



One against the Wind

A film about courage, endurance, free food and battling the elements.
Starring the LeeRoadies, the Dingle peninsula & the Irish Weather.

Shot entirely on location on the Dingle Peninsula.

Must see : Irish Met Office.
Vote Healy-Rea : Healy Rea.

No dolphins were harmed in the making of this epic!

On location with the cast!



First food stop as Joan, John, Amanda, John and Margo refuel.





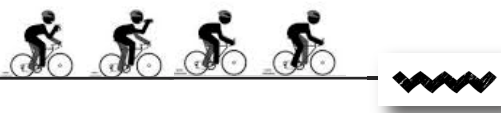
Dingle conjures up images of dolphins, fishing trawlers, music and other voices in the church of St. James with Philip King. A place of calm sunshine and a base for the Sleahed circuit.

For the 24 intrepid Leeroadies huddled into any available sheltered place awaiting the start of the Dingle challenge on Saturday April 29th, Dingle was wet, cold and miserable. Miracles do happen, and perhaps it was the spirit of Tom Crean, that caused the sun to appear and the rain to ease by the time the peloton reached Anascaul. In the ancient of days long before our most famous polar explorer, legend and popular folklore describe an almighty battle between Cú Chulainn, the legendary Irish hero and protagonist of the Táin Bó Cualinge, attempting to rescue a local beauty, Scál Ní Mhuirne, from an ugly giant. The fight between Cú Chulainn and the giant took place on the cliffs on either side of the nearby lake. They fought for days by throwing boulders at each other. Many of the standing stones that can be found in the Anascaul area are supposed to be remnants of the contest. After days of fighting, Cú Chulainn weakened and was hit by a rock. He gave a mighty groan and Scál hearing the cry, assumed he was killed and threw herself into the lake and drowned. The battle continued for another day when Cú Chulainn, true to form, decapitated the giant. On top of nearby Dromavally Hill are three stone cairns known as the bed, house, and grave of Cú Chulainn.



The heroes today were the brave cyclists who roared through the ford, declining all offers of pints at Tom Crean's bar and Ashe's world famous black pudding as they made their way to the north side of the peninsula and the left turn at Camp.

The meaning of Anascaul is disputed. Depending on the translation used, it can either mean the 'river of shadows', 'the river of heroes' or 'the ford of the heroes'. The latter two reference a "bloody and decisive battle, the vital and final battle" between the Tuatha-De-Danaan and the Milesians circa 1500bc, or the mano-a-mano contest between Cu Chulainn and a formidable giant.





Shelter from the storm on the Pass.



Riders recover on top of the Pass.

It was too good to be true, and a gale of wind braced the riders as they pushed towards Castlegregory and the base of the Conor pass, Irelands highest mountain route. Every farm gate proved menacing, as the ripping crosswinds blew riders sideways across the road. Several cyclists were blown off their bikes and dozens had narrow escapes. Your AWOL correspondent is relying on eyewitness accounts of the day for the bulk of this report. It is intriguing how some riders see the wind as an exhilarating challenge, while most dread the wind and seek shelter behind larger stronger bodies. On the camp road no such relief was available as the cross winds threatened everyone.

One rider described his arduous progress up the Conor pass climb as being so slow *“that a guy out jogging passed him out!”* Another Leeroadie said that he knew he was *“near the top of the climb when he saw a bunch of riders walking backwards towards him, desperately trying to hold on to their bikes”*. The marshals eventually instructed every rider to dismount and walk the crest of the pass and even down a bit on the other side for fear of serious accident. Margo described the journey from Camp to Dingle as *“one of the hardest I ever did”*, but do it she did, and all of the riders eventually reached the warm embrace of Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne in Dingle. Burgers and chips were better than aphrodisiacs or epo, according to a very hungry eyewitness, who shall remain anonymous!



Under orders on the pass.



Riders hugging the rock face on the way up the Conor Pass.





“ A cold wet spring start, followed by gale force winds up the Conor pass, where the sight of bikers carrying their bikes increased the sense of danger. After a fantastic spread of food, a few hardy souls got as far as Ventry, where liquid refreshment eased their disappointment at being told to dismount. An extremely tough day on the bike, but one of the most enjoyable, as the conditions created a wonderful sense of camaraderie and a sense of achievement.” (RP).

Amanda, Pat and John holding on at Conor pass.

PO'L described the day as *“cold as we set out. The first indications of real wind hit us as we descended into Camp and towards the Conor pass the winds were gusting severely. Our heads were down as we struggled up the pass and it was extremely difficult for everyone. As we approached the top we were instructed to dismount. Anybody who did not was blown off their bike. Our Tracey, like Mary Poppins, was blown over, but luckily she had a soft landing on a poor misfortune of a man beside her. People had to walk down the other side of the pass before they could safely remount and cycle back to Dingle”.*

Dingle CC put on a magnificent spread. Burgers/Hot Dogs/Brown Bread with salmon, buttered brack, cake tea coffee”. (definitely going back!). *“At this time the Sleah Head stage was cancelled. Richie, Sheila, Con, Ian and others who were out on the road, were stopped and had to return to Dingle. Dermot was so far ahead that he was not stopped and was one of the very few who completed the course”.*

Dermot described the Sleah head section of the ride as *“scary, very, very windy, it was a constant battle to hold on to my bike. In every gap on the road the wind knocked me sideways. It was a wonder that I stayed on the bike”.* We all know of his speed and the way he glides up every climb, but this tested his endurance and he described the last *“twenty kilometers from Cuas to Dingle town as the hardest that he has ever done”.*

The last word to PO'L, *“despite everything it was a great day! We agreed that the Leeroadies would return to the peninsula in the summer to complete the full circuit. A tough day in the saddle”.*



Man hugs for John and John or is JB checking JO'C's Heart rate?

