



THE GAUNTLET COMPETITOR GUIDE

Lough Cutra Castle Triathlon



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“

It's fantastic news that Castle Triathlons have expanded the range of races on offer at Lough Cutra Castle this year with the addition of the Gauntlet. The venue is absolutely stunning, crystal clear waters, a scenic and undulating bike route and a beautiful, mainly off road, run in the castle grounds.

Matt Molloy

Irish Elite performer and podium finisher in 2013

”

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Event dates in 2014:

Lough Cutra Castle, Galway (Ireland)

Sunday 25th May 2014

Cholmondeley Castle, Cheshire (UK)

Sunday 29th June 2014

The Bastion, Kent (UK)

Sunday 13th July 2014:
Full Iron Distance at Hever Castle

Castle Howard, York (UK)

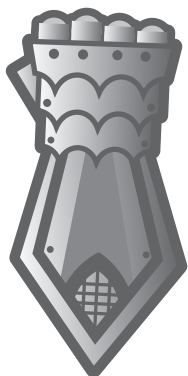
Saturday 26th/Sunday 27th July 2014

Chateau de Chantilly, Chantilly (France)

Saturday 23rd/Sunday 24th August 2014

Hever Castle, Kent (UK)

Saturday 27th/Sunday 28th September 2014



2014

Time to throw down The Gauntlet

Dear Competitors,

Congratulations on rising to the challenge of The Gauntlet and signing up for the first half iron distance race at The Lough Cutra Castle Triathlon. You will be one of 100 competitors taking part in this iconic race within a triathlon festival of 1000 competitors.

The Gauntlet is a natural extension to our current competitor offering; we want there to be a race for everyone at our stunning castle venues nurturing the growth of the sport.

For those of you who don't know the rationale for the race name, it was chosen in keeping with our castle theme. The Gauntlet not only symbolises a protective glove used as a form of armour during historical battles, but celebrates the two idioms 'running the gauntlet' (originally running the gantlope), which means running between two confining rows of adversaries and 'throwing down the

gauntlet', which was an old fashioned way of challenging someone to mortal combat! We appreciate your armour for the day will be made of lycra rather than steel and hope you can enjoy the historical land stunning landscape you will be competing in.

Lough Cutra Castle, which plays host to the triathlon has a rich and varied history dating back to the early 19th century and boasts the largest privately owned lake in Europe. The 90K cycle will take you into the heart of the hostile Burren terrain, one of six national parks in Ireland, described in 1651 by a Cromwellian Army Officer

named Ludlow as, "a country where there is not water enough to drown a man, wood enough to hang one, nor earth enough to bury them." The run, through the beautiful grounds of the castle estate and surrounding forestry, provides a fitting finale to your epic undertaking.

This guide aims to provide you with more details about key aspects of the event and course to help you prepare for the day. I have no doubt you will have a memorable race and look forward to seeing you at the finishing line.

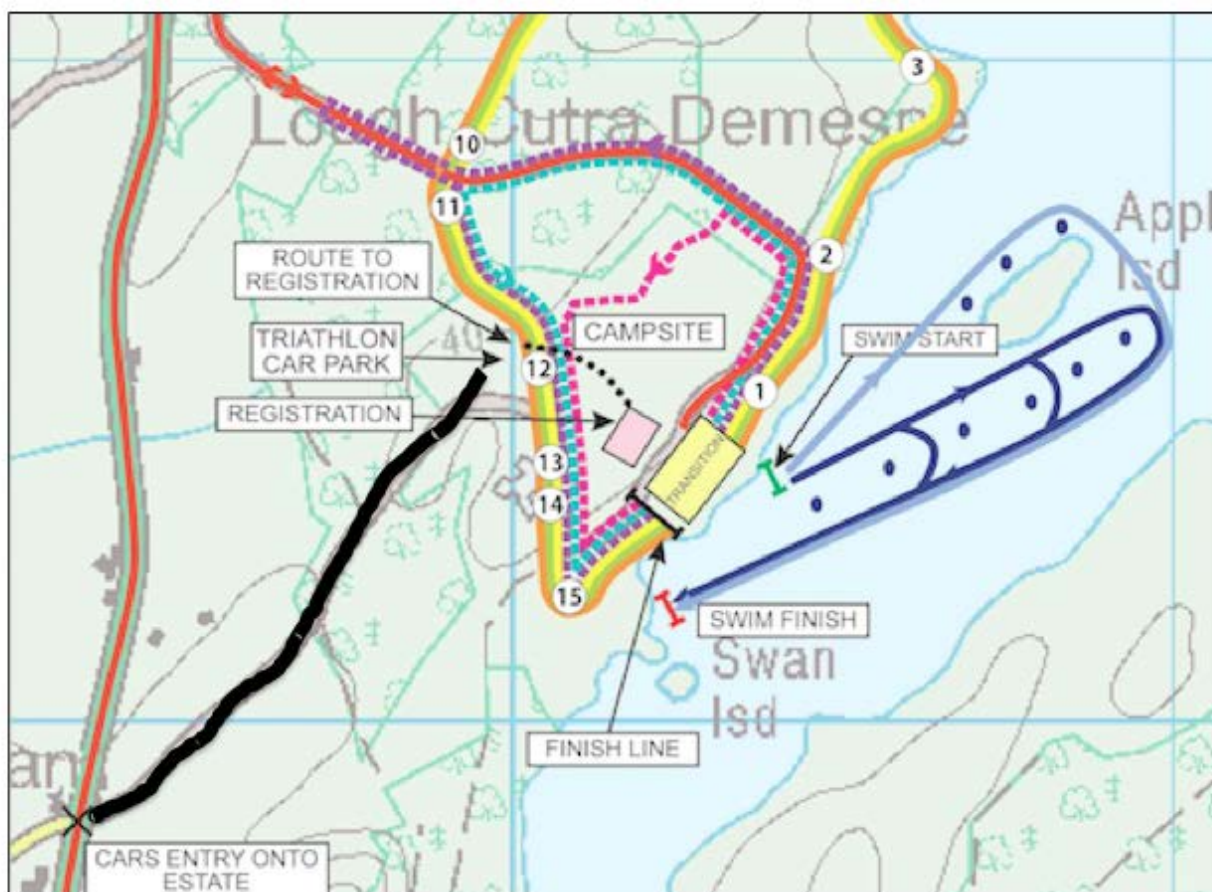
Good luck and most importantly enjoy!

Mise le meas,

Brian Adcock
Race Director
Castle Triathlon Series



Directions



Route into Car Park from the old N18 now the R458

From Dublin:

Follow the N6 for Galway. At Loughrea avoid the bypass signposted for Gort, but head straight on into the town.

At the end of the town turn left at the bridge onto the N66 signposted for Gort. Entering Gort turn left at the T Junction onto the N18. After c. 2 miles there is a small road to the left. Take this and immediately in front of you are the main gates to Lough Cutra Castle.

From Shannon:

Head east on N19 Rd for 500 m. At the roundabout, take the 1st exit and stay on N19 Rd

Go through 3 roundabouts (5.1 km). At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto the M18 ramp to Gaillimh/Galway/Inis/Ennis. After 41.2 km take the exit toward N18. After 400m turn right onto N18. At the next roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto Crowe St/N66. Continue to follow N66. Continue onto Georges

St. Continue onto Ennis Rd for 3.5 km. This will take you to the entrance of Lough Cutra Castle.

Yellow correx signage with the words "Triathlon Car Park" and marshals will direct you to the triathlon car park on the estate. This is a different entrance from the main gates at the front of the estate. It is a 5 minute walk from the Car Park to registration.

Registration

Signs from the Car Park will lead you to registration. Registration for The Gauntlet competitors opens at 16.00 on the Saturday before the event (24th May) until 17.00. If you are unable to make this, registration will be open from 6.45am on Sunday (25th May) where we will provide you with a race pack including:

- An individual coloured race number that is worn during the cycle and the run (safety pins are provided if you don't have a race belt)
- Three numbered labels – one for the front of your helmet, one for the back of your helmet and one for the bike frame
- A coloured swim hat (the colour relates to the wave that you are in)
- A timing chip device to be worn around your left ankle – this must be worn throughout all 3 disciplines and will need to be handed in at the finish line
- A bike timing device which is attached by a sticker underneath your saddle
- A wristband to be worn on your right wrist identifying you as a Gauntlet competitor

If you choose to register on Sunday morning please arrive at least an hour before the wave start at 8.00am (we would recommend you are with us for 6.45am)

Our staff at registration will provide you with a race number and will body mark your hand.

Wetsuits will be mandatory for this race.

There is no facility for overnight racking at Lough Cutra Castle.

Due to safety and security of equipment no friends or family will be allowed in the Transition area with you.

The Gauntlet wave briefing will commence at 07:40 by the lakeside before the wave starts at 08.00.



Transition

Transition is on the Castle lawn located next to the lake and just down the hill from the registration tent (2 minute walk).

You will be sharing transition with Olympic, Sprint Plus and Super Sprint competitors who will be starting in later waves than yourselves but will be racked in different rows to you.

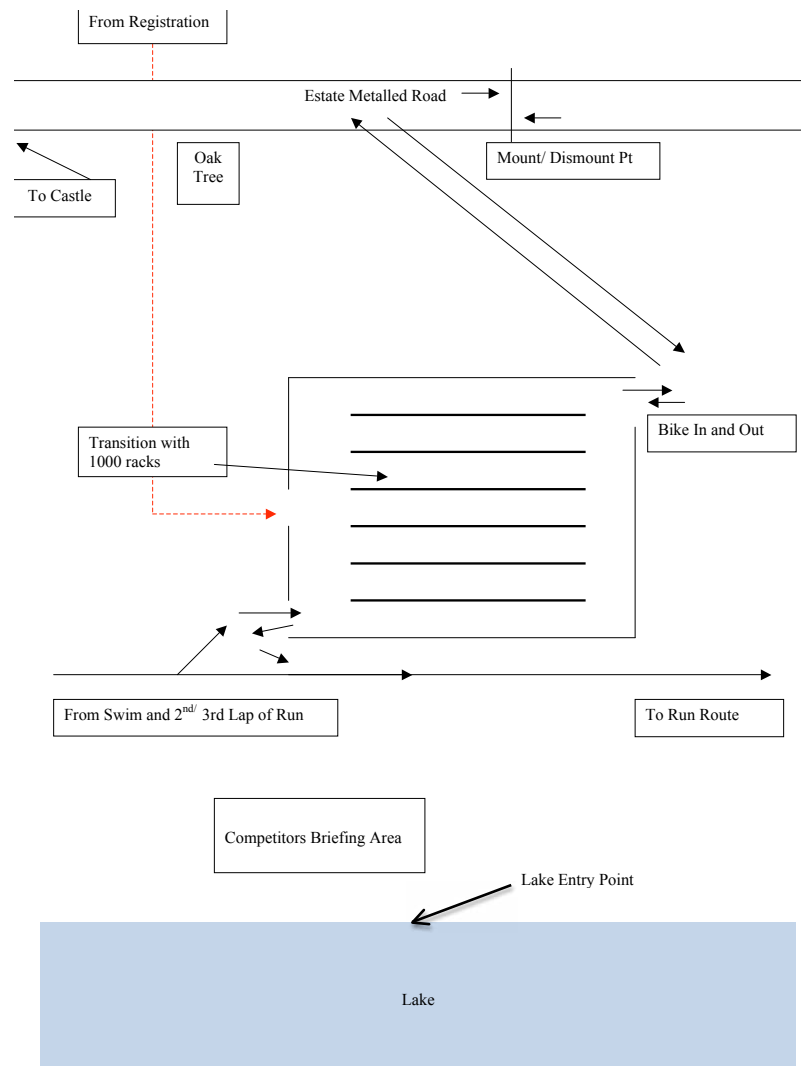
There will be allocated racks for your race but you will not have a numbered place. The transition is neutralised so there is no advantage to be gained by being the first to rack.

Before entering transition you should have placed your numbered labels on the bike and bike helmet. Transition staff will check your helmet and brakes for optimum safety.

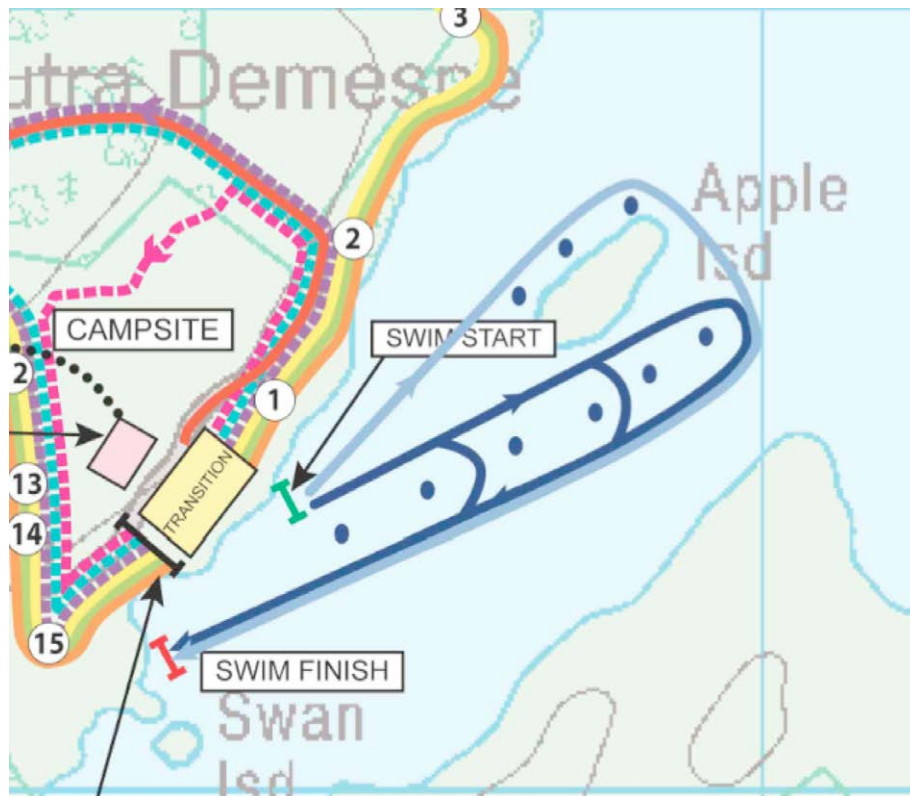
Bike helmets should be placed on the bike handle bars in transition.

Each competitor is allocated a 1 metre space for their belongings.

It's recommended that you name your property so any lost items can be returned to their owner.



The swim course



The course is a 1.9km loop which circumnavigates Apple Island in the middle of the lake (shown in light blue on the attached map).

Race Director, Brian Adcock will brief all competitors on the course and safety at this point. If you are in a relay team, please ensure the whole team comes to the briefing.

Swim buoys will be placed at regular intervals round the course and will act as distance markers and also "sighters" for your swim. Wetsuits will be mandatory for this race. The swim cut off will be 75 minutes.

Safety at the heart of the event – we have 3 safety boats/ crafts and 8 kayaks manned by fully trained life

safety representatives out on the lake for your swim. If you feel that you are in trouble please roll on to your back and raise your arm and someone will be with you immediately. Resting on the boat or kayak at any time during the race is acceptable with no implication on the race qualification.

- There will be a swim session on Friday 23rd May (6pm) for any Gauntlet competitors who would like to swim in the lake. Please email: admin@castletriathlonseries.co.uk to secure your place.



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The cycle course



Once competitors have finished the swim leg, there is a 200m run to transition. The “Bike Out” will be at opposite end of transition to “Swim In” and take competitors uphill onto the estate road.

The estate drive is 1.7km long and has the joint hazard of cattle grids and on cyclists return, exiting cyclists taking part in the shorter distance races.

At the end of the estate road you will reach the old N18 (now the R458) where cyclists will turn right onto the public road. Once on the public road, cyclists are reminded that the roads are not closed to traffic and that you must follow the rules of the Highway Code at all times.

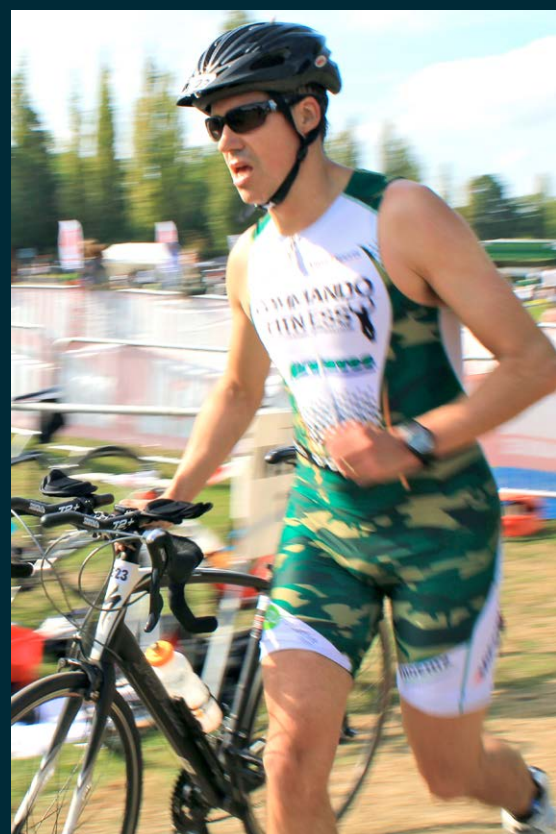
The Gauntlet cycle route will take competitors on a single loop 90K course. Once the first loop has been completed, cyclists will come back to the front of the castle entrance and carry on for a second loop. After repeating the second loop cyclists should then return to transition via the estate road. Towards the end of your first lap or on the early part of your second lap you may well be joined by other cyclists from the Olympic distance race.

The cut off time for the bike leg is 5 hours 45 minutes. In other words, if you are not back in transition 7 hours after race start, you will not be allowed to continue out onto the run section.

There will be feed and water stations out on the bike course. Please see the nutrition page (page 23) for more detail.

Relay teams must ensure they pass the timing chip between team members during each transition.

An automatic 2 minute penalty will be issued to triathletes if any litter is dropped on the course!



The cycle route



ELEVATION (m)



Distance (KM)

The cycle course continued



The cycle route is a 90K single loop which will take you deep into the heart of the world famous Burren National Park.

On exiting the castle cyclists turn right and head north on the R458 (old N18) for 4K and into the centre of the town of Gort. Turn left in the market square and head west out of town for 1K before turning right onto the Corofin Road, the R460, opposite the supermarket. After crossing over the motorway continue for a further 1K before turning right towards Kinvarra. You will pass Coole Lough and Park on your right hand side before arriving in the small hamlet of Tierneevin. Turn right at Tierneevin church and continue west towards Kinvarra. After a further 3K turn left (also signposted to Burren Yoga) and head towards the Burren proper. The first of the large limestone fields associated with the Burren will come into view.....a taster of what is to come!!

At 16K turn right onto the L4507 and head north west for 7K hand railing the impressive Burren mountains, up close for the first time. At the end of this long straight road turn left onto the steepest section of the whole course, the L1014 and head up for 600m to the feed station at 24K, just across the border into County Clare. A 4K sweeping downhill is followed by a sharp right at a t-junction and then a sharp left at a second t-junction. This is the main Kinvarra to Ballvaughan road, the N67, and caution should be exercised at this point. Please take in the view on this next 7K section as it

is the last you will see of the coast on the course.

At 36K you will enter the village of Ballyvaughan, home of the Burren Cycling Club. At the T-junction in the village centre turn left and begin the long steady Category 3 climb up to the infamous Corkscrew Hill which does a very passable imitation of an alpine col with its switchbacks and steep incline. The top of the hill is just under halfway and not long after you will turn left onto a minor road and are rewarded by the 2nd of our three feed stations.

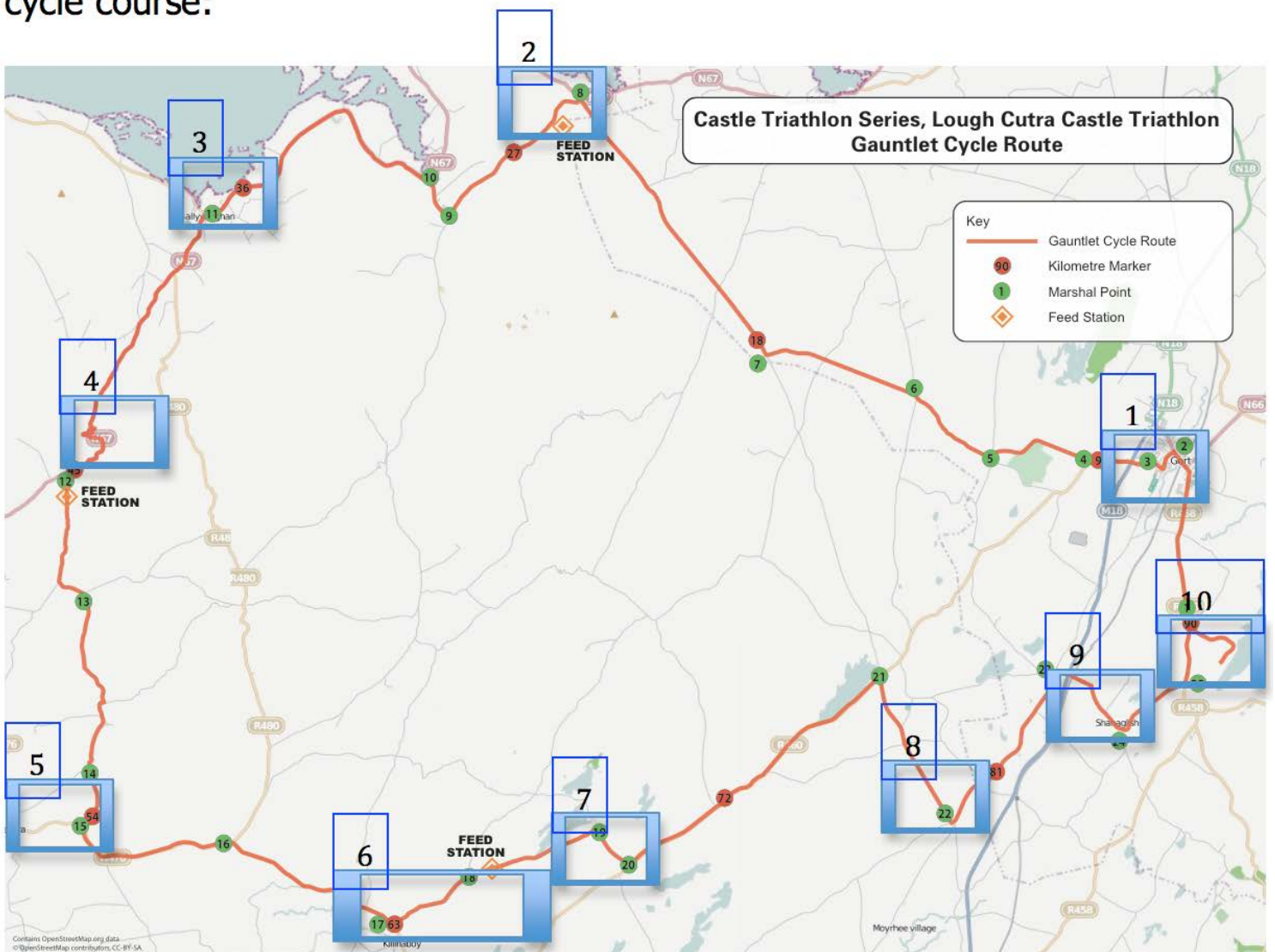
For the next 9K the route winds its way south and downhill on a relatively narrow road, through the heart of the Burren National Park, towards the village of Kilfenora. Turning left onto the main road, the R476 at 54K you will then head towards Corofin for 9K in an easterly direction passing the ruins of Leamaneh Castle en route. In the hamlet of Killinaboy turn left and head once more towards the mountains for just over 1K before turning right at a pronounced fork in the road. Here at 63K you will find the final feed station followed by 5K along a well made but single track road – please take great care on this section!

The next 7K is a fast section on the main Corofin to Gort road, the R460, and the last 2K passes alongside the beautiful Lough Bunny. Turn right at the

crossroads at the end of the lough and join the L1010 for 4K heading south east before arriving at the village of Carrowcraheen and turning sharp left onto the newly resurfaced Tubber Road. At 80K pass through the village of Tubber itself and continue towards Gort for a further 3K and then turn right heading over the M18 once more and the Galway to Limerick railway line. After entering the village of Shanaglish with its impressive church. A left turn here and after 2K on a narrow road section you will arrive at the old N18 again, directly opposite the entrance to the Triathlon Car Park on the edge of the Lough Cutra Estate. A further left and a quick dash due north for 1.5K on the R458 will see you regaining the main entrance to the castle before turning right (please be aware of oncoming traffic which should be held for you) and heading down the main drive and relative sanctuary of the transition area.

The cycle course points of interest

cycle course:



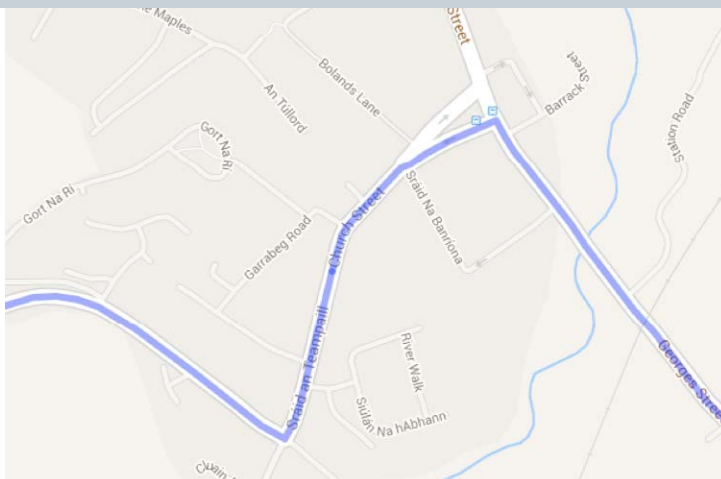
Cycle course tips

Please take note of the following 10 key junctions/ points of interest on the cycle course:



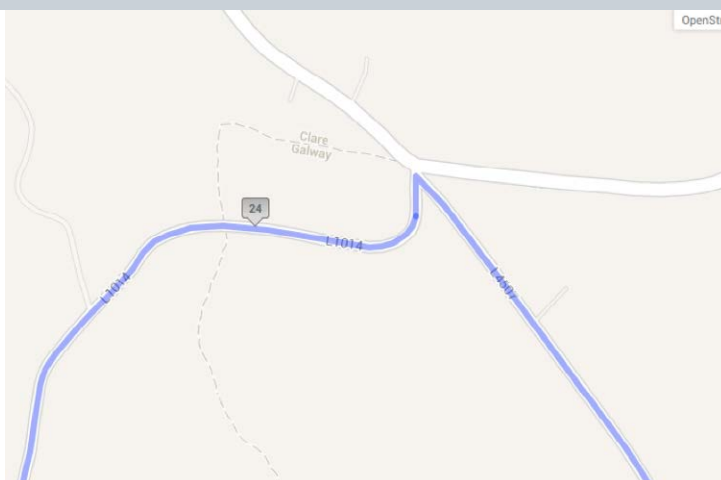
1. 5.7K Gort Town Centre

Follow the Ennis Road (R458) all the way into the centre of town passing under the railway bridge and over the river en route. Look out for the marshal and signage in amongst the town centre clutter although should be relatively quiet in the early morning. After turning left continue for another 800m out of town on the Tubber Rd before turning a sharp right opposite the Supermarket onto the Corofin Road.



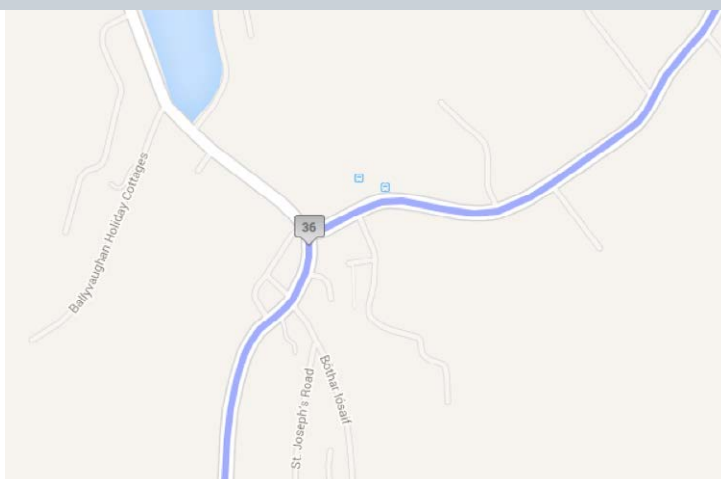
2. 23.5K Abbey Hill - Category 5 Climb

Follow the long straight road towards the coast until T-junction and then turn immediately left and get into low gear for a Category 5 climb to the top of your first Burren col, Abbey Hill. Only 600m of lung bursting effort and you will be at the top! Take care not to overshoot and end up on the faster and busier N67 that takes the coast road to Ballvaughan.



3. 36K Ballvaughan Village

Follow the N67 into Ballyvaughan and then turn left at the t-junction in the middle of the village. Beware the locals heading to the village shop for their Sunday paper!

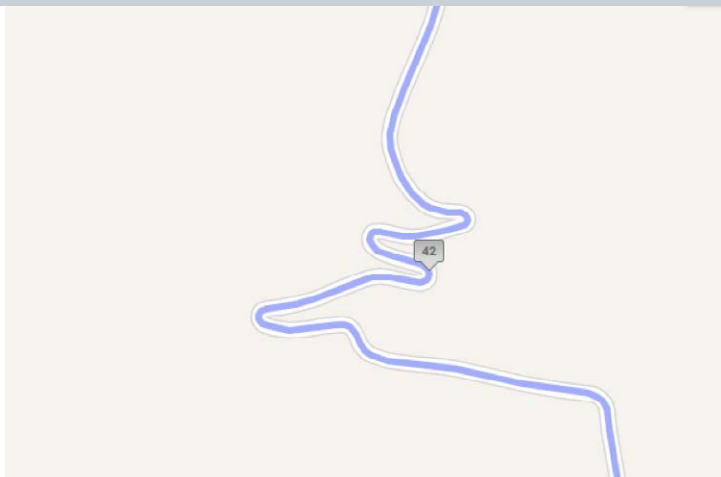


Cycle course tips continued



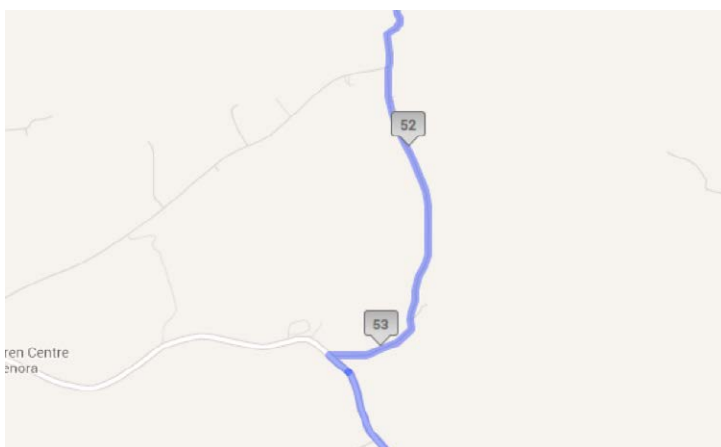
4. 43K Corkscrew Hill – Category 3 Climb

Follow the N67 out of Ballyvaughan in the direction of Lisdoonvarna and then get climbing. Steady climb for approx. 6K and then steepens up quite dramatically as you approach the top. 4 serious switchbacks and then you are there! Beware motorists cutting the corners on the sharp turns. Feedstation 2 is just around the corner.



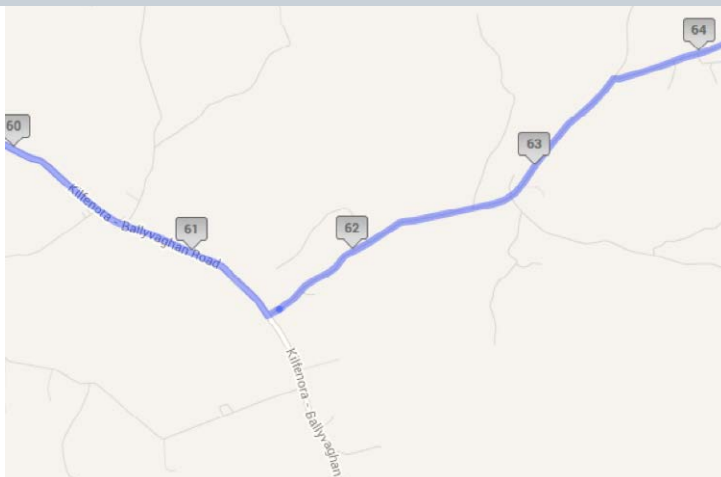
5. 52-53K Kilfenora Approach

Following a fast and steady descent on relatively narrow and quiet roads at just under 52K you will approach road signage for Kilfenora – make sure you continue straight on following the triathlon signage and marshal in this location. On arriving at the main road, the R476, exercise caution as you turn right and head east for the first time.



6. 61K Killinaboy

Approaching Killinaboy just after 61K prepare for a sharp turn left onto a minor road. Travel 2K along this road and then follow the marshal and signage to turn right at a fork in the road. This next narrow section will be made one way for the triathlon but please keep your wits about you on this very narrow section of road which lasts for 4K. Third feed station is found here at 63K.

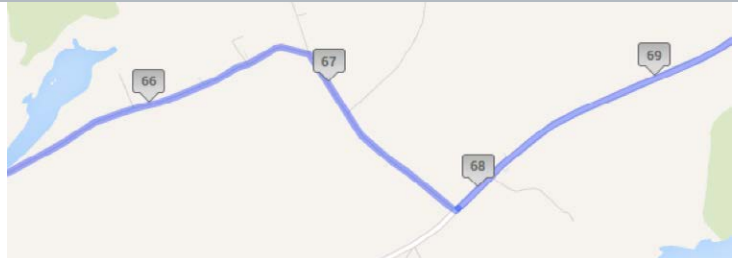




Cycle course tips continued

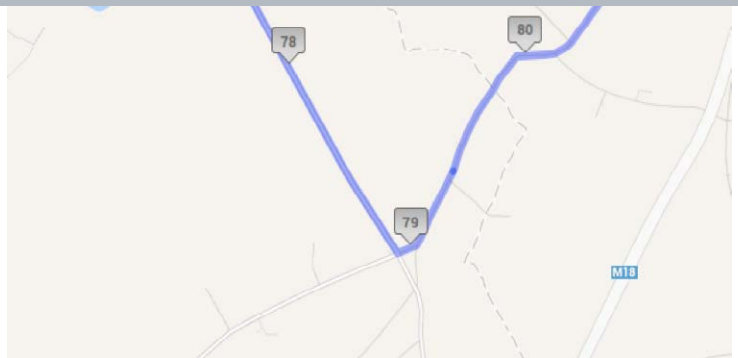
7. 68K Ballard

Sharp right turn at 67K at a T-junction followed by a sharp left turn just before 68K at a place called Ballard onto the Corofin to Gort road, the R460. Please listen to the marshal's instructions as this is a fast and straight road.



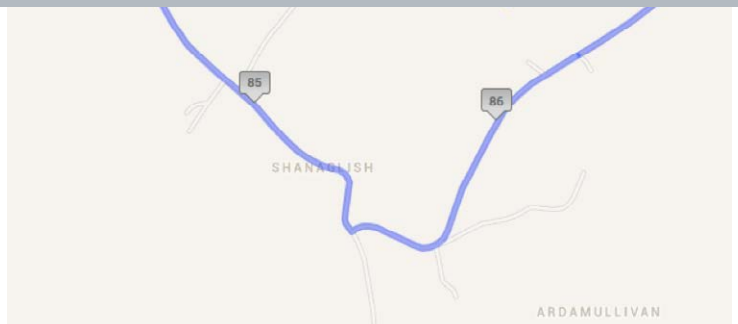
8. 79K Carrowcraheen

Just approaching 79K on a straight Burren road with limestone paving left and right you will approach the hamlet of Carrowcraheen. Turn sharp left and left again after a few yards onto the Tubber Road, which if you followed it to the end would take you back into Gort. Enjoy the newly laid road surface!



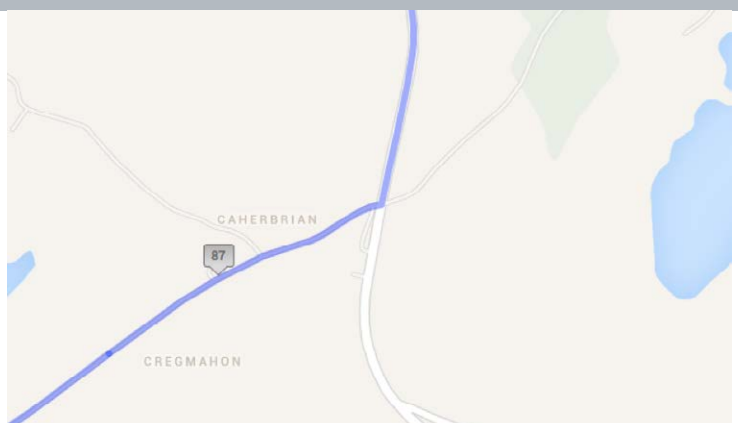
9. 85K Shanaglish

Take care approaching the small hamlet of Shanaglish with its prominent church – you may well be passing as churchgoers are either arriving or leaving. A few yards after the church take the narrow road on your left and follow this for 1K before hitting the Ennis Road, the R458.



10. 85K Shanaglish

At the Ennis Road you will see a garage on your left hand side and the entrance to the Triathlon Car Park straight ahead. This is right on the edge of the Lough Cutra Demesne Estate – nearly there!! Turn left carefully as this is a fast road and there may well be a lot of additional traffic arriving for the triathlon and continue for just over 1K until you get to the main entrance of the Castle.



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The run course



After competitors leave T2 they will begin the run course which consists of three loops of a 7km course totalling 21km.

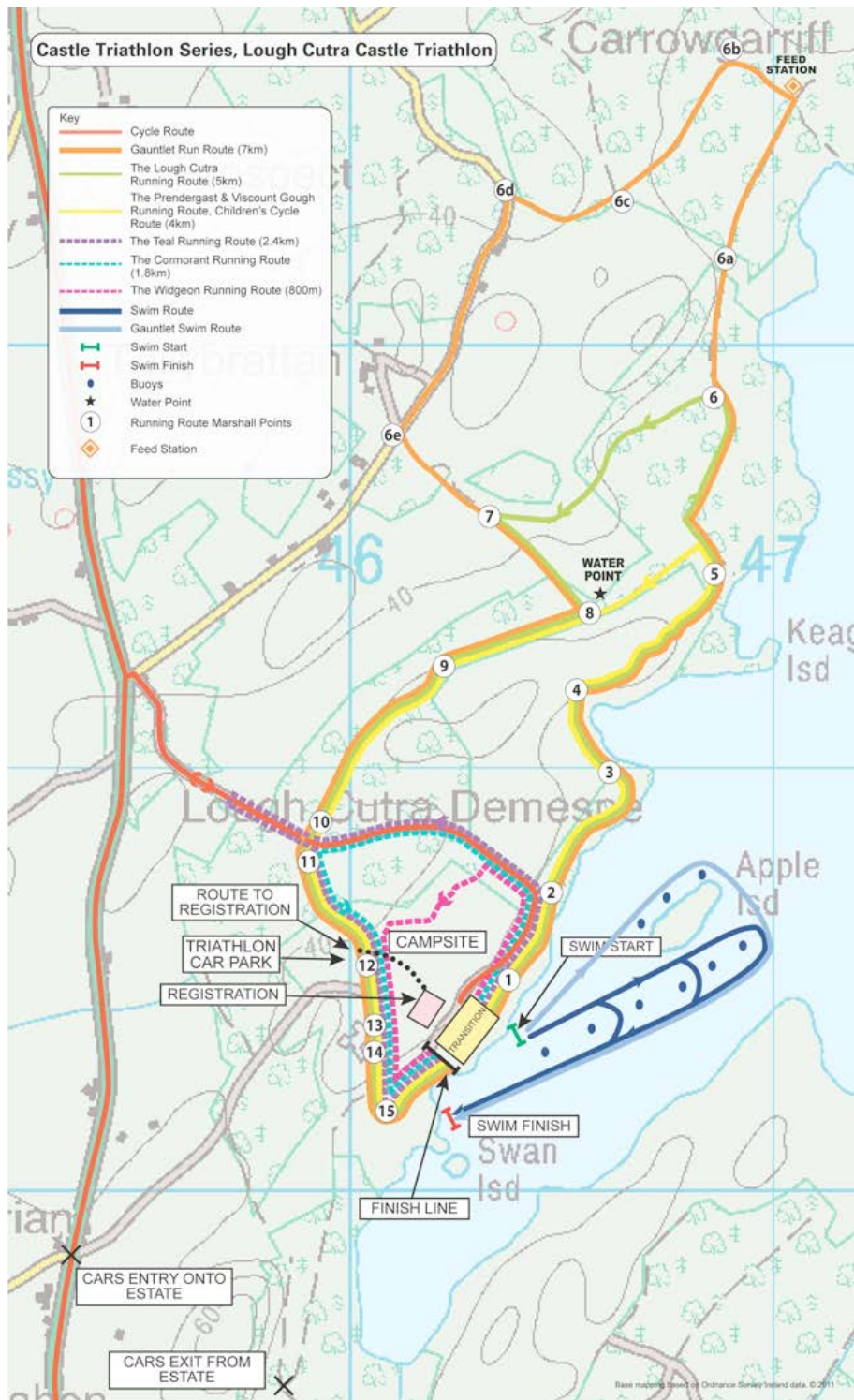
A large proportion of the run route is off road with many competitors choosing to wear trail or multi-terrain run shoes.

Please exercise caution when running along all sections of the route as there may be other walkers, people on horseback and motorists using the same tracks, bridleways, paths and roads.

The finishing line is situated next to the castle where a host of refreshments and drinks will be on offer.



The run course



Run course tips

Please take note of the following
10 key junctions/ points of interest
on the run course:

1. 1.2K - Entry into Deer Park

After 1.2K of running along the lake side the route turns inland and enters the Deer Park through iron gates. Care must be taken under foot at this point and all through the field which is the most uneven 600m of the route.



2. 1.8K - Exit of Deer Park

Again on exit of the field, although the route has been much improved care must be taken under foot.



3. 2K - 1st Run Split

At 2K you will pass a water station and also be presented with a run split. Competitors from the shorter races may well be on the run course at the same time as you. At this junction continue straight on, those on the 4K route will turn left at this point.



Run course tips continued



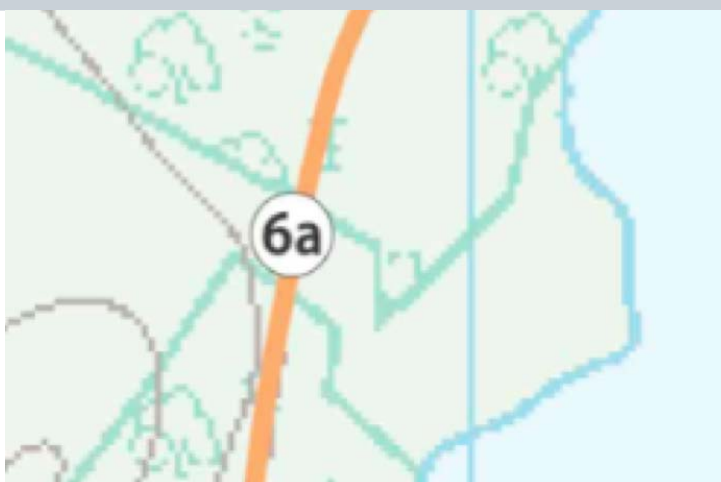
4. 2.5K – 2nd Run Split

At 2.5K you will pass a further run split. Again competitors from the shorter races may well be on the run course at the same time as you. At this junction continue straight on, those on the 5K route will turn left at this point.



5. 3K – Entry into Carrowcarriff Wood

At 3K you will cross an open field section and then enter Carrowcarriff wood. Path has been upgraded but is still a little uneven so please be careful under foot.



6. 4K – Turn onto Road

At 4K you will emerge from Carrowcarriff wood onto a quiet country lane. Although the locals are aware of the event please be wary of motorists driving along this 500m stretch of road.



Run course tips continued

7. 6K – Run/ Cycle Crossing Point

At 6K after a run along Black Drive you will emerge at the Run/ Cycle crossing point on the main estate ride. Please listen to the marshals and give way to cyclists if required.



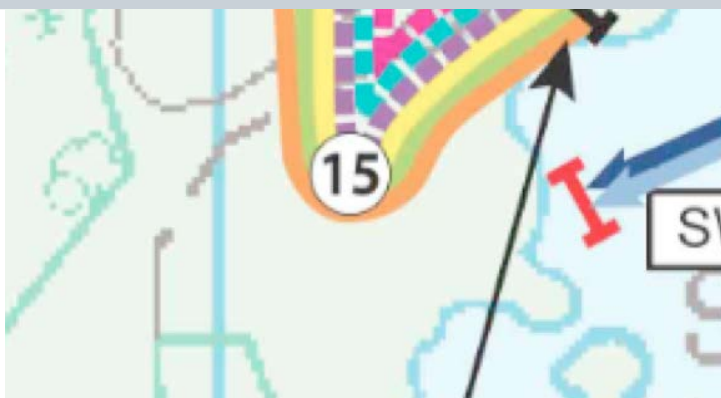
8. 6.7K – Stable courtyards

At 6.7K, after 500m running along a good tarmac road you will enter the stable complex. Please be aware of spectators and also speed bumps across the roads.



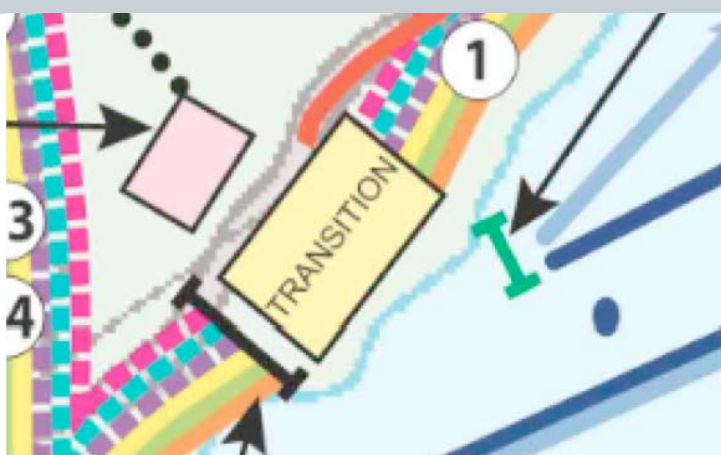
9. 6.8K – Castle Return Steep Downhill

At 6.8k, you will get the choice of turning left and heading towards the finish line in front of the castle or to continue straight on for your second/third laps of the course. Beware of cobbles and loose stones under foot as you descend the steep path adjacent to the castle on tired legs.



10. 7K - Transition

At 7K you will pass along the lower lawn and adjacent to transition. Please be careful to keep your wits about you as there will be other competitors joining the run course at this point.



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Race nutrition



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The Castle Triathlon Series will be working with nutrition sponsors, High Five to provide you with comprehensive food and drink stations.

On the bike

Each station will be preceded by a football net ready to catch your empty water bottles or litter.

A feed station will be placed at 24K, 44K and 63K on the bike route.

A team of volunteers will have a selection of food and drink available for you including half bananas, High 5 energy bars, High 5 gels and pre-prepared bottles of water and pre-mixed High 5 isotonic energy drink.

On the run

A feed station will be placed at the 3.5K point of the 7K loop. You will therefore pass this three times, once at 3.5K, again at 10.5K on your second lap and finally at 17.5K on your third lap.

In addition there will be a water station at the 2K point of the 7K loop which you will pass at 2K, 9K and 16K.

The team of 4 volunteers will have an identical selection of food and drink available for you as per the bike feed station, including half bananas, High 5

energy gels, High 5 gels, pre-prepared bottles of water and pre-mixed High 5 isotonic energy drink.

On your run you may well be joined by competitors from the shorter adult races that have departed after your race start time. Do not be put off by fresh legged runners overtaking you (they will have different colour numbers on their vests) and keep following the signs for the 21K race rather than just following others as they may well be on one of the shorter 4K or 5K routes!!



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Race timing

You will be timed during the race using electronic chip timing technology. The timing devices, of which two are being utilised, will be given to you in registration.

The first is a timing chip which is attached with a Velcro strap around your left ankle. Throughout the course you will pass over a series of mats that record your chip's signal and update the central timing computer. This will be used to give you your split timings on all sections of the course and ensure that you have completed the requisite number of laps.

In addition you will be given a seat post timing device that you must attach to the seat post of your bike. This will give you split timings out on the bike course. The Transmitter/receivers for this timing chip will be out on the course – there are no mats for these devices. This will enable us to give you a more detailed breakdown of your cycle lap times across the course as well as ensuring that everybody completes the entire course.

After the race you will be able to get a print-out of these times at the results tent in the Event Village and all results will be posted on-line on the evening of the race.



The rules

Although we run our events to British Triathlon Federation (BTF) and Triathlon Ireland safety and procedural rules we are an independent event that hopes to break down barriers to entry and relax the competitor's experience.



This is a non-drafting race. Penalties will be issued to all competitors who are caught drafting out on the course. Unless overtaking, you must remain more than 7m from the back wheel of the nearest cyclist.

Any wrong turnings onto the wrong course will be penalized with a DNF. It is the responsibility of all competitors to read these notes and listen to the briefings given on the day of the race. We recommend, if at all possible, that you come and do a recce of the cycle route in advance of the event.

Please stop if you see an injured fellow competitor and find help from the nearest marshal reporting their race number, location and nature of injury. We know it is a race but your safety and that of your fellow competitors comes first.

There is a team of cycle support representatives on the road. If you have a mechanical fault and would like help, please flag them down with no penalty to your time or race qualification.



Prize money and rewards



Each Gauntlet competitor will receive the following:

- A well-earned warm meal on completion of the race. (This can be claimed by entering the Gauntlet competitors marquee and presenting the wristband worn during the race).
- An exclusive Gauntlet Buff © designed especially for competitors.
- A free massage from one of our sports masseurs
- A free rucksack with various CTS and sponsored goodies to take home
- A free shower in the courtyard showers
- A free technical tee shirt

The open category podium winners will receive a trophy along with prize money with each winning male and female receiving;

1st place – €750 2nd place – €375 3rd place – €150

There will also be Age Group trophies for 40+, 50+ and 60+ first places along with prizes for all positions.

The prize giving will take place at approximately 2.00pm at the prize giving podiums adjacent to the castle.



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Spectators view

Many of you will be bringing spectators to watch your herculean efforts. Our recommendation for your supporters, based on a 6 hour race completion time for the race, would be to do the following;

0730

Chill out and grab some breakfast in the Retail Village area whilst taking in the atmospheric sounds of the local piper.

0800

Watch the swim start of the race and then wander in a northerly direction up the lakeside path so that you can see your competitor round Apple Island.

0830-0900

Make your way back to the castle lawn so you can watch the front-runners exit the water and then cheer your loved one on as they emerge from the cold waters of the lake. There is a good grandstand view of the transition area at this point.

0900-1200

Make your way out onto the cycle course in your car and head for the 43K point which is on the N57 and the fabled Corkscrew Hill, Ireland's answer to an alpine col. If you have the time go and visit Father Ted's house in the Burren <http://www.fathertedshouse.com> before heading back to the Castle to catch your man/ woman as they get off their bikes.

Alternatively, particularly if you have got small children, stay and enjoy the atmosphere at the castle. There will be free bouncy castles, live bands and much more on offer.

1200-1400

You can watch the run from anywhere you like on the 7K route. The Castle and immediate surrounds provides the best backdrop for photos but you are welcome to walk any section of the run but please just be careful to stay to the side of the tracks and give way to any competitors on narrow sections.

The lawn directly in front of the castle is a great spot to watch the finishing straight and you are welcome to run the last 100 yards with your competitor, particularly if you have young kids, if you so desire.

1430

The prize giving ceremony is scheduled for this time directly in front of the castle and adjacent to the finish line.

1445-1700

The children's races start at 1500 and this provide a great spectacle and inspiration for younger children.



In addition, more live music and traditional set music will play continuously throughout the afternoon.

If you are looking for a great place to eat both before, during and after the race we can recommend the Gallery Café in the middle of Gort, which is right on the Market Square.

Make sure your spectators know your race number and projected times for each leg of the event. This should give them a good idea of when you'll arrive at any point on the course.

More information

We hope that this competitor guide has answered any questions that you may have had, but please don't hesitate to contact the office if you have any further questions.

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