

Ballyhass Sprint Triathlon 2021 Race Report

By Gary Condell

Ballyhass Sprint Triathlon was organised by Mallow Triathlon Club. It took place on Sunday 26th September. This year it formed part of Triathlon Irelands National Series, it was the last race of the 2021 race series so there were scores to be settled ahead of a long winter and a last chance for points to be obtained.

The race briefing was completed virtually via zoom on the Thursday evening before the race. On Friday evening each participant was sent their race number via text message and this number determined what starting group you were in.

On the morning of the race transition opened at 8am and closed at 9:45am. On arrival to transition your licence and entry number were checked along with a non-contact bike check, which basically involved you illustrating that both your brakes were working and your helmet fastened. Transition was set up in a field just beside the quarry lake, so transitions weren't too long. Each competitor had their own numbered spot in transition, here you found your race bag with your timing chip, race stickers, t-shirt and goodie bag.

Group 1 had a start time of 10:30 am, as with most races this year there was a rolling start format following numerical order, with competitors being allowed into the water every 6 seconds. The swim took place in an old, flooded quarry. The swim start was off a pontoon with some competitors taking the opportunity to display their diving skills. The water in the quarry was crystal clear and somewhere in the region of 18 degrees we were told during the race brief. The quarry walls sheltered the lake resulting in calm waters and ease of sighting.

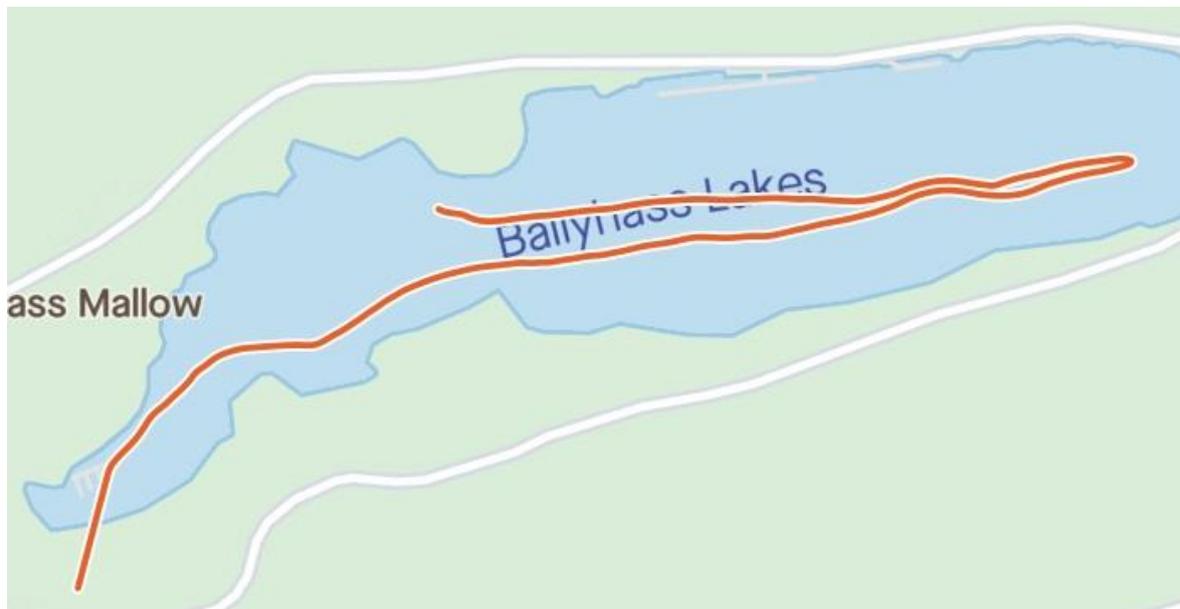


Figure 1: Ballyhass Swim Route

The cycle was a single loop, 22km long and consisted of some nice undulating drags, followed by fast down hill sections, about 2km from the end there was a steep hill just for good measure to make sure the legs were well warmed up before the run. The cycle route

was very well marshalled along with all junctions having directions clearly spray painted onto the road.

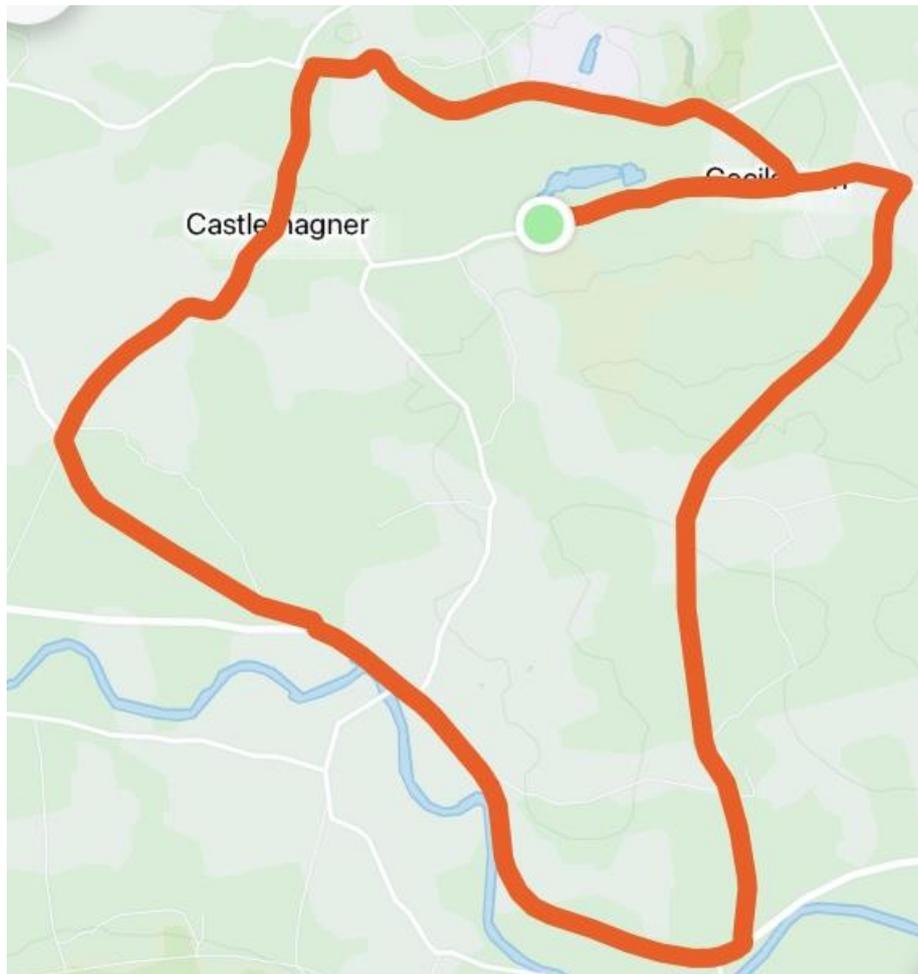


Figure 2: Ballyhass Cycle Route

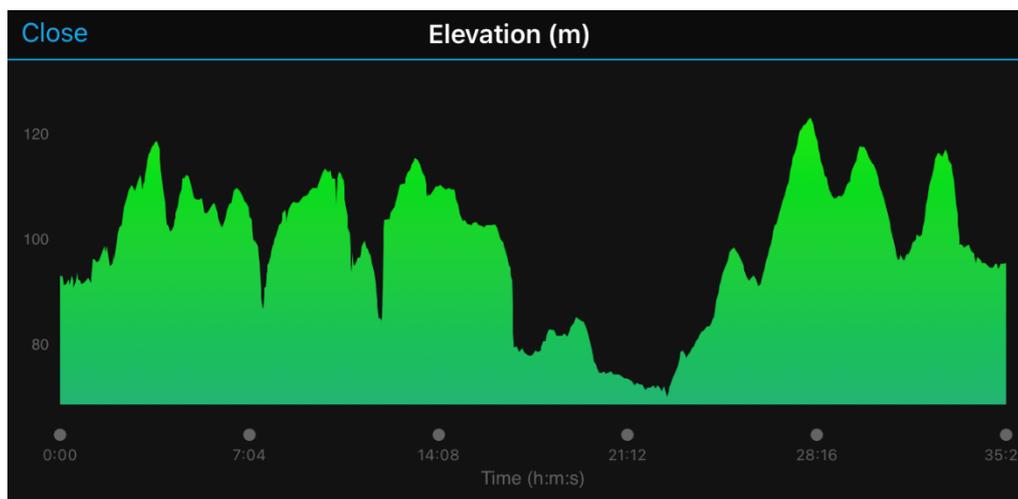


Figure 3: Ballyhass Cycle Route Elevation

A 5km single lap run on the road including one very testing hill and a 500m grass finish brought the competitors through the finishing arch. Overall, it was a nice run route, once you had got to the top of the steep ascent there was a very gradual downhill back towards transition which really helped to get the cadence back into the legs.

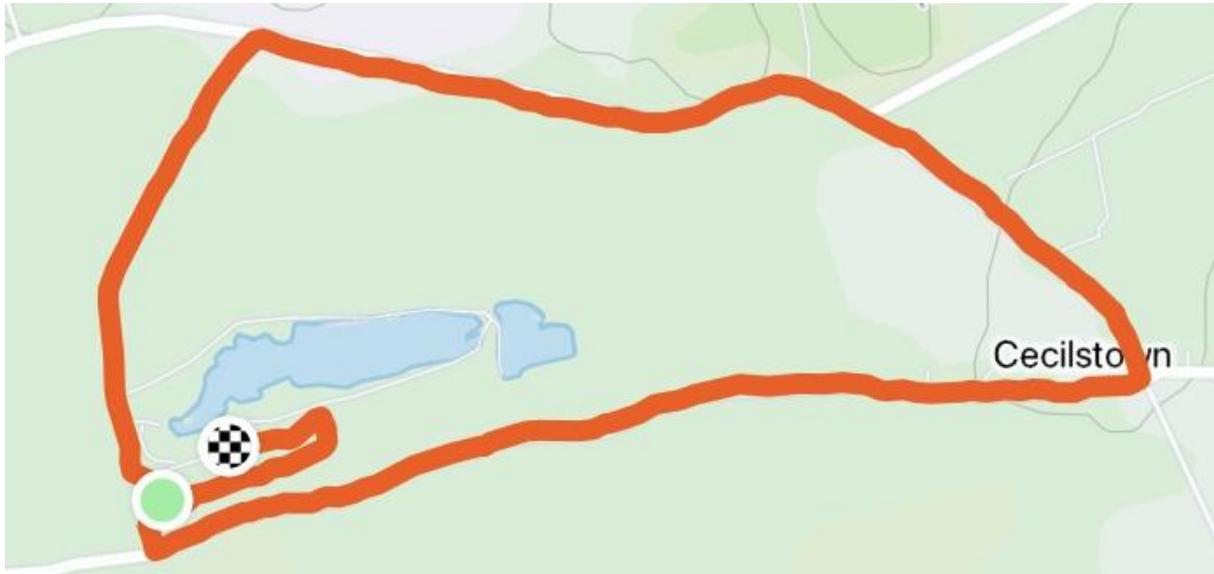


Figure 4: Ballyhass Run Route

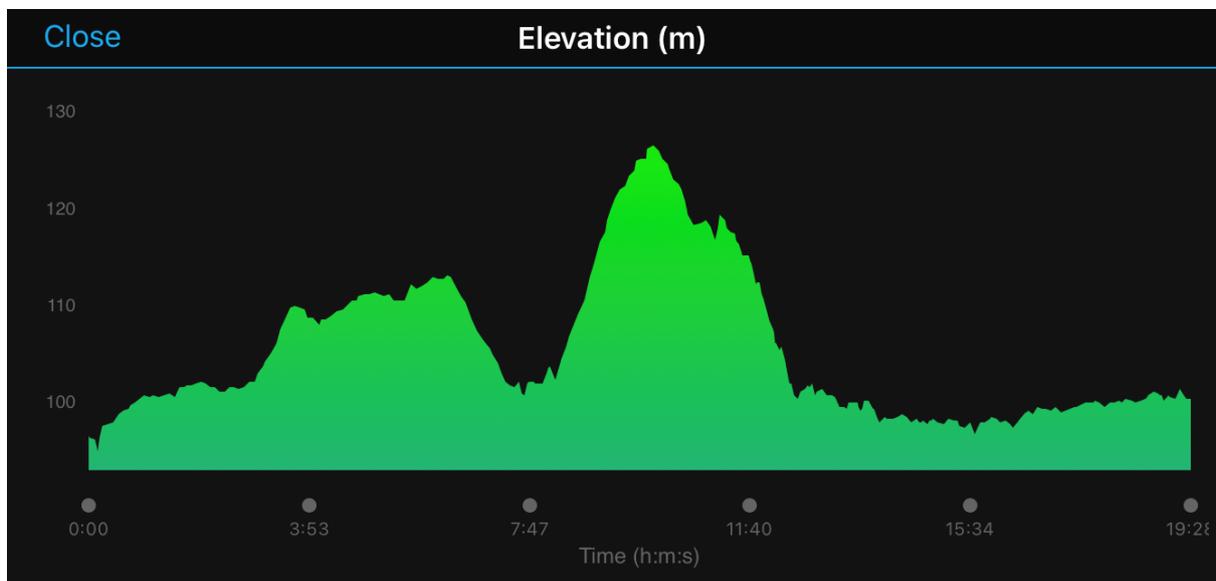


Figure 5: Ballyhass Run Route Elevation

This race was extremely well organised, loads of marshals out on the course, always encouraging participants. The venue itself could not be faulted and it's a race I will certainly be back to compete in again.

The four Trilogy competitors were all placed in their age groups. Madeleine was first in hers, Amy was third, and Niall and I both came second in ours. A great day's racing was certainly had, one to mark into the calendar for next year.



Figure 6: The Gang!