

THE RACE DONEGAL 2014

THE RACE 2014

North West Donegal will play host to Ireland's toughest day-long ultra-endurance event this March. In the space of 24 hours competitors will be required to complete 15km of kayaking, 5km of mountain running, 175km of cycling and 65km of road and trail running. In total **260 km will stand between competitors and the finish line.** The event, which is simply called *The Race*, has seen 80 top endurance athletes from over 15 countries signing up to participate in the inaugural event.

BACKGROUND

The course has been designed by two of Ireland's most renowned adventurers David Burns and Maghnus Collins. Burns and Collins whose previous feats have included man-powered expeditions taking them the full length of Africa and the width of Asia by bike, foot and raft.

Explaining the concept, Burns said that they wanted to find "a course that would replicate in a single day the physical challenges that we have experienced during our expeditions."

The Race has a limited its field of 80 competitors. According to Collins the rationale behind the small field is "to minimise ecological impact and to ensure maximum support for competitors."

"There will be no typical competitor. Competitors will come from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. You do not need to be an elite runner, cyclist or kayaker. **Those who compete in and ultimately complete The Race will be those who refuse to give up.**"

One such athlete is Gerry Duffy, winner of the Deca Enduroman event in 2012. Duffy, who is an ambassador for The Race, is "delighted to see true endurance racing in Ireland." Duffy agrees that "this event will be **one of the most daunting single day endurance events in the world** and an amazing opportunity for people to test their limits."

The event is being organised as a not-for-profit venture with **all proceeds going to support the work of Irish based NGO Self Help Africa.**

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THE COURSE

Two hours before dawn, with Glenveagh National Park still in a blanket of darkness, The Race will begin.

Immediately facing competitors is a pre-dawn half-marathon from the edge of the park to the banks of **Lough Swilly**. As the sun rises, competitors begin the kayaking leg, battling with the North-Atlantic tide for 15km from Ramelton to Rathmullan.

Kayaks are then swapped for bicycles as the first **cycling section follows the Wild Atlantic Way**. Ceaseless hills and spectacular coastline lie in wait as the route loops around Fanad Head and Atlantic Drive before heading to the foot of Muckish where athletes must scramble up and down the mountain.

Only the mentally strong will ignore screaming muscles to again mount their bikes, pedaling west and around the Bloody Foreland for a final 75km of cycling. As shadows grow longer, **the peaks of Glenveagh will funnel those still persisting towards their final obstacle**—a marathon through the national park and the end of The Race.



INFORMATION FOR EDITORS

- Date: 1st - 2nd March 2014
- The Race is a multi-sport ultra-endurance event.
- It is 260km long and must be completed within 24 hours.
- The field is limited to 80 competitors.
- All proceeds from the event will go to Self Help Africa, www.selfhelpafrica.org
- It is being organised in conjunction with Gartan Adventure Centre VEC.
- Magnus Collins and David Burns of Sand2Snow Adventures are course designers
- www.sand2snowadventures.com.
- Gerry Duffy is The Race 2014 ambassador.
- Facebook page is www.facebook.com/therace.ie
- Twitter page is https://twitter.com/TheRace_ie
- For further information call Race Director, David Burns on 0877463419
- www.therace.ie

RACE PROFILES

(Below are race bios of some of our highest profile foreign competitors.)



Name: Ryan Bennett

Nationality: USA

Background

I have been running competitively for 6 years and recently made a visit to Ireland for the first time, where I immediately fell in love with the people, the culture, and the stark and beautiful landscape that will make "The Race" such an epic adventure. Besides wanting to see all that Ireland has to offer, I'm excited to test my limits in cycling and kayaking, which is sure to make this race such an extreme challenge.

Experience

2nd Place - 2010 Racing the Planet Sahara Race, 7th Place - 2011 Racing the Planet Nepal Race, 1st Place - NJ Ultra Trail Festival 50KM, Run Rabbit Run 100 Mile Participant, North Face Endurance Challenge 50KM, NYC Marathon, Boston Marathon, NJ Marathon, Mohawk Hudson Marathon, Northern Central Trail Marathon

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Name: Samantha Gash

Nationality: Australian

Background

I am a big supporter of this new not for profit endurance race. Additionally I have never been to Ireland and I think the design of this race is pretty exciting.

Experience

389km single stage ultramarathon across the Simpson Desert , 222km single stage ultramarathon in Himalayas (The High), Four Deserts Grandslam (4 x 250km desert ultramarathons), Clifbar10Peaks race (75kms with 6000m elevation), Northburn100km (New Zealand), 250km multistage race in Nepal.



Name: Belinda Holdsworth

Nationality: British

Background (Reasons for entering The Race)

I am at my happiest when I am running, biking and exploring the world. I am always looking for a new challenge, and beautiful places to explore. I haven't been in a kayak since I was 12 years old, so I'm looking forward to learning a new skill while training for this race. The race looks like an incredible challenge in a stunning location.

Experience

3 x Ironman finisher, 7 multi-stage ultra marathons (Racing the Planet), Multiple single stage mountain ultra races throughout Europe, 6633 Arctic Ultra (completed 160 miles).



Name: Bill Wells

Nationality: Canadian

Background (Reasons for entering The Race)

I have always wanted to see Ireland and a friend of mine told me about the race. She lives very close to the start/finish so it would be a great way to see the country and do a cool, challenging race.

Experience

3x Adventure racing world championships, Primal Quest AR, Southern Traverse AR, Abu Dhabi Adventure Challenge, Mountain X Race Worlds, 2x Raid World Series. Rogaine World Championships Estonia. 10x marathon (3x Boston). Canadian Death Race 125km UltraMarathon. ITU Worlds Olympic Distance, Duathlon and Long Course (Long Course 2013). 2011 1/2 Ironman World Championship Las Vegas. 2013 Ironman Mt. tremblant (9:44), 2013 Ironman Hawaii (10:31)



Name: George Chmiel Jr

Nationality: USA

Background (Reasons for entering The Race)

I was born for this type of competition. First off...I absolutely love Ireland. The beauty of the countryside, the people, the history, the strong dark beers... unreal. Been looking for a good excuse to visit and this is an exceptional one.

Secondly, I love the mental challenge of running/biking long distances. Simply getting lost in your own thought as you attempt to push beyond the pain and the constant desire to quit. A race like this reveals an individual's true character. One day, 24 hours, 260km, lay it all on the line, put your head down, and don't look up till you cross the finish. No matter how bad it hurts.

Experience

8 Ultramarathons completed including 5 RacingThePlanet events: Sahara Race 2009 (5th place), RTP Australia 2010 (22nd place), Atacama Crossing 2011 (4th place), RTP Nepal 2011 (2nd place team) and Gobi March 2012 (7th place), Completed the Vermont 100-miler once and Vermont 50-miler twice, Lake Placid Ironman finisher (first triathlon, Despite many close calls, injuries and epic collapses along the way...have never DNF'd in a race. It's not in my DNA.



Name: Una Hall

Nationality: Canadian

Background (Reasons for entering The Race)

My favourite type of race is off-road multi-sport which involves mountain biking, trail running and kayaking. I love the variety, the planning, the scenery and the challenge. This race will be a different sort of challenge for me. I've never been on a road bike and I've never run a full marathon. At a different time of the year, I would say I'd have an advantage in the kayak section as I live on a lake and paddle regularly but since my lake will be frozen soon (one of the disadvantages of living in Northern Ontario) I'm a little worried my paddling muscles will be rusty by race time. My goal is to finish.

Experience

Lost in the Rock and Trees - 60 km mountain bike race (2010, 2011). Logs Rocks and Steel - Multi-sport race (2011, 2012 - 1st woman, 2013 - 2nd woman). Bruce Peninsula Multi-Sport Race (100 km) - (2012 - 3rd woman, 2013 - 1st woman). Eager Beaver 100 - 100 mile mountain bike race (finisher - 2nd woman). (These races consisted of very few female competitors)