



Scottish Hill Runners

Race Organisers Pack

Contents

- [Calendar entry and race results](#)
 - [Insurance](#)
 - [Safety](#)
 - [Environmental issues](#)
 - [Introduction](#)
 - [Route planning](#)
 - [Ownership](#)
 - [Path protection](#)
 - [Wildlife protection](#)
 - [Race organisation](#)
 - [Other environmental concerns](#)
 - [Sponsorship](#)
 - [Key contacts and sources of further information](#)
 - [Race Registration Form](#)
-

Calendar entry and race results

Amending the entry for your race

If the entry for your race needs to be amended please let the compiler know as soon as possible (Currently: [Neil Gilmore](#)). The compiler will arrange to have the [web-based version of the calendar](#) updated.

Updating the entry of your race for the next year's calendar

Please let the compiler have your updated entry for next year **by 31 October of the current year**, preferably by e-mail.

Race results

Could race organisers please email their race results to: results@scottishhillrunners.uk, as soon as possible after the race, preferably as an **Excel** spreadsheet. The results will be published on the SHR website at www.shr.uk.com. We would also appreciate a short race report to post on the website.

If necessary, please also send the [SHR secretary](#), in confidence, a note of any problems, accidents, incidents or near misses that occurred during your race. These will only be made public with your permission; they will help SHR to draw on your experience to offer a better service to runners and organisers.

[Back to Contents](#)

Insurance

Race organisers must ensure that they have insurance cover for their race. There are three basic choices - insure through either SHR or Scottish Athletics, or arrange private insurance.

SHR offers its own insurance policy as a privilege of SHR membership. This provides third party liability insurance for all SHR members as race organisers. N.B: Race organisers should note that cover is not automatic - you must register your race with SHR (via the designated committee member, currently Jill Stephen) and complete and return a "safety sign-off document" well in advance – it must be received by SHR **at least 7 days** before your race.

Clubs affiliated to Scottish Athletics are covered by the UK Athletics insurance policy for all their organised athletics activities including any races promoted by the club. Race organisers who are not in an affiliated club may now affiliate to Scottish Athletics, as individuals, under the new category of associate membership if they wish to have their races covered by the UK Athletics insurance policy. Scottish Athletics rules require affiliated bodies to obtain a permit for any open race they promote. You will also be required to conduct a risk assessment.

Race organisers should carefully examine the available insurance schemes - there are significant differences - and choose the one they judge most suitable for their requirements. For more details of SHR or Scottish Athletics insurance, see the contacts list at the end of this pack.

[Back to Contents](#)

Safety

SHR revise their official safety rules from time to time for races insured through SHR. The March 2020

[SHR Generic Safety Rules](#)

apply to both race organizers and competitors, and are supported by the

[SHR Safety Guidelines](#).

Race organisers should make sure they fully understand the rules and comply with them.

[Back to Contents](#)

Environmental issues

Hill running and racing is increasingly subject to environmental concerns. Particular issues are access to private land, avoidance of sensitive areas, erosion, litter, and sanitation. All race organisers should be aware of the following synopsis (after C Menhennet, R Turnbull, M Simms *et al*):

Introduction

Mountain/hill running is just one of many mountain sports and hill runners are just some of thousands of people who find pleasure in wild and rugged places. As runners we love to run, love competition but also love the places through which we run. We have a responsibility for that environment and towards those who manage it. We are a minority sport but a part of the whole of mountain recreation. Our actions contribute towards damage and disturbance. Our objective should be to climb hills and run ridges without leaving a trace of our passing. Set out below are guidelines. They are not rules but suggestions of ways in which races can be planned and organised to minimise the effect of the event on the environment. Much of the following is common sense and carried out already. Many of the actions involved depend on the resources of the race organisers, the sensitivity of the area and the number of runners expected.

[Back to Contents](#)

Route Planning

Ownership

Get the Owner's Permission

Establish who owns the land and contact the owners in good time to obtain their permission. The Land Registry or other local landowners should be able to assist. Make sure the owner agrees with your plans and that he fully understands your proposals (race route, number of competitors, parking arrangements, etc) and that the costs of any damage will be re-imbursed.

The **Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003** gives everyone a right of RESPONSIBLE access. These access rights and responsibilities are further explained in the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code** (www.outdooraccess-scotland.com). The Code emphasizes that in most cases you are required to obtain the landowner's permission for an organised event, such as a hill race.

It is also courteous to contact owners after the event has taken place, to thank them and check that they were happy with the way the race was managed.

If traders are going to be present, make sure the landowner has given approval.

Consider Special Land Status

Check whether the route or any part of it lies in a designated area such as a National Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest or a National Park. If so, consult the relevant organisation (usually Scottish Natural Heritage) as well as the landowners to find out if this entails any restrictions or particular considerations.

[Back to Contents](#)

Path Protection

The most vulnerable areas are slopes of more than 30% gradient, very wet slopes, bare earth or peat slopes, and scree slopes. With increasing altitude, the vulnerability of soils and vegetation increases and the likelihood of re-growth reduces. Most erosion is caused by descending runners. Plan courses with these elements of vulnerability in mind.

If in Doubt, Consult

If there is any doubt as to the vulnerability or condition of the proposed route, consult the National Trust for Scotland over land owned by them, Scottish Natural Heritage over Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves or other habitats and sensitive land and other landowners as required.

Use Existing Paths

If there is a path in existence use it, following it as closely as possible and adhering to any erosion control instructions. Avoid creating new paths.

Pay Attention to Steep Slopes

Avoid steep, bare slopes, very wet slopes and scree runs, particularly if alternative routes exist and especially on descent routes.

Resting the Route

In areas suffering badly, consider resting the hill for the next few years until the ground has recovered.

Consider Ground Conditions

In very sensitive areas consider alternative areas when thawing snow, heavy frost or excessive rain have softened the ground to a considerable depth.

Boundary Protection

Limit wall and fence crossing to specific locations e.g. particular stiles or gates and ensure that this is enforced.

Race Numbers

Decide whether it is necessary to limit the numbers in the race to limit the damage (the landowner may insist on a limit anyway). Pre-entry only may be necessary to ensure that limits set are not exceeded.

Dates

Avoid coinciding with other events on the same ground on the same day, e.g. walking or mountain biking events, in order to avoid overloading the route. Also remember that there will be times of the year and locations which may be unsuitable for land management and nature conservation reasons.

Consider erecting warning signs before the event informing local walkers etc that the event will be taking place giving them the choice of going elsewhere on the day of the event.

Start Location

Consider varying the start location and if necessary requesting runners not to practice on the course beforehand. If possible, locate starts on areas of road or track which can bear the pressure of many runners milling around. There should be adequate distance for runners to spread out before reaching any narrow footpaths, gates or stiles.

[Back to Contents](#)

Wildlife Protection

Wildlife Habitats

Consult locally about areas of sensitivity. Identify whether there are any Sites of Special Scientific Interest or other features of wildlife importance on the course. Certain types of habitat may be particularly vulnerable to damage, e.g. Summit plateaus, scree and rock gullies which support fragile fern, moss and lichen communities. Crag and rocky outcrops may be nesting sites for birds of prey and others such as Ringed Ouzel. Many of our moorlands are of international importance for their breeding birds. These birds are easily disturbed, resulting in increased mortality in some cases. Avoid planning races for the nesting season (which can last from February to July depending on species and conditions), where there is known to be protected or rare species which are sensitive to disturbance or stick to well used routes. Grouse moors require a quiet lead-in period prior to a shoot in August - October. Meadows may be flower rich and support breeding birds. Trampling can damage their wildlife interest and reduce the hay crop for the farmer. Plan routes to avoid vulnerable wildlife habitats or species and identify, mark and marshal any exclusion areas which are necessary. Landowners such as the National Trust for Scotland, and Scottish Natural Heritage can offer advice on sensitive habitats and species.

Farm Livestock

Consult early with landowners and tenant farmers regarding the vulnerability of any farm stock and, if necessary, arrange for the temporary removal of any stock from the route, especially at the start and finish areas. The timing of lambing varies across Scotland, but is generally between March and May. In

many cases early on in the season the sheep and lambs are in the low ground and events may take place on higher ground. Farmers tend to be very busy at this time of year so try not to approach them during this period unless absolutely necessary.

Crops

You have the right to cross fields of crops via paths or tracks, or by using the margins of the field or any unsown ground. Watch out for fields of grass – this may be silage and in the later stages of growth should be treated in the same way as a crop.

Dogs

Dogs should not be permitted to accompany hill runners as they pose a risk to wildlife and farm livestock, as well as being detrimental to relationships with landowners and fellow runners during races. Similarly, dogs accompanying spectators can cause problems and organisers should encourage owners to keep dogs under proper control.

[Back to Contents](#)

Race Organisation

Deploy Marshals

Where resources permit, place marshals at sensitive areas to offer further protection, and to identify people who ignore instructions. Make sure the rules are clearly displayed and people are made aware of them before the race. Be prepared to take action against anybody responsible for serious damage to the environment or disturbance to wildlife if they flout the rules of the race.

Record any Damage

It would be very useful to keep a record of damage to the course, including photographs taken before and after. Ask competitors to report any damage on the route. A post-race inspection of the course while collecting markers should be used to identify problems. Any damage should be brought to the attention of the owner immediately after the race. Agree on remedial measures.

[Back to Contents](#)

Other Environmental Concerns

Litter

Ensure that there are enough litter bags or bins at the start and finish areas. Remind people not to drop any litter and arrange a rubbish collection after the race.

Parking

Parking should be on firm surfaces and not roadside verges or soft fields. Signpost parking areas and restrictions clearly. Do not block farm and field entrances. The presence of a race can have a great impact upon residents close to the start and finish areas. Ensure that they and the police are warned of your plans.

You need to park sensitively, not block entrances to houses or fields, obstruct tracks, potentially cause an accident, try not to damage soft verges and use car parks if nearby. You don't have a right to drive your car on private roads or tracks without the landowner's permission. When local residents find parking causing concern, they should work with their local authority to see if a formal car park can be provided.

Toilet Facilities

Ensure that adequate toilet facilities for the number of runners anticipated are available and clearly signposted at the start and finish. In the case of larger races, this may mean hiring portable toilet facilities.

Donations

Landscape, footpath and wildlife conservation costs a lot of money. Most of the organisations involved are very short of funds to carry out protection and restoration work, run public awareness campaigns, etc. In areas where such work is known to be taking place, consider asking for donations, or raising a small levy on entrance fees towards a relevant organisation such as The National Trust for Scotland, BTCV, or the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

[Back to Contents](#)

Sponsorship and other financial help

A major hill race can provide a significant boost to a local economy. Contact the local Tourist Board and ask them if they can support the event, e.g. by offering publicity, or by dealing with accommodation and other enquiries from competitors. They might also advise on possible sources of financial support. Contact local businesses and tourist attractions and see if they would like to get involved. Offer publicity in return for sponsorship and services. The local council should be another source of useful support. Other potential sponsors include sports shops and major local employers.

[Back to Contents](#)

Key contacts and sources of further information

scottishhillrunners.uk (for Insurance, contact Jill Stephen)	Scottish Hill Runners
www.scottishathletics.org.uk (for Insurance, e-mail: admin@scottishathletics.org.uk)	Scottish Athletics
www.outdooraccess-scotland.com	The Scottish Outdoor Access Code
www.nts.org.uk	National Trust for Scotland
www.ramblers.org.uk/scotland	Ramblers Scotland
www.rspb.org.uk/Scotland/	RSPB Scotland
www.snh.gov.uk	Scottish Natural Heritage
www.swt.org.uk	Scottish Wildlife Trust

[Back to Contents](#)

© Scottish Hill Runners. Further information from: [SHR Convenor](#)

Last updated: 12 March 2020

Example of a Race Registration Form below (*amend as appropriate, e.g. Minimum Age limit*) :

REGISTRATION FORM

RACE _____ DATE _____

FULL NAME _____ AGE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

VEHICLE REGISTRATION _____

CLUB _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

CATEGORY (TICK BELOW AS APPROPRIATE) :-

MALE ___ JUNIOR ___ MU23 ___ MV40 ___ MV50 ___ MV60 ___ MV70 ___
FEMALE ___ JUNIOR ___ FU23 ___ FV40 ___ FV50 ___ FV60 ___ FV70 ___

I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS RACE IS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLISHED RULES AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS. I AM AWARE OF THE ORGANISER'S INFORMATION AND STIPULATIONS, AND I ACCEPT THAT ANY INJURY OCCURRING TO ME DURING THE COURSE OF THE RACE IS IN NO WAY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RACE ORGANISER. I AM OVER THE MINIMUM AGE LIMIT FOR THIS RACE (which is ___). IF I ABANDON THE RACE, I UNDERTAKE TO INFORM THE NEAREST MARSHALL OR THE TIMEKEEPER AT THE FINISH BEFORE LEAVING THE RACE VENUE.

SIGNED _____ DATE _____
