



Ireland's
longest and
friendliest
bike ride

AUDAX IRELAND

LONG-DISTANCE CYCLING IN THE 32 COUNTIES



Ireland's
longest and
friendliest
bike ride

Over four unforgettable days cycle through the South of Ireland from the green pastures of Tipperary's Golden Vale to the rugged beauty of West Cork's Sheep's Head Bay.

Ireland by bicycle, like you have never seen it before. Over twelve hundred kilometres of our finest scenery from Waterford's Copper Coast, via the Glen of Aherlow to The Lakes of Killarney, Moll's Gap, Ladies View and much, much more. From quiet country lanes to the busier Ring of Kerry, this route joins the iconic vistas with the hidden treasures of rural Munster.

An event designed for the very experienced cyclist and run under the rules of the Audax Club Parisien. It incorporates just short of 14,000 metres of climbing over 1,200 kilometres distance, reaching a high of 400 metres on moderately challenging gradients. The time for completion is 90 hours.

The event Start/Finish is in An Stór Hostel, Midleton, County Cork. From here on your first day commencing at 06.00 you will

set out on – and hopefully complete - a 360 kilometre loop. This base control will remain open until 08:00 the following day. This manned control will provide you with a cooked evening meal, cooked breakfast, showers and beds. We will also transport an overnight bag to our second manned control in Killarney.

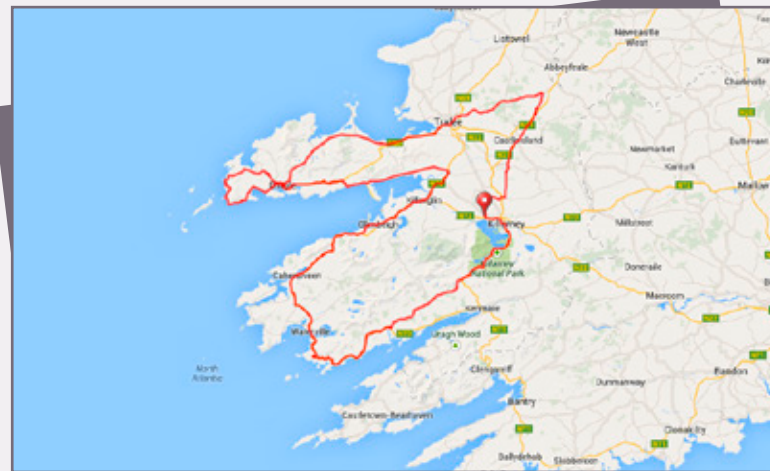
Day 2 sees you depart Midleton for Killarney where you will again be provided on arrival with an evening meal and with breakfast before you leave. This second manned control will also provide bed and shower for both your second and third nights on the event.

The final leg of the journey brings you from the Killarney base back to your starting point in Midleton.

THE ROUTE

DAY 3 – 350 KM

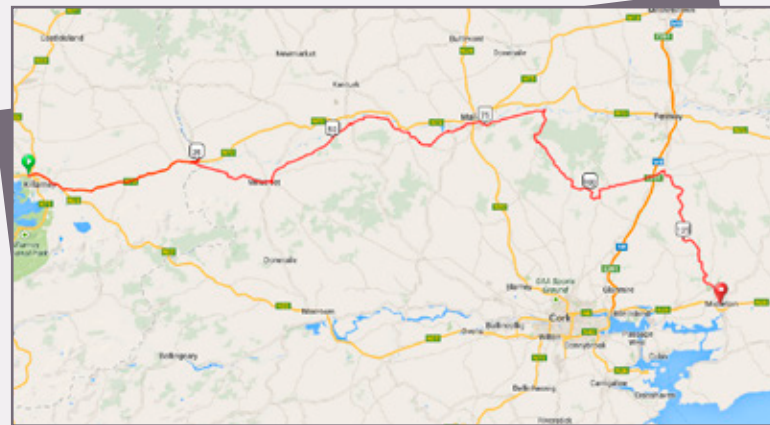
Day three starts with the mystical Celtic trail called the Ring of Kerry progressing around the Iveragh Peninsula and Dingle in the heart of the Kerry Gaeltacht. Watch the sun set behind Castleisland from the stunning Glounsharoon as you return to your Killarney base.



DAY 4 – 140 KM

Your final day takes you through Sliabh Luachra and inland through the pastures of Cork back to Midleton. Along the way we will introduce you to the famous sights, to the bustling towns and sleepy villages of rural Ireland.

There is so much to see and so much you will want to return to explore; Ireland is a land rich in culture, and lore with a world-famous welcome in every village.



MIDLETON

Many people may not be aware that whiskey was invented in Ireland! Today, some of the finest is distilled in Midleton where there is a long tradition in distilling. Midleton was the home first of Cork Distillers which was formed in 1825 and was later to be merged with Irish Distillers. Later again and with the inestimable help of one business tycoon, Dermot Desmond, the brand was acquired by Pernod Ricard. The old distillery boasts the world's largest pot still and also the country's largest working water wheel at seven metres. Today visitors to the new distillery are welcomed to Jameson Heritage Centre and have an opportunity to sample the finest whiskey in the land.



YOUGHAL

A pretty little harbour town at the mouth of the Blackwater River. It features a lighthouse and an iconic clock gate through which the main street and the Míle Fáilte runs. The walls of Youghal were built as protection in 1200 by the Normans and the new concrete bridge opened in 1963. Sir Walter Raleigh the noted Elizabethan adventurer, was the Mayor of Youghal on two occasions. One of the most colourful characters of the era, he is credited among other things with bringing the potato to Ireland and also introducing tobacco. A favourite in the court of Queen Elizabeth he was given 40,000 acres for suppressing an uprising. These included the towns of Youghal and Lismore. He later sold his property for the 'princely' sum of £1,500. Youghal was one of the busiest medieval ports in the south of Ireland. Safe access to the port is vital and the original beacon tower was demolished in 1848 when the present, granite structure was built. The automated single light will catch your eye every two and a half seconds. In 1954 John Huston filmed part of the movie Moby Dick in Youghal and a pub in the town still carries the name.



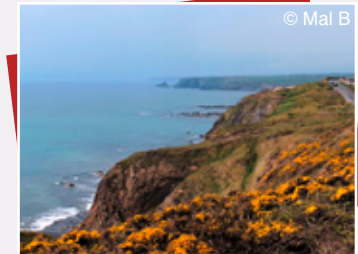
DUNGARVAN

Master McGrath, Ireland's favourite and thought to be the greatest dog ever, was born in Dungarvan in 1866, the runt in a pack of seven. Performing so poorly at his first trial that his trainer ordered him to be given away, the greyhound went on to become the world's most famous greyhound. He was beaten only once in thirty seven coursing events. He was a three time winner of the Waterloo Cup - the blue riband of UK coursing - and the first supreme champion of the sport. So famous was he that he was summoned to appear before Queen Elizabeth and became the subject of painting, ballad and lore. At the autopsy after his death in 1873 his heart was found to be twice the average size. His statue, the only public monument ever built to a dog in Ireland, guards the junction of the Clonmel and Cappoquin road a few kilometres west of the town. His image was also immortalised on the old Irish sixpence.



THE COPPER COAST

Eight kilometres out of Dungarvan we come to area known as the Copper Coast. It takes its name from the 19th century mines that grew up along this 25 kilometre stretch of spectacular coastline with Bunmahon at its centre. The cliffs west were mined for copper, silver and lead in the 18th century but it was in the mid-19th century that mining flourished in the area. Within ten years of being founded, The Mining Company of Ireland described the area as being "the most important mining district in the empire". However, this proved to be its peak and within a few years having reached depths of five hundred metres mining became too expensive. The company then withdrew to Tankardstown in 1850 and activity there grew for the next fifteen years. The industry was marked at the time by fluctuating prices and production was regulated accordingly. However, by 1879 the last few tons were sold and an operation that once employed more than a thousand was quickly wound down. Entire families emigrated, some finding employment in Michigan and later in Montana, USA. Today, the ruined engine houses on Tankardstown cliffs are a reminder of the halcyon days on the Copper Coast.



DAY 1

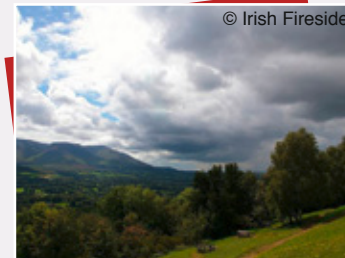
CARRICK-ON-SUIR

Sean Kelly, former professional road cyclist was born in 1956 about five kilometres from Carrick-on-Suir. Considered among the finest classic riders of all time, Kelly amassed 193 professional wins in an eighteen-year cycling career. Among them Paris-Nice on seven successive occasions, the Vuelta a España and multiple wins in the Giro di Lombardia, Mila-San Remo, Paris Roubaix, and Liege-Bastogne-Liege. Twice a bronze medallist in the World Championships, he ranked number one in the world rankings for a record six years. He also won the points classification in the Tour de France four times, the intermediate sprint classification in three years as well as winning five Tour stages and the yellow jersey. In 1984 alone he recorded 33 victories. Twenty years later a limestone plaque was unveiled to him in the eponymous Sean Kelly Square in the centre of his home town.



THE GLEN OF AHERLOW

This is an area of secluded and entirely unspoilt natural beauty that stretches for sixteen kilometres in Tipperary encompassing some of the most remarkable scenery in the country. It is bordered on one side by the Galtee mountains and on the other by Slievenamuck.



THE GOLDEN VALE

This area is generally taken to mean the valleys of the river Suir and its tributaries running through the lowlands of Tipperary. It stretches from the Silvermines in the North to the Galtees and Comeragh Mountains in the south encompassing parts of three counties: Limerick, Tipperary and Cork. Famed as one of the most fertile areas of Europe its farming land is considered the best in Ireland and especially suited to dairy farming. It is a region of rolling pastureland and natural beauty.



DAY 1



THE VEE

The Vee is the name given to a pass through the Knockmealdown mountains which overlook much of the Golden Vale

LISMORE

An area favoured for holidays by Fred Astaire a man of whom it was infamously said at an early audition “losing hair, can’t sing, can dance a bit”. Today, Fred is remembered as the greatest ever star of the musical screen. He is often linked with Ginger Rogers whom he joined in ten films. However, he was also worked with many others including Rita Haywoth and Judy Garland. Critics agree that he was among the finest dancers and singers of any generation.

Lismore Castle on the banks of the Blackwater is the home of the “father of Chemistry” Robert Boyle who gave his name to Boyle’s Law ($pV=K$).



DAY 1



COBH

Fota island is a small island in Cork harbour that is host to Irelands only wildlife park, ornamental gardens and stately home. Cobh is a dedicated cruise terminal that welcomes around 100,000 visitors each year. In the past it served as an embarkation point for many Irish who emigrated to America especially in the famine years around 1845. It was also the final port of call for the ill-fated Titanic in 1912. Keep an ear cocked for the 47 bells that comprise the carillon of St. Coleman's Cathedral in the centre of the town.



© Bill barber

FERRY

From Fota, the route leaves the mainland, crossing the bridge onto Great Island. Follow the coastline until Carrigaloe. The ferry, operated by a private company runs from 7.00 am to 10.00 pm each day and the four minute crossing costs Audax cyclists one euro.

KINSALE

Kinsale is a small fishing town hailed as the gourmet capital of Ireland. The population is increased substantially by tourists who enjoy the angling and sailing.



© JonoTakesPhotos

CLONAKILTY

William Ford left famine stricken Ballinascarthy, near Clonakilty in 1847. A generation later, his son Henry had founded the Ford Motor Company, pioneered assembly line manufacture and by 1913 was producing more than half of all motor cars in the United States. With a panache peculiar to this day among Irish industrialists Henry amassed one of the world's largest fortunes without ever allowing his company to be audited.



SKIBBEREEN

Its newspaper the Skibbereen Eagle, founded in 1857 had a uniquely international perspective, famously and variously giving solemn warning to the British Prime Minister, Tsar of Russia and Kaiser Wilhelm that it “had its eye on them”. Little wonder then that the grandfather of the man known as the Father of American Intelligence hailed from Skibbereen; William Joseph (“Wild Bill”) Donovan.

Seven years previously, and born in 1890 was another involved closely in Intelligence and known to the Irish as the “The Big Fella”. Michael Collins, from Clonakilty was a charismatic guerrilla leader, Irish revolutionary and signatory of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. He was killed in an ambush in 1922 during the Irish Civil War not far from Clonakilty (30 km) in Béal na mBláth. His stature as a political leader and visionary continues to grow among his people.

ADRIGOLE

Has the highest waterfall “The Mare’s Tail” in Ireland or the UK.



© GrahamandDairne

Mile
Fáilte
2014

DAY 2

BEARA

Beara is dominated by the Caha mountains running from end-to-end along the peninsula. Castletownbere is the country's premier whitefish port and the second largest natural port in the world. The local climate (in an Irish context) is uniquely mild and temperate, warmed as it is by the waters of the Jet Stream. Adrigole is the warmest part of Ireland. Gorse, Fuschia, Rhododendrons and Camelias thrive in the climate covering the hillsides and valleys of this Rugged Glen. Allihies is given as the resting place of the Children of Lir from Irish mythology.



KENMARE

Reputed to be the site of the first suspension bridge in Ireland which opened in 1841 and was replaced by the current bridge in 1932. Ireland's first planned town in 1670.



ARDTULLY

Ardtully House. This house was built in castle style by Sir Richard Orpen in 1847 and replaced number of earlier structures dating as far back as 1215. Rinuccini the Papal Nuncio is reported to have stayed there in the mid-17th century. Kilgarvan, close by is the birthplace of Mike Quill, founder of the Transport Workers Union of America in 1934. He organised the unions within the US and led the general transport strike in 1966. He is widely admired and remembered locally as the man who "put New York on its feet".

The ride finishes at 350 km in Fossa, Killarney.



DAY 2

THE RING OF KERRY

Day Three incorporates the mystical Celtic tourist trail called The Ring of Kerry. The day starts and ends in Killarney covering 365 km of stunning scenery. Killarney is the most celebrated tourist destination in Ireland. As the Míle Fáilte road is narrow and very popular, and because tour buses cannot pass each other with safety, they travel in an anti-clockwise direction. We will be travelling clockwise, making your day a little more safe and pleasant with buses mostly approaching. Killarney is the gateway to the Iveragh Peninsula and on the shores of Lough Leane, part of Ireland's first National Park created in 1932 which extends to more than 102 sq km. The park - through which we travel - has Ireland's only native herd of red deer and an abundance of wildlife; red and sika deer, fox, badger, wood mouse, red squirrel, pine marten, with chaffinch, robin, goldcrest, blue tit and wren. It incorporates three lakes supporting brown trout, salmon, arctic char, and Killarney shad. It is one of the few places on the island of Ireland covered in native woodland since the end of the most recent glacial period 10,000 years ago. The yew woodland on the lowland limestone of the Muckross Peninsula is thought to be one of only three pure yew woods in Europe.

After departing Killarney the route climbs first to Ladies View at about 22 km, so called we are told, because of the admiration given it by the Queen's servants in 1861. (Even then, Kerry had an international reputation as a holiday destination). It is one of the best known and most photographed panoramas in the region. A small coffee shop awaits opposite the viewing area.

Not much further along, we meet a second viewing point; the famous Moll's Gap. It is named for Moll Kissane, who ran a small pub (or sibín) during the construction of the road in the 1820's. Moll's home-made poitín was popular and she retailed it with impunity from her sibín. The spot commands views of the Macgillycuddy's Reeks mountains, rivers, lush countryside and the famous Lakes of Killarney, with truly breathtaking views - Carrauntoohill, Ireland's highest mountain to one side, the Gap of Dunloe opposite.



© Alex ranaldi

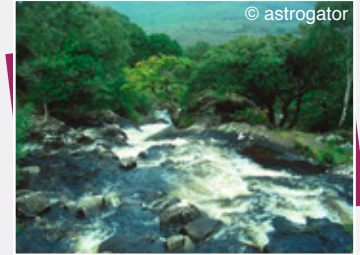


3
DAY

THE RING OF KERRY (continued)

Onwards and gently upwards now towards Sneem, home of the famous Casey brothers, who were cited in The New York Times as The Toughest Family That Ever Lived . Steve Casey was a consummate rower and was also the undisputed world wrestling champion for more than ten years. There is a life size statue of Steve The Crusher Casey on the left as you leave Sneem. He died in 1987.

Next up is the village of Caherdaniel, named after Daniel O’Connell who was known as The Liberator and was the great political leader of his time. Derrynane close by – now a National Park – was the family home. O’Connell was a charismatic figure from the first half of the 19th century, a profligate spender and lady-charmer. A committed pacifist he is famously quoted as saying that “the freedom of Ireland is not worth the spilling of one drop of blood”. His commitment to peaceful revolution is known to have inspired many including Ghandi and Luther King. He also won the admiration of many leaders of his time including Gladstone, Prime Minister of England who thought him the “greatest popular leader the world has ever seen”. His heart was buried in Rome and the rest of his anatomy we are assured, in Glasnevin – the dead centre of Dublin.



3
DAY

CAHERCIVEEN

Ever onward through Caherciveen, the birthplace of Iron Mike Murphy, winner of The Rás in 1958. The Rás is associated with the ancient Tailteann Games held in Ireland and which pre-dated the Greek Olympics by more than a thousand years. Murphy who hailed from Caherciveen was also known as Mile-a-Minute Murphy. He liked to ride at the front of the peloton believing – and regularly demonstrating - he had the strength to wear down any opponent. His win in the '58 Rás is still considered an epic. Mike was one of the first cyclists to pay close attention to his diet and drank cow's blood whilst in competition, sometimes fresh from the 'baysht'. A background as a circus performer helped develop extraordinary upper body strength. Mike's life was very tough; his working life began at age 7. He had no formal schooling after that. In the run-in to big events, he set up a training camp in the woods paying great attention to his diet, exercise and mental readiness. There may (arguably) have been better cyclists in the Rás but hardly any as colourful. Mike was a teammate of the great Gene Mangan from Killorglin who had also won the Rás three years earlier and contributed greatly to Murphy's triumph in '58. Mike still lives locally.

Further along the coastal road, the village of Kells offers a fabulous view of the Blaskets and Dingle Bay. Leaving the busy N71 by a narrow laneway we pass Rossbeigh beach and through the village of Glenbeigh towards Killorglin the home of Puck fair. Dating back four hundred years, Puck's origins are the stuff of lore but these days free reign is given to a male goat in the town for a week in early August. Killorglin was also the home of Bianconi who founded public transportation in Ireland. How we wish he had done a little more as it appears to have developed little – if at all – in the intervening years. A restaurant in the town named eponymously provides excellent sit-down fare for the Mile Fáilte cyclist.



3
DAY

CASTLEMAINE

Castlemaine is remembered in the song lyrics as the home of the Wild Colonial Boy. The song is thought to be based on the life of Jack Donahue who was transported to Australia in the early 1800's for felony. There, his fine contempt of British Rule continued. He formed a gang called the "The Strippers" allegedly stripping the wealthy landowners of their wealth and clothes. He evaded capture or escaped on several occasions, but was eventually shot in the head and died from the wound. He was aged 24.

ANNASCAUL

Annascaul is famed as the home of Tom Crean, seaman and Antarctic explorer. It is only a few minutes ride from our route and presents an excellent photo opportunity as Tom's pub is the first building you will meet entering the town. Tom was a member on three of the four major British Antarctic expeditions, accompanying Scott and Shackleton on their world-famous journeys. He was decorated four times. He received the Albert medal for a 56-kilometer, life-saving, solo walk across the ice and was also further honoured with three Polar Exploration medals. Crean enjoys a growing stature in history. He was nicknamed the "Irish Giant" and noted especially for his cheerful disposition, mental strength and extraordinary courage. It is a shame he never joined the ranks of Audax cyclist as he appears to have had the essential skills! He was one of the very few men on whom Scott and Shackleton could absolutely depend when morale amongst the touring party was low. Tom left the navy after twenty-seven years of service and returned to Annascaul, opening The South Pole Inn in the village. He saw out his years there with his wife and three children. Sadly he died from a burst appendix in 1938 not long after his 61st birthday.



© Freetoeknee

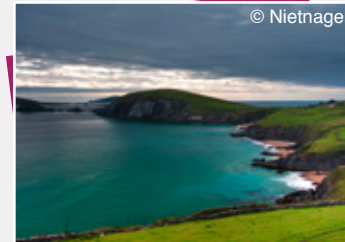
DINGLE

The town of Dingle sits on a natural harbour at the foot of the Slievanea Mountain. It hosts a lively combination of shops, pubs and restaurants, all with a distinctly Irish character. The Peninsula is part of the West Kerry Gaeltacht and as the most Westerly point of both Ireland and Europe its landscape is scored by the harsh Atlantic weather.

Further West along the Dingle peninsula is Ventry, home to the O'Sé's, the most famous of all Irish Gaelic footballing families. Páidí, who is sadly recently deceased, was one of only five men to win eight All-Ireland football medals. He also made a significant contribution to the game in other counties famously managing Westmeath to provincial success in 2004. He was steeped in the Gaelic tradition, a lover of the Irish language and always an outspoken ambassador for the national games, his beloved Ventry and Kerry football. That said, there was a warm welcome for all in his pub.

His nephew Darragh O'Sé was one of the finest midfielders ever and made more championship appearances (81) than any other in the history of the game. Darragh's brothers Marc and Tomás also won multiple All-Ireland honours and when all three became All-Stars in 2007 it was the first time this feat had ever been achieved. In all, Ard a' Bhóthair in Ventry home to the O'Sé's has 25 All-Ireland Championship medals – more than many counties. The Míle Fáilte control is Paudie's pub which is still under the management of his family.

An Conair (The Conor Pass) provides a dramatic exit from the town. It is the highest mountain pass in Ireland. Often shrouded in mist, on a clear day it provides breathtaking views over Tralee and Dingle bay and as far west as the Achill islands. The road has length and weight restrictions for traffic, but weight should no longer be an issue for Míle Fáilte cyclists arriving at the summit after this iconic five kilometre climb. There is not an inch of respite in the long ascent, with the ever-present headwind adding to the challenge, but the views and the prospect of an exhilarating descent make it seem worthwhile.



3
DAY

DINGLE (continued)

Rounding Slea Head gives a view over the Blasket Islands, uninhabited now since 1953. Inisvickllane is the furthest west of these islands and was acquired by former Taoiseach Charles Haughey. Popular rumour had it that besides the American Ambassador's residence in the Phoenix Park the air space above this island was the only other no-fly zone in the country. Blasket Sound was also the site where the Santa Maria de la Rosa, vice flagship of the Spanish Armada, sank with the loss of 300 lives in 1588. The Ring of Kerry, but Dingle especially has an exceptional wealth and variety of prehistoric and early Christian remains among them wedges, ring forts, oratories, ogham stones and inscribed crosses.



TRALEE

Tralee is the county town of Kerry and has gained fame as the home of the Rose of Tralee. This international competition is open to women of Irish ancestry and is said to be have been inspired by a love-song written by a wealthy Kerry Protestant for a poor Catholic girl; Mary. The competition in its current format began 1959 and chooses as a winner one who best embodies the attributes "lovely and fair" as mentioned in the song. Said to be one of the truly fun beauty pageants it chooses a winner based on personality, appearance and suitability to serve as an ambassador of the festival.



KNOCKNAGOSHEL

The hills around Knocknagoshel are the birthplace of Con Houlihan noted sports journalist who often drew inspiration from its people in his sporting columns. Famously, at a meeting held locally (Newcastle West) in 1891 and addressed by Charles Stewart Parnell, a banner was held aloft which called upon Knocknagoshel to take its place among the nations of the earth. Knocknagoshel has never forgotten this call to greatness and today, in what is thought to be fitting memory, a plaque commemorating the occasion hangs on the gable of a wall in the Village.



CURROW

Crossing the Brown Flesk river the route enters the birthplace of four Irish rugby Internationals, three of whom also achieved the honour of playing for the British and Irish Lions; Tom and Mick Doyle, Mick Galwey and Moss Keane. Aside from being sporting legends, they were each among the most charismatic, endearing and inspirational figures of their respective times. Mick Galwey has the unique achievement of winning both an All-Ireland GAA football medal and its rugby equivalent with Kerry and Shannon respectively. He also carries the distinction of being the most-dropped international rugby player in the game; a testament to his enduring loyalty and the indecision of selectors. All four characters were steeped in GAA traditions, so much so that Mick Doyle had never seen a rugby ball until he attended Newbridge College at the age of 13. Galwey was also a latecomer to the game and Moss Keane only began playing when he was aged 23! He was a member of the legendary Munster side that beat the All Blacks in 1978 (a game attended by the writer) the only time they have ever been beaten on Irish soil. Asked on the mud-soaked 1977 Lions tour of New Zealand what his personal highlight of the three months was, he is said to have responded “hearing that Kerry had beaten Cork in the Munster Final”. For the record the score was 3-15 to 0-09, part of an eight-in-a-row sequence. He famously described watching rugby as being “like a pornographic movie in that it was very frustrating for onlookers and (intended) only for the enjoyment of the participants”.

‘Doyler’ too was one of the enduring greats in Irish sport who went on to manage Leinster and Ireland. He brought no little colour, humour, flair and panache to Irish rugby and under his guidance the Irish team won the Triple Crown and Championship in 1985. His “give it a lash” philosophy was a breath of fresh air in the game and the squad he assembled and nurtured was among the most innately talented ever assembled here.

Whatever about the town and its famous sons, the long drag out of Currow will leave a lasting impression in your legs. The day finishes over some short, sharp hills in Fossa, outside Killarney.



KENMARE

Setting out on Day 4 we pass close to Gneevguilla, the birthplace of Eamon Kelly, actor and renowned story-teller. This part of the country is known as Sliabh Luachra, the mountainous area in Munster considered the home of Irish music, song dance and poetry. Kelly rose to fame primarily through radio and television; media which ironically hastened the end of the seanchaí or story-teller. He was an immensely talented storyteller who developed his art to suit his times. His stories were flavoured with clever and colourful use of idiom, idiosyncrasy and the musical quality of the local Kerry dialect. His statue was erected in Gneevguilla after his death in 2001.

Rathmore, also part of Sliabh Luachra is the birthplace of famous Irish poets Eoghan Rua O'Súilleabháin and Aogán O'Rathaille. Their tragic lives and loss of wealth and status mirrored the fate of the Irish people and language through the years late 16 -1700's. Though they lived through times considered to be the worst for Irish poets, they were hugely influential. O'Súilleabháin was known as "Owen of the Sweet Mouth" and we are told that none of his poems were published in his time. They were passed on instead through lore and music. A third man, also born in Rathmore but almost a century later brought their work to prominence - Patrick Dinneen. He is remembered as a fine lexicographer and historian leaving us the famous Dinneen's Irish-English dictionary first published in 1904. This period was famous for the Irish revival of which he was part.



© abhainn

DAY 4



MILLSTREET

Millstreet is home to one of Ireland's largest equestrian centres known as the Green Glens Arena. It is famous for hosting the 1993 Eurovision song contest which was won by Irish girl, Niamh Kavanagh. It also hosted two of Steve Collins' defences of his world title. The first of these, against Chris Eubank in 1996 was immortalised by Mrs. Merton when she reminded the defeated British boxer that Steve "came from behind and licked him in the ring".

KILLAVULLEN

Nano Nagle, born in Killavullen in 1718 to the landed Nagle family was founder of the Presentation sisters. Her mission was to educate the poorest in society, laudable in any time. The Presentation order has since spread to more than two dozen countries and Nano Nagle achievements as a pioneer in female education was recognised when voted Irish Woman of Millennium.

Killavullen is also home Richard Hennessy of Cognac fame who founded the brand in 1765. Cognac is the most popular brandy today accounting for more than 40% of world sales.



DAY 4



FAQ

■ What Is The MF 1,200?

The MF or Míle Fáilte 1200 is a 1,202 kilometre bicycle ride through the provinces of South Leinster and Munster in the Republic of Ireland. It will be held on open roads; some primary routes, but as far as possible through quiet roads and laneways of this picturesque island.

■ When Will It Be Held?

It will run over three days beginning on Mid-Summers Day – Saturday, June 21st 2014 at 06.00 hrs and finishing at 24.00 hours on the following Tuesday, June 24th.

■ How Can I Enter?

Enter by registering an interest now at MilleFailte1200@gmail.com. Just send us your name and contact details, and once details are finalised and entry is officially opened after December, you will be invited to submit a written application. At that time you will also be asked to the entry fee. This will give you a place on the “Confirmed Rider List”.

Finally, official registration will be held in Midleton, County Cork on June 20th 2014 on the eve of the event.

■ How Much Will It Cost?

The final details are subject to numbers but we expect the entry fee to be less than €150 to include a hostel B&B on each of the three nights of the event.

■ How Can I Pay?

You can pay online by PayPal, by cheque, money order or bank transfer. Cheques and bank draft should be made payable to MF 1,200 and denominated in euro.

■ What Does The Entry Fee Include?

It includes a detailed route sheet and GPS files, participation medal, overnight hostel lodging and breakfast during the event. It also includes a bag transfer between hubs.

A supplement is payable for those wishing to upgrade to hotels.

■ Do I Need To Qualify To Enter?

Yes. This is Ireland’s first multi-day Audax event in many years so it is important that those undertaking it are familiar with the sport and appreciate its self-supporting nature. Therefore entry will be limited to those who can show they have successfully completed a similar ride (for example Paris-Brest-Paris or London-Edinburgh-London). Alternatively those who have not completed an Audax event can qualify by completing a 200, 300 and 400 kilometre (or longer) in 2014. The organisers reserve the right to require ride verification.

■ Can I Cancel My Entry?

Yes you can cancel your entry with a refund until two months before the start.



FAQ

■ Is There An Official Jersey?

Official event jerseys will be available for sale in the weeks preceding the event and at registration. They should be ordered in advance and are not included in the entry fee.

■ When Do Entries Open?

Audax Ireland is now inviting applications for pre-entry. Subject to achieving qualification standard official entry will be offered first to those who have pre-entered. Official entries open on December 1st 2013.

Final places on the MF1200 will be allotted once the 400 km event in May 2014 is completed. Entrants who have completed events outside Ireland and have supporting evidence will be invited to participate until then. There is no quota of riders for any country.

■ Where Does It Start?

The event will start from Midleton in Cork (exact location to be announced) on Saturday, June 21st 2014.

■ What Time Does It Start?

The official start time is 6.00 am. In common with other events, riders continue through the three days at a pace and time their choosing and having regard to their personal well-being and ability.

■ What Sleeping Facilities Are Available?

The organisers are happy to offer advice to entrants with regard to accommodation at the start/finish and also en route. Mid-June is not yet high season for tourists but some places are likely to be booked out.

■ Where Can We Eat?

The route meanders through idyllic countryside on an established tourist trail. Most towns will have small cafés or restaurants and these are usually open from mid-morning until late evening. In a rural area it is always a good idea to stock up with some food and supplies in late evening. On our route you are seldom more than 15 kilometres from a store though these will not be available if riding through the night.

■ What Happens If I Break Down?

There is no official sag wagon or support car, mechanical help or otherwise available. A limited amount of spares, such as tyres and tubes and lights will be available to purchase at each overnight stop.

■ Will There Be Support Vehicles?

There will be no official support vehicles provided by the organisers. Many of the roads are narrow so the use and especially parking of support vehicles is considered an unwelcome hazard. Where a rider is unable to finish the organiser will endeavour as far as practical to arrange that they be rescued at the riders cost. Private support vehicles are allowed only in case of emergency.



FAQ

■ Are There Manned Controls?

Only the overnight controls will be manned. There may be manned secret control(s) on some of the days. Otherwise the event will use commercial or information controls.

■ What Equipment Do I Need?

Riders must ensure that their bicycles are in excellent repair and capable of completing a 1,200 kilometre event. They must obey the rules of the road at all times and must not endanger other cyclists or road users during the event. Night riding will be a feature of the event so bicycles should carry working front and rear lights and backups at all times.

The wearing of a helmet and high-viz (reflective) jacket is recommended but not compulsory.

■ Can Progress Be Followed Online?

No. Organisers will attempt to update some information to Facebook during the event but it is likely that the progress of many riders will not be officially reported at any stage during the event.

■ Will You Carry My Gear Between Controls?

The organisers will transfer a small duffel bag collected at registration between the (Midleton and Killarney) overnight controls. These bags will be returned after the Killarney control closes to arrive in Midleton no earlier than late afternoon Tuesday.

■ Will The Organisers Help Arrange Hotels?

Organisers have pre-booked a limited number of reasonably-priced local hostel, hotel and B&B rooms. These will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis to entrants. Apart from that, there are many great places to stay in Killarney and Cork City but each entrant will have to organise their own transport.

■ What Are Conditions Like?

The surface is sealed and usually in good repair. Potholes can appear occasionally or on short stretches. The route uses some main roads but where possible uses quieter roads and lanes. It is usually suitable for a 23mm tyre. Hilly regions can be prone to flooding and loose gravel.

■ What Is The Weather Like?

Ireland enjoys a temperate climate. The average temperature range for June is 7° C to 15° C (45F to 60F). There is a slight risk of night frost. It rains on average every second day in Ireland though June is one of the dryer months.



FAQ

■ What Is The Route Like?

This is a tough route incorporating about 14,000 metres of climbing. It reaches a high of 409 metres and at times on some days there are many short, sharp climbs. The first few hundred kilometres are largely through the countryside and quiet lanes going through a few small towns. The middle half of the route is along the coast and a more established tourist trail, frequently passing close to small cafes, restaurants and shops and B&Bs that are tempting for the Audax cyclist. The last section winds its way inland on quieter roads. The area is very safe with relatively low crime rates. Internationally the Irish people have an established reputation for helpfulness and friendliness.

■ What Happens If I Am Late At A Control?

All participants will be encouraged and supported as far as practical to complete the ride, even if they are outside their time but with due regard first to their health and safety. If

a rider misses a time control they may not have their ride officially ratified. The organisers will consider any extenuating circumstances presented.

The organisers caution that it may not be possible to keep controls open beyond their official time.

■ How Do I Get To The Start?

For International arrivals, Cork (24Km), Killarney (125 km) and Dublin (270 km) have many direct flight arrivals each day from International Airports. Midleton has train connections from Dublin via Cork and Midleton also has a public bus service. It is possible to book a cycle on Irish trains and usually it is possible to bring a cycle on public buses at off peak.

There is no convenient ferry service to the South coast; the closest arrival from the UK is either Dublin Port or Dun Laoghaire (@270 km) both of which are frequently connected with Holyhead in Wales.



ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

The MF 1200 cycle revolves around the two hubs of Midleton and Killarney. The recommended stages are a 360 km loop around Midleton, followed by an outward ride Westward to Killarney of about 350 km. The third stage is another 350 km loop, this time around Killarney. The final section is the 140 km return Westward to Midleton.

Day 1 – 360 Km: Midleton to Midleton

Day 2 – 350 Km: Midleton to Killarney

Day 3 – 350 Km: Killarney to Killarney

Day 4 – 140 Km: Killarney to Midleton

The ride has manned overnight controls in Midleton and Killarney where riders can be accommodated in pre-booked hostels and hotels. Around the Killarney hub especially, overnight B&B lodging is in plentiful supply and is not just in the major towns. You will often find them in remote beautiful areas and along quiet roads. B&Bs are usually family-run and focus on the warmth of the welcome and the personal attention of the host. For the over-tired cyclist they can provide an oasis and will usually offer shelter to your bicycle as well. Many can be booked as you pass for around €60 to include breakfast and they are too numerous to include.

In choosing the perfect route for the MF 1200 we have avoided as far as possible major towns. To help you plan your food we are including a list of towns, strategically placed and a guide to the facilities you can expect to find.

Smaller places such as Ardmore may have a very limited choice so then it is a good idea to stop at the very first store you see. They will usually replenish your drinks bottles and have a variety of groceries.

Our second icon indicates that the town has a hot delicatessen bar which would usually provide tea or coffee and freshly made sandwiches or rolls. They will also re-fill bottles.

Bigger towns will usually have a variety of cafes, restaurants or fast-food outlets though you may want to bring a lock for your bicycle if you plan a sit-down meal. Almost all outlets accept cash and credit or charge cards,

Key:



Grocery shop; perhaps only one in the area



Deli bar; hot food and groceries



A variety of eating places.

Opening hours are usually 08:00 hours to 20:00 hours. 24-hour Roadside Filling stations are rare but tend to stay open a little longer especially in the bigger towns.

If you are passing a shop in late evening it is usually a good idea to replenish supplies for the night as it may be many hours



ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

DAY 1

KM	TOWN		INSTRUCTION	OPEN	CLOSE
29	Youghal			09.00	17.00
45	Ardmore			09:00	17:00
70	Dungarvan		Entering Town	07:00	22:00
95	Bunmahon		Store and Café on the main street	09:00	17:00
119	Waterford City			07:00	22:00
150	Carrick-on-Suir			07:00	22:00
217	Ardfinnan			09:00	17:00
226	Cahir			07:00	22:00
260	Anglesborough		On left entering village	09:00	17:00
270	Kilbehenny			09:00	17:00
305	Lismore			07:00	22:00
345	Dungourney			09:00	17:00
354	Midleton		Manned Overnight Control	24 hr	



ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES










DAY 2

KM	TOWN		INSTRUCTION	OPEN	CLOSE
22	Carrigaline			07:00	22:00
43	Kinsale			07:00	22:00
80	Clonakilty			07:00	22:00
113	Skibbereen		Divert left at 2nd RAB	07:00	22:00
137	Schull			09:00	20:00
163	Durrus		Divert straight on into village	09:00	20:00
200	Bantry			07:00	22:00
235	Adrigole			09:00	17:00
265	Ardgroom			09:00	17:00
300	Kenmare			07:00	20:00
310	Kilgarvan			09:00	17:00
348	Killarney			24 hr	



ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES







DAY 3

KM	TOWN		INSTRUCTION	OPEN	CLOSE
22	Ladies View			10:00	17:00
50	Sneem			09:00	17:00
85	Waterville			09:00	20:00
100	Cahersiveen			09:00	20:00
130	Glenbeigh			09:00	20:00
143	Killorglin			07:00	22:00
173	Inch			11:00	22:00
196	Dingle			07:00	22:00
205	Ceann Tra			10:00	17:00
240	Dingle			07:00	22:00
286	Tralee			07:00	22:00
312	Knocknagoshel			09:00	22:00
326	Castleisland			07:00	22:00
332	Currow			09:00	17:00
353	Killarney			24 hr	



ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

DAY 4

KM	TOWN		INSTRUCTION	OPEN	CLOSE
26	Rathmore			09:00	20:00
37	Millstreet			07:00	22:00
74	Mallow			07:00	22:00
100	Glenville			09:00	17:00
113	Rathcormack			09:00	20:00
136	Midleton			24 hr	

SECTION 1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Telephone Contact:

SECTION 2. QUALIFICATION:

I have completed or will complete one of the following events (please tick):-

Paris-Brest-Paris

London-Edinburgh-London

Mille Alba

Brevet Cymru

2/3/400 km Audax event in 2014

Other Name:

NOTE: Organisers reserve the right to ask for ride verification.

SECTION 3. ACCOMMODATION

Midleton Hostel

Midleton Hotel

Killarney Hostel

Killarney Hotel





VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

The Míile Fáilte is a non-commercial international cycling event run by a small number of volunteers. Billed as the “Longest and Friendliest” cycling event in the country it is also sure to be one of the toughest. We are looking for people to help out at the controls and make the four days an unforgettable success for everyone taking part.

Being a volunteer can be hard work – but it can also be very rewarding. We need help in every aspect from now until the completed brevet cards are validated and despatched in the post after the last rider finishes. You can volunteer for as much or as little as you like; all will be appreciated.

If you can help complete the form below and we will be in touch as soon as we can.

SECTION 1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Telephone Contact:

SECTION 2. How You'd Like To Help

Event Planning

Website, Facebook, Twitter

PR and Marketing

Organising a Control

Managing a Kitchen

Cooking

Cleaning

First Aid

Driving a Vehicle

Bike Mechanics

WHEN

Now

Fri, June 20th

Sat, June 21st

Sun, June 22nd

Mon, June 23rd

Tue, June 24th

Wed, June 25th

Please tell us if you have other experience that might be relevant:

The accounts above are a blend of careful research, folklore, half-truth and rumour; on every occasion we thought to take the more entertaining option. If you see anything we have written that is patently untrue please let us know and we will rewrite it more credibly.

HOW TO GET HERE

Ireland is served by a number of Airports, of which Cork at 30 kilometres, is the closest to event HQ in Midleton. Cork Airport has incoming flights from many European cities. Cork City is well served by public transport with rail and bus links to major Irish cities and towns.

There is also a rail link between Cork City and Midleton a distance of 20 Kilometres. Midleton is also served by public and private bus services, hackney and taxis.

WHERE TO EAT

The organisers will provide food and shelter to cyclists at Midleton and Killarney.

Otherwise a detailed guide (for participants) to eating out in towns en route will be provided with the route sheet. GPS files are also available.

Note: All times, dates and routes are subject to change and riders will be notified through our website.

HOW TO ENTER

This is the inaugural running of this event which it is hoped will become part of the International Cycling calendar. Organisers are calling for expressions of interest so that facilities can be pre-booked. It is envisaged that the first running of the event will be in mid-June 2014 and probably 4-yearly thereafter. You can register your interest and pre-book a place by e-mailing the organisers at MilleFailte1200@gmail.com

STAY IN TOUCH

<http://mf1200.com/MFMain/>

MilleFailte1200@gmail.com

 [MF1200 _Audax](#)

