# National Adventure Races Series

# Reports, Tables, etc for 2012 , 2011 & 2010

**2012 Sea 2 Summit Adventure Race Report**

The last Expert and Sport races of the Series were held in cold and wintery conditions and was the setting for a new face to emerge from the shadows with a first time Expert race Series Race win.

This event has been dominated by local athletes in the past and again it was the case this year as Westport's Covey Wheelers clubman Gerard Corcoran, who was close up fourth last year, lead the local charge taking an impressive win by over 6 minutes in a time of 3h 7’ 24” with his win based on some strong cycling and a super descent of Croagh Patrick.

Fellow local Kieran Hastings and Brendan Gill led the initial run charge along the Greenway with Corcoran back in 12th but he took the lead on the arrival by bike in Murisk with young Robert Staunton second, Eddie Sweeney third and Hastings fourth.

Hastings led again by over a minute at the top of the Reek with Corcoran second tied together with the fast ascending Tommy Gill and these positions remained unchanged after the descent with Corcoran setting the fastest descent leg to move into a clear second place but now just 9 seconds behind Hastings.

Back on the bike Corcoran set sail for home with Hastings dropping back through the field on the homeward bike leg from the top of the Maum climb as Eddie Sweeney, Robert Staunton, Chris Caulfield and Noel Brady all came past him to take the remaining top five placings with Caulfield taking the vets prize and Brady the super vets in 4th and 5th respectively.

In the ladies expert race it was again a Covey Wheelers affair as Ann Marie Egan fulfilled earlier season promise of several placed efforts to take her first series win in a closely contested race.

From the off Egan had company with Dubliners Suzanne Kenny and Eimear O Leary grouped together on the first run but by the summit of Croagh Patrick it was O Leary who had taken the lead ahead of Egan and Kenny with Nessa Sweeney getting closer in fourth.

A good descent by Egan brought her into the transition alongside O Leary and on the subsequent bike leg she took the lead and held it all the way to the line to win in 3h 39’ 46”.

 Behind her Kenny had a strong bike leg and caught and passed O Leary going into the last run with a 1 min lead. Despite the best efforts of O Leary on the final run leg,  Kenny just held on to take second place just 4 seconds ahead of O Leary with Sweeney taking the vets prize in fourth.

The final race in the Sports Series was another close encounter and once again the Series favourite Jerry O Sullivan from Kerry just came out ahead of the pack and took the Series title in the process with 5 wins (Several by less than a minute including a dead heat) in his 5 races.

He was locked in a battle with local favourite Brendan Conway on the opening run, dropped a minute behind on the cycle to Murisk, had regained his lead by the top of the Spirit climb CP but Conway showed his local practice to good effect by catching O Sullivan by the end of the mountain descent and again built a small lead on the cycle leg back to the quays. O Sullivan retook the lead about 1km into the run and despite a wrong turn before the finish line he hung on to take the win just 8 seconds ahead of Conway with Jimmy Lawlor having a consistent race 3 min back in third with a gap of 4 min then to Stephen Donnelly in fourth and Ger O Sullivan in fifth.

Mayo took their third win of the day as expected in the ladies Sport race when Series champion Collette Sweeney led from start of the bike leg right to the finish to take the win in 1h 58’ 55”. Aileen Mc Namara led into transition 1 by a few seconds but could not match Sweeney’s consistent progress and in the end was 9 ½ mins behind in second but with a comfortable gap of almost 7 min ahead of Edel Hacket in third place though Eilish O’ Brien’s 2h 10’ 32” time from a later wave was the third fastest ladies sport time of the day.

**2012 Killarney Adventure Race Report**

Last Saturday’s Expert level race was held in idyllic autumnal conditions with the scenery forming a spectacular setting for the penultimate round of the Expert Series.

Recently crowned 2012 Series champion Tim O Donoghue was attempting to make it 6 wins out of 6, though with a surprise entrant, top ultra runner Paul Tierney, in the field the pre race talk was centred round Tierney and “Can he bike?” question.

O Donoghue, Tierney and Jerry O Sullivan , who went on the win the 57km race, led out on Strickeen mountain ahead of Noel O Leary, Adrian Hennessy, James Blackhouse and Drew Sharkey.

On the bike leg through the Gap of Dunloe and the thick freezing mist shrouded Black Valley, Sharkey set the fastest leg time but whilst Tierney proved to be no slouch on the bike, O Donoghue held a lead on arrival at the kayaks of 4 mins over Sharkey in 2nd, Tierney 3rd and Hennessy 4th.

With O Donoghue having a long timed out wait for a kayaking partner the top racers were grouped together heading out on Mangerton mountain but this year O Donoghue showed his experience and class by showing the field a clean pair of heels with Tierney the only one to come close to matching his relentless pace on foot on the long Mangerton mountain stage

In the end O Donoghue took the win in 3 33 54 with 13 mins to spare over 2nd placed Tierney with 2011 winner Hennessy coming from behind to again overtake Sharkey on the mountain descent to take 3rd and 4th respectively ahead of Noel O Leary in 5th, Blackhouse in 6th and Rónán O Shea in 7th with Paul Mahon coming through on Mangerton to take the vets win in 8thoverall.

In the ladies the pre-race favourite Fiola Foley started as she intended to continue with an impressive top 20 ascent of Strickeen and she continued to extend that big lead over her rivals with a strong bike leg to Mucross lake where she set the fastest overall kayak leg of the day after electing to use a single boat.

Behind her Maura Regan was in 2nd ahead of Becky Grant, Pauline Brady and Mary Mc Evoy coming off Strickeen . On the bike leg Brady leapfrogged Regan to head up the mountain in 2nd but these pair were tied together at Mangerton summit after an impressive climb by Regan. Brady then set the 2nd fastest ladies descent time of the day to move into a clear second ahead of Regan as Foley consolidated her lead with the 3rd fastest descent of the day and Mc Evoy moved back into podium contention with the fastest ladies descent of the day.

In the end Foley crossed the line in 18th overall in 4 28 24 with an impressive 27 min winning margin over Brady who was a few mins ahead of Regan in 3rd with Mc Evoy less than a min behind in 4th and Becky Grant taking the vets prize in 5th overall.

Final race in the Series for both Expert and Sport categories is the Westport Sea 2 Summit on Nov 3rd

**2012 Killarney Adventure Race Formguide**

This Saturday’s Expert level race has a strong favourite with 2012 Series champion Tim O Donoghue attempting to make it 6 wins out of 6 this year.

As relative novice competitors here last year O Donoghue and Drew Sharkey led out on Mangerton mountain but both faded in the closing stage through lack of nutrition and experience leaving Adrian Hennessy come through to take the victory. Hennessy returns to defend his crown and UK based Sharkey is again listed and is sure to have learned from last year’s mistakes but baring mishap O Donoghue looks an odds on certainty with Sharkey and Hennessy most likely to chase him home. Noel O Leary has been in good form lately with podium finishes in Achill and WAR Powerscourt and will hope to repeat that form here though this longer hilly course will not suit him as much. Last year’s 4th and vet winner Kevin Murphy will love the climbing nature of this route though his 2012 form has been a bit behind that of 2011, he is probably good enough to take the vet win whilst others like him chasing top six finishes include Ronan O Shea and the vet pairing of Paul Mahon and the generally unknown package Colm O Halloran who, if back to the form shown at orienteering events many years back, could figure in the top ten.

The ladies Expert race looks like it could be the setting for a Kerry success with Fiola Foley due back from her base in Switzerland to race and if her form is to be believed she should have enough in the tank to see off last year’s champion Deirdre Nagle who is a class act but seems unlikely to be in the same form as last year given that she had a baby just 7 weeks ago. WAR Glenmalure winner Jackie Howard is on the starting list but is rumoured to be unlikely to race and in her absence other podium contenders will be Eibhlin Cleary, Grainne Read and vet favourite Pauline Brady who will be suited by the long final run stage here and is in fine form recently and could well get the better of her younger rivals.

**2012 WAR Powerscourt Race Report**

Last Saturday’s Expert level race was held in sunny autumnal conditions in the beautiful setting of Powerscourt Estate and took in some of North Wicklow’s most iconic scenery including the Sugarloaf and Sally Gap.

On the day Peter O Farrell returned to winning form with a measured display of racing throughout. Over the first few stages he competed alongside eventual second and third Brendan Buck and Noel O Leary. Once out of the water and heading to the Sally Gap on the bike however O Farrell powered away from his rivals and extended this lead on the Maulin run and final bike leg to the finish to amass an impressive 15 minute winning margin in the end. Behind the leading trio a close battle was developing with Shane Murphy the leader in a group of 5 lads in close proximity almost 10 mins down on O Leary in 3rdarriving at the start of the Maulin run leg transition. Maulin sorted out the results as James Clancy and Liam Vines took 4th and 5th ahead of Murphy in 6th and vet winner Dave O Shea in 7th.

It was a somewhat similar story in the ladies race with triathlete Laura O Driscoll showing fine form from the outset taking a lead into TA1 that she held and extended all the way to the line.

Behind her a great battle for the other podium place was developing as Joan Flanagan moved from 6th to 2nd over the tough Sugarloaf run section and she held this position still coming off the kayak section ahead of Martina Nolan,  Eibhlin Cleary and Lisa Mc Mahon. On the climb up Sally Gap however Nolan moved into second and extended the gap over Flanagan as Cleary moved up to be alongside Flanagan for most of the Maulin run. On the final sprint bike leg to the line Cleary just got the better of her older (super vet!) rival to take 3rd behind Nolan with Flanagan taking the vet prize in 4th, Mc Mahon 5th and Niamh Mc Donald in 6th

The men’s Sport race was showing all the signs of being close with Jerry O Sullivan and Eanna Cunnane battling it out ahead of Derrick Evans in 3rd until Cunnane unluckily crashed out when taking a corner at speed in pursuit of the leader O Sullivan on the final bike leg.

This left Evans to come home in 2nd, 4 mins behind O Sullivan, and ahead of Ger O Reilly in 3rd , local Gerry  Kavanagh in 4thand early bike leg leader Garreth Murphy in 5th with Patrick Fitzgerald winning the vets.

In the Sport ladies Glenmalure 2nd Clare Sullivan went one better in some style with a pillar to post victory by over 6 mins in the end.

Behind her Shelly Brown led the chasing pack into TA1 but out on the Sugarloaf run leg Sue Widdowson and vet Laura Flynn moved through the pack to move into 2nd and 3rd place respectively and held these positions to the line ahead of Browne in 4thand Diane Cooper in 5th

**2012 WAR Powerscourt Race Formguide**

This Saturday’s Expert level race has been robbed of likely favourite with Tim O Donaghue failing to recover in time after a fall last w/e and last year’s winner Padraig Marrey taking a well earned rest after his tough double 70.3 in Galway and Las Vegas on consecutive weekends.

Adian Mc Moreland looks most likely to record his second series win of the year but Peter O Farrell will be there to keep him honest and could well trouble the favourite with local knowledge in his favour. With Adrian Hennessy another to not make the line up due to work commitments, Noel O Leary has a good chance to follow up his 2nd in Achill with another podium finish here though will be less suited by the climbing nature of this course.

The ladies Expert race looks like a fairly open contest with no previous series winners in the line up and Glendalough second Martina Nolan could go close again but will be strongly challenged by Setanta Tri club’s Laura O Driscoll who seems to be back in good form after recent injury problems.

Other podium contenders will be Eibhlin Cleary, Lisa Mc Mahon and the super vet Joan Flanagan who is fancied to set fastest hill descent times and will also challenge for a podium position if back to her usual good racing form.

The men’s Sport race should be again be close one with Jerry O Sullivan and Eanna Cunnane who were only seconds apart in Glenmalure ahead of Derrick Evans in 3rd .These 3 again look like they could be too good for the rest of the field. This sport course will favour the bikers a bit more than the runners and might give Cunnane a great chance to reverse the Glenmalure form and repeat his well timed win of last year whilst Evans should be a bit closer on a bike route that would suit him. In a tight contest it might prove very worthwhile for these podium contenders to have a single kayak lined up to give themselves every chance against O Sullivan who has a knack of hanging in and eeking out good results in tight finishes.

In the Sport ladies race Glenmalure 2nd Clare Sullivan should go one better to take her first series win with vet Laura Flynn, Christine Hyde and Diane Cooper most likely to chase her home of those with known form.

**2012 Achill ROAR Race Report**

Last Saturday’s Achill ROAR Expert level race in Co Mayo saw the crowning of new 2012 Series champions as Tim O Donaghue, Marie Boyle and Colette Sweeney took victories in their respective races to secure overall 2012 Series wins.

Top vet Noel Donohoe and DAR’s Noel O Leary were first Kayakers out of the water in their speedy K1 boats but this pair were left trailing after some strong swimming by Tony Fitzgerald, Jonny Walsh and John Mannion.

After a quick visit to transition the long beach run led the competitors to the testing Minaun mountain climb where race favourite O Donaghue moved into the lead and was never to be challenged again winning by almost 20 minutes in 3h 7’ 58”. Behind him O’Leary and Adrian Hennessy were locked together for much of the cycle with O’Leary just prevailing in the end to take second ahead of Hennessy with Donohoe taking the vets title in 4th, Dave Mc Grath 5th and Alan Galvin 6th

It was a similar story in the opening water leg with Eibhlin Cleary, Aoife O Sullivan and Catriona Nic Caba the first 3 out of the water having chosen to swim ahead of kayakers Yasmin Kenny, pre-race favourite Marie Boyle and Pauline Brady.

On the run however the leading trio emerged from the field and were locked together at the transition onto bikes with Brady holding a slim lead over Boyle and Cleary with O Sullivan in 4th and Nic Caba in 5th.

On the long bike leg however Boyle took the lead and held it to the finish coming home 4 mins ahead of Brady with Cleary in 3rd, O Sullivan in 4th and Nic Caba in 5th

In the sport men’s race the anticipated close race was evident from the start with Chris Troy leading into transition ahead of last year’s winner Kieran Cosgrove and Damien Mc Connell, Martin Manning, and the other race favourite Jerry O Sullivan and Derrick Evans closely grouped behind.

On the run leg Jerry O Sullivan set the fastest time ahead to take a narrow lead into transition ahead of Cosgrove with Ger O Sullivan moving into 3rd thanks to his second fastest run leg of the day.

On the bike leg Cosgrove caught but could not drop Jerry O Sullivan and this pair finally sprinted for the line to take a joint win with a gap of 3 mins over 3rd placed Chris Troy who moved through the field with a fastest bike split of the day. Derrick Evans had the second fastest bike split of the day to take 4th ahead of Jonathan Caulfield in 5th and vet winner Ger O Sullivan in 6th.

In the ladies Sport race Colette Sweeney took the win and the national series title in some style leading from the opening water section and never looked in any real danger. Sara Creighton and Eithne Mc Shane followed her out of the water but on the run section Sweeney moved into an unassailable lead. Gertrude Fitzpatrick chose to move down from the Expert and showed great running speed to have the fastest overall run leg in wave 4. On the bike Sweeney set the fastest leg time ahead of Creighton and Nicola Forde and crossed the line in 1h 53’ 05” with over 10 mins to spare over Nicola Forde who was followed home by Sandra Caulfield, Sara Creighton and vet winner Monica Forde.

Rachel Nolan, who modestly declared herself a “runner” and started in wave 3, set the second fastest time of the day just ahead of Nicola Forde.

**2012 Achill ROAR Race Formguide**

This Saturday’s Achill ROAR National Series Races in Co Mayo could see the crowning of several 2012 Series champions as both mens and ladies leaders lead the charge.

Strong favourite in the mens Expert race is Cork’s Tim O Donoghue who has had impressive wins in WAR Glendalough & Glenmalure, Dingle and Gaelforce West and a win here will see him crowned 2012 Series champion.. The only man to beat O Donaghue in recent times where mechanicals did not play a part was Limerick’s Adrian Hennessy in last year’s Killarney race but he will be hard pressed to repeat that given more recent form between the two.

2011 Achill ROAR champion Niall Somers is entered and his claims need to be respected despite having very little race form so far this. He will be well suited by the bike leg in particular and should again make the podium if he starts but will need to be on top form to topple O Donaghue who is the definite form favourite here.

Outside this likely leading trio Dingle’s Noel O Leary, Dave Mc Grath and Killian Heery will be aiming for top 5 finishes along with William Cooke in a strong Vet entry likely to be lead out of the water by top level kayaker Noel O Donaghue, whilst other vet contenders include cyclist Tom O Toole and triathlete Pat O Dwyer .

In the ladies Expert  race Marie Boyle is looking to wrap up the expert Series title and few would bet against her here.

Contenders looking to make the podium include Eibhlin Cleary, Ruth Jenkinson, Yasmin Kenny, Catriona Nic Caba whilst vet Pauline Brady will be right up there too and seemsmost likely to take the vet’s title.

The men’s Sport race should be a cracker with several serious contenders including Jerry O Sullivan and Derrick Evans who have both won several Series races whilst 2011 Achill ROAR sport winner Kieran Cosgrove leads a big entry from the Cavan Kayak Run club and will give O Sullivan in particular a good race whilst Evans will be well suited by the bike course and could challenge strongly if back to the form he showed earlier in the season.

Patrick Dirrane looks like the slight favourite for the vets title if Cosgrove makes the podium but others that will challenge strongly include Jimmy Lawlor, David Delaney and John Joe Rodgers.

In the Sport ladies race multiple Sport series race winner Colette Sweeney leads the strong Mayo entry but fellow vet Laura Flynn will challenge her as indeed could Monster Mac winner Sarah Galligan and possibly Sandra Caulfield, Cera Slevin and Sarah Fagan whilst newcomer Mary Nolan is likely to set the fastest running leg and if her other disciplines are on a par she could upset soem of the usual podium contenders.

If promises to be a great day and of course night out at the infamous Achill ROAR fancy dress after race party 

**2012 Gaelforce West - Race Report - 18/08/12**

Last Saturday’s Gaelforce West National Series Expert level race in Mayo fulfilled its promise to be one of the highest standard races of the series this year with a who’s who of the racing scene in attendance with the exception of the unfortunate national series champion and 2010 GF winner Padraig Marrey who was missing due to a recent illness.

After the usual mad start on the first run Tim O Donaghue took over the lead and set sail for home arriving at Killary with a 4 min lead on a big group including Adian Mc Moreland, Brendan Conway, Micheal Forde, Brian Caulfield and Frenchman Timothee Francony  who all seemed to be trying to win the race the Peter O Farrell paced way as they followed him throughout.

Last year’s second Tom O Dowd was a few mins back on this group with vet favourite Noel Gibbons as the field was reasonably tighly bunched at Killary, apart from the leader.

Whilst O Donaghue built on his impressive lead, Mc Moreland made a decisive move on the run to Delphi opening up a lead on O Farrell in 3rd with Forde, Francony and Conway just behind.

On the subsequent bike leg, O Donaghue suffered a setback puncturing on the offroad section allowing Mc Moreland to take a small 30 sec lead onto Croagh Patrick with O Farrell 3 mins back just ahead of former international cyclist David O Loughlin (competing in disguise!), Tomas O Loughlin and the day’s fastest cyclist Dessie Duffy (1h 8 mins!) who went from a mid thirties position at the end of the first run to 5th at the start of the mountain ascent with a blistering cycle leg. O Dowd followed a min further behind ahead of Conway. Up front O Donaghue was right back on the winning track with a 23’ 13” ascent and an astonishing 8’ 38” descent to establish a 5 min lead on Mc Moreland who secured a clear second place with a sub 10min descent of his own ahead of O Farrell.  These 3 were followed by Duffy, Tomas O Loughlin and O Dowd who gained significant ground on the other  two on the mountain descent as David O Loughlin faded badly on the mountain leg finishing in mid thirties in the end.

The final bike leg into the finish quays in Westport was taken carefully by O Donaghue as he secured an impressive victory in 3h 32’ 40”, 6 mins clear of Mc Moreland in 2nd who was almost 3 mins clear of last year’s winner O Farrell in 3rd.

Duffy again hammered the final bike leg to take 4th ahead of O Dowd in 5th, Tomas O Loughlin in 6th with Conway hanging on for 7th ahead of vet winner Paul Mahon who moved up the field steadily all day from 41st at Killary to secure the category win in 8th overall with a good mountain climb and descent with his main category rivals Noel Gibbons and Brian Caulfield rounding out the top ten in 9th and 10th respectively and local Robert Staunton taking the Junior prize.

In the ladies race 2011 winner Emma Donlon was made work hard all day by the strong running Kate Cronin who matched her speed on foot from the start and indeed took a slender lead over Donlon onto and off the kayak leg with this pair ahead of Collette Sweeny, Eimear O Leary and Kathleen Barry.

Donlon regained the lead on the bike leg to Croagh Patrick but on the mountain ascent Cronin chipped away reducing Donlon’s lead from over 3 mins to less than 1 at the summit as behind this leading duo Sweeney, O Leary and Barry all solidified their placings.

Donlon had the better descent though and extended her lead on the final bike and short run leg to the finish taking the win in 4h 14’ 18”, 4 mins ahead of the ever improving Cronin with Sweeney 3rd 13 mins further back.

 O Leary held on well to 4th in her first race of this type ahead of vet category winner Barry in 5th place overall, Emily Boldly in 6th place from wave 3, Niamh Mc Donald in 7th, Fiona O Riordan in 8th from wave 5, Leonie Moran in 9th with Pauline Moran rounding out the ladies top ten.

As the sun sets on another big day out in Westport the next race in the Series for both expert and Sport levels is again in Mayo at the [**Achill ROAR**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cpaulmahon%5CMultisport%20Adv%20Ire%5C2012%20Nat%20Adv%20Series%5C2012%20NAS%20Formguide%5Croar.ie) on Sat 8th September

**2012 Gaelforce West - Race Formguide**

This Saturday’s Gaelforce West National Series Expert level race in Mayo promises to be one of the highlights of the series this year with a who’s who of the racing scene in attendance

Last year’s top two of Peter O Farrell (4 time GF winner) and Tom O Dowd will be there and are both in great form so it should be a super battle again between them. Whilst last year’s 3rd and 2010 winner Padraig Marrey unluckily misses the race due to a recent virus there are other very worthy challengers including Cork’s Tim O Donoghue who has had impressive wins this year in WAR Glendalough & Glenmalure, Waterford, Dingle and Rás Na Ríochta. The running sections in particular will suit him and his biking is also quite strong.  Aidan Mc Moreland has been in great form this season and had a great win over Padraig Marrey in Gaelforce North recently. It will be interesting to see how he fares here against his above named top 3 rivals but he has a big deficit to overturn on O Donaghue based on their recent 1, 2 in War Glenmalure.

O Farrell always seems to peak for this race and is well suited by it nature with a generally  and it is hard to oppose him but O Donaghue has being showing strong form all season and, providing a recent outing in the 36 hour Beast of Ballyhoura has not taken the edge off his speed ,he could well make a winning GF debut.

Behind these four leading contenders, Micheál Forde ( 5th here in 2010), Ronán O Shea, the strong biking Michael Flangan and local Brendan Conway seem most likely to battle out for positions in the top ten whilst talented triathletes Stephan Teeling-Lynch and Dessie Duffy may be unlikely to be suited by the rough and tumble nature of this course and GF Ambassador and Deca-Ironman Gerry Duffy will be another interesting entrant who will be aiming for a top 10 finish.

In the vets local Noel Gibbons looks to be the one to beat and challenges are most likely from fellow local Noel Brady, the strong running Brian Caulfield, good biker Sean Tangney and possibly Paul Mahon who’s form this season has been below par but who is suited by this course and could come with a late challenge if the conditions are soft on the day.

In the ladies race 2011 winner Emma Donlon is back and should repeat her victory despite an injury plagued season to date. Local Collette Sweeney, who has had some good successes in Sport races this year, Rachel Nolan and Kate Cronin seem likely to battle it out for the minor placings against Vets Pam Coleman ( who was quicker than Cronin behind second placed Nolan in GF North recently), the consistent performing Kathleen Barry and Hilary Jenkinson.

**2012 WAR Glenmalure Race Report - 28/07/12**

Last Saturday’s Expert level race in Wicklow saw some outstanding performances and some hard fought battles over a tough and scenic course.

In the men’s expert race the favourite Tim O Donoghue confirmed his standing as the one to beat in 2012 with a pillar to post victory with fastest times in almost all legs. The pre-race anticipated battle with reigning Galeforce champion Peter O Farrell never happened as O Farrell dropped out in the opening few km having lost his keys on the route. The chasing group of newcomer Harry Fowler, Ronan O Shea, Adian Mc Moreland and Adrian Hennessy were well behind the leader after the opening run up Kirrikee mountain. Fowler was dropped on the next bike leg as the remainder worked to try to reel in the leader with Hennessy and O Shea moving a minute ahead of Mc Moreland and Kevin Murphy and Stephen Perry moving through to 5thand 6th respectively at the start of the tough Croghanmoire mountain run. O Donaghue set out on this leg with a 8 min lead and extended it to almost 13 by the end with Mc Moreland moving into a clear second place ahead of Hennessy and O Shea and Perry improving into 5th ahead of Murphy. These positions remained the same all the way to the finish despite O ‘Shea’s efforts to overtake Hennessy to make his first podium. In the end O Donaghue was 13 mins clear of Mc Moreland with Hennessy 5 mins back in 3rd just ahead of O Shea in 4th and Perry using his local knowledge to good effect in 5th and Murphy taking the vet’s title in 6th

In the ladies expert race the national series leader Marie Boyle made the trip up from Connemara looking to consolidate her lead and she led out the opening run ahead of Jacqui Howard, Pauline Brady, Paula Prendergast and Pam Coleman. Howard closed the gap on the next bike leg as Coleman moved into third just ahead of Brady. Out on the Croghanmoire run, Howard used her mountain running experience to good effect as she moved into a  5 min lead over Boyle with Coleman similarly establishing a good gap over Brady for third place and Roisin Hickey in 5th. Despite Boyle’s best efforts on the final bike leg she only managed a minimal reduction in her deficit as Howard went on to record her first Series win in impressive fashion 5 min ahead of Boyle with Coleman in 3rd, Brady 4th (taking the vet prize) and Hickey in 5th.

The men’s Sport race produced the anticipated cracker between Jerry O Sullivan and Eanna Cunnane with this pair establishing a clear lead over 2011 Expert Series winner Emma Donlon in 3rd ahead of Derrick Evans in 4th entering transition after the opening Kirrikee mountain run. With Cunnane ahead after the run, O Sullivan worked hard to reduce the deficit on the bike and the leaders were locked together reaching the transition after the bike leg with Evans moving into 3rd. The experienced O Sullivan just had enough in the tank on the final river run and obstacle course section to take the win just 15 seconds clear of Cunnane with Evans taking third ahead of Donlon in 4th overall and Patrick Dirrane taking the vets title as 4thman home and Brian Mac Donnacha improving his position on the bike leg finish 6th overall.

In the Sport ladies race Emma Donlon as mentioned above had an impressive win almost 10 mins ahead of triathlete Clare Sullivan looks destined to win a Sport race in the next future.

Sullivan posted second fastest legs throughout to take 2nd place with Hilary Jenkinson similarly 3rd fastest throughout whilst a consistent performance from Mary Collins earned her the vets prize in 4th and in Melissa Eisdell in 5th.

Next Expert race in the Series is **[Galeforce West](http://gaelforceevents/west/)** on 18th August whilst next Sports race is at [**Achill ROAR**](http://www.roar.ie/) on 8th September.

**2012 WAR Glenmalure Race Formguide**

This Saturdays Expert level race in Wicklow promises to be one of the hardest fought this year with some well established stars toeing the line alongside some of the more recently arrived stars of the scene in the preliminary entry list.

Worthy favourite has to be Cork’s Tim O Donoghue who has had impressive wins in WAR Glendalough, Waterford, Dingle and Rás Na Ríochta. The running sections in particular will suit him and his biking is also very strong. The only man to beat O Donaghue in recent times where mechanicals did not play a part was Limerick’s Adrian Hennessy in last year’s Killarney race but he will be hard pressed to repeat that given more recent Dingle form between the two. Aidan Mc Moreland has shows much improved form this season and had a great win over Padraig Marrey in Gaelforce North recently. It will be interesting to see how he fares here whilst all eyes will be on multiple Gaelforce winner Pater O Farrell who will be using this race to fine tune his GF preps no doubt. O Farrell has been competing strongly on the road biking circuit this year and more recently has shown good mountain running form. If in touch at the start of the final run leg he could well be in the mix as he will have local course knowledge in his favour but his priorities may well be focussed on the west as the others do battle with National Series titles foremost in their minds.

Kevin Murphy makes a return visit after a broken chain cost him a likely second place here last year and is very suited by the climbing nature of both run and bike legs but will have to be content with the vets title most likely as the top four may have too many gears for him to match in the closing stages.

In the ladies race Marie Boyle is looking to seal her stranglehold on the expert Series title and few would bet against her here though the hilly course will not be entirely in her favour. Cork’s Jacqui Howard has been showing fine recent form recently in various running and biking events and will surely make the podium whilst vet Pam Coleman should do likewise ahead of fellow vet Pauline Brady and Roisin Hickey.

The men’s Sport race should be a cracker with current Series leader Brian Mac Donnacha having to contend with several serious challengers. Jerry O Sullivan and Eanna Cunnane have both won races whilst Derrick Evans has won two and the race looks most likely to be fought out between these three. If Evans is back in top form after a recent dip he could overtake the other pair on the bike as he is likely to be dropped on the first run by the other strong running pair. O Sullivan is a class act if his recent injury problems do not hinder him and last year’s winner Cunnane will need to be on top of his game to match him in what is likely to be a very close contest between these three at least. Patrick Dirrane looks most likely to take the vets title and a top 6 finish maybe with Ciaran Smith and Adam Kelly others that should figure towards the top of the leaderboard.

In the Sport ladies race Emma Donlon looks an odd-on certainly as she continues her measured return to racing after recent injury with view to chasing bigger prizes later in the season.  Seasoned vets Hilary Jenkinson and Mary Collins seem most likely to be in the pack chasing her home.

**Race 2 Glory Race Report**

On a day when the anticipated top 3 men's showdown produced the closest finish in Series race history, the local welcome and support for all participants was the talk of all post event.

On the opening run the defending champion Ruraidh Geraghty led out as expected but with several unexpected toilet stops on route was off the pace by the bike transition wiht Adian Mc Moreland leading by a min into transition ahead of Padraig Marrey and  Brendan Conway with Jonathon Caulfield, Geraghty and Paul Carolan 20 sec further behind.

Marrey set off at a ferrocious pace on the bike and caught and passed Mc Moreland as Geraty regained some time on the bike to move into 3rd with Conway in 4th at the second transition. Mc Moreland caugh up on Marrey soon into the run but could not shake him off and in the end local course knowledge and "auld dog" determination helped Marrey to out sprint his younger rival and take the win by only 4 seconds! Gerraghty held on grimly to take 3rd place 4 mins back with Irish Air Corps' Declan Kelly coming through with a fine last run leg to take 4th place just a min ahead of vet winner Noel Gibbons in 5th place.

In the ladies race reigning Expert Series Champion Emma Donlon made a welcome return to competitive action after a prolonged absence through injury and was never in any great danger as she led from the off to post a neat win 5 mins ahead of recent Series race winner Collette Sweeney who in turn was 5 mins clear of fellow top vet Kathleen Barry and Pauline Moran taking 4th a further 6 mins back. Sandra Caulfield kept up a family tradition of top placings in 5th as her hubbie Jonathan took the Top Culchie title with his 11th place overall in the men's race.

[**RACE 2 GLORY**](http://race2glory.com/)**Formguide Preview**

Last year's winner Ruraidh Gerrarty is is flying form and will take all the beating but Padraig Marrey and Adrian Mc Moreland are likely to be the pair challenging him most closely. Marrey had a disappointing result by his high standards when second to Mc Moreland in Gaelforce North recently but this course might suit him better as Mc Moreland's strengths on steep off road running routes is not supported by this course in direct contrast to Gerraghty who will be suited by it in general but the certain to be wet boggy section and the new obstacle coure near the end might prove Gerraghty's undoing. Marrey is racing lighter this season which will help his running form so it will be interesting to see if he can regain his desired top of podium position and put his bid to retain his National Series title back on track. Brendan Conway will go well if back to his best form after an injury sustained when in second at the Connemara Adventure Challenge back in May whilst Ger O Sullivan will be looking to follow up on some great Sport race results this year but might find the pace up front a bit harder to handle this time. Several Defence forces lads went well in IM Austria a few weeks back and it will be interesting to see if any of them can challenge the more established stars in the line up.

Noel Gibbons is likely to be challenging for a top 5 finish and if course the top vet prizes.

In the ladies race, Emma Donlon is hoping to make her return to action a winning one after a long absence through injury.

Recent double Sport series race winner Collette Sweeney will be there take her on but the 2011 Expert Series winner is likely to have a few gears too many and should take the win if she makes the start and finish without reoccurance of her injury with Sweeney likely to take the vets win and Noreen O Toole a local fancy to make the podium.

Uniquely on offer to all participants who do not make the podium are prizes for return flights to Milan sponsored by Knock's "[**Ireland West**](http://www.irelandwestairport.com/)" airport - these are going to the 53rd and 111th finishers!

A great battle look to be in store as local's vie for the "Champion Culchie" title - Jonathan Caulfield has been going well this year but Barry Freeman has been training hard as he seeks to take revenge for last year's narrow loss.

Should be a great day out and with some last min entries likely to show before the entries close we could have some additional names figuring high up in the results

**Gaelforce North Race Report**

The men's expert race last week turned out to be nip and tuck between Padriag Marey and Gary Crossan as expected with Marrey winning that battle by less 23 seconds in the end despite two punctures but on the day both men had to take a back seat to Adian Mc Moreland who posted his first ever Series win with a very impressive perfomance coming home 10 mins clear of the field. With an improvement of over 30 mins on his time in 2011 he is sure to figure prominently in the remaining Series races this year. Crossan started confidently with a sub 1 hour opening run well clear of McMoreland, Peter Crommie and Torben Dahl with Marrey in 5th. Mc Moreland moved into the lead ahead of  Crossan and Marrey on the bike leg with Crommie staying in 4th ahead of a fading Dahl and an improving Noel Gibbons. Crossan closed the gap a little on the climb up Errigal but Mc Moreland blitzed the descent to move into an unassailable lead returning to the bikes as Crommie dropped off podium contention with a slow descent relative to the top 3. Mc Moreland rode well and increased his lead all the way to the finish as Crossan faded and was caught at the end for 2nd by Marrey who rode into the finsh on a flat after two punctures. Crommie held on for third a further 6 mins behind Crossan with Gibbons taking the Vets title with a 5th place overall finish

In the ladies race Marie Boyle continued her winning ways coming home 16 mins clear of Rachel Nolan who led after the opening run and kayak stages with Niamh Mc Donald offfically 3rd (As only first wave starters could officially place) and Jacueline Le Bourhig officially taking the vets win. Boyle now looks like an odds on favourite to take the ladies Expert Series. Other performances of note came from Kate Cronin in wave 2 and Fionnula Diver in wave 3 who both posted sub 72 min opening run legs. Diver had a good first bike leg but lost time on her rivals on Errigan while Cronin followed up with some consistent legs to finish with the 4th fastest time on the day. Pam Coleman (F50) started steadily in wave 2 and her strong biking moved her up the field passing Cronin on the bike and in the end she posted the 3rd fastest race time 10 min down on 2nd placed Nolan

In the official results Ger O Sullivan had a clear win in the Sport race of wave 1 ( As again race rules has stated that one must start in wave 1 to be eligible for a prize) to take his second Sports Series win of the year ahead of Brian Mac Donnacha and Ger Henehan with Collette Sweeney posting an impressive win in the ladies section (And 6th fastest time of the day!) well clear of Clare Quinn and Emer Friel and Leigh Mc Geever in joint 3rd.

The full race results however show wave 2's Steve Sweeney with a time 3 mins faster than O Sullivan with Alan Johnston having the 4th fastest time of the day ahead of Henehan.

In the ladies results Sweeney's time was well clear of the other ladies with Noreen Mc Gee in wave 2 and Marie Timoney in wave 3 posting next fastest times ahead of Quinn.

The National Series points table has now been updated.

As is always the case, final race times and positions, regardless of the starting waves, will be used to allocate Series points

**Gaelforce North Formguide**

The expert race in Donegal is set to be a cracker with local Gary Crossan who was an impressive winner here last year being taken on by 2011 Series champion Padraig Marrey. This course should favour the strong running Crossan who is no slouch on the bike but Marrey is fighting fit after his recent Rás exploits.  Marrey had a good win in Connemara Rough Diamond a few weeks back and the reigning champion will need to race hard if he is to retain his title from the in-form Marrey.

The two others that look most likely to make the podium are Limavady's Peter Crommie who won the Coast 2 Coast pairs race last month but might not have the technical skills needed to keep with the leading pair on the tricky Errigal descent and Denmark's Torben Dahl who is running well on the hills but who's cycling is a bit suspect to compete at this high level.

Patrick Dirrane looks most likely to take the vet's title whilst his partner Marie Boyle is a strong favourite to continue her winning ways and rack up her 4th Series win of the year.

The new sprint course which counts for the Sport Series looks fairly open for the men with no previous Series winners in the field (Unless Ger O Sullivan is actually Jerry from Kerry who would be a warm favourite!) and Mayo's Collette Sweeney looks a strong favourite to follow up her Connemara Adventure Challenge with one here.

**Dingle Adventure Race Report**

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

From the off the field was well strung out with Donnacha Cassidy and late entry and vet favourite Kevin Murphy setting a hot pace up the Connor pace with pre-race favourites Tim O Donoghue and Adrian Hennessy hanging onto their tails. This quartet were together into TA1 at Cloughan with other including Robert Wormald and Sean Tangey a just a minute behind.  2011 2nd Milosz Wojcik and David Power were over 3 mins down and significantly 2010 winner Diarmuid Collins was more than 6 mins down on the leaders in 27th place starting up Mt Brandon after the cycle leg.

On the long climb up Brandon O Donoghue set a relentless pace as he posted the fastest times on all 3 running sections to build up an unassailable lead over 2011 winner Hennessy who had a strong race throughout.  Behind him Hennessy moved into a clear second ahead of Murphy and Wormald with Power moving up to 5th with Collins making significant gains with the 2nd fastest climb of the day to take him into 6th overall at the summit of Brandon.

On the descent Wormald lost significant time on his podium challengers dropping to 8th as Wojcik, Collins and indeed Power all made gains as O Donaghue and Hennessy moved further clear of the field with super descents.

On the long road run back to Dingle, the main battle was for 3rd between Power and Collins as Murphy slipped from 3rd overall back to 6th with Wormald regaining some ground into 5th.

On the long kayak section Collins moved into a clear 3rd as O Donoghue set a respectable time on the water and then scorched the final run leg to the finish in a new course record of 3h 1’ 04”. This was more than 7 mins ahead of Hennessy who in turn was 6 mins clear of Collins who held onto 3rd ahead of Power who repeated his 4th placing of last year with Wormald 5th and Murphy taking the vets prize in 6th overall.

In the ladies race Fiona Meade showed her cycling credentials with a impressive leg to start out on the run with a gap of 3 min over Ann Marie Egan with 2011 race winner Fiona Devane 2 min back ahead of Joanne Ní Suilleabhain, Lisa Mc Mahon, Pauline Brady and Hilary Jenkinson.

Meade held increased her lead to 4 mins over Egan on the climb up Brandon with Devane a further min behind as Ní Suilleabhann lost time to the leaders but still held onto 4th at the summit.

On the descent the placings remained unchanged but Devane and Egan made gains on Meade's lead and on the long road run Devane and Egan both overtook Meade with Devane taking a lead into the kayak leg which she held to the line taking victory for the second year in a row in 3h 49’ 49” over 2 mins clear of Egan and with Meade 5 mins back in 3rd. Ni Suilleabhain had a consistent race in 4th ahead of Mc Mahon in 5th and Brady who took the ladies vets title in 6th overall.

**2012 Dingle Adventure Race Formguide**

This Saturdays Expert only level race in Dingle promises to be the hardest fought this year with all podium finishers of the last two years lining up alongside some of the more recently arrived stars of the scene.

Worthy favourite has to be Cork’s Tim O Donoghue who has had impressive wins in WAR Glendalough and Waterford despite a very poor kayak leg in the latter. He has been working on his kayaking and in any case this should not be a major factor in this race. The long running sections will suit him both on and off road and his biking is also very strong. Last year’s winner Adrian Hennessy from Limerick is motoring well this year with a second in WAR Glendalough and a win in Monster MAC in April and even though a hard race on Carrauntoohill last Sunday will not help his case but he looks set to again make the podium. Kerry resident Pole Milosz Wojcik was second last year and with proper footwear to descend Brandon could be a force to be reckoned with as should 2010 winner Diarmuid Collins though he has yet to find his best form this season and with some stamina doubts might do well to make the podium in this strong field. Waterford’s David Power was 4th here last year and was in impressive form winning in the Blackstairs last weekend and like Wojcik should have learned and seems likely to improve on his poor mountain descent last year and is quietly fancied to make the podium. Robert Wormald has not been seen since an impressive podium debut in last year’s Monster Mac but this sub 10hr Ironman could be in the shake up if his mountain descending has improved though the relatively short bike section will not help his case. Denmark's Torben Dahl has come into some good mountain running form in recent weeks and will be another aiming for a top five placing whilst Stephen Tabb and Ronain O Shea should be close on their heels.

 Last year’s third Paul Mahon is likely to again have a close battle with Sean Tangey and Anthony Cornforth for top vet finisher as he did in Killarney last year with all 3 aiming for top 10 finishes.

In the ladies race last year’s winner Fiona Devane is in good form as evidenced by her recent Monster MAC win but Cork’s Fiona Meade was a very impressive winner in Waterford and could well upset the Kerry lass who is hoping for a repeat of last year’s victory. With Maeve O Grady listed but believed unlikely to race as she is currently doing the Trans Germany bike event, it is likely that her fellow Defence Forces colleague Lisa Mc Mahon can make the podium after a good win in the Blackstairs last weekend. Last year’s second Roisin Hickey, Eibhlin Cleary, and top vets Pauline Brady and Hilary Jenkinson look likely to battle it out for the remaining top 5 positions.

**Connemara Rough Diamond Report**

Only a week after completing successfully in his 10th Rás cycling event, Mayo's Padraig Marrey started his fist National Series race of the year and in the end had no real trouble repeating his 2011 win here with a margin of 10 minutes over fellow countymen Brendan Conway. Conway started strongly and led until Marrey overtook him in the 40km cycling leg and in the end just hung onto 2nd ahead of the fast finishing Noel Gibbons and Padraig Hughes in 4th and Declan Henegan in 5th.

It was a similar story in the ladies expert race with Series leader Marie Boyle taking over the lead on the bike leg to take a 5 minuite win over Kathleen Barry. Barry led after the first running leg from Pauline Moran, with Boyle close behind and Paula Prendergast and Pauling Brady well back but the former international cyclist Boyle established a clear lead on the long bike leg. Barry closed the gap on the Diamond hill run to finish a clear 2nd and Brady finished strongly to take 3rd ahead of Moran and O Prendergast. Boyle has established a strong lead in the Series already with 2 wins and a second as she seeks to add to her 2011 Sport Series title.

The Sport men's race produced a very tight fight with Ger O Sullivan prevailing in the end. O Sullivan led narrowly with Aodhan Mc Aleer being caught by James Kane and Daniel Brady starting the last leg only 30sec down on the leader but O Sullivan built up a gap of a minute over Mc Aleer in the end ahead of Kane with Brady taking 4th ahead of Brian Joyce and the unlucky Jimmy Lawlor who was only 3' 31" behind the winner in 6th having missed his wave start by several minutes!

Mayo were again to the fore in the Sport ladies race as Collette Sweeney bided her time to overtake early leader Caroline Conway and Michelle Traynor to take her second Series win on the year by a margin of 5 minutes over Conway with Caroline Herwoord coming through to take 3rd ahead of Traynor with Christine Hyde in 5th

**Moxie Adv Challenge Race Report**

On a hot sunny day a great close day’s racing took place in the surrounds of Blessington lake in Co Wicklow.

Top level kayaker Cillian Duggan led the field off the water followed by Danish international adventure racing lady Sessel Elmstrom but Chris Caulfield and Noel O Leary were in hot pursuit and made up time on the run to the bike transition area.

Caulfield led out the bike as O Leary and Elmstrom worked together but current Sport Series leader Derrick Evans posted the fastest first bike leg to get up to 2nd just behind Caulfield and ahead of O Leary, Elmstom, Ciaran Smith and Jonathan Caulfield at the transition to the mountain run section.

O Leary had a strong climb to catch the two leaders on the ascent and these three battled hard on the long descent with O Leary unable to shake off their close attentions and build a significant gap and he only held a narrow lead over Caulfield and Evans starting out on the final bike leg. It was here that O Leary paid the price for his earlier efforts as he was passed by both Caulfield and Evans on the leg returning to Tulfarris. Evans put in a super final bike leg and held a minutes’ lead with 2 km to go when he was delayed significantly by a tractor and trailer but he held on gamely to record an snug win in 1h 58’ 47” with Chris Caulfield 2nd, O Leary 3rd, Jonathan Caulfield 4th and Rory O Neill coming through on the last leg to take 5th ahead of Ciaran Smith with Mike Jordan the first vet home in 7th overall.

In the ladies the strong pre-race favourite from Denmark Sessel Elmstrom was never in any danger and finished an impressive 11th overall in 2h 7’ 49” as she posted the fastest ladies times in all legs. Super vet Pam Coleman showed her all round abilities by having a solid race in second throughout. Yasmin Kenny was in 3rd for much of the race ahead of Sarah Galligan but local lass Rose Griffin came through from a later wave with an impressive last bike leg to take 3rd by a margin of only 3 seconds ahead of Galligan in 4th and Kenny 5th.

**Moxie Adv Challenge Fromguide:-**

The Moxie Adventure Challenge this Saturday has attracted some top Expert Series contenders and of these Mayo's Chris Caulfield and Cork's Noel O Leary are sure to be in contention at the business end of things. Based on recent form and the fact that this course is well known to him, Caulfield could prove the strongest this time round but his case will not be helped by racing hard in Connemara and Waterford the last two weekends. These pair will have new Sport series leader Derrick Evans to contend with however and providing he stays in touch on the opening kayak leg, which O Leary is likely do well on, then he will certainly be realistic with winning ambitions to add to his recent Monster Mac win and WAR second. Mike Jordan is likely favourite to take the vets cat and could keep up with the 3 favourites but needs to minimise his losses on the opening kayak stage to maintain realistic podium prospects with Patrick Dirrane and Brendan O Brien likely vet challengers with their own top 5 ambitions.

In the ladies the international adventure racer Sesseel Elmstron is the likely favourite despite having done a 25 hour race in Denmark last weekend and likely nearest challengers include consistent podium finisher Yasmin Kenny and Michelle Burke.

**Connemara Adventure Challenge Race Report**

With the rain staying away for most and a helpful tail wind on the second section of the bike leg and on the kayaks, records tumbled in the race with the first 5 men across the line well inside the course record set last year by 2011 National Series Expert Champion Padriag Marrey.

From the off Diarmuid Collins set a fast pace but having arrived at the start line with a heavily bandaged ankle he was not in the same form as had seen him challenge for victory the last two years. Kerry's Jerry O Sullivan soon took over the lead and only local Brendan Conway could keep pace with him ahead of Collins and the surpise packet of the race, Galway's Gearoid Hynes, a bit further back ahead of Paul Mahon.

O' Sullivan and Conway maintaned their lead on the field with Collins in third and Mahon overtaking Hynes on the descent to the bike transition.

On the bike leg the main race drama unfolded with Conway crashing and he was unable to continue after a shoulder injury made kayaking impossible. This left O' Sullivan in a good lead which he built on and he was never to be headed again.

By the end of the off-road section Collins had been caught by the chasing pack of Hynes, Mahon and 2010 winner Chris Caulfield. After a spell working as a pack, Caulfield broke clear and on arrival at Kilary gaps were evident between himself Hynes, Mahon and Collins. On run to the kayaks however Hynes caught Caulfield and Collins similarly caught Mahon and these formed into two pairs in single boats for the kayak leg.

O' Sullivan was in an unassailable lead coming onto the final run and he went on to set a new course record in a superb time of 1h 59' 19" as Hynes moved into a clear 2nd with the fastest final run split of the day - no mean feat for a former basketballer and cyclist who was on his stag weekend and had been for a "few" the night before :-)! We no doubt will see a lot more of him at other national series races later this year. Collins overtook Caulfield early in the final  run leg but struggled to build a gap and in the end just survived to take 3rd ahead of Caulfield in 4th and Mahon who was first in 5th overall.

In the Ladies race the pre-race favourite Collette Sweeney was never in any danger once she started the bike leg as she went on to record a good win in  2h 23' 26". As expected Kathleen Barry proved her nearest challenger and led out the first mountain run leg but Sweeney took a 2 minute lead onto the water and with a stong paddling partner she built a good lead of 9 minutes on the water and maintained this lead on the final run leg to take her maiden victory ahead of Kathleen Barry with Misty Price coming through from the 2nd wave on the final results to place 3rd ahead of Hilary Jenkinson in 4th who had the consolation of taking the vets prize and Claire Quinn placing 5th.

**Connemara Adventure Challenge Race Formguide**

Whilst the 2011 race winner Padraig Marrey is absent as he finalises his preparations for his 10th national An Post Rás later this month, the quality of the field is evidenced by the presence of the next 4 home from last year.

Galway’s Diarmuid Collins was 2nd here the last two years and if he gets a trouble free race he could be the one to top the podium but recent form suggests that he will be strongly challenged in particular by Kerry’s Jerry O Sullivan (3rd here in 2011) who has shown good early season race form whilst Collins has concentrated on his favourite running discipline up to recently.

Mayo will be well represented by 2010 winner Chris Caulfield, in form Brendan Conway and John Lenehan amongst others, all of whom will be hoping to challenge for the podium but this race should favour the stronger runners.

The choice of bike for the mixed terrain bike section may make it an interesting race up front with punctures possibly effecting the results as in previous years. Others hoping to challenge for top 5 finishes are likely to be Ciaran Smith and vets Paul Mahon and 2010 3rd Brian Keogh.

In the ladies local vet 2011 winner Collette Sweeney is probably the slight favourite in a field that could well spring some surprises with Kathleen Barry and Hilary Jenkinson other experienced performers that could go well along with Tara Reale.

** Monster MAC 2012 Race Report **

With entries for this year’s race reaching double the 2011 entry and the weather staying dry if a little cool for the day it made for a great day racing in the Boggeragh mountains close to Millstreet.

The Men’s Expert course saw Adrian Hennessy, who was a close up 3rd here last year, take a small lead in the first run over Rónáin O Shea and Stephen Tabb. He extended this lead throughout the day with the fastest splits on every stage except the final kayak /run one (2nd fastest by 3 secs) to take an impressive win in 3:08:39.

Behind him some drama was unfolding as both Noel O’Leary and O Shea punctured and it was triathlete Aidan O Gorman who had a strong bike leg to reach the transition to mountain run in second ahead of local hero Brian Murphy and Tabb in 4th.

On the testing mountain run Murphy showed the benefit of local knowledge and practice since last year and he overtook O Gorman with Tabb a close 4th getting on the bikes for the final cycle stage.

On the run to home Murphy consolidated his 2nd place and O Gorman similarly in 3rd ahead of Tabb in 4th whilst behind them O Leary needed the fastest kayak split of the day (5’27”) to shake off O’ Shea and take 5thwith Ciaran Dillane taking the vets prize in 10th position overall.

In the Ladies Expert race, National Series Sport Champion Marie Boyle was the formguide favourite but the strong running Fiona Devane showed she was in good form leading the first run ahead of Boyle and Eibhlin Cleary with a gap of a further 4 minutes to the chasing group of Niki Cranley, Grainne Read and Susan Godwin.

On the first bike leg Boyle moved into a lead of a minute over Devane with Cleary staying in 3rd just ahead of the strong biking Read.

On the tough mountain run stage Devane again showed her running prowess and turned her deficit into a 2 minute lead on return to the transition area with Cleary extending her lead in 3rd place over Read and Cranley.

The final bike leg was to prove decisive however with Boyle regaining the lead only to unluckily puncture allowing Devane to re-take the lead and the victory after the short kayak stage in just under 4 hours and 19th place overall. Boyle was still well clear in second ahead of Read who came through with another strong bike leg to take 3rd ahead of Cleary in 4th with Yasmin Kenny coming through on the final bike leg to take 5th ahead of Cranley in 6th.

In the men’s Sport event the pre-race favourite Derrick Evans showed his class from the outset and proceeded to post the fastest run and bike splits of the day.

On the opening run only Ger O Sullivan could kept up the strong pace and was only just behind Evans leaving transition with David Delaney a further minute behind ahead of a chasing pack consisting of Jason Moore, Garreth Casey, Joe O Leary, Patrick Fitzgerald, Patrick Dirrane and John O Mahoney.

 On the long climb to the intermediate bike checkpoint Evans extended his lead over O Sullivan in 2nd with Dirrane moving into 3rd ahead of Delaney with O Leary and Fitzgerald locked together in 5th and 6th.

On the second bike and final kayak legs the top 3 maintained their positions whilst Delaney was overtaken by O Leary and Fitzgerald with O Leary sprinting clear on the final kayak leg to take 4th ahead of Fitzgerald in 5th who had the compensation of taking the vet prize.

The Ladies Sport competition proved a closer contest with Bernie Condron leading out on the first run ahead of Christine Hyde, Esme O Flynn and Sarah Gallagin. On the bike however Gallagin showed great strength to take her into a clear lead ahead of Condron, Hyde and O Flynn and these positions were held to the line with Gallagin taking her maiden victory ahead of Condronin 2nd, Hyde 3rd and O’ Flynn 4th with Siobhan O Sullivan making 5th place her own throughout the day and taking the vet prize.

A great days racing in Munster with huge local support in evidence throughout .

Next up in the National Series is the [**Connemara Adventure Challenge**](http://msai.ie/www.gaelforceevents.com/connemara/) on 12th May where over 800 are expected to battle for sports series points.

**Monster MAC 2012 Formguide**

With entries for this year’s race reaching double the 2011 entry it looks like we are in for some great racing in Millstreet this weekend.

The Men’s Expert course sees some big guns ready to sling it out again just 2 weeks after going to WAR in Glendalough. 2ndplaced Adrian Hennessy,who was a close up 3rd here last year, would seem to be the one they all have to beat though Noel O’Leary and Rónáin O Shea who were in 3rd and 4th that day will hope to get closer as will local hero Brian Murphy who was 4th here in 2011 after fading from podium contention on the second mountain run stage.

Others that might surprise these obvious contenders include Kerry based orienteer Brendan O Brien who is probably favourite to take the vet’s prize, triathlete Aiden O’Gorman, Paul Hyde, John O Shea and Raymond Griffin.

In the ladies Expert race, WAR Glendalough winner and National Series Sport Champion Marie Boyle is the formguide favourite with the improving Eibhlin Cleary again providing opposition along with Fiona Devane, Yasmin Kenny, Grainne Read and Frances Shanahan who makes the move into the Expert race after a good 2nd in Sport here in 2011.

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 Derrick Evans on the back of his close up 2nd in WAR Glendalough Sport race recently but Sean Healy and John O Mahoney who were 3rd and 4th here in 2011 will no doubt have ambitions to win this year. Others like Ian Lewis, Garreth Casey, Jason Moore, Adrian Burns, Noel O Sullivan and the two leading vet contenders Patrick Dirrane and David Delaney will also be looking for top 5 finishes.

In the ladies Sport section it is again hard to call but Esme O Flynn is the likely favourite if she can reproduce the form that saw her finish 2nd in last year’s Westport Sea2Summit.

**WAR – Glendalough – 2012 Race Report**

With the 2 hot men's favourites in the Expert race electing not to participate and freakish snow/ sleet/ hail and sunshine providing epic weather conditions on race day it was left to the Munster men to show that they have not left their winning form behind on the tough Series opener in Glendalough.

From the off the pace was fast with west Cork man Tim O Donaghue coming off the Spinc run with a gap of 2 minutes ahead of Adrian Mc Moreland, Adrian Hennessy and Diarmuid Collins with Noel O Leary and Ronain O Shea a further minute behind.

Hennessy made up ground on the bike leg to Lough Dan with Mc Moreland and O Shea also posting impressive splits whilst on the water O Leary posted the fast split of the leading quintet with best expert kayak split of the day coming from eventual 11th placed vet winner Noel Donohue as Mc Moreland and O Shea both lost valuable time on the water. On the cycle up to the Lough Tay transition Hennessy caught up with the leader O Donaghue but on the long Djouce run he could not keep with his relentless pace and on the on the remaining legs O Donaghue pulled away to take the win by a final margin of 5 minutes ahead of Limerick's Hennessy. Behind the leading pair, Dingle AR's O' Leary kept a good pace throughout to take 3rd whilst O Shea finished strongly to take 4th ahead of Mc Moreland in 5th.

In the ladies race the pre-race favourite, 2011 National Series Sport champion Marie Boyle, made the trip from Connemara worthwhile taking an all the way victory by 3 minutes ahead of the steady and improving Martina Nolan (Who modestly declared herself an intermediate and so started in wave 3!). Eibhlin Cleary continued her early season good form with a solid third place finish ahead of vet category winner Hilary Jenkinson in 4th and Niamh Mc Donald was just behind in 5th.

The Sport race was a close fought affair with one of the leading contenders being wrongly assigned to wave 4 where he started as the others all did battle in wave 5 but the results showed a steady and impressive performance from the fast running 2011 WAR Powerscourt winner Eanna Cunnane to take the win ahead of Derrick Evans who got the best of an epic all the way battle with Richie Mac Liam to take second and third. Ex international paddler Simon Von Lonkhuyzen posted the fasted kayak split of all the races ( 14' 40") to take him into 4th ahead of Stephen O Kane in 5th whilst 11th places Patrick Dirranne too the top vet honours.

In the ladies sport event the leading trio of Louise Cullen, Pam Coleman and Elizabeth Carolan posted near identical times on the opening run but it was Carolan who had the speediest transitions and cycling legs to pull out an impressive 5 minuite wining margin by the end ahead of local Cullen. Nicola Crean came through late in the race with strong kayak and final run legs to take 3rd ahead of the well known fast walking Pam Coleman who took the Vet category whilst behind these Lorraine Crean took a great 5th place on her comeback race just a couple of months after giving birth

National Series Points will be available HERE shortly

The National Series now moves southward for the [**Monster Mac**](http://monstermac.ie/) on 28th April in Millstreet Co Cork where a field of about 350 is expected to take part so it should be a good point bagging opportunity for the Series.

**WAR - Glendalough 2012 - Formguide**

The [**2012 National Adventure Race Series**](http://msai.ie/adventure-race-ireland-organiser-points-series.php) kicks off this Saturday 14th April in the beautiful Glendalough area of Co Wicklow.

With some of the regular stars of the series missing due to a combination of injury and commitments to forthcoming national championships in Duathlon and the Rás it is left to the local favourite and 2011 winner Noelie Kavanagh to head the men’s field and he is certainly expected to make a bold early bid for glory as he did successfully last year.

His main opposition on the day is likely to come from Castlebar based Tom O Dowd who will lack a little in local course knowledge but should be in top shape currently.

Other likely to pose strong top five challenges are Adrian Hennessy, Diarmuid Collins, Adian Mc Moreland, Chris Caulfield, Torben Dahl and Eoghan Carton whilst last minuite entrant Kevin Murphy could well make the top 5 and is expected win the vets title.

In the ladies race, 2011 National Sport Series winner Marie Boyle makes the expected move into the Expert category and she is the favourite to take the win.

Others vying for the podium should include fellow vet Hilary Jenkinson, Eiblin Cleary and Yasmin Kenny.

The men’s Sport race sees a renewal of the last [**WAR**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cpaulmahon%5CWAR%20Glendalough%5CFormguide%5Cwicklowadventurerace.com) race in Powerscourt top 3 with Eanna Cunnane, Richie Mac Liam and Simon Von Lonkhyzen likely to again figure for top honours though the sport races often have new talent emerging to challenge the established contenders.

The ladies race looks like a fairly open contest with Roundwood resident Lorraine Creane in the field just 2 months after giving birth. She would prove popular winner though several other like Diane Cooper and Elisabeth Carolan are expected to be in the reckoning too.

It should be a great race before the National Series moves onto Munster on the 28th April where the [**Monster Mac**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cpaulmahon%5CWAR%20Glendalough%5CFormguide%5Cmonstermac.ie) takes place in the Boggeragh Mountains near Milstreet Co Cork.

**2011 National AR Points Series - Final Table of Points**

[**Final Table of Men's Expert Points Here**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Expert_Mens_2011_Final.pdf) - 2011 Champion is Padraig Marrey

[**Final Table of Women's Expert Points Here**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Expert_Womens_2011_Final.pdf) - 2011 Champion is Emma Donlon

[**Final Table of Men's Sport Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Sport_Mens_2011_Final.pdf) - 2011 Champion is Noel Brady

[**Final Table of Women's Sport Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Sport_Womens_2011_Final.pdf) - 2011 Champion is Marie Boyle

**Putting these achievements into context, over 2,400 individuals registering top 100 scores in the 2011 Series:**

**Breakdown As Follows:-**

**Men's Expert: - 686;**

**Men's Sport:- 876;**

**Women's Expert - 277**

**Women's Sport - 621;**

[**Westport Sea 2 Summit**](http://www.westportsea2summit.ie/)**Race Report:**

On a perfect weather day for racing the [**Westport Sea2Summit**](http://www.westportsea2summit.ie/) Supreme event produced a tight finish with 2010 Spirit winner Andrew Murray just holding on to take his inaugural Expert Series event win in an impressive time of 3h 39". Murray led from the outset with Shawn Stewart, Edward Sweeney and Brendan Conway his closest challengers after the first run into T1 with Adian Mc Moreland a bit further back in 5th. Murray held onto a slim lead on the bike leg to the base of Croagh Patrick with Conway moving into second ahead of Keith Ruddy and Gerard Corcoran who had the fastest time on this leg.

On the mountain Murray made significant gains on the field with the fastest times both up and down with Stewart the only one to come close to matching him on the ascent and similarly Paul Feeney on the descent but Murray then increased his lead further on the hard climp up the Mauum hills to hold a lead of over 6 minutes on Stewart with McMoreland more than a minute further back at the top of the climb. On the race back to home the stamina issues that have been in evidence before in Gaelforce when he has led in the early stages only to drop out of contention, crept back into view as Murray's return leg time was only 17th fastest for the day with Stewart also slowing a little and allowing Mc Moreland to catch him for second by the final transition at Westport quay. The relatively short run leg back into town was again to prove more challenging than it might appear on paper with Murray suffering badly with cramps and being chased down the whole way by Mc Moreland who made up over 5 mins on this leg but Murray held on grimly to take the win by less than a minute at the finish line. Behind him Stewart also had a nightmare final leg losing over 7 mins to Mc Moreland and allowing Keith Ruddy and Gerard Corcoran to come through to take 3rd and 4th respectively .

In the ladies Supreme contest there was no such drama as Kathleen Barry posted the fastest times for all sections of the race to come home a clear and impressive winner by a margin of over 25 mins in a time of 3h 42' 03". In the battle for the minor placings Nessa Sweeney had an impressive climb up Croagh Patrick to move into second ahead Esme O Flynn, Sharon Cronin and Sophie Bagnall. Bagnall then had a great descent to move into joint 3rd with O Flynn by the base of the mountain. They both then passed Sweeney on the final stages of the Mauum bike climb and extended their advantage to come home only 18 seconds apart with O Flynn in 2nd, Bagnall 3rd, Cronin 4th and Sweeney in 5th.

In the Spirit event the fast running Tommy Gill led from the start and was a clear winner by over 4 mins ahead of Mark Kenny and Patrick Dirrane in 3rd with Eoghan Mc Carthy's fastest bike splits taking him into 4th ahead of Ciaran Smyth in 5th and Liam Heanue in 6th after the fastest run legs both up and down the mountain.

In the ladies Spirit event the recently crowned 2012 Sport series champion Marie Boyle showed her champion form when taking 11th place overall with the fastest ladies legs throughout coming home 5mins clear of Eleanor Griffiths with Deirdre O Mahony coming through late in the race to take 3rd ahead of Helen Gibbs in 4th and Noreen Toole in 5th

**SERIES SUMMARY at 1st Nov:**

With the [**Westport Sea2Summit**](http://www.westportsea2summit.ie/) on 12th Nov still to come the top standings are looking fairly clear with some minor place joustling still possible in the final race of the series.

Whilst the entry lists are not yet available it is looking like the men's expert level (Supreme) race should be an opportunity for some new blood to make the podium with several of the expert men 2011 race winners already in their off season whilst in the ladies race the promise of a great race between the 2011 Series champion Emma Donlon and 2010 champion Derval Devaney who has spent this past summer concentrating on the triathlon scene now looks unlikely as Donlon sustained an injury whilst on the winning MSAI team at the [**24 Hour Raid adventure race**](http://www.cooleyraid.com/) up north recently.

After some very close racing all season in the expert events in particular (7 different winners of the 9 men's races), Connaught have taken a clean sweep of the 2011 Champions list.

Mayo is well represented by Noel Brady and Padraig Marrey who have taken the men's sport and expert titles respectively whilst Galway's Marie Boyle and Roscommon's Emma Donlon have taken the sport and expert women's titles.

To put in context the scale of these achievements it is worth noting the number of individuals registering top 100 scores in the series:

**Men's Expert: - 490**

Men's Sport:- 876

Women's Expert - 242

Women's Sport - 621

**WAR Powerscourt Race Reports:**

The weather, venue and course all were stunning as the Wicklow Adventure Race Series wound down with some cracking racing throughout the field.

In the men's expert race, single speed world champ Niall Davis led one of the pre-race favourites Padraig Marrey into T1 in the company of the race's surprise packet James Mc Fadden. Having been long absent with running injuries and having taken up cycling in an effort to regain fitness Mc Fadden then showed why he has Irish Mountain Running team credentials on the short but technical Sugarloaf Run opening up a decent gap on local hope Noelie Kavanagh and Marrey.

Mc Fadden and Marrey were together again arriving at Vartry lakes courtesy of a very strong second bike leg by Marrey. It was on the water however that Marrey made his most significant gain of the day putting time into all of his expert course rivals with a great kayak leg while McFadden, who had not organised a single boat for himself, had to wait for over 4 minutes until Davis arrived and joined him on a double sit on top boat. The pair lost more time to their single kayak equipped rivals and left the lakes in eight and nineth positions whilst local hope Noelie Kavanagh had moved up to second and Peter O Farrell third. Marrey then had an excellent bike leg to maintain his lead but Mc Fadden and Davis both had stunning climbs to Sally Gap to move into second and third respectively on arrival at T3.

Whilst the Biking.ie man Davis and Kavanagh dropped from contention on the Maulin Run it was left to the experienced Marrey to keep the ship steady to lead off the mountain and all the way to the finish in Powerscourt. Mc Fadden closed the gap to 2 mins at the finish coming in second ahead of Peter O Farrell and Adrian Hennessy who both came through on the Maulin run leg to take 3rd and 4th respectively ahead of Aidan Mc Moreland in 5th with John Mc Gregor taking the vets title.

The 3 leading ladies based on known form coming into the race were Emma Donlon, Mary Mulchrone and Catherine Devitt. These 3 were locked together on the opening bike leg into T1. Donlon opened up a gap on the Sugarloaf which she never relinguished to the finish despite the best efforts of Mulchrone who closed the gap at one stage to 33 seconds by virtue of a great kayak leg. Donlon pulled away again on the climb to Sally Gap and held the gap on the Maulin run to defeat her great rival by less than 2 mins at the finish. Devitt had a good race for her first outing in an expert distance event and finished strongly to be only a minute behind Mulchrone with Hilary Jenkinson taking the vets title as 4th placed woman overall.

These results mean that both Marrey and Donlon are now National Adventure Race Expert Series Champs for 2011 

In the Sport Race the National Series champion elect Noel Brady and John Lenehan who could still technically beat him were both in the strong field but in the end the two Mayomen had to play second fiddle to Dublin rivals. On the first bike climb to T1 Garreth Murphy led initially but was passed by Richie Mac Liam, Declan Kelly and Eanna Cunnane with Brady just behind Murphy in fifth. On the slopes of the Sugarloaf Cunnane and Mac Liam lead out whilst behind some fine running from Christopher Fenlon took him up the field to 3rd but ahead Cunnane and Mac Liam stretched out a good lead on the field and were locked together the whole way to the Kayak Stage at Vartry lakes as Kelly dropped away on the iconic mountain to be in 5th coming back to the bikes with Brian Driver just ahead in 4th. On the bike leg out to the lakes those with TT bikes were to the fore and the powerful Simon Von

                              Lonkhuyzen and Brady posted the quickest two times of the day to move up the field. On the water ex international paddler Von Lonkhuyzenshowed his class with the fastest time of the day to move into 3rd overall with local Gerry Kavanagh second fastest.

Up ahead Cunnane and Mac Liam had already set sail for home with Cunnane's experience probably helping as he eeked out a lead on the return cycle to Powerscourt to come home just over a minute ahead of Mac Liam with Von Lonkhuyzen 3rd, Kelly 4th and Driver 5th whilst Brady took the vets title and the National Series Sports title by virtue of other results to date.

In the ladies event Marie Boyle did not travel for Connemara having wrapped up the National Series already so it was left up to local cyclist Linda Haugh to lead the field from the off and she maintained this lead until passed at the summit of the Sugarloaf by mountain runner Laura Flynn. Despite Flynn pulling out a good lead on the descent, Haugh had caught her by Vartry lakes and the pair were still locked together coming out of the final transition. Predictably Haugh pulled away on the return bike leg to take a maiden win by just over 4 minutes ahead of Flynn and Tracie Ryan who had a great second half of the race to move from 5th at Sugarloaf summit to 3rd place ahead of Sophie Bagnall and Elisabeth Carolan with Corina Naughton repeating her Achill ROAR win in the vets.

**WAR Powerscourt – Formguide:**

This Saturday’s expert race looks like it will be a cracker with a virtual who’s who of the 2011 National Series of Races taking to the start line in both men’s and women’s contests.

Gaelforce winner Peter O Farrell is back after his recent foray onto the hills at the World Masters hillrunning champs whilst regular sparring buddies Padraig Marrey and Niall Somers again renew rivalry just two weeks after Somers’ win in the Achill Roar where Marrey may have being feeling the effects of his half ironman exertions 6 days previously. Add into the mix local Noelie Kavanagh who had a convincing win over all of these lads in WAR Glendalough in April but might not be in quite as devestating form still, and recently crowned single speed MTB World Champion Niall Davis and you have a recipe for a super race up front. As an additional incentive, if Marrey can manage to finish ahead of Somers then he should take the National Series title whilst Somers will need to win here and also at the Sea 2 Summit in November to take the series and then only after a countback on head to head results.

Others looking to get up there amongst the top five seeds are Adrian Hennessy, Anthony Frazier, Aidan Mc Moreland, Zoran Skrba, Dan Morough and mountain biker James Mc Cluskey whilst in the vets the two most likely to fight it out for the title are probably Richard Nunan and Ciaran Smith.

In the ladies the top pair from Gaelforce and Achill ROAR, Emma Donlon and Mary Mulchrone, again renew rivalry with the added incentive that if either of these are the winner then they will also take the 2011 National Series title on countback of head to head contests. Donlon had a clear win at Gaelforce but Mulchrone emphatically reversed that in Achill due in no part to her biking experience and skill which could come in handy this Saturday too if blustery after Sally Gap and on the descent toTA3 so this one is also very hard to call. This however may not be just a duel up front as might generally be expected as Catherine Devitt is also in the field. She has has some notable success this year in shorter events such as WAR Glendalough and has both good running and biking credentials and might cause an upset if she has the stamina and correct pacing strategy as will be required for this 3hr + contest. The ladies vet favourite is probably the experienced Hilary Jenkinson but the strong running Muriel Haire could come close if her descending skills both on foot and on bike have improved since her outing in WAR Glendalough whilst Mary Collins is another experience performer that should go well from wave 2

In the sport the usual suspects are there in the men's race with the nearly elected National Adventure Race Series Sports Champion Noel Brady the obvious favourite. Eanna Cunnane seems the one most likely to threaten Brady as could John Lenehan (Who technically could still win the series) and Simon Von Lonkhausen all of who have beaten Brady at various events this year. This route will suit the strong biking Brady so Cunnane will have to create a decent gap on the Sugarloaf run if he is to stay ahead whilst the kayaking leg may not be suficiently long for West Wicklow Roar winner and ex international paddler Von Lonkhausen to create the gap needed to keep Brady and Cunnane at bay on the final bike leg to the finish at Powerscourt. With vet Brady a likely top 3 finisher Patrick Dirrane seems most likely to take the title as he did behind Brady at the Achill Roar 2 weeks ago tho Garreth Murphy might be one to challenge.

The ladies Sport race looks likely to be won by the ex international hill runner Laura Flynn unless some of the newcommers such as triathlete Orla Mooney or another, who's form is scant to this formguide anyway, can show something special on the day whilst Corina Naughton could well repeat her vet win in Achill Roar.

With a super setting in Powerscourt House estate, a challenging and memorable course and this year's strongest line up at the front it promises to be a great day's racing throughout the field

**2011 Achill ROAR Race Report:**

With very strong winds forcing cancellation of the swim/ kayak section and the expert route modified to avoid the exposed cliff edge and summit ridge of Minaun mountain for the Experts, the third running of the Achill ROAR proved a stern test of resolve for all competitors with particularly tricky cycling conditions.

In the expert race 2010 [**Achill ROAR**](http://roar.ie/) winner Padraig Marrey and 2011 [**West Wicklow ROAR**](http://roar.ie/) winner Niall Somers who ran Marrey close here last year again did battle for the top honours. With conditions proving tough for all competitors the level of competition was as high as the winds blowing in from the Atlantic. Somers went clear on the opening run and with fastest splits in all sections of the race proved a worthy winner 3 minuites ahead of Marrey who lost nothing in defeat given his recent racing schedule. An epic battle for third saw places change throughout the race.  A possible star in the making Brendan Conway was second after the run but dropped away to finish 5th in the end having been passed first by Adrian Hennessy and then Chris Caulfield who had a storming last bike leg in particular to pip Hennessy in the closing stages to take third place ahead of Hennessy and Conway with John Mc Enri taking the vets title

In the ladies expert race the anticipated top two did battle with Emma Donlon leading Mary Mulchrone by just over a minute after the run. In the testing cycling conditions the experienced Mulchrone revelled and soon took over the lead and went on to an impressive 10th place overall winning by over 5 minutes from Donlon and the super vet Joan Flanagan having a great race to take third ahead of Paula Keoghan with Betty Walsh taking the vets prize.

In the Sports race the pre-race favourite Noel Brady performed well but on the day the fast running newcomer to the AR scene Kieron Cosgrove from Cavan led from the start to post an impressive win ahead of the strong biking Brady and youngster Dean Gillespie in third with Patrick Dirrane taking the vets title.

Ladies sport favourite Marie Boyle had no such trouble and recorded an emphatic win in 11th place overall. Laura English and Ann Marie Egan had a battle royal for second with English just taking it by a single second by virtue of a great final bike and sprint for the line leg and Corina Naughton taking the vets title.

As the competitors retired for the now legendary post race party the statisticians reported that Noel Brady and Marie Boyle have now wrapped up the MSAI National Points Sports Titles after consistent top performances all season.

In the Expert categories the title destinations are nicely poised for the penultimate race in the series, WAR Powerscourt on 24thSept. If Padraig Marrey wins or at least finishes ahead of last year’s Series winner Niall Somers then the title is his but a win for Somers would leave him with a great chance to retain the title though he would need a win in the final race of the series, the Westport Sea 2 Summit, to complete his late season comeback and snatch the title from Marrey's grasp.

The ladies Series title is even more finely balanced with Mary Mulchrone and Emma Donlon each with 399 points so if both race and either of them win in Powerscourt then they will take the title on head to head countback.

With two weeks to recover from Achill Marrey should be well recovered and ripe for battle as will his partner Mulchrone who is coming right back into form at the right stage of the season though Somers and Donlon will have advantage of superior local route knowledge which could prove vital.

Updated Points Series Standings given above

**Achill ROAR Formguide:**

After the excitement of the [**Gaelforce West**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/)3 weeks ago County Mayo plays host to the Achill ROAR this coming weekend.

In the expert race [**Gaelforce**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/)winner Peter O Farrell is the obvious favourite but he looks set to be challenged strongly by 2010 Achill ROAR winner Padraig Marrey and 2011 Niall Somers who ran Marrey close here last year and who held on gamely for a deserved win over Marrey in this year’s [**West Wicklow Roar**](http://roar.ie/).

O’Farrell is in good form since GF with a strong showing in Warriors Run and IMRA events and is the man to beat. Marrey seems back in form having qualified for the 70.3 worlds in Las Vegas with his 3rd Age Group finish in ½ IM in Galway last Sunday. That race may leave him a bit lacking in sharpness coming as it does at the end of a hard season but Marrey is a battle hardened sort who will want to finish his season on a high and repeat his win here last year. Somers is likely to be suited by this course and will be anxious to make amends for his fifth place at Gaelforce and could go close providing he has recovered from an ankle injury sustained on the holy mountain. Adrian Hennessy who won in Dingle and had several top 3 series placings early in the season could be another to go well but has not been seen on the racecourse lately so could be lacking a little in race fitness whilst Chris Caulfield and Brendan Conway should also challenge for a top 5 finish. Other likely top ten finishers are current Nat Series leader Eoghan Carton, Ciaran Smith and Brian Mc Kechnie.

Mayo’s Noel Gibbons is in great form recently but will have to be on top of his game to keep 2010 [**Achill Roa**](http://roar.ie/)r 4th John McEnri at bay for the vets title and both of them will be highly placed overall.

In the ladies race the current top two ladies in the country will again do battle with Mary Mulchrone looking to go one better than when second to Emma Donlon in [**Gaelforce**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/). Whilst Mulchrone is showing definite signs of a return to the form that saw her record several series wins earlier in the season, Donlon probably still has enough of an edge in the key running discipline to confirm their recent [**Gaelforce**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/) placings. Betty Walsh looks most likely of the others to chase them home and is favourite for the vets title providing her recent leg injury does not flare up but former mountain runner Joan Flanagan will be there to take advantage if Walsh is off form and Catherine Halpin could possibly round off the top 5 ladies.

In the sport race the men’s and women’s [**Nat Series**](http://msai.ie/adventure-race-ireland-organiser-points-series.php) leaders Noel Brady and Marie Boyle are the ones they all have to beat as they continue to defy their vet status. Regular rivals Brendan Scullion and John Lenehan will line up against Brady but last year’s second Dean Gillespie could be the one to pose the greatest challenge and newcomer Nic Wright could also pose a big threat.  [**Monster Mac**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cpaulmahon%5CAchill%20Roar%5CAR%20formguide%5Cmonstermac.ie) winner Zanya Dahl could go close if she has recovered from a recent injury and newcomers to the AR scene Julie Carbery and Crona Brady look like they have the class to challenge for podium positions if they handle the off road running aspect of this event.

All in it promises to be a great day racing and for most night of celebrating this now legendary post race party venue with all sorts of Heroes and Villians likely to be about.

**Current SeriesSummary at 23rd Aug 2011:-**

With Gaelforcewest just finished the table below is now updated with the latest expert results.

By virtue of his consistent finishing Eoghan Carton has now taken over the lead from the absent Adrian Hennessy but in second place Padraig Marrey now looks the favourite for the title. With Marrey likely to finish his long season at the [**Achill ROAR**](http://roar.ie/)it is still possible for the likes of Hennessy, Gary Crossan, Mike O Brien and Niall Somers to overtake him in the overall standings but a win at Achill will leave the rest with a virtually impossible task to dislodge him from the top spot.

In the ladies points series as predicted Roisin Hickey has taken over the lead but the big two Emma Donlon and Mary Mulchrone look set to repeat their Gaelforce rivalry again at  [**Achill Roar**](http://roar.ie/), [**WAR Powerscourt**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/index.php/powerscourt-adventure-race-wicklow/) and possibly [**Sea2Summit**](http://www.westportsea2summit.ie/) to see who will take the title. With only one point seperating them it should be a battle to the wire well worth watching.

The [**Achill Roar**](http://roar.ie/Achill-Roar-Home.php) race on 10th September is the next event counting for both Sports and Expert points as will both the [**WAR Powerscourt**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/index.php/powerscourt-adventure-race-wicklow/) races in Wicklow on Sept 24th.

**Gaelforce Race Report:-**

As predicted the battleof the big guns in Gaelforce did not disappoint with the first three men and the first two women all breaking the existing records set over the recently extended course in 2010.

Up front in the men's race Martin Bradshaw led off at an, in retrospect, lunatic pace followed by Micheál Forde and Eamon Mc Andrew but all 3 were to fade quickly from contention before the crux of Croagh Patrick was reached. Behind them defending Champion Padraig Marrey, Bruce Duncan, Peter Crommie and Tom O Dowd happily kept each other's company whilst 3 time champion Peter O Farrell started very slowly but was only just over a minute behind this group starting the kayak leg at Killary. O' Dowd and Duncan set fastest times on the kayak but O'Farrell was back in touch with Marrey by the Delphi bike leg start and they set off working together to reel back O' Dowd, Duncan and Somers who also worked together until O' Dowd broke clear on the Sheffry climb and set sail for home in a brave early move. On arrival at the base of Croagh Patrick's climb O' Dowd still had a good lead over Somers, Marrey and O'Farrell and Duncan. As has often been the case it was on the steep ascent that O' Farrell made his move taking over the lead from O' Dowd by the summit  whilst on the descent Marrey set the fastest time of the day (9' 37") to close the gap on O' Farrell and O' Dowd with Duncan's similar blistering descent ( 9' 39") also keeping him in 4th by the start of the final bike leg as Somers faded somewhat from contention after an ankle injury ascending the reek. O' Farrell clearly had kept something in reserve with the fastest final leg of the day ahead of the known strong bikers O' Dowd and Marrey who were locked together at the end of the cycle into the quay at Westport.

O' Farrell crossed the line in a super time of 3h 34' 33" ahead of O' Dowd who broke clear of Marrey in the final 800m run to take second with Marrey improving his 2010 winning time by 8 seconds finishing third. Duncan kept on steadily to take 4th whilst Somers will have learned lots from his first time Gaelforce experience in finishing fifth. David Sands had a great steady paced race to take sixth and was clearly delighted to take the coveted veterans win ahead of tenth placed Noel Gibbons.

In the ladies race it was a two woman race from the start with Emma Donlon using her running strength to take a good lead on the first run and despite the valiant efforts of two time champion Mary Mulchrone she was never headed. On this occasion Mulchrone set fastest times on kayak, mountain descent and final bike legs but had to give best overall to Donlon who showed great improvement (By 27') from her second placing of last year. Her time of 4h 09' 22" is a great new record with Mulchrone also bettering the old record set for this course in 2010. A great battle for third saw Anne Marie Egan take third place ahead of local lass Collette Sweeney who had the consolation of taking the vets title ahead of fifth placed Hilary Jenkinson.

Congrats to all 2253 who completed this event and hopefully we will see you at the A[**chill ROAR**](http://roar.ie/) on 10th Sept 

**GAELFORCE WEST FORMGUIDE:- Updated as Entries Now Are Closed!**

MSAI's formguide has all the latest news based on available information, curent form and expceted soft goign with some tail winds and of course a possibility of a bitta rain :-)

In the Men's race the defending champion and local favourite Padraig Marrey will undoubtably defend his title fiercely but with a hard season behind him he will need to be at the top of his game to keep the challengers at bay. English guest elite full time adventure racer Bruce Duncan comes with a tall reputation and is in good form so he is expected to give all the home contingent plenty of opposition but he too has had several hard events and this race might prove too short for his undoubted abilities over longer distances. he is being given a great chance with expert advice on the route for his preperation though compared to some of the wily veterans he will need all the knowledge he can glean in his big race preparations. Three time winner and twice second Peter O Farrell has recovered well from a poor season start at [**WAR Glendalough**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/) and comes here having trained and raced very well recently.  He should be fresher than most of his opponents and will have intimate course knowledge which could prove useful so will again take all the beating. Tom O Dowd who finished strongly here last year to take third is also racing well after a slow season start and again should be in the reckoning for the podium. Micheál Forde had a great ascent of the Reek last year to take him into fifth and if his cycling has improved to a comparable level then he is another that will challenge. The presence of Andy Murray on the start line should ensure a fast first run - He was in first at the start of the kayak stage and in second at Delphi but after a poor cycle leg he dropped out before the reek. If he has worked on his biking and has a more balanced race he certainly has the speed to figure. The man I think will challenge them all strongly on his first Gaelforce is [**West Wicklow Roar**](http://roar.ie/)winner Niall Somers who has had some focussed training abroad recently and has had this race as his season goal for some time. With strength on and off the bike it will be interesting to see if the experienced hands like Marrey, O'Farrell and Duncan can manage to keep him at bay. Other outsiders for the podium who should make the top ten include Somers' training partner Anthony Frazier, local Noel Gibbons, Martin Bradshaw, Adian Mc Moreland, Jerry O Sullivan and Eanna Cunnane who has been competing successfully in sport events recently plus notherner Peter Cromie who is usually spotted doing the mule work on MSAI's adventure race teams in longer events like the Ballyhoura Beast and Cooley Raid and is my "unknown outsider" tip for a top 5 finish.

Gibbons is probably  favourite in the vets competition ahead of usual contenders Paul Mahon, Noel Brady, Kevin Murphy and David Sands who has been is good form lately too.

It promises to be a facinating race with close and fierce racing assured - *May The Best Man Win*!

In the ladies race it seem to be much more straightforward contest in the absence of reigning champion Derval Devaney who has not fully recovered from a recent bike crash that left her with a severe head gash and other crash related injuries. Former champion Mary Mulcrone is a fierce competitor who knows the course and distance well but like her partner Marrey is also on the recovery trail after a hard season with wins at [**Rough Diamond**](http://www.connemararoughdiamond.com/), [**West Wicklow Roar**](http://roar.ie/) and [**WAR Glenmalure**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/) in addition to her successful completion of the 24hour Reeks Challenge. [**WAR Glendalough**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/) and [**Monster Mac**](http://monstermac.ie/) winner Emma Donlon is herself on the recovery trail after a mid season fall on Djouce was followed by another 3 weeks ago whilst descending Snowdon. The latest fall left her with 3 broken toes and unable to run since but her previous form and undoubted abilities are such that she is taken as favourite to confirm her recent [**Race 2 Glory**](http://race2glory.com/) form ahead of Mulchrone. Strong cyclist Marie Boyle who has had some great success in sport events is likely to round off the top 3 and take the top vet placing in the process as last year's winner Betty Walsh also misses the event with injury with other top 5 contenders likely to be Roisin Hickey and Collette Sweeney with vets Mary walsh, hilary Jenkinson and Kathleen Barry also likely to figure in the top ten.

***CURRENT SERIES SUMMARY at 20th July 2011:-***

After the last event for the sport series ([**Race 2 Glory**](http://www.race2glory.com/)) we have new leaders in both men's and women's competitions.

In the men's Noel Brady has jumped into the lead and with several races to go he now looks favourite to take the title though Eanna Cunnane and Simon Van Lonkhuyzen could still win if they were to compete in all 3 remaining Sport events.

In the women's Marie Boyle has now taken over at the top of the leaderboard with a big lead and is favourite now to take the title but is still in danger from Catherine Devitt should she compete in all 3 remaining events.

In the expert Adrian Hennessy currently leads the men's and is likely to lose his lead as he misses Gaelforce. Eoghan Carton or Noel O Leary seem likely to take over the top spot but behind them Padraig Marrey in particular but also Mike O Brien and Gary Crossan have strong claims in the series. The fancied outsider though with only one win currently but who could come with a late season challenge in the remaining 4 races is Niall Somers so promises to be an interesting Series season finale.

In the women's expert standings Susie Mitchell currently leads and it seems likely that lose her lead after Gaelforce where she will not compete. Roisin Hickey should take over the lead but behind them Mary Mulchrone and Emma Donlon with 2 wins each seem likely to fight out the series providing they complete at least 3 of the remaining 4 expert races.

[**Race 2 Glory**](http://www.race2glory.com/) Report:

The [**Race to Glory**](http://www.race2glory.com/) event held last Saturday was a relatively non-technical route to somewhat favour the stronger runners and in the absence of Mike O Brien and Tom O Dowd the in form Ruaidhri Geraghty used his strong running and equally strong biking to dominate with fast times in all 3 stages. He came home almost 5 mins clear of the equally strong running and much improved Aiden Mc Moreland (6th in [**Gaelforce North**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/north/) recently) whilst a minuite further back in 3rd was a below par Padriag Marrey who no doubt will take a bit of time out to recharge the batteries before the defence of his [**Gaelforce West**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/) Crown in 5 weeks time. Chris Caulfield was a further minute behind in 4th and 5th placed Decky Madden took the vet's title.

In the ladies race in the absence of Derval Devaney and with the effects of her Reeks World 24 hour record of only 2 weeks ago slowing Mary Mulchrone it was left to Emma Donlon to take an emphatic win by nearly 9 mins ahead of Mulchrone with Marie Boyle taking the vet's title in 3rd ahead of Collette Sweeney and Kathleen Barry. With Donlon showing all the signs of taking her cycling performances to similar high levels to her well known running speed she now is probably favourite to topple former champion Mulchrone and reigning champion Devaney at [**Gaelforce West**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/) in 5 weeks time though by then it is likely that a well rejuvingated Mulchrone and Westport based Devaney will have other ideas. It is shaping up to be another great race 

Race2Glory Formguide:

All roads lead to Mayo where the next Sport event in the series is the [**Race 2 Glory**](http://www.race2glory.com/) on 16th July

On a course designed by Padriag Marrey it expected to be one of the more challenging Sport event routes in the Series and is set in an area that is likely to be new territory for most participants.

The men's contest seems to be shaping up for a bit of muscle flexing of several of the Galeforce West contenders with the obvious favourite Padraig Marrey likely to be challenged by the strong running Ruaidhri  Geraghty and possibly Tom O Dowd though the [**Monster Mac**](http://monstermac.ie/) winner Mike O Brien might well be best suited to this less technical course and could be the one to trouble Marrey most particularly if he has not fully recovered since his participation in the successful Reeks World Record Challenge outing 2 weeks ago. Noel Brady looks most likely to win the vets title whilst others like Chris Caulfield, Noel Gibbons, Brendan Conway and John Lenehan will be looking to achieve top six placings.

In the ladies Mary Mulchrone has had a great season to date with recent wins in [**West Wicklow ROAR**](http://roar.ie/), [**Connemara Rough Diamond**](http://connemararoughdiamond.com/)and [**WAR Glenmalure**](http://wicklowadventurerace.com/) but having had to battle hard in the Reeks World Record Challenge she may be hard pressed by Westport based Derval Devaney and Roscommon's Emma Donlon who had been flying early in the season but has struggled to shake off a leg injury since her [**Monster Mac**](http://monstermac.is/) victory in late April. Marie Boyle looks certain to take the vets title but will probably not have enough cycling in this event to take advantage of her cycling strength to win here.

Sport Points Series Table will be updated with these Results shortly

 [**WAR Glenmalure**](http://wicklowadventurerace.com/) Race Report:

In the Expert event the late defection of defending champion Niall Somers left the way clear for Padraig Marrey to make it two wins in a row with a good win over the fastest runner of the day Gary Crossan and Ciaran Smith in 3rd whilst unlucky 5th placed Kevin Murphy took the vets title despite having to run the final 3km of the cycle route after breaking a chain when in 2nd.

In the ladies the pre race favourite Mary Mulchrone Mayo also continued her winning ways breaking clear on the first bike leg to take the win over Paula Prendergast and Dairine Frawley.

In the Sports men, Eanna Cunnane made no mistakes this time out and came home a clear winner ahead of Covey Wheelers clubmen Noel Brady and the ever improving John Lenehan (2nd in final results) whilst pre race favourite Marie Boyle came through half way through the cycle leg to take the win ahead of longtime leader Suzanne Sheedy and Tracie Ryan.

The points series table has now been updated with all recent results and the table shows Adrian Hennessy and Susie Mitchell still leading the Expert series rankings and Brendan Scullion and Grainne O Keeffe leading the Sport series but rankings can certainly change as more athletes complete further events. Behind behind the leaders several top athletes are well placed to take over at the top in the near future if events go their way - Check out the links below for your ranking.

Top 5 results count so if you have a low scoring one then you might be able to drop it with a good result in a future event!

MSAI's WAR Glenmalure Formguide: -

This coming Saturday sees the second running of the WAR Glenmalure event in Wicklow with the WAR Full and Sport races counting toward the Expert and Sport Series Points respectively.

Whilst overall numbers maybe low and spread between the two races this will of course give great chance of good point scoring for those looking to increase their series ranking as both leaders in the Expert Rankings can't take part this weekend.

In the Men's Expert Race recent [**Connemara Rough Diamond**](http://www.connemararoughdiamond.com/) Expert winner Padriag Marrey will be looking to reverse placings with the recent [**West Wicklow ROAR**](http://www.roar.ie/West-Wicklow-Roar-Home.php) winner Niall Somers who is also defending the [**WAR Glenmalure**](http://glenmalure.wicklowadventurerace.com/) title he won here in 2010 with a hard fought win over Aaron O Donaghue, Kevin Keane and Robbie Bryson. One man that is sure to lead the field at a good pace up the first run in Donegal's Gary Crossan the recent [**Gaelforce North**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/north/) winner who has a sub 2 20 marathon to his credit a few years back and is also a former mountain running international but it remains to be seen if his biking will be strong enough to hold off the former pair who are both strong up and down the hills on the bike.

It promises to be a facinating battle between the young all rounder Somers, the raw biking power and experience of Marrey and the strong running Crossan all of whom are in good form with recent race wins to their credit.

In the ladies expert section Mayo's Mary Mulchrone who is on a roll after recent [**West Wicklow ROAR**](http://www.roar.ie/West-Wicklow-Roar-Home.php) and [**Connemara Rough Diamond**](http://www.connemararoughdiamond.com/) victories will be opposed by 2010 [**Gaelforce West**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/) winner Derval Devaney so it will be interesting to see can Mulchrone defeat Devaney as she did in 2009 [**Gaelforce West**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/west/) before an injury kept her out of many races in 2010 with others who will be looking to challenge for podium placings include Mags Fitsgerald and Rose Grffin.

The heavy weights are also coming to the famous Glen in the shadow of Leinster's highest mountain Lugnaquilla for the sports section with recent emphatic [**Rough Diamond**](http://www.connemararoughdiamond.com/) sport class winner Noel Brady being opposed again by Galway's youngster Brendan Scullion who currently leads the series, the consistent John Lenehan, Wicklow's Declan Kelly and the strong running Eanna Cunnane who could well grab his first series win whilst in the ladies the favourite has to be Marie Boyle who recently had a runaway success in the Connemara Rough Diamond sports event and has her sights set firmly on the Nat Points title and who's main opposition is likely to come from Suzanne Sheedy.

Dingle Race Report:

The news from Dingle is of a first series win for the regular Series podium finisher Adrian Hennessy of Kilfinane AC ahead of Tralee based Polish triathlete Milosz Wojcik with the slippy descent off Mount Brandon after recent wet weather deciding the race in Hennessy's favour whilst behind MSAI's Paul Mahon took control of 3rd (and first vet) with a good mountain descent ahead of Waterford triathlete David Powers and Eoghan Carton in 5th whilst close behind in 6th was heavyweight rower and 2008 Olympian Sean Casey from Killarney.

Kerry lass Fiona Devane showed great improvement from 4th last year to take a decisive win ahead of Kilkenny Tri club's Roisin Hickey and Susie Mitchell with Pauline Brady first vet in 4th overall just ahead of Hilary Jenkinson.

Dingle Adv Race Results [**Here**](http://userfiles/2011DingleRESULTSExcel.pdf)

MSAI News at 9th June: This w/e the MSAI points series heads southward to Kerry for the second running of the [**Dingle Adventure Race**](http://http/www.dingleadventurerace.com/). Almost 400 are entered in this single "Expert" category event which takes in the iconic bike section up and down the Conor Pass before the exposed run/ climb up Mount Brandon followed by the Tourist Path descent and long road run section  to the outskirts of Dingle town and the kayak leg and sprint to the finish

MSAI's [**Dingle**](http://www.dingleadventurerace.com/) Formguide:-

Whilst the entry list has yet to be published, last years top 3 lads ( Diarmuid Collins, Paul Mahon and Adrian Hennessy) will all be back again and new challengers in the form of Kerryman Jerry O' Sullivan and Eoghan Carton are sure to make it an interesting race up front whilst Susie Mitchell looks likely to get another podium finish in the ladies race.

The shortening of the road run and lengthening of the bike section will do last year's winner and most people's favourite Collins no favours and he will be hard pressed by Adrian Hennessy and Jerry O Sullivan who have both recent series podium finishes to their credit.  If Collins' biking is not up to scratch even though he is certainly likely to be top ranked runner along with O' Sullivan,  Hennessy's all round ability could serve him well and he may possibly last home safely from a likely leading position on the summit of Mount Brandon. The vets title is likely to be fought out between Mahon and last year's long time leader Kevin Murphy who's climbing abilty both on and off the bike suits this race.

[**Gaelforce North**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/north/en/gaelforce_north_challenge.html) Race Report:

The first running of the Gaelforce North event saw lots of local participation and the pre-race favourite from Letterkenny Gary Crossan did not disappoint the local supporters with a blistering first run and ascent of Errigal coupled with steady biking to finish in 3h 31' 03" over 5 mins clear of Mayo's Chris Caulfield who pulled clear of his nearest challengers with an impressive last bike leg to come home a further 5 mins clear of army man Eoghan Carton whilst the Mayo based Englishman David Sands faded in the final leg after a puncture when challenging Caulfield for 2nd and ended up fourth overall after completing the last 6km on a flat but was still a comfortable winner of the vet's title.

In the ladies race Mayo's Betty Walsh had a great race throughout and dismissed the close challenge of her nearest rival Julie Murphy with impressive final run legs both up and down Errigal and on the final bike stage to the finish to come home 15 min clear in the end in 16th place overall ahead of Murphy with Aoife O Sullivan in third.

[**Connemara Rough Diamond**](http://www.connemararoughdiamond.com/) Race Report:

In Connemara it was business as usual for the Mayo pairing of Padraig Marrey and Mary Mulchrone in the expert race with impressive victories. Marrey had 6 mins to spare at the end despite a puncture on the final bike leg over Carlow's Paul Mahon who held onto his second place from the end of the first hill run section to finish a minute clear of the chasing trio of Noel Gibbons, Kenny Curran and Donal Kelly who finished within 30 sec of each other and 10 mins clear of the next finisher.

Last week's [**ROAR**](http://www.roar.ie/) winner Mulchrone had over 17 mins to spare with her impressive 7th overall finish with Carlow taking another second place when Susie Mitchell finished second with Mayo's Kathleen  Barry in third assuring Mayo of the County title ahead of Carlow.

In the Sport race the evergreen Noel Brady posted three blistering bike legs to finish 6 mins clear of Brendan Murphy with young local Brendan Scullion a further minute behind in third.

In the ladies it was a similar story with former international cyclist Marie Boyle finishing in 6th overall and she took ladies victory with a winning margin of 15 mins over second placed Michelle Traynor with Sinead Oakes in third.

[**Gaelforce North**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/north/en/gaelforce_north_challenge.html) Formguide:

In the Donegal event the consistent Chris Caulfield will be opposed by others with less AR experience but possibly stronger claims given Caulfield's recent return from an outing in the Apex adv race in Switzerland.

Young Eoghan Carton had a good result when 4th in the [**West Wicklow Roar**](http://roar.ie/) last weekend aided by a very strong kayak leg but will not get  the same advantage from the paddling section here.

Martin Rea is a top class ultra runner who is having his first outing at this type of event and has very strong claims along with Letterkenny's Gary Crossan who is a former mountain running international and top marathon runner of a few years back whilst his cycling is also to be respected. These pair certainly have the pedigree and class to make the podium first time out and the strong running Laurance Colleran is another that could challenge if his biking is up to speed.

With the mighty Errigal in themiddle of the race it promises to be a cracker up front.

The vets title looks likely to head west in the hands of the improved David Sands if he can get his pacing right and in the ladies competition Newport's Betty Walsh looks to be the girl they all have to beat after several podium placings in 2010 events.

Rought Diamond Formguide:

The Expert race is likely to be dominated by the Mayo pairing of Padraig Marrey and Mary Mulchrone who are worthy race favourites after their 2nd and 1st respectively last weekend in the [**West Wicklow Roa**](http://roar.ie/)r whilst local man James Keavney, mountain runner Sean Whelan and last year's second Andy Carroll are other likely to challenge for the podium along with last year's winner Paul Mahon who seems favourite to take the vet title. In the ladies Suzanne Kenny will challenge Mulchrone hard if back to the form that saw her win the [**Achill Roar**](http://roar.ie/) in 2009 and others likely to go well are the Carlow pairing of Susie Mitchell and veteran Hilary Jenkinson.

The Sport race is likely to be a closely contested affair with National Series Points on offer and top points scorers to date such as Noel Brady, and Brendan Scullion renewing recent rivalries.

An interesting sideline competition is the inclusion of a 4 person County team element to the races and it will be interesting to see who can challenge the expected Mayo dominance with Marrey and Mulchrone joined by Noel Gibbons and Cathy Barry with Carlow and Wicklow the most likely challengers in the Expert race and Limerick, Galway, Tipperary and Cork in the Sport category - AR is obviously different to the GAA scene in terms of heavyweights .

Last weekend saw second running of the [**West Wicklow ROAR**](http://www.roar.ie/) event which was also a featured race in the [**National Adventure Race Points Series**](http://msai.ie/adventure-race-ireland-organiser-points-series.php) for both sports and expert categories. Next event counting towards Expert points this comming weekend is Gaelforce North whilst the Sport series points will be on offer at the shorter version of the Connemara Rough Diamond race.

West Wicklow ROAR Report:

In the expert race the extended 3km kayak leg led to a good advantage for the skilled paddlers and two of the per-race favourites , Mike O Brien and Derval Devaney failed continue after this stage both suffering in the challenging conditions.

In the end the long time leader Adrian Hennessy had to give way to Niall Somers who hung on in the last bike leg from the strong biking Padraig Marrey whilst in the ladies section Mary Mulchrone led from start to finish to win from Hazel Thompson who just pipped locally based Catherine Halpinion the final few km of the race.

In the sport race it was a two horse race in the end with the international paddler Simon Van Lonkhuyzen just hanging on from the strong cycling Noel Brady who was well clear of Stephen Magee in third whilst Catherine Devitt had a great race to complete the WAR / Roar sport double in fifth place overall - Results given below:-

[**Preliminary Expert West Wicklow ROAR Results Here**](http://www.roar.ie/userfiles/ROAR_Expert_Results_Prelim_280511.pdf)

[**Preliminary Sport West Wicklow ROAR Results Here**](http://www.roar.ie/userfiles/ROAR_Sport_Results_Prelim_280511.pdf)

MSAI's West Wicklow ROAR Formguide:-

The race for points in the sport section has started to take shape with several sometimes “experts” dropping to the sport in search of the points.

In the mens race the fast running Eanna Cunnane will have to contend the strong biking Super Vet Noel Brady and the all rounder John Lenehan whilst they will be chased hard by the strong junior cyclist from Connemara, Brendan Scullion.

In the ladies the [**Monster Mac**](http://www.monstermac.ie/) sports winner Zanya Dahl from Dublin is the current form favourite with Lucy Kelly, Elisabeth Carolan, Suzanne Rath and Joanne Cullen likely to also to be in contention for podium spots.

The Expert race promises to be a classic up front with Mayo’s Padraig Marrey the favourite whilst other in the picture should be the Rathfarnham AC duo of Peter O'Farrell and Niall Somers (Narrow second here last year) who have being showing winning form of late on the hills, Limerick's Adrian Hennessy (3rd in both [**WAR Glendalough**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/) and [**Monster Mac**](http://www.monstermac.ie/)) and particularly Mike O Brien the recent [**Monster Mac**](http://www.monstermac.ie/) winner and triathletes Anthony Frazer and Eric Clinton, any of whom are likely to take full advantage if the favourite shows any signs of weakness!

Derval Devaney is the ladies expert favourite but will challenged strongly by Mary Mulchrone providing she has recovered from a recent running injury, both of these being past [**Gaelforce**](http://www.gaelforcewest.com/) winners. Newcomer to this grade Catherine Devitt who had a fine win against a strong sports field in [**WAR Glendalough**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/) is also a likely podium contender.

**The**[**Connemara Adventure Challenge**](http://www.gaelforceevents.com/connemara/)**on 7th May was the last race in the Sport section of the series -**[**RESULTS HERE**](http://www.sportident.co.uk/results/2011/ConnemaraAdventureChallenge/challenge_splits.html)

**Overall Series Points to include this race for this have now been updated**

[**Latest Women's Sport Rankings HERE**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Sport_WomensOverallat090511.pdf)

[**Latest Mens Sport Rankings HERE**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Sport_MensOverallat090511.pdf)

**Connemara Adventure Challenge Race Report:-**

It was probably the higest class field ever for a Sport event as many of the top placings were taken by those usually seen competing in the Expert sections of National Adv Race Series events.

In the Men's section Army man Diarmuid Collins set a frantic pace from the off, determined to improve on his close second of last year when a puncture surely cost him victory. He was kept company by Kerryman Gerry O Sullivan whilst pre-race favourite Padraid Marrey was not far behind after the mountain run section ahead of Paul Mahon and last year's winner Chris Caulfield. On the bike section Marrey took the chance many other did not by selecting a road bike and he safely powered through this section to establish a lead of over 3 minutes ahead of O'Sullivan with Collins now in third and mahon dropping out of contention after two punctures.

Marrey maintained his lead whilst O' Sullivan lost over a minute and second place to Collins in the kayak section and despite losing some time to the chasing duo on the final run to the finish Marrey had a comfortable victory of almost 2 minutes over Collins with O'Sullivan a minute behind in third and Caulfield a further 2 mins behind in fourth with sixth placed Noel Brady taking the Vets title.

In the ladies the Gaelforce form of 2010 was again to prove the best guide with Derval Devaney leading from the start  ahead of former international cyclist Marie Boyle and Michelle Ryan. Despite an impressive cycle by Boyle when catching and passing Devaney on the bike leg and maintaining a narrow advantage over the kayak section, Devany's blistering last run left her with over 3 mins to spare over the vet Boyle who was 2 mins ahead of another vet Betty Walsh in third and Ryan a further minute behind in fourth.

**National Series Points have now been updated after the MonsterMAC event - Links to each category table are as follows:**

[**Latest Men's Expert Rankings Here**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Full_MensOverallat010511.pdf)

[**Latest Women's Expert Rankings Here**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAR_Full_WomensOverallat010511.pdf)

**MONSTERMAC Report and Provisional Results Now Available**[**HERE**](http://www.monstermac.ie/index.php)

**National Adventure Race Points Update coming shortly!**

**Monster MAC Report:**

**On a day when the sun shone and the weather was well matched by the warmth of the local welcome as evidenced by the friendly and encouraging local marshals and public support, the Monster of Munster was met and conquored by many hardy souls.**

**In the Expert version the fast running Mike O Brien from Limerick Tri Club led from the start and despite being reeled in on the bike and mountain run descents by Kilfinane A.C's Adrian Henessy and the close attentions of strong biking Bristol native and now Cork resident Robert Wormald, O'Brien's superior climbing ability proved the key to his success in a tremendous time of 3h 04' 59", just a minute ahead of Wormald with Hennessy less than a minute further behind in third. Local fireman Brian Murphy was well  up with the leaders on the initial two stages but the testing 10km mountain run took it's toll and he faded a little in the end to finish fourth and 1st Vet was former Irish and European kickboxing champion Richard Nunan from Cork. In the ladies race another former kickboxer Roscommon's Emma Donlon was in a class of her own with a superb 10th overall position in a time of 3h 34' 34" ahead of Carlow's Susie Mitchell and local lass Pauline Brady in third and 1st Vet.**

**In the sport race the veteran Tom Palmer had a great steady race to take the win in a time of 1h 47' 24"over two minutes clear of Austin Hennessy and Seán Healy with Patrick Fitzgerald taking the Vet's prize with 6th overall. In the ladies race Zanya Dahl showed fantastic form after her injury problems last year and came home a superb 5th overall in a time of 1h 53' 08" ahead of vet Frances Shanahan and Rozelle Owens with Veronica Horan taking the vet's prize.**

**MSAI's**[**Monster MAC**](http://monstermac.ie/)**Formguide:-**

**Sat 30th April is the date for the next National Adventure Race Series event.**

**It is the first staging of the**[**Monster MAC Adventure Race**](http://monstermac.ie/)**in the Boggeragh Mountains near Millstreet in Co Cork.**

**At the sharp end of the Expert race a renewal of their recent WAR tustle is on the cards with Limerick Tri club's Michael O Brien the slight favourite over Kilfinane AC's Adrian Hennessy in the Expert Race. Others likely to figure in the top ten include the consistent Brian Mc Kechnie, Dingle AR organiser Noel O Leary, Cormac Mc Donnell and the dark horses that I think can upset a few AR regulars are triathlete Robert Wormald, if he can handle the off road mountain run section, and local fireman Brian Murphy who has been training consistently on the course and is certainly no slouch on a bike having completed the Rás in the past.  Vets likely to battle for the title and also likely top ten finishers are long distance AR specialists Willie Rock and Richard Nunan. The recent WAR winner Emma Donlon looks to be the one to beat of those entered in the Women's race with Carlow's Susie Mitchell looking a likely next best and Pauline Brady a similar strong fancy for a top 5 finish and the ladies vet title.**

**As ever the Sport version looks wide open with many lesser know participants than the Expert race and a great accessible route for those new to this type of event.**

**Ciaran O Sullivan and Tom Palmer both look to have good chances in the men's  whilst Zanya Dahl, Ann O Regan and Grainne O Keeffe should figure prominently in the women's race but there are likely to be many surprise performances in this race.**

**The prizes fund (value over €1,500) consists of vouchers for**[**The Edge Shop**](http://www.theedge-sports.com/)**in Cork and Trophy Tankards from [Crannmor Pottery](http://crannmorpottery.com/) in Kilkenny. These are sure to be well recieved by those finishing in the top 3 overall or top (over 40) vet.**

**It promises to be a great day's racing in the Boggragh Mountains.**

**Full Entry List is now on the**[**Monster MAC**](http://monstermac.ie/)**Site**

**WAR Glendalough Report:-**

**The**[**WAR Glendalough**](http://wicklowadventurerace.com/)**race last Saturday is probably the hardest in the series and Wicklow native Noelie Kavanagh produced an outstanding performance despite a puncture at the Sally Gap to come home just 31seconds clear of the pre-race favourite Padraig Marrey from Mayo with the Limerick duo of Mick O Brien in third and early leader Adrian Hennessy in fourth. Cork's Kevin Murphy picked up the vets title finishing 9th overall.**

**In the ladies WAR race it was much more straightforward for pre-race favourite Emma Donlon from Dublin after some late withdrawals of potential close rivals left her to enjoy an easy win and an impressive 20th position overall with a gap of 21 minutes to second placed Roundwood resident Lorraine Creane and German native Sonja Furhman in third ahead of Army girl Lisa Mc Mahon. Carlow's Hilary Jenkinson was the winner in the vet ladies category with her 7th overall.**

**In the Sports event there was an exciting tussle throughout with the lead being exchanges several times and at the final transition 17 year old Galway native Brendan Scullion led only to be overtaken by both John Dunne (1st) and Aiden Campbell (2nd) in the last 3.5km run with Michael Grimes the first vet home.**

**In the ladies race it again proved an exciting tustle between a south Dublin based trio. Catherin Devitt proved strongest on the day ahead of Deirdre O Toole and 2010 winner Laura Flynn with Roundwood taking yet more glory with Louise Cullen repeating her 2010 win in the vet ladies category.**

**National Points Series tables have now been updated.**

**Next event in the series in the**[**Monster Ma**](http://www.monstermac.ie/)**c on 30th April based in the Millstreet Country Park in north Co Cork.**

**With somewhat shorter courses than WAR (Wining times anticipated are 1h 40 mins for sport and 3hrs for Experts) and a likely turnout of about 250 between both races the points will be easier earned than in WAR so be sure not to miss out on what should be a great event in a largely undiscovered area.**

**Race reports below and overall preliminary results for the Harlequin Adv Duathlon**[**HERE**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/Top100HAD250311.xlsx)

See Below for [**WAR Glendalough FORMGUIDE**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/WarGlendalough2011Formguide.docx)

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**There will be 10 events in both the Sport and Expert Sections with seperate points awarded for each and mens and women's races assessed seperately with 100 points for 1st, 99 for 2nd, etc**

**Your best 5 results will count so the more races you do the better chance you have to improve your series ranking and allow your worst results to be disgarded**

**First event in the the Sports Series section on Saturday 26th March was the**[**Harlequin Adventure Duathlon**](http://www.harlequinhotelcastlebar.ie/duathlon-mayo)**.**

**National underage Duathlon champion Con Doherty had an emphatic win over Anthony Murray and the new vet David Sands giving Mayo a clean sweep on the men's podium whilst in the ladies section former international cyclist (and also a Vet) Marie Boyle from Spiddal had a good win over English lass Helen Gibbs with Foxford's Rachel Moloney taking third.**

**The next two events in the Series are**[**WAR - Glendalough**](http://www.wicklowadventurerace.com/)**in Co Wicklow on 16th April and**[**Monster MAC**](http://monstermac.ie/)**based in Milstreet, Co Cork on 30th April.**

**Both these events offer both Sport and Expert categories so are sure to be closely contested**

[**WAR - Glendalough**](http://wicklowadventurerace.com/)**was a sell-out success in 2010 and**[**Monster Mac**](http://monstermac.ie/)**is particularly suitable for 1st timers to this type of event with a 7km trail run and a short kayak section**

**National Adventure Race Points Series – WAR Glendalough - Formguide**

The second sport event and first expert event in this year’s National Points Series is the Wicklow Adventure Race (WAR) which takes place this Saturday 16th April.

Points will be awarded to the first 100 men and women in both WAR Full (Expert) and WAR Sport sections. These will be assembled into a table where your best 5 races of the possible maximum 10 will count toward you 2011 National Adventure Race Points Series ranking.

In the absence through injury of last year’s winner Eoin Keith the expert race looks set to be a repeat of the 2010 Gaelforce showdown between Mayo’s Padraig Marrey and Dublin’s Peter O Farrell where only 9 seconds separated them after 3 ½ hours of hard racing. Marrey is likely to be well suited by this course with not too much technical downhill running and plenty of power biking sections especially from Sally Gap back to Laragh but O Farrell should prove slightly stronger on the runs and will have the benefit of local course knowledge so if he can avoid being dropped on the final bike stage it might well come down to a “sprint” for the line on the final 3.5km run stage. Others likely podium contenders are local hope Noelie Kavanagh, UK based triathlete Niall O Brien who won WAR Glenmalure sport in a canter last September and 2010 Connemara Challenge winner Chris Caulfield.

The ladies race looks set to be a repeat of the battle of West Wicklow Roar with 1st and 2nd Jenny Mc Cauley and Beth Mc Cluskey respectively who are trying to prevent a possible Mayo double with multiple Galeforce winner Mary Mulchrone set to compete hard for the win whilst others likely to figure in the race for the podium are race favourite Emma Donlon who is in flying form already this season,  German native Sonja Fuhrmann and well known Roundwood triathlete Lorraine Creane.

In the Sports section the men’s contest looks wide open with any one of a number of dark horses whilst ladies that catch the eye as serious podium possible include last year’s winner Laura Flynn, triathlete Deirdre O Toole and Suzanne Sheedy.

**Congratulations to Niall Somers and Derval Devaney  - 2010 National AR Points Series Winners**

2010 MSAI National AR Points Series: - [**Men's Series Points Here**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAROverallMen2010Final.pdf)**&**[**Ladies Series Points Here**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAROverallWomen2010FINAL.pdf)

**Congratulations to all those that made the final table by virtue of a top 100 placing on one or more events**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Points awarded to top 100 men and top 100 women in each race** | **2010 Men's Standings** | **2010 Women's Standings** |
| **WAR 1 - Wicklow Adventure Race Glendalough - 17th April** | [**WAR 1 Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/MensPointsWAR1.xls) | [**WAR 1 Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/WomensPointsWAR1.xls) |
| **WWR - West Wicklow Roar - 22nd May** | [**WWR Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/MensWWRPoints.xls) | [**WWR Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/WomensWWRoarPoints.xls) |
| **GF - Gael Force West - 22nd August** | [**GF Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/GF-Points-Mens010910.xls) | [**GF Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/GFFPoints.pdf) |
| **AR - Achill Roar - 11th September** | [**AR Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/ARPoints160910.pdf) | [**AR Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/ARWPoints160910.pdf) |
| **WAR 2 - Wicklow Adventure Race Glenmalure - 26th September** | [**WAR 2 Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/WAR2MensPoints.pdf) | [**WAR 2 Points**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/WAR2WomensPoints.pdf) |
| **2011 Nat AR Points Series Overall  -**[**MENS FINAL POINTS HERE**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAROverallMen2010Final.pdf)**-**[**LADIES FINAL POINTS HERE**](http://msai.ie/userfiles/NAROverallWomen2010FINAL.pdf) |