

## **Race Report – Pauline Sweetnam**

### ***What drew you to triathlon and when?***

I've been running with my local AC for the past few years, in September 2018 I decided to buy a bike to give my legs a break from pounding the roads. I surprised myself by really enjoying the bike so with a milestone birthday looming I decided to add in swimming and mark the occasion by completing a triathlon. I joined Mallow Tri February 2019 after a little persuasion from my sister!

### ***What's your triathlon experience?***

Last year was my first year, I tried everything from Duathlon, Try-a-Tri, Sprint and Aquathlon.

### ***Best tips for beginners?***

Invest in a good wetsuit and just give it a lash, life is short!

### ***How has your training changed amid Covid19?***

I really miss the club pool sessions but apart from that I'm pretty much doing the same. I usually run around work and the kids so that's no different. I have a turbo that I'm using but come next week with the increased 5k distance I hope to get out on the road.

### ***Race report of a race that you really enjoyed/learned a lot from?***

## **Valentia Island Sprint Triathlon, June 2019 - The Rookie View**

### Background

This Sprint triathlon is organised and run by Hardman Ireland, no T.I. license was needed in 2019. I don't know if all events outside Triathlon Ireland are this relaxed but I enjoyed the atmosphere especially for my first Sprint event. The pre race safety talk included details that the mounting line for the bike would be at the guy in the wheelchair, I kid you not.

### Location/Date/Time

The whole event is held on Valentia Island off Co Kerry. We took the ferry over from the main land, it's a short crossing of about ten minutes. Registration and transition is at the Royal Hotel in Knightstown where the ferry docks, there was plenty of parking along the shore. Last year it was held on a Saturday and started at 4pm, all very sociable!

### The Swim

The 750m swim is from the main land to the island, all competitors get the ferry across, this is included in your entry fee. We ended up on the second ferry crossing so had a very brief acclimatisation before the start, if you're somebody who would like more time I would advise to push your way on to the first ferry crossing. This was my first sea swim, I very naively used the peer to sight and then followed the peer wall to the water exit. I learned afterwards that I got caught in a lot of swell by taking this route and added a lot of distance on to my swim. Follow the bouys off to the right and hook back left to the water exit is what all the experienced swimmers did for good reason! I would like to add I wasn't on my own making this mistake. There is plenty of safety kayaks etc.

### The Bike

Transition is right on the peer so very little running in bare feet/cleats. The bike climbs around 125m in the first 4km but after that you pretty much sweep down around the island. The roads are narrow but the surface is good. The views are absolutely amazing. Last year the bike was 18km.

#### The run

The run is out and back and takes exactly the same route as the bike so yes you climb 80m in the first 2.5km. So in my opinion you work hard for 2.5k and then free wheel down to the finish.

#### The Cost

Entry is €50. At registration we got a t-shirt and swim hat. At the finish we got a medal and buns!

#### Pros

The most amazing views. We were haunted with the most fabulous weather.

#### Cons

Don't have any.

Mallow Tri: Heather O'Brien, Pauline Sweetnam and Marie Lombard.

