**IVCA-Dick O Brien Leisure League 2016 Round 5 - 8th May**

The 5th round of the Dick O Brien Leisure Leaguecommenced at the newly located Cycle Superstore now located on Airton Road Talaght, with a start time of 9:00 am. The weather forecast indicated that temperatures would rise to 18 degrees with the possibility of rain showers.

A total of 6 riders signed on for this challenging event which accounted for 5 IVCA members and 1 guest. The route planned was ideal preparation for those taking part in the Wicklow 200 next month. Before setting off it was agreed that the group would stay together and stop for a tea in Laragh.

The group set out in the direction of the Belgard Road and Blessington. As the group commenced the assent up the Blessington Road to Brittas a steady pace was set to ensure the group stayed together. There was some dark clouds in the distance however the rain stayed at bay and temperatures were comfortable.

The group proceeded through Blessington and Hollywood to the first climb and onto the Wicklow Gap. As we climbed the Wicklow Gap the group stretched out a little with **Ciara Donaghue** taking the lead. A heavy mist covered the top of the Gap and visibility was poor, as **Ciara Donaghue** went up the road she disappeared like a ghost into the mist to arrive first at the top of the Gap where she waited for the group to form before setting off for a careful decent into Laragh for a well earned tea stop and a chance to chat and take time to reflect on the route.

After the tea stop **Evelyn Doyle** and **Ciara Donaghue** were first to set out to commence the climb to the waterfall followed by the rest of the group who decided to stop at the bottom of the climb and shed some clothing as the sun was shining and the temperature was rising. The banter was good and the group was in good spirits with some jokes being told.

There was no stopping Ciara and Evelyn, once they reached the top of the waterfall they ploughed on towards the Sally Gap which was 16K away putting some distance between the remaining riders. Pat Murphy noticed the emerging gap and as Ciara and Evelyn were going out of sight he upped the pace with yours truly on his wheel and started to slowly close the gap, the rest as they say stays on tour. We all arrived energised and in good form at the Sally Gap and took time to contemplate the decent into Manor Kilbride.

It was agreed that the group would descend with a time gap between each rider for safety reasons taking note of the sharp bend at the bridge half way on the descent. This is where **Philip Brogan** had a name change to the **Bullet Brogan** after his fast skilful descent although **Pat Troy** was not far behind.

As we reached Manor Kilbride we took the right fork in the road and headed for the Blessington Road where Philip Brogan and yours truly went to the front and with the wind in our faces headed through Brittas and on to the start of the final decent to Tallaght. After the decent the group formed again and continued at a steady pace to the finish.

A most enjoyable and energising day and a good time had by all. The next event is the Wicklow 200 on the 12th June see the website for details.

Tony Pearson