bike leg to overtake Wolfe who himself is known for his strength on the bike. The Cavan pair chose to ride time trial bikes which ultimately may have made the difference. In the end they were only separated by 3 seconds with Duffy taking a well-earned victory in a time of 2h 56' 53" over Heery in second. Wolfe comfortably came in 3rd some 3 minutes back. Hennessy managed to make up another few places to come in 4th overall just ahead of Malone in 5th and Carton in 6th. Chris Caulfield won the vets title and 7th overall with a consistent performance throughout.

In the ladies expert race the Dublin based but well connected local lass Sarah Galligan was in a class of her own all day as she set the fastest legs on each of the race stages en route to an impressive victory.

Jenny Mc Gready was her nearest challenger after the kayak stage ahead of Blessington girl Jennifer Kavanagh, Valerie Mallet, Catherine Terry and Shelia Doyle.

On the opening bike leg the leading 3 positions were unchanged with Terry moving up into 4th Just ahead of Maillet and Doyle.

On the mountain run Galligan extended her lead to 9 min over Mc Gready who in turn was well clear of Kavanagh, Terry Doyle and Maillet.

The positions remained unchanged on the final bike leg with Galligan taking a clear win in a time of 3h 35' 25" some 10 mins clear of Mc Gready with Kavanagh 16 mins back in 3rd, Terry 4th, Doyle 5th and Maillet taking the vets win in 6th

In the men's Sport race twice national Sport Series champion Jerry O Sullivan was a strong favourite and his performance clearly underscored that favouritism.

Coming off the water he was led by Brendan Ward with Jason Moore close behind and a small gap back to Anto and James Cronin.

On the opening bike leg he soon opened up a gap of 2 ½ mins over Ward with the Cronin pair together next ahead of Ladislav Faska as Moore retired.

On the mountain run O Sullivan showed his strength opening up a lead of 9 mins over Damien Kelly in second with James Cronin 3rd just ahead of John Paul Coughlan and Ward.

On the final bike leg to the finish O Sullivan extended his lead to 10 mins taking a clear victory in 1h 58' 31" ahead of Kelly in 2nd some 3 mins clear of James Cronin in 3rd just ahead of Brendan Ward 4th, Coughlan 5th, Anto conin 6th and promising junior Patrick Ward in 7th. Patrick Fitzgerald took the vets prize in 10th overall.

In the ladies Sport race thing were much more competitive with a good mix of experienced racers and newcomers.

Maeve Coleman led after the kayak stage with Kate Harrison 2nd, Yseult O Brien 3rd, Mascha Hemsing 4th and Jill Horan 5th.

On the opening bike leg there was a good degree of positional changes as O' Brien led into transition with the experienced pair of Claire O Donovan and Jill Horan next ahead of Kate Cramer and Harrison.

On the mountain run section Cramer took over the lead from O Donovan and Horan with O Brien dropping to 4th ahead of Harrison.

On the final bike leg to the finish O Donovan made her move and took the lead and the win in a time of 2h 26' 22" with a margin of 1 ½ mins over Cramer with Horan a further 3 mins back in 3rd, O Brien 4th, Harrison5th and Hemsing taking the vet win in 6th.