

Day 4

What a beautiful day today, sun is shining and hardly any wind. Its 120km today up to Letterkenny. We had 2 extra cyclists in our little group, Denis (the chatterbox) and Dave who joined us from another group. All the cyclist were leaving the hotel which is in the middle of Sligo together because negotiating the traffic was going to be difficult. As usual I was at the back and at one stage I was at the top of a hill looking down at all the cyclists in front of me, absolutely fantastic sight first thing on a Saturday morning. We all whizzed out the road together for about 10km and then split into our groups. Denis was doing his best to talk his way up the hills but the lads told him he'd have to pedal too !! We cycled on to Bundoran where we stopped for coffee in the sunshine, lovely.

There are simple pleasures in life like fresh coffee in the morning or the sound of a baby laughing but at this stage my absolute favourite is bringing my pedals level then standing up and getting my arse up off that bloody saddle for 10 to 15 seconds !! After coffee we motored on to Donegal Town where we had a scheduled stop for lunch organised by Niall Muldoon who had joined us last night to cycle this morning. I love these lunch stops where all of us get to meet during the day and swap stories about the morning. Unfortunately there was a split in our group, Denis and another cyclist accidentally took a wrong turn and ended up in a different garage than the pre arranged one and when Denis saw the Supermacs sign he wasn't interested in joining us. So he ended up with Kevin Bannons group for the rest of the day....I was gutted !!

In fairness to Denis we met him later in Ballybophey and he apologised....but still remained with young Bannon.

We have our first female "roadie" this year, Aileen Murphy and I have to say she's been absolutely brilliant. Organising bags, stopping traffic, keeping our chief roadie Liam o Carroll sane and basically sorting whatever problem is put in front of her !! That's not to say the regular roadies weren't great either, big big thank you to Ciarán and Mick, Ed and Micky, and Mick and Ronnie. (bit of a theme there) Also a big shout out to our 3 bikers Ronan Dave and John who have all been "Angels on our shoulders" this week !! And we definitely could not have managed without them. I'd arranged to meet my cousin Liam Currams, who won a football and hurling All Ireland with Offaly back in the 80's at the lunch stop. He married a Donegal woman and now lives here. Brief encounter but great to see him.

After lunch we cycled on to Ballybophey where we had coffee/ice cream and then finished the last 22km into Letterkenny. That's 4 days done and one to go tomorrow. I think most people are oblivious to the pain at this stage and as tomorrow is the last leg it's much easier to take.

Bumped into my old friend Arnie from day 1 a few times, have to say he's looking like a seasoned cyclist now, he's using less tranquillisers and a lot more gumption !! He'll enjoy Malin head tomorrow and deserves it after all he's put in this week and before. Great meal in the Clanree Hotel tonight and where we're coming back to tomorrow night for our final night. So no need for packing our usual big bag as we're coming back.

Denis has found himself in Limbo and says he can't decide if he wants to go with me or young Bannon tomorrow. Kevin said he doesn't have a choice and I agreed, so group 1 it is for him tomorrow...don't worry Kevin will pick him up at the first roundabout out of Letterkenny !!

Big day tomorrow especially for our first timers ,which I love. So hopefully we can keep our excellent safety record and enjoy seeing them all get up that horrible hill at Mizen Head.

I haven't mentioned roomie Richie for a while and that's because we're not friends anymore, after the first night he said I snored my head off,even though I'd only got 5hrs kip.....Mark never treated me like that !!

Time for sleep.

PS next email probably won't arrive till Monday....always wi fi problems up here !!

Donie