

The Searlait Tywang memorial Road Run

I had no plans to do this (despite it being one of my favourite half marathon events), but when a registration fell into my lap I snapped it up. Another example of the benefits that come with being part of an active club. I had passed on an event registration to a club mate recently that I can't attend and the favour was returned with a ticket to this one. I think a couple of other ATC heads were there under similar gratuities. Great to see a club barter system in full effect.

This is really a local event for ATC, as it's just a short drive down the road (Sinead Foley kindly transporting myself and Seamus in her fancy schmanchy mobile!!!). On the day, there were 4 distances to choose from (5k, 10k, 10 mile & Half Marathon). ATC had 5 members lining up for the half marathon challenge, myself (aka Pdraig for the day), Seamus Rowan, Sinead Foley, Suzanne Kelly & Siobhan Harmon. With Murt Holohan and Maggie Owens (AKA Karen) taking on the 10 miler. I also thought I spotted Debbie Dineen at one point so there may have been more ATC peeps that we just didn't meet.

Blessed with the weather (again) and with a nice big week of Zone 2 training behind me (sorry Arnold!!!) this route was begging for a bash at a Zone 4/threshold paced effort. The hills actually demand it. It's impossible for me to maintain a low HR going uphill. I'd also watched the movie Forrest Gump again on TV this week and that famous line was resonating..... So on a Sunny Sunday for Searlaith "I just felt like running".



Rank	Athlete	Total Time	Activities	Swim Time	Ride Time	Run Time
1	Eamonn McEntee	15h 46m	10	3h 30m	8h 50m	3h 26m
2	Arnold Kane	12h 18m	15	1h 59m	7h 3m	3h 15m

Having previously ran this race I knew what was coming, there's a more detailed breakout of the course in a [2017 Searlaith Twang Race Report](#) so I'll save print here but basically it's a hilly 1st half, fast 2nd half and a downright mean final 1km climb at 19k before an Evil Kenevil stopped downhill finish:



There were 141 starters for the half this year, and given I'd achieved a very pleasing (albeit heart attack risking) sub 1:43 finish here last year; I decided to position myself behind the 1:45 pacer balloon. There was a pacer for 1:30 but there were only a handful of very svelte looking athletes around him and I wasn't about to join 'em. I already looked like an over enthusiastic muppet with my sun-blocking head scarf and shades (as well as my now obligatory fully loaded race belt) so I didn't fancy being passed by half the field after I blew up chasing Peadar Owens like times.



I used the 1:45 pacer to drag me up the 1st 3km of climbing. It was actually a bit weird, the hills didn't hurt half as much as last year. For so long I've hated hills but they really do pay dividends if you incorporate them into training/race plans. That and reducing the timber load helps a bit too!!!! Anyway, after the 1st 4km, there's a zooming decline, which I

free wheeled, and made up some time on the 1:45 pacer, passing some runners along the way. Sounds great but I was then in the uncomfortable/regrettable position of having to try maintain that pace so as to avoid the very demoralising and awkward situation where the runners you've arrogantly zipped past on the downhill, smugly catch you on the next uphill as you run out of gas!!! I get that all the time on bike rides too. I'm determined to change that this year.

After the 8km mark it flattens out something lovely and is very accommodating to a fast tempo run. The half marathon runners are also met by the 10 milers again too so there's new "targets". That's not meant in any disrespectful way at all, it is a simple strategy of spotting a jersey up ahead and chasing it down – It breaks a long run into a series of short ones. I met 10 miler Maggie along the route, as happy & social as ever, she was stood at a water station yappin' to a volunteer. I "encouraged" her to continue but avoided stopping for a chat!!!! You know Maggie, she'd bend the ear off ya & probably have you signed up for a Charity Speakathon or Sing & Sign musical if you gave her a minute. I'll get a slap on the train for that comment for sure!!

The 2nd half continued as a series of short tempo sections. Constantly picking targets, checking my form, breathing, cadence & pace. Sipping on fluids and keeping focussed on the moment.

By the time I reached the 18k marker and with that horrible final hill approaching I was feeling ready to ly down, let alone slow down. Then I spotted fellow club mate Murt – who was looking comfortable accompanying a friend on the 10miler route and just like magic I found an extra drop of gas. Ya can't be looking tired in a half marathon if a fellow IM Barca bound buddy is around, so I bit down and attacked the hill. My earphones were belting out run tunes so I couldn't make out Murt's muffled comment as I pushed on, no doubt they were supportive!!!!

At the 20k mark the effort is over and all that's left is to avoid tumbling down the very steep finishing hill. To be honest I nearly pulled the toenails off myself belting down this on my tippy toes as I knew I'd be close to a PB so didn't want to let up. I got my rewards with a very surprising finish time, albeit not in my own name.

Place	Gender Position	Bib	Name	Gender	Club	GunTime	ChipTime	
The Searlait Tywang Memorial Run Half Marathon								
10.	10	903	Padraig Kavanagh	m	Athy Triathlon Club	1:35:54,32	1:35:49,57	☆
41.	35	966	Seamus Rowan	m	Athy Triathlon Club	1:53:17,10	1:53:11,53	☆
54.	17	878	Sinead Foley	f	Athy Triathlon Club	1:55:22,14	1:55:16,70	☆
83.	37	905	Suzanne Kelly	f	Athy Triathlon Club	2:05:25,75	2:05:21,08	☆
90.	42	894	Siobhan Harmon	f	Athy Triathlon Club	2:07:56,90	2:07:51,96	☆

[show all 141 participants](#)

A fellow club mate since remarked "we need to check his p1ss for doping" but I'm afraid all you'll find are traces of the previous evenings Chinese take away & few pints of Uncle Arthurs finest. Proving once again there's more than one way to "carb load". A cracking day, absolutely lovely event & with great ATC company as always. For now, it's back to the comforts of Zone 2!

