

# Westport Sea 2 Summit 2013 Race Report

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As predicted the 2013 Westport Sea 2 Summit race proved to be high class affair with several top athletes making their mark as an end of season challenge with a difference.

The presence of world class junior triathlete Con Docherty was an indication of this and the local favourite started the day as he intended to continue with a blistering first run to the quays for bike collection on way to the base of the Reek. Almost a min behind were some top class runners and these worked together in general on the bike as Docherty again set the fastest leg with Michael Flanagan, Des Kennedy and Peter Tuohy his nearest challengers over a min behind.

On the holy mountain it was expected that international mountain runner Kennedy might make inroads but despite an excellent time for the mountain run to move into 2<sup>nd</sup> Docherty stretched his lead further as 2012 National Sports series champion Jerry O Sullivan moved into 3<sup>rd</sup> ahead of Flanagan and Lonan O Farrell.

The first part of the long cycle back to Westport is made for strong cyclists and at the top of the Maum climb 14k in the cyclists were beginning to make inroads into the strong runners advantage on the mountain run.

Top triathlete brothers Shane and Gary Scully had been reunited after a hard learning experience of mountain running on the reek and worked well on the bike leg to bring them back into contention with Gary recording the fastest bike climb leg ahead of Flanagan with Docherty just a few seconds slower but Docherty still maintained his lead of over 2 mins ahead of Flanagan who was now in 2<sup>nd</sup> just ahead of Kennedy with O Sullivan 4<sup>th</sup>, O Farrell 5<sup>th</sup> and the Scully brothers next.

The early pace of Docherty and his chartering of unknown 2 ½ hr+ race territory were starting to tell however as his pace slowed significantly with Flanagan turning a 4 min deficit into a 3 min lead over the remainder of the bike leg as he set the fastest leg of the day with some powerful solo cycling.

Docherty hung on to a ~90 sec gap starting the final run in 2nd ahead of the Scully brothers with O Sullivan and Kennedy close behind and he recovered his form on the final run to again post the fastest leg of the day.

Flanagan however had done enough and hung on well to take a hard earned victory in a super new course record time of 2h 55' 47sec almost 2 min ahead of Docherty.

The Scully brothers finished together to take joint 3<sup>rd</sup> ahead of O Sullivan in 5<sup>th</sup> and Kennedy the first vet home in 6<sup>th</sup>.

Chris Caulfield had a disappointing race on his return to racing after a broken arm but in the absence of Adrian Mc Moreland his good early season results were enough to ensure he secured the 2013 National Series Expert men's title.

In the ladies race the rematch of the top 2 from the recent Killarney race was eagerly anticipated with Marie Boyle coming home just 7 secs ahead of Fiona Meade on that occasion.

The return to racing of ultra mountain runner Moire O Sullivan after a baby mid-summer and 2013 Hardman triathlon winner Christina Mackenzie added to the mix of top athletic talent on the start line.

From the off Boyle and Meade matched strides and were almost a min clear of Niamh Garvey, Lucy Bridlestone and O' Sullivan at the first transition.

On the short bike leg out to the base of the Reek Meade broke clear to establish a gap that she built on all day. Boyle was still in a good 2<sup>nd</sup> with Mackenzie moving into 3<sup>rd</sup> ahead of O Sullivan and Garvey.

On the mountain ascent Meade set the fastest ladies climb of the day and after a good descent she had a gap of almost 8 mins over Boyle with O Sullivan close behind in 3<sup>rd</sup> and Garvey a further 7 mins back in 4<sup>th</sup> ahead of Mackenzie.

On the bike leg back to Westport Meade set another fastest leg of the day to build her lead ahead of Boyle with O Sullivan holding onto 3<sup>rd</sup> despite a relatively poor leg and Mackenzie powering her way back up to 4<sup>th</sup> ahead of Aine Donegan who had the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest bike leg of the day.

Meade had a good run back to the finish line to take an emphatic win in 3h 26' 46" over 11 mins clear of Boyle with O Sullivan some 9 mins further back just ahead of Mackenzie in 4<sup>th</sup>, Donegan in 5<sup>th</sup> and Garvey the first vet in 6<sup>th</sup>.

Boyle had the consolation of taking her 2<sup>nd</sup> National expert title in a row with her impressive season's results including 3 victories and here 2<sup>nd</sup> here.

In the Spirit race, with last year's winner Jerry o Sullivan opting for a last min move up in distance to the Supreme event the men's field was led on form by last year's 2<sup>nd</sup> placed Brendan Conway.

The form proved to be no lie as he led from start to finish posting all the fastest legs throughout to take a comprehensive win in a new course record time of 1h 38' 33".

Behind him it was a close fought affair for the podium positions with Martin Nee performing consistently throughout to take 2nd and secure the Nat Sports Series title in the process.

Ger O Sullivan had held 2<sup>nd</sup> after a super mountain descent leg but dropped back on the final bike and run legs to let Jimmy Lawlor move into 3<sup>rd</sup> ahead of the fast mountain ascending TJ Mc Hugh in 4<sup>th</sup> with O Sullivan first unplaced vet home in 5<sup>th</sup> and Joe Hastings 6<sup>th</sup>.

In the ladies Spirit race the rematch of locals Mary Daly and Catherine Conway was anticipated after Conway took the spoils at the Race 2 Glory.

Conway held the lead after the opening run ahead of Daly and Mairead Durkan but by the end of the bike leg to Croagh Patrick Daly had moved ahead of Conway with Eimear Kelly moving into 3<sup>rd</sup> ahead of Durkan.

Daly showed her superior ascending and descending skills on the Reek as she built up a commanding lead over Conway, Kelly and Niamh O Malley in 5th.

Despite Conway's best efforts, including the fastest final run leg, Daly took victory in 1h 55' 17" some 4 mins clear of Conway who in turn was over 10 mins clear of Kelly in 3<sup>rd</sup>, Durkan 4<sup>th</sup>, O Malley 5<sup>th</sup> and Deirdre Fortune in 6<sup>th</sup>

Ericka Murray took the ladies National Sport series win after the final race of the season had finished and all points were totted up.