



Malin Head to Mizen Head
Ireland Top to Toe 2025

This cycle challenge takes place from Saturday 31st May to Saturday 7th June 2025 in Ireland. There are six days cycling from Malin Head to Mizen Head. Approximately 445 miles will be cycled over the seven days.

Sport Ecosse Events classify this cycle as "Hard". Participants need a good level of fitness in order to complete this challenge while being competent on a bike and able to cycle up quite steep and / or long hills.

Participants will bring their own bikes with them. Bike helmets must be worn at all times during the cycle challenge.

Included in the service offered by Sport Ecosse Events is:

- A Cycle Ride Leader and First Aid qualified cycle guides, support, and encouragement from at least 3 Sport Ecosse Events staff
- Basic bike maintenance with spare parts available to purchase
- Seven nights hotel accommodation with breakfast
- Lunch and dinner for seven days
- Healthy snacks, and drinks throughout each day's cycling
- Luggage transfers between accommodations
- Two support vehicles
- Transport if required from Belfast or Derry / Londonderry to Malin Head
- Transport if required from Clonakilty to Cork airport, Dublin airport, or Belfast
- Kit list

- Training schedule
- Public liability insurance

What is not included:

- Drinks with lunch and dinner – jugs of water will be available but if alternative soft or alcoholic drinks are wanted these must be paid for
- Travel insurance – each individual should have their own travel insurance cover
- Any individual spending money that you may want to take – please remember that you will need both UK Sterling and Euros

General

Regular stops will take place at roughly every 12 to 18 miles on the cycle. This gives the group a chance to get back together and stops it spreading out too much. For most of the event cyclists can go at their own pace but the faster you go the longer you may have to wait at stops – it is not a race. At the same time the group needs to move at a minimum pace in order that we finish each day at a reasonable time.

Snacks, drinks, and rest are provided at each stop. Clear instructions on where the stops are will be given and they are always in obvious places with a vehicle and Sport Ecosse Events member of staff waiting there in advance. Arrows will be used as required to guide participants on the route to take. There will always be a Sport Ecosse Events member of staff at the back of each cycle so no one will ever be last! At each stop a description of the next leg of the challenge cycle will be given.

The Tour Leader is responsible for the event. The Tour Leader will make decisions that are for the benefit and safety for the event as a whole. The decisions of the Tour Leader are final and ultimately a participant may be asked to leave the event if they refuse to follow instructions from the Tour Leader or if by continuing on the event, they are placing either themselves or other people on the event at risk.

Ireland

The cycle will be in in the Republic of Ireland, move into Northern Ireland, and then back into the Republic of Ireland. For this reason, you may need both UK pounds and Euros.

The weather in the island of Ireland is very similar to the UK. In June it is very difficult to predict what the weather will be like. For this reason, we ask that you plan for both wet and windy weather but also for the possibility of warm weather. As you will see from the kit list both waterproof clothing and sun cream are essentials.

More details on Ireland can be seen at two main websites; covering the Republic of Ireland is <http://www.discoverireland.ie/> and covering Northern Ireland is

<http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/>

Route

There is a mixture of terrain and a mixture of road surfaces encountered on this event. The whole route is on roads, there is no off-road cycling. There is a combination of different road surfaces as would be expected for this type of trip.

The busiest of roads have been avoided with the obvious exception of when entering and leaving towns particularly for the overnight stops. Some of the roads have an excellent road surface but on occasions country lanes are used which can be rougher with potholes to be avoided.

Road bikes and hybrids are both appropriate for this event. It is possible to undertake the event on a mountain bike but we would discourage you from doing so due to the extra effort required and the fact that it will slow you down.

You should be prepared for some steep hills that can on occasion also be fairly long although the route has avoided the worst hills wherever possible. Most days at least some hills are encountered so training should take account of this – descending as well as climbing – and basic skills such as gear changing should be practiced.

Day 1: Malin Head to Buncrana - 31 miles 1,300 feet climbing

After meeting, lunch, and registration at The Seaview Tavern near Malin Head <http://www.seaviewtavern.biz/> we have a half day cycling on Day 1. There is a bit of everything in these first 31 miles though from the rugged landscape at Malin Head, to an attractive coastal section, and a series of short sharp hills.

Day 2: Buncrana to Bundoran - 76 miles 3,698 feet climbing

After a flat opening section, we move onto quiet country roads and a challenging hill to start. The day continues with rolling hills a few of which are challenging. It offers great views over the wonderful green countryside, as we stay close to the border and then sweep westward towards the coast. Beautiful views of Lower Lough Erne before reaching Bundoran. Possibly the hardest day.

Day 3: Bundoran to Knock - 71 miles 2,876 feet climbing

This is a flatter day than yesterday with still the occasional undulation. We make our way South West skirting around Sligo, heading for Knock and County Mayo. Keeping away from the main roads to help see the beauty of this part of western Ireland. Ending the day in the small town of Knock which boasts a Museum, an Airport and a famous Shrine.

Day 4: Knock to Ennis – 84 miles 1,976 feet climbing

This day covers the longest mileage but covering the flattest terrain it offers the best chance to make up this distance despite being mainly on minor roads before we arrive in Ennis. Small hill to start the day but after that it is quick flat cycling, passing Galway with some nice views out to the Atlantic and the Aran Islands.

Day 5: Ennis to Killarney - 71 miles 3,841 feet climbing

West from Ennis to catch the ferry for a 25-minute crossing, then into County Kerry passing near Tralee. Flattish start with most of the climbing done in the second half of the day. The Magillicuddie Reeks providing the scenic backdrop as we finish in the beautiful town of Killarney.

Day 6: Killarney to Clonakilty - 61 miles 3,112 feet climbing

Not the most direct route to avoid some climbing of the Kerry Mountains, but having to do a reasonable amount to get the wonderful views, before making quick progress towards the south coast and Clonakilty.

Day 7: Clonakilty to Mizen Head - 51 miles 3,107 feet climbing

As we head west towards our final destination, we see some attractive glimpses of the coastline on the first half of the day. Fittingly the final afternoon offers probably the best and most stunning scenery of the whole trip as we approach Mizen Head to bring to a close a fantastic challenge. Once completed we return to Clonakilty for a celebration meal.

Typical day

Each day will be different as we cover different mileages and essentially different types of challenge. Start and finish times to each day also depends on the speed of the group. However, the outline of a 'typical day' is shown below:

8am	Breakfast
8.45am	Meet for briefing
9am	Begin cycle covering between 25 to 40 miles in the morning with stops every 12 to 18 miles
12.45pm	Stop for lunch at a pub or restaurant
1.30pm	Resume cycling with again 25 to 40 miles to be covered
5.30pm	Arrive at the hotel for relaxation and evening meal

Accommodation

All of the accommodation provided will be on a twin room basis. The accommodation below has been reserved for this event, although it is subject to change if there are circumstances out with our control:

Day 1 – Buncrana – Inishowen Gateway Hotel <http://www.inishowengateway.com/>

Day 2 – Bundoran – Allingham Arms Hotel <https://www.allinghamarmshotel.ie>

Day 3 – Knock – Knock House Hotel <https://www.knockhousehotel.ie>

Day 4 – Ennis – Treacy's Hotel <https://www.treacyswestcounty.com>

Day 5 – Killarney – Parkavon, Killarney <https://www.parkavonhotel.com>

Day 6 – Clonakilty Park Hotel <http://www.qualityhotelclon.com/>

Day 7 – Clonakilty Park Hotel <http://www.qualityhotelclon.com/>

Meals

Snacks and water will be provided throughout the challenge at the regular stops that take place during the cycle. This will include bananas, apples, raisins, nuts, and cereal bars. It is important that each event participant drinks enough to remain hydrated and takes on enough food to have adequate energy for a tough physical challenge.

Please let us know about any special dietary requirements that you may have.

Breakfast

This will be a combination of both continental style breakfasts with traditional cooked Irish breakfast available some days.

Lunch

Soup, sandwiches, or pasta in a hotel or restaurant.

Dinner

This will either be two or three courses in the hotel that we are staying in. The main course will contain meat or fish with carbohydrates and vegetarian options are always available.

Training

A suggested outline training schedule has been provided. As a general rule the more training you have done by the time of the event the easier you will find the event and the more you will enjoy it!

Kit

It is strongly suggested that you make sure you have the following:

- Helmet (must be worn at all times when cycling)
- Waterproofs –rain at some stage is likely!
- Sun cream
- Cycling shorts
- Cycling gloves
- A bum bag or jacket / cycling tops so that you can keep personal possessions with you
- Water bottle with holder on your bike
- A bell
- At least two inner tubes and we recommend having one with you when cycling

As you will be riding your own bike you are responsible for making sure that it is in a good and appropriate condition for a trip of this length. We strongly recommend that you have your bike serviced prior to the event.

We encourage everyone to have two bags with them – a day bag and a big bag. Your day bag should contain things that you may need ready access to throughout the day such as waterproofs, sun cream, a heavier or lighter top etc.

Day bags will go in the front vehicle so that when you arrive at each stop you can get immediate access to it. Big bags travel in the back vehicle so you can still get access at stops, but it saves a lot of time if we try and restrict this to a minimum.

Passports & visa and health

If you have a UK passport, an Irish EU passport, or any other EU passport then there are no restrictions on traveling between the UK and the Republic of Ireland while on this event. We would advise you to take your passport with you on the event, however, for other passport holders please contact your Embassy or Consulate for advice.

For those traveling from the UK and / or the Republic of Ireland there are no health issues or vaccinations required.

Sport Ecosse Events

This event is being organised by Sport Ecosse Events. The cost per participant varies dependent on participant numbers and there is a minimum of 20 participants for this event to go ahead.

Sport Ecosse Events and Marie Curie are committed to responsible tourism. The challenge is organised by Sport Ecosse Events which aims to minimise environmental impact. We support a number of charities including those with environmental purposes.

For more information please go to www.sportecosseevents.co.uk or contact Kevin Gerrie at kevin@sportecosse.co.uk