

Training for The Ladies Tour of Lough Gill

By Padraig Marrey

Lance Armstrong made a comeback this year after been out of the sport for 3 years with a inspiring performance to get 3rd place overall in the Tour De France. In 4 weeks time women all over Sligo will get the opportunity to try out what cycling has to offer as a healthy form of sport by taking part in the Ladies Tour of Lough Gill. It's a 40k cycle around the beautiful Lough Gill, so you don't have to be an expert to have a go, but it is advisable to take in to account what is required to complete the distance..

The first question many people ask themselves is how do you get started in the world of cycling? If you have come to the sport with the intention of getting fit, then these tips will help you.

Cycling will do wonders for your fitness without over stressing your joints or your heart and before long you'll be thrilled at the prospect of your next bike ride with the winds whistling through your hair. First though lets sort out some basics - if the last time you turned a pedal in anger was to get to school on time, your fitness may not be exactly be where you would like it to be! Rather than hopping straight on to your bike it might be a good idea to work up to the real thing by using the gym exercise bike or spinning bikes at your local gym. That way you get accustomed to cycling in a safe environment while also building fitness.

In this week article we will look at the requirements to be fit for **The Tour of Lough Gill - 40 km cycle by September 26th**.

Fitness training wise, a person can get fit for the 40k event by cycling 1-2 spins per week of 30-70mins at low/moderate intensity and maybe 1-2 gym sessions working on cardiovascular type exercises. Following this routine for the next 4 weeks would be sufficient to get you around your goal of cycling around Lough Gill. Remember to stretch after each session to avoid stiffness, your local gym instructor will help you here or else get advise from your local cycling club.

Before you hop on your bike that has been stored away in the shed for years, dust of the cobwebs and get your bike serviced by your local dealer, otherwise you may run into problems!!

Below is a table, which will aid you in your quest to get fit by setting some simple goals on different areas of your fitness - it won't be long till you are flying along the road.

If you already have a **bike** its very important that it fits you, so seek advice. Personally I wouldn't recommend riding a mountain bike over that distance as it would be quite a chore but it could be done. I would recommend a hybrid or racer type bike as they are easily pedalled because they are light, the tyres are narrow and when pumped to optimal pressure makes it a lot easier to cycle.

Proposed Training plan for the next 2 weeks for the 40k Ladies Tour of Lough Gill.

I would recommend that you get a friend to sign up to the spin as well that way you will have an extra incentive to train and it will also give you that extra motivation to get up and get out.

- **Monday** 30-40mins easy pedalling, try and train with a partner as you have a 50% better chance of completing your task
- **Tuesday** optional
- **Wednesday** 1hr in the gym broken into the following, warm up 10mins, bike 10mins at 70% , rest 5mins, cross trainer 7mins, rest 4mins, Treadmill 10mins jog pace, rest finish off with 12 mins slowing down gradually then stretch.
- **Thursday** Rest
- **Friday** 40mins cycle at Brisk pace.

- **Saturday** off
- **Sunday** 60mins with a group.

This plan can be changed around to suit your weekly schedule.

Contact your local cycling club as they have coaches who cater for all abilities.

Innisfree Wheelers Cycling Club contact John 0861005219 see www.innisfreewheelers.com

In the next few weeks we will look at the following areas:

- The next phase in the Lough Gill training plan.
- Nutrition and hydration
- Bike set up
- The pre event, build up

Padraig Marrey is a personal trainer and cycling coach to some of Ireland leading professional cyclists.

See www.marreytrainingsystems.com for useful tips on cycling.