

# Quest Killarney 2016

## Adventure Race Formguide

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All roads lead to the southwest this coming weekend for what is Ireland's largest one day adventure race in the country, the Quest Killarney event.

As was the case last year, the size of the entry is well matched by the quality of the Expert race field and almost everyone currently racing at the top level will be throwing their hat into the ring in the 70km event but in reality to make top 10 will be reward enough for many top contenders with the strength in depth of the elite field line-up.

Dessie Duffy is reigning Series champion and has to be amongst the favourite to win here but this year has had a couple of reversals and this course does not play to his biking strengths so it might well be that Kieron Kelly can take the spoils here given his good all round abilities and recent winning form.

Mark Nolan is another that has the talent to win a race like this but whether he will have honed his mountain running skills sufficiently, and descending in particular, will be crucial in determining his place after the long technical Mangerton descent as he is likely to be amongst the leaders starting up Mangerton and indeed at the summit.

Others regular podium guys worthy of mention include Killian Heery, Eric Wolfe, his younger brother Mark and interestingly Shaun Stewart (Coast 2 coast solo winner this year) and Lonan O Farrell. The latter pair had been training for long distance AR but their Iterra race plans came unstuck so if they have recovered well they will not be found lacking in stamina here and with the fierce pace the likes of Kelly and Nolan are sure to set this could be important in their top 5 aspirations.

The recent form of proven race winners like Aidan Mc Moreland (2013 winner) & Jerry O Sullivan is hard to assess whilst the likes of Barry Cronin, David Power, Mike Buckley, Peter Walsh, Garret Bracken and John Paul O Connell (Moving up from regular sport race podium finishes) will all need to be in good form to gain a top 10 finish here.

In the ladies race it looks like it could be a very close race up front between 2014 race and Series champion Moire O Sullivan and last year's winner here Emma Donlon who finished close behind O Sullivan in 2<sup>nd</sup> in Dingle earlier this year and who's 2015 time was a few mins faster than that posted by O Sullivan in 2014.

If Donlon is back to her best form of a few years ago this one should be very close and is very hard to call as both will be suited by the running bias of the route though O Sullivan might have the edge given her recent race sharpness and proven stamina.

Behind these the likes of Emer O Mahony, Ellen Vitting (2<sup>nd</sup> here in 2014 but somewhat off form this year), Denise Casey ( 2<sup>nd</sup> here in 2015) and Caroline Conway could well be scrapping for the podium and certainly for top 5 positions