

MUNSTER LEISURE TOURS - 2011.



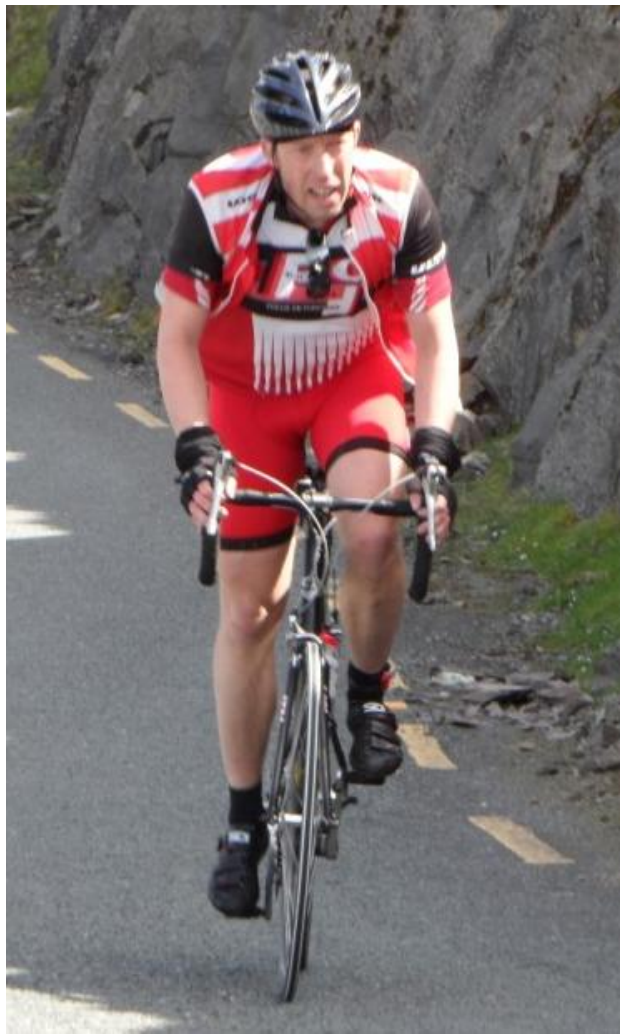
The Etape Rás Mumhan provided leisure & sportive riders a rare opportunity to ride a classic stage of a domestic road stage race, 2nd stage of the 2011 Kerry Group Ras Mumhan, with a summit finish on the Conor Pass, the highest mountain Pass in Ireland.

Simply put it's a classic course and appealed to all levels of cycling enthusiasts, allowing them to test themselves against the racing best, conquer the Conor Pass, or simply experience a fantastic day out on the roads of beautiful West Kerry.



A few route options were available, 128km being the full stage, and 64km the shorter version, both included the 225 meter Slieve East and 475 meter Conor Pass climbs.

Based on the number of cyclists who participated, general feedback, envisage that this will become an annual event, and perhaps extended further to incorporate other road race events.













CURROW'S FRONT ROW

John Breen, Mick Galway, Tom Kenny
(Probably switch Tom into the middle)



Kilmallock's Cycling Hub Tour, (Ticks All the Right Boxes!!)



Kilmallock's Second Cycling Hub Tour, was a tremendous success, numbers were up on last year, perfect conditions for cycling, simply put, a brilliant day! Majority of cyclists opted for 'The Hub Challenge' a 125km Sportive. Leaving Kilmallock the riders headed towards Ardpatrik, into the first climb of the day up through Glenenaar then towards the main Kildorrery to Ardpatrik road over the second climb, then a tester through the village of Ballyorgan, into Ballintubber, to the fourth climb of the day, followed by a long decent, into Ballylanders, heading for Galbally, through the Glen of Aherlow, crossing into Tipperary with the Galtee mountains on the right hand side, and up over the fifth and last climb of the day, Christ the King, all this before the food stop in Lattin!!.



The club really looked the part on the day, wearing their new gear that incorporates the traditional Kilmallock colours.

The Hub Experience, a 60km Leisure Spin, left Kilmallock heading for Kilfinane, whilst the club's web site mentions that the route is mostly flat terrain, gentle drags, (but folks Kilfinane is a testing 160 meter climb!!) Here the group split up a bit, overall road conditions to Lattin aren't great, but admittedly after the food stop, they improve significantly.

No sign of the Lisdoon Lady (Long black hair and a smile that would melt countless hearts, see last weeks edition)

Anyway back to the cycling, 10km from Kilmallock, fell in with a group of three riders, two of which were from SWW, (Southside Wheeley Wheelers) straight away had a hunch, this could be interesting, nearly all of us are vets!!

First off a share of good natured bantering, then a train, followed by a bit of sizing up, once yours truly hit the front, the comments started flying, speed picked up a bit, 5km to go, the attacks started, each one was hauled back, 1km to go, no sooner had the water bottle raised another attack, again hauled back, as to what happened at the finish, I'm claiming Null and Void, others may differ, but at least we all agreed that it was thourably enjoyable.

Overall an excellent tour, everything that is great about cycling, this has it by the bucket full!! testing climbs, brilliant scenery, plenty of food, and camaraderie.



Full credit is due to Kilmallock Cycling Club, for the tremendous effort, (Marking all the potholes, road turns, tee-shirts, pig on spit etc.) not forgetting of course, marshals on motor bikes, plus everyone else who helped out on the day.

Dolmen's 'Mid Coastal and Burren Tour' Report.

Numbers Well Up, But U-Turns May Have Been Applicable!!



Weather smiled again for Dolmen's, Mid Coastal and Burren Tour, in ideal cycling conditions; we headed off from the Lee Road Sports Complex, in Ennis.



The wind was with us for the climb up to Poulanine, from here to Ballyallban is one of the best downhill sections in the country, good twists and turns, Simply Put Brilliant, but there's nearly always a catch, and in this case, for the leisure group, facing the Corkscrew Climb against the wind, whilst the Sportive headed for Ballyvaughan and onwards to Lisdoonvarna via the coastal route.



Killorglin CC have the 'Humpy Hundred' on the 15th May, but there's no lack of Humps in Dolmen's 'Mid Costal and Burren Tour', no sooner your going down, you're back up climbing again, don't recall any 5km flat stretch on the route.

Besides the normal calls of 'Braking, 'Hole(s)', Car Up', there were no shouts of 'Cows Up' or, 'Bull Up', like last year, but there were a few distractions, one in particular coming against us half way up on the Corkscrew Climb.

Like a vision, there's she was, flying down the hill, her long black hair tied up in a ponytail, that was floating in the wind, and a smile that would melt countless hearts, clearly she enjoys her cycling.

Shouts of U-Turn, U-Turn, could be heard, looked back and she was long gone, the prospect of doing the Corkscrew twice in the one day wasn't very appealing, easier option, phone Mick Daly, (Lisdoonvarna) and enquire about said lady!!

Anyway back to the cycling, on a climb, you'd often get a few good natured exchanges, but in this case on the Corkscrew nearly everybody was at it, also when you think the climb is over, nope there's another leg to it. On a positive note, it's a good workout for next weekends Kilmallock Hub Tour, with its five testing climbs, including 'The Glen of Aherlow', all of which are before the food stop!!

A few Cyclists on the Sportive route commented that the 7 km leading into Lisdoonvarna was particularly tough, as the wind speed increased significantly. A number of them opted to join the Lesiure group and head for Kilfenora, and Corofin whilst the Sportive (125km riders) went by the coast to Miltown Malbay, with everybody finishing up in Ennis.



Overall an excellent tour, full credit is due to Dolmen CC and to all who helped out on the day.

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