

# The Hardman Swim

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The scenic beauty of the Lakes of Killarney, encompassing a rich landscape of lakes, mountains and woodlands, are one of the crowning jewels of Ireland's tourist industry, attracting an estimated one and a half million visitors to the area each year. Lough Leane provide free fishing for trout although fish are rather small they are very free rising. Lough Leane is also a famous salmon fishery yielding substantial catches to the rod each year. Tales of the lake include stories of prehistoric monsters but the truth is a much smaller. The Arctic Char is a small trout like fish found in only a few lakes in Ireland. Its closest relatives are found in the lakes of the high Arctic and it is likely that the resident population is descended from ancestors trapped here when the ice retreated at the end of the last ice age.

The most famous myth of the lake is that underneath the shimmering waters is the Land of Tir na n'Og, the land of eternal youth. Legend tells of how Oisín was hunting near the lake, when he saw Niamh of the Golden Hair and fell instantly in love. He went with her to Tir na n'Og and lived there for many years. When he returned 300 years had passed and Niamh warned him that if he touched the land again all those years would return to him. So Oisín set off on horseback, careful not to step on the ground. However he reached down to pick up something and as he did so, the stirrup of his saddle broke. He fell to the ground and was instantly transformed into an old man.

Today Lough Leane forms the serene centrepiece of the Killarney National Park, with a great many famous sights that make up the one of the most popular visitor attractions in Ireland.

For the swim therefore you need to be careful of free rising trout and golden hair maidens. On the plus side the prehistoric species are small, shy and live on the bottom.

Lough Leane is classed as, a Type 4 lake in the Environmental Protection Agency's classification of lakes in Ireland, a typology that is based on hydromorphology and water chemistry. Type 4 lakes are greater than 3 m deep, have a large surface area (greater than 50 ha) and low alkalinity. In other words it is a typical lake fed from a peaty catchment area. The turbidity is quite high as a result of the amount of peat transported in the water. This gives the lake its particular dark colour.

The swim starts in the water in front of the pier. The bottom is a mixture of stones and peaty mud. The course is a right handed rectangle with a pan handle start and finish straight. The kayaks will stay upwind of the swimmers while the RIB's will stay downwind. Water temperature in late August can vary significantly. However it is likely that the temperature will be around 19° C. Wetsuits are mandatory for all open water swims run under the auspices of Triathlon Ireland.

## Transition 1: Swim/Cycle

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**Transition 1** is located at the Killarney Golf and Fishing Club main car park. No car parking is available at **Transition 1**. All bicycles must be checked into **Transition 1** on Friday between 5:00pm and 7:00pm following registration. The area inside the barriers is for athletes only. Athletes will enter through the sign-on tent and have their transponders checked. Bikes are laid out in numerical order on the frames. The swim starts in the water at the top of the pier. Swimmers finishing the swim are to get on the pier and the timing gate is at the head of the pier. A water station is located near the timing gates. The pier and the area from the pier to the grass area are carpeted. Changing areas and toilets are available within the **Transition 1** compound. Competitors must have the chinstrap of their helmet secured before they take their bike from the rack. Competitors may then proceed through the timing station. The start line is located 30m outside the **Transition 1** compound. Riders may not mount their bikes until they have reached the start line.

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## Hardman Triathlon

**Proposed Swim Course** Start in the water off the pier at Killarney Golf and Fishing Club. Swim Eastwards for 70m approx to the first marker. Swim North for approx. 280m. Then swim South East for 350m approx. Swim West for 500m approx. Then swim North for 200m approx. Repeat this lap and then swim in to finish at the pier.

The final route may vary from the route mapped here.

The swim course is subject to obtaining final approval and permissions.