

# The Girvan Cycle Challenge 2023



*Rider Pack*

*May 6<sup>th</sup> 09:45am Roll Out*

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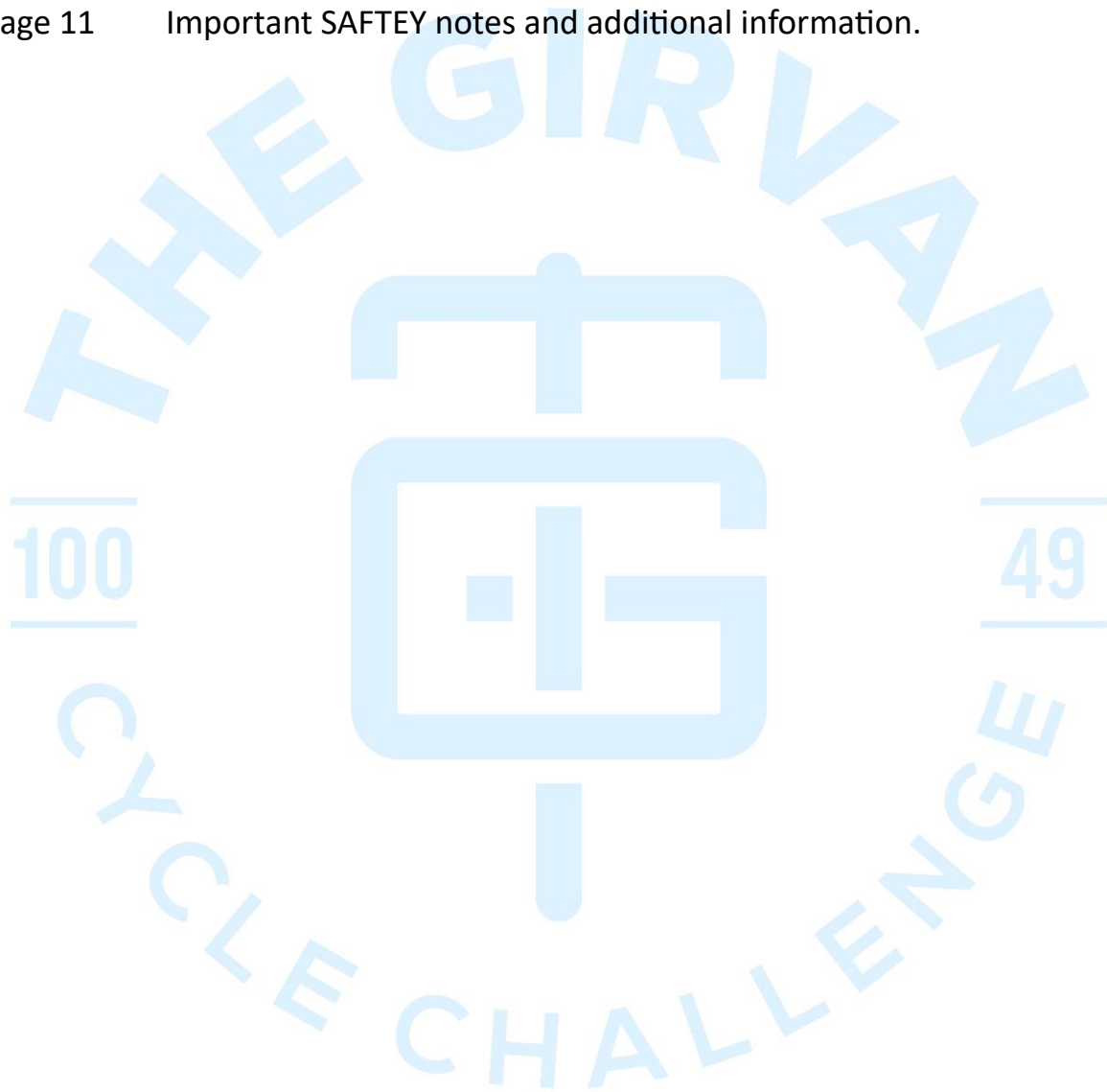
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**Welcome** to the Girvan 2023 Cycle Challenge. Let's start with some congratulations as you are now in the first official roll out of this event. After a test event we are delighted to have you within the first 100 riders to experience this incredible course.

The roads were made famous by the Scottish Monument Road Race known as the Girvan 3 Day which morphed into the Davie Bell Memorial RR.

The history of the Girvan 3 Day is legendary and its constant undulating roads made it both explosive and challenging for some of the greatest riders the UK produced in the 70's – 90's. Iconic figures like Sean Kelly, Chris Boardman, Malcolm Elliott and Mark Cavendish pedalled, panted and etched their names into the history of the race. Cavendish even took his first senior road victory as an 18-year-old! You will ride on the same roads as we condense the 3 days into one ride that has over 9,000 feet of climbing!

The venue is Girvan Academy, where the Girvan 3 Day riders would sign on. Registration will open at 9.00am

Venue: Girvan Academy, The Avenue, Girvan KA26 9DW: [Google Maps Link](#)

Parking: The school car park is open for event riders

Registration: Main Reception Area from 9:00

Roll Out: In front of School at 09:45am

Feed Station: Straiton Village (just before 2<sup>nd</sup> split in the Lang and Wee Course)

- Please keep an eye on the weather and dress appropriate for the conditions.
- Please note that there is NO chip timing for this event. Both courses are recorded on Strava, but the event is about the challenge of the road.
- Photography will happen during the ride. These photos will be made available as soon as possible after the event. If you do not want any image of yourself shared, then please make this clear at the point of sign on. This is important as some images will make up part of the new museum that will be open in 2024 (see additional notes)
- All riders have the option of doing either the LANG or Wee course on the day. We have also created two other options that you may take on the day (depending on how the legs feel)
- E-Bikes are permitted to use in the ride.
- We advise riders to have a rear light.
- All riders MUST wear a helmet. We appreciate that this is not a law BUT it is for this event.
- Rider numbers with cable ties will be issued at sign on
- We ask all riders to please sign out when they return.
- For issues on the ride that prevent you getting back to finish area you must contact Scott Maclean on 07933158473.

## The Routes

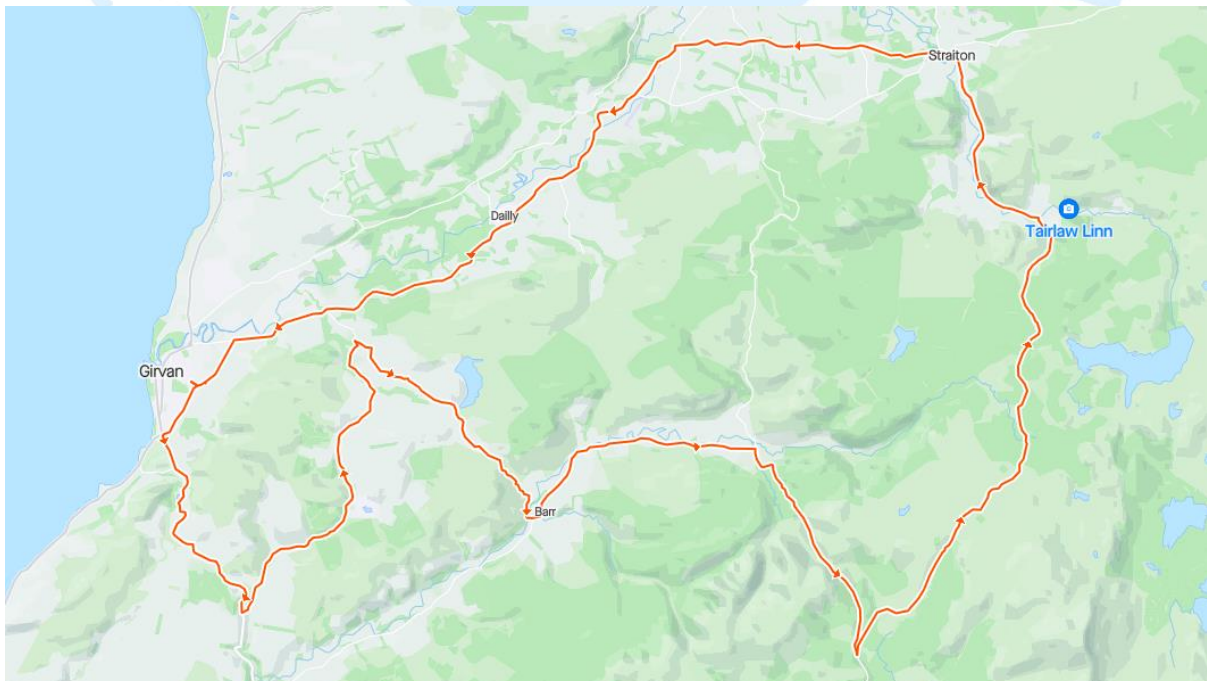
The LANG Course: <https://www.strava.com/routes/3002249852781779576>

Distance: 103.54 miles: Altitude: 8494 feet



The WEE Course: <https://www.strava.com/routes/22259639>

Distance: 49 miles Altitude: 3,480 feet



Two Extra Options to increase or decrease your original planned challenge.

Both options involve a change of route at the 2<sup>nd</sup> split in the course at the village of Straiton where the feed station is located.

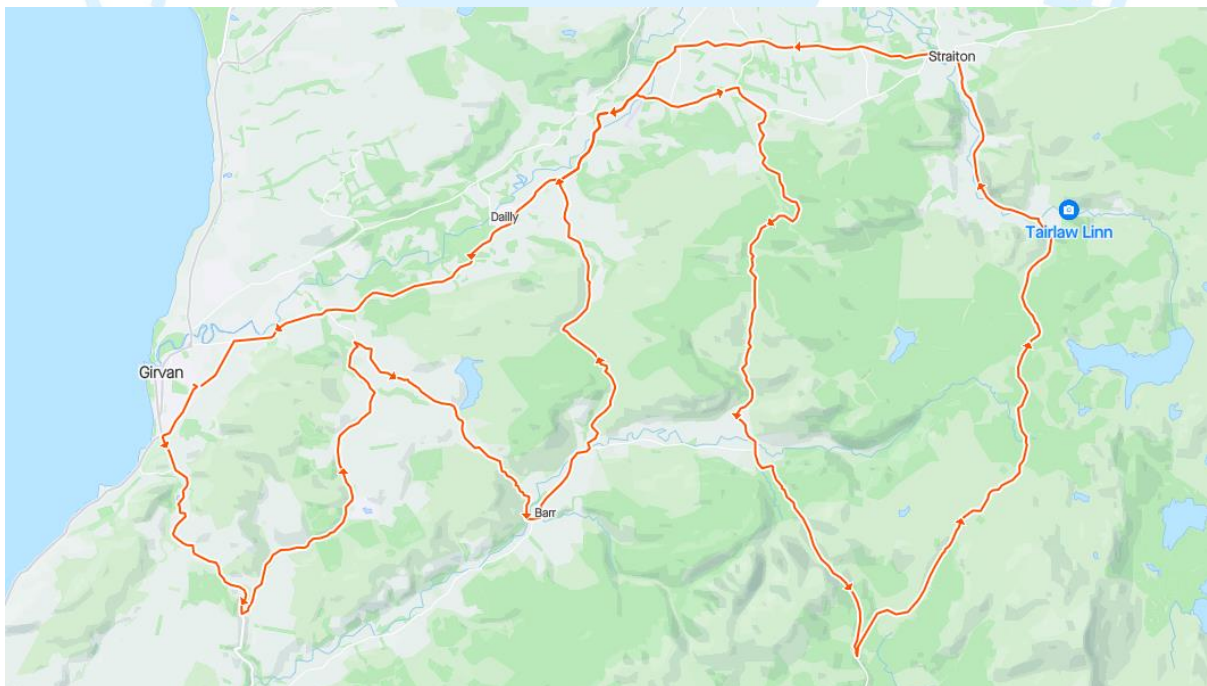
**WEE start with LANG Finish:** <https://www.strava.com/routes/3087423529393266502>

Distance: 90 miles Altitude: 7,000 feet



**LANG Start with WEE Finish:** <https://www.strava.com/routes/3087422180754750278>

Distance: 62 miles Altitude: 5,000 feet



## IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION

This is a very challenging course, especially the section of road that forms part of the LANG course when you leave the village of Dalmelington. You will enter what is known as the Daleagles Road. This is a 10 mile stretch of undulating road that will test any level of rider. You will enter the outskirts of New Cummock before turning left onto the Boig Road and then heading for the small village of Skares (then Sinclairston and Patna.) Don't miss this left. There is actually a new left road about 3 miles prior to the Boig Road which you may take. It's a lovely road but will reduce the ride to just under 100 miles.

I have presented a summary of the key sections of the route. All sections are populated with Girvan Challenge signs BUT know your route please.

LANG	WEE	
1.0 miles	1.0 miles	Turn LEFT and start the BYNE climb
4.6 miles	4.6 miles	<b>CAUTION: Approaching LEFT Turn at Pinmore (DEAD TURN!)</b>
10.3 miles	10.3 miles	Turn RIGHT to join Blackies Brae heading for BARR
12.4 miles	12.4 miles	<b>Start technical decent into BARR. Caution with sharp hairpin bends</b>
14.8 miles	14.8 miles	LEFT turn at end of BARR village has a 10% incline for 20 meters!
16.3 miles	16.3 miles	<b>COURSE SPLIT - LANG goes Left and WEE goes straight on.</b>
18.0 miles	x	Summit of Glengennet: Decent starts smooth but gets very technical
21.2 miles	x	<b>Steep decent to STOP! Caution. Turn RIGHT (signed Straiton)</b>
23.3 miles	x	Take RIGHT to start Glenalla Climb (signed Walled Garden)
25.0 miles	x	Take RIGHT and join main Glenalla climb and look out for 'mini Peru!'
29.3 miles	x	Summit of Glenalla. Decent is very technical at the bottom.
32.1 miles	18.9 miles	<b>COURSE MERGE</b>
34.3 miles	21.2 miles	Summit of the Nic
35.8 miles	22.7 miles	DEAD Stop and turn LEFT - Pass Davie Bell's Memorial on LEFT
39.1 miles	26.0 miles	Summit of Shalloch (Tairlaw) Highest Point on Course at over 1400 feet
44.5 miles	31.2 miles	<b>CAUTION at end of long decent. NARROW Bridge</b>
47.8 miles	34.4 miles	<b>FEED STATION: COURSE SPLIT</b>
47.8 miles	x	Turn Right for LARGS Hill and Dalmelington
50.0 miles	x	Summit of LARGS Hill
53.8 miles	x	GO STRAIGHT ACROSS at Road End Follow road to end and turn Right. At the next junction turn LEFT and head to New Cummock
50.0 miles	x	Summit of LARGS Hill
53.8 miles	x	GO STRAIGHT ACROSS at Road End Follow road to end and turn Right. At the next junction turn LEFT and head to New Cummock
63.9 miles	x	<b>TURN LEFT onto BOIG Road: Don't MISS this turn!</b>
66.4 miles	x	Take The Road to Skares. It's the road in the middle The road is single track at the start but opens.
69.2 miles	x	TURN LEFT (Sign for Skares)
72.9 miles	x	TURN LEFT (for Sinclairston)
75.8 miles	x	<b>TURN LEFT (Signed Panta). Road has steep downhill with sharp right bend.</b> Take bend even though road looks it goes straight ahead
79.1 miles	x	TAKE LEFT at Junction (signed Patna)

- 80.3 miles x **TAKE RIGHT over bridge as you enter Patna (signed Kirkmichael): Don't MISS This Turn!**
- 81.0 miles x Top of Patna Ramp. CAUTION ON DECENT. ROAD CONDITION POOR  
The road starts great but doesn't finish so good so slow down.
- 85.5 miles x **VERY SLOW Left corner as you enter Kirkmichael**
- 85.9 miles x TAKE LEFT at junction (signed Straiton)
- 89.5 miles 34.7 miles Enter Straiton and TAKE RIGHT (signed Girvan)  
COURSES MERGE For Final STRETCH HOME

ROAD IS NOW STRAIGHT TO GIRVAN FINISH POINT



# The Girvan Challenge Climbs

## Climb 1: The Byne

- **Distance: 4.5km**
- **Elevation: 154m**
- **Max Gradient: 10.4%**
- **Average: 3.7%**

Welcome to the Girvan! This monster will open your lungs and set the scene for the day. A beautiful view of the Ailsa Craig appears behind you but stay focused on the effort. Not a full downhill decent after the summit as you have a sharp left to contend with, so you are welcome to freewheel here and get some rest.

## Climb 2: Blackies Brae

- **Distance: 4.7km**
- **Elevation: 175m (-25m)**
- **Max Gradient: 9.8%**
- **Average: 3.9%**

We are actually joining Blackies Brae at approximately it's half way point as we turn right and head to Barr. You'll want a headwind here as it means a tailwind home. The exposed nature of this climb makes it tough but it's a gentle giant. Just wait until you hit the decent to Barr. Known as 'The Screws', you'll discover why.

## Climb 3: (Lang Course only) Glengennet

- **Distance: 2.8km**
- **Elevation: 153m**
- **Max Gradient: 13.2%**
- **Average: 6.9%**

A left turn takes the Lang course riders up Glengennet. The 'Wee Course' head straight on for the Nic!

Glengennet is one of the shorter climbs of the Ayrshire Alps but makes up for it with a rather relentless gradient. Pluses are if you can find a rhythm you are onto a winner, and the views down the west side onto a streaming waterfall are marvellous.

You ascend onto the top of Hadyard Hill, with the sleek wind turbines chopping at the sky.



## Climb 4: (Lang Course only) Glenalla

- **Distance: 7km**
- **Elevation: 284m**
- **Max Gradient: 14.1%**
- **Average: 3.4%**

Once you are out the treeline, Glenalla is a joy. A fast ascent with a strong tail wind will blow you ever higher. But getting here is a long slog. After the sawmill by Cloyntie the road rises steeply, but eventually this abates and as the road switches back on itself you get a marvellous view across to Maybole, the Carrick Hills and beyond, if you are not breathing through yer a\*\*\*! But be warned, there is a wee plot twist at the end!

## Climb 5 (3 if on Wee Course) Nic O Balloch

- **Distance: 3.5km**
- **Elevation: 248m**
- **Max Gradient: 20.4%**
- **Average: 7.6%**

Nic O Balloch holds a fearsome reputation among Scottish cycle racers in the days of the Girvan 3 Day and the Davie Bell RR. Too many have seen their race come undone on its slopes. At an average 7.6%, you'll be looking for extra teeth as the road goes ever higher. Hope for a tail wind!

The Nic O Balloch used to feature a lovely high tree line – no more! You now pop out the trees to be met with the gruesome sight of a long straight climb into the sky. Those familiar with the climbs are hypnotized by counting the road barriers. We suggest you try it – you'll have little else to take your mind off the effort!

## Climb 6: Tairlaw (climb 4 Wee Course)

- **Distance: 4.0km**
- **Elevation: 156m**
- **Max Gradient: 7.6%**
- **Average: 4.3%**

Relax, this is a dawdle in comparison to the Nic. The only challenge with this climb up the spine of Rig Of Shalloch is its seeming never-endingness. No matter how well you know the road, the summit likes to tease you as it always hides 'behind the next corner'!

## Climb 7: (Lang Course Only) Largs Hill

- **Distance: 3km**
- **Elevation: 145m**
- **Max Gradient: 10.5%**
- **Average: 5.8%**

From Straiton (feed station) you turn right and head east towards Dalmellington and snake out past the Lady Hunter Blair trail. The road sweeps round on itself before you hit a false summit. Enjoy the respite because the final kick up to Gass farm is relentless and makes for an intimidating sight.

Then you bump and roll through Dalmellington and cut across country on some of the toughest rolling roads in Ayrshire! No categorized hills but tough challenging roads. You'll loop around and head back to Patna for a short kicker known as Patna ramp. A tricky decent that must be taken with caution as the road starts in beautiful condition and then gets slightly rougher at the bottom. But once you hit Kirkmichael and head to Straiton again, you only have the short Col de Briseur and then Straiton Hill and you are homeward bound.



## Important Safety Notes for all riders

1. Please always abide by all rules of the Highway Code on sections of the course.
2. The category climbs have single track roads with passing places. The roads are generally very quiet from vehicles, but they will be present so please always ride responsibly. We share the road with everyone.
3. Be wary of sheep and cattle entering the road. It happens! You will encounter several cattle grids at the bottom and top of categorised climbs that are well signposted.
4. There are a lot of pheasants as well. Try not to laugh at them as they try and fly away from you!
5. There will also be a lot of Birds of Prey but so far none have swooped down and carried away a fatigued rider...but you can never be sure, so you better keep pedalling!
6. Make sure you sign out or call 07933158473 and speak to Scott if for some reason a café stop or pub stop has provided a better option!

### **The Girvan Museum**

South Ayrshire Council have allocated funding and a manager to develop a cycling museum within the Girvan library. This will share the rich history of the 3 Day Road Race and use the Challenge ride to showcase present day cycling in the area. The museum will be open during the 2024 event, so you are riding on historic roads and also creating part of the new history.

### **The Girvan Development and Charity Support.**

The Girvan Challenge will continue to grow and bring riders new experiences and rewards each year. In 2024 we plan to field 200 riders and offer a few more climbs with the distances we have set. The event is closely linked to the UK Crohn's and Colitis Charity due to me having the condition and although the 2023 revenue will mainly cover the new signs, nutrition and venue hire, we hope to still be able to donate several hundreds to the charity.

### **The Girvan Merchandise**

T-shirts and other merchandise are available but to keep costs down to a minimum, these are available as personal items of purchase. You can purchase via the Link below.

[Girvan Challenge Merch](#)