

Scottish Hill Runners

The Newsletter of Scottish Hill Runners, providing independent services to hill runners in Scotland.

Issue 11/1 Winter 2011.



Bishop Hill 2011.
(Photo: John Donnelly. Westerlands)

SHR Membership.

Why join SHR?

Details and membership forms can be found at www.shr.uk.com

Scottish Hill Runners is an independent organization providing services for hill runners in Scotland.

We are not a governing body. Membership benefits include a regular newsletter, an annual journal and a race calendar which includes all hill races in Scotland. We aim to provide up to date information on all aspects of hill running, racing, long distance challenges and non-competitive hill running in Scotland.

Our objectives

To foster and improve Scottish Hill Running in the widest sense.

To keep Scottish Hill Runners informed of issues relevant to the sport by producing appropriate material.

To promote or organise (or assist others delivering) events for Scottish Hill Runners.

To consider, and if appropriate, act upon any other proposals from hill runners in Scotland in respect of activities not catered for by other organizations.

Membership Benefits

A comprehensive printed race calendar including highland games races.

Public liability protection including when acting as race organiser.

Championship competitions such as the Scottish Hill runners championship, the Bog and Burn.

Championship and the Long Classics Championship.

A regular newsletter and annual journal

Competitions at home and abroad including international selection.

A race organisers pack.

Social events such as the end of year prize giving.

SHR branded merchandise.

The SHR website and ...A chance to win the coveted SHR mug by taking part in the Championship races.

The SHR Committee. 2011

Convener – Dave Scott

Treasurer – Martin Hulme

Secretary – Bruce Smith

Membership Secretary – Malcolm Paterson

Journal/Insurance – Ronnie Gallagher

Calendar/Web/Bog & Burn/Long-Classics – Chris Upson

Newsletter – Ken Macdougall

Committee members:

- Louise Burt
- Angela Mudge
- Andy Spencely
- Cameron Scott.

News:

Online entries are now open for Kaim Hill Race on 20th April at [Entry Central](#). The race organised by [Irvine AC](#) is limited to 100 runners. Kaim forms part of the Bog & Burn series.

Convenor's Corner:

With the coming of the spring equinox the countryside is at last waking up after what seems to have been a long winter. The snow and ice prior to Christmas caused a major disruption to training and racing with an even harder spell of weather than earlier in 2010. For those of us lucky enough to have cross country skis, this was not necessarily a disadvantage – I skied for about 10 consecutive days directly from the house, with several longer excursions up onto the Ochils in superb conditions. Sales of microspikes no doubt had another boom season, although not much use in deep snow!

A friend posted me a link to an item on the FRA forum recently entitled “interesting short term work”. For anyone with no ties and able to drop tools immediately, this must have been the best opportunity ever to spend time in St Kilda. A 4-6 week post, arrival by helicopter, all expenses paid and some beer money (apparently there is a pub!), male fellrunner preferred. The work: chasing the local wild sheep over rough terrain to take samples! The choice of footwear might prove a dilemma for some...!!

We have some new faces on the Committee this year following the AGM in November. We welcome Angela Mudge, Cameron Scott and Ken Macdougall, the latter now the new newsletter editor. If any other members feel like helping out, please feel free to get in touch!

Late March sees the start of the Run4It Scottish Hill Runners championship, with the first race at Birnam. This will be followed by Slioch, Yetholm, Eildon, Ben Rinnes and finally Ben Venue, so some great racing should be in prospect. To finish off the series, this year we plan to have the annual “do” at the Forth Inn in Aberfoyle, after the Ben Venue race, with accommodation provided nearby. So please put a special note in your diary for the 1st October, both for the final race and the do!

We are again running a navigation course this spring, on 7th and 8th May. The venue will be the Dounans Outdoor Centre in Aberfoyle – see the advert elsewhere. The courses proved popular last year, so get your booking in soon.

Have a great season, and I hope everyone achieves what they want to do and stays injury free.

Dave Scott

SHR Championship, Prize giving and Party.

It is very early to be mentioning this but get it into your diary now and make it an excellent event.

Scottish Hill Runners Annual Do

Saturday 1st October

B & B bunkhouse accommodation at Dounan’s Camp, Aberfoyle

Meal and ceildh at Forth Inn, Aberfoyle

2011 and a change of format

This year the SHR Do and prize giving will take place on the Saturday night straight after the final championship race, Ben Venue. The Do will be 5 miles down the road from Loch Katrine and the facilities will be available from Saturday afternoon. Price tbc but will be around £20 for B & B plus £25 for the meal. There will be a few places booked for Friday night for thus wanting to stay the extra night.

If you’re interested in booking a place please contact Angela on angela.mudge@btinternet.com or 01877 382632

AGM report.

A review of the AGM - a new secretary writes;

With Ian Nimmo signing off from a successful spell as SHR secretary (thanks for all your hard work Ian) I found myself the only nominee for the position. With that in mind I thought I would pay a bit more attention to the goings on to see if I could pick up any tips.

The 23 members attending came from across many clubs with some new guys and some, well not as new faces in the crowd. Mind you as it came only a few minutes after the hall had been packed for the Tinto prize-giving it did seem that quite a lot more faces could have been present to help keep the committee on the right track. Still, I guess it must mean the current incumbents are doing a reasonable job as there was no sign of an angry mob with pitchforks surreptitiously hanging around large wicker statues.

The business of the day got underway with convener Dave giving a welcome and the usual apologies for absence, with the formalities of a roll-call of attendees going on in the background the minutes from 2009 were formally adopted. Dave then gave a report on how he felt the year went, with Ian following up as secretary and Martin Hulme reporting on our financial position (and Tony Stapley agreeing to step in as auditor for the accounts). If you want access to these reports get in touch. With subscription being held at the same price as previously the process of electing the committee equally passed without comment (all nominees for the posts were elected without objection), the full committee can be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

With no motions submitted for discussion the debate was opened to talk about any other business. This gives the membership an opportunity to air any questions they have and a few topics were raised.

The removal of the SHR forum was discussed (we were cyber-attacked and the forum was a weak point) and although we have an active facebook page it was felt the forum should be resurrected (and hopefully will be available before Easter too, although the gremlins are biting back).

The next topic raised was the emasculation of the routes for the international races the WMRA are planning for 2011. For a fuller discourse on this see the SHR journal, suffice to say the idea of going all the way to the dolomites or Albania to run a cross country is not going down well with our membership.

The next discussion surrounded the timing of the SHR annual do with 3 opinions warranting mention; Glenmore lodge is better than Badaguish, it would be good to hold it after the last championship race, we could hold it after the agm. (more on this to follow). It's always good to hear opinions, although it won't take too much nous to realise that they are from different parties and we're not using Meall a Buachaille as the final champs race and holding the agm and do afterwards).

Finally it was queried why the accounting year and agm are so far apart so we said we'd look into it and if not move the dates at least publish the unaudited accounts earlier.

With the membership satisfied we drifted off into the night to reconvene again in 2011 (probably at the same place, but you never know). Meanwhile I'll have to remember to take notes myself for next year.

Bruce Smith.

New Records:

Ben Lora: [Nicola Meekin](#) set a new ladies record of 29:57 to finish 5th overall.

Conic Hill: [Peter Devenport](#) won the inaugural [Conic Hill Race](#) in 26:47. [Shona Robertson](#) was 1st lady in 31:58.

Bishop Hill: Robbie Simpson led the race to build up an impressive lead and break the record by seven seconds in a time of 17.22. In the ladies' race Clair Whitehead flew over the course to smash her own record by a mindboggling 44s in a time of 20.32– a superb performance!



Nicola Meekin. Record holder at Beinn Lora. 2010.

100'ers.

Eh....? Is the normal remark made on hearing the explanation for said achievement. Another question that could be asked is, tough elite hill runners or just obsessive headcases with nothing better to do. I suspect a bit of both, but on the basis that I'm trying to run 100 races before I'm 40, I think I'll err towards the former, although my race records will say otherwise.

To-date there are 18 runners who have hit the mystical 100 races, as recorded on Chris Upson's 'Scottish Hill Racing' website. Most notable is David Duncan who has his own club having reached over 200 races and is currently sitting at 216. The only female member is Joan Wilson with 113. The quickest entry goes to Jonathon Weir, who only took up hill racing a couple of years ago and has now done 114 races. Although, it has to be said that everyone who has reached the number is due a mention and has shown dedication to the sport, making it was it is.

The most recent entry goes to Brian Marshall, who reached his with a win at Criffel this year. Well done, Brian.



Brian Marshall. Picture from Scottish Hill Racing website.

Birth of a Hill Running Club:

Since the 'Carnethy 5' of 2010, some of you may have noticed me 'running' (very loose term) in a red and black vest with the name of Tinto Hill Runners on it. This has been my concerted effort to start a new hill running club in the South Lanarkshire area. It has been a tough year, mostly due to Brian Brennan's (Westies) constant tormenting and enquiring if he joined, would he get the club trophy. However, with perseverance and a lot of races THR is now a formalised club with committee, website and soon a job lot of vests. We have training runs every Wednesday, Thursday and most Saturdays. Wednesday's are night runs on Tinto, Thursday's are low level runs on the Clyde walkway and Saturdays offer distance runs and navigation classes. The first social night is planned shortly, we just need to find a night in-between races and training.

SHR have had a couple of enquires asking for advice on how to go about forming new clubs, so here is how I went about it.

The first thing I did was to get a Tinto HR vest printed up. It was as simple as buying an ordinary vest and having it lettered at my local printer. The next step was trying to lure other runners to join me. This started with cunningly signing my brother up for a race and giving him a vest. This trick worked with a few other unsuspecting friends who have now taken up hill racing as a result. I also opened a Facebook club page and invited all of my hill running friends to subscribe to it. On top of these ways, I just went out and raced as often as possible and talked to as many runners as I could. We all know how friendly the race community are.

What really helped getting the club off the ground was posters and flyers at Carnethy HR's Tinto Hill Race. A big thanks to Cammy Scott, of Carnethy, for helping me there! This followed on with having an A4 poster on display at the car park at Tinto. A simple email address from yahoo provided a contact, along with mention of the Facebook page. The number of email enquiries went up dramatically and runners attending Wednesday night runs on Tinto rose, even given it was the mid of winter. It gives you a great sense of achievement when you're standing at the top of your hill in the pitch dark, up to your knees in snow, with a group of like-minded lunatics.

What you need to consider when taking runs is the level of fitness of those joining you. I set a minimum requirement for our winter runs on Tinto of being able to get up and down the hill within an hour, and be able to navigate off the hill if the weather changed. Full body cover was mandatory and a sweeper/buddy system used to watch out for slower runners, night running is a different game from running during the day. Summer time and light night will allow this to be relaxed and we can encourage newer runners to join us on Tinto. As club members we all have responsibility to each other, we also watch out for others on the hill.

The next step after finding other runners to join the club was to make it formal and at the beginning of February we had our inaugural meeting in Lanark. A pub was selected with a view to loosening inhibitions and hopefully persuading club members to take roles on the committee. Prior to the meeting I drafted up a constitution, this

was based on one of the big club's and amended accordingly. A brief agenda was written and emailed out along with the constitution, prior to the meeting. Years of committee meetings help when preparing these. Our considerations for the year ahead included: subscriptions, running vests, a club championship and the club aims and members expectations.

Our latest move has been to get the club website up and running. My brother had been good enough to buy me the domain name as a belated birthday present, however, my knowledge in building websites is absolutely dire. This is where meeting and chatting to other hill runners paid dividends as Neil Campbell of Carnegie Hillbillies very kindly offered to help. Neil is in the Marketing and Web design business, his help speeded up the THR website at least 10 fold and had us on-line in a couple of days. Another thanks must go to Chris Upson, who added the club profile to his Scottish Hill Racing website which records all of our results and provides invaluable information on what's happening on the race circuit.

We regularly up-date the site and members are encouraged to write reports on races, training runs and anything they have planned. THR are shameless in our approach to self promotion, as witnessed at the Carnethy 5, when Dougie Vipond made the mistake of coming too close to the THR wind shelter the opportunity was grasped and interview for the Adventure Show recorded, we even managed to wangle another at the end of the race.

So, what's next for Tinto ? We've agreed that a club championship will consist of a single race this year and 3 races next. We also aim to host a hill race in the future and develop the numbers and we can offer. A few of the members are planning to do some ultra races.

If, you are considering setting up a new club feel free to drop me an email for some support and encouragement. If, you are looking for a club to join, then why not join Tinto Hill Runners and help shape the club or just join us for some running, racing and banter. You'll be made to feel very welcome !

Ken Macdougall.

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Navigation and Hill Running.

The race season is now well and truly started, and in the last year a number of navigation courses have been running, including ones organised by SHR. There are going to be some more this year and runners are encouraged to refresh or even learn all of the necessary skills to run and race in the hills safely. When the weather drops it is all too easy to lose your way and always remember you are taking part in a dangerous sport in exposed places. Even in good weather it is important that you can navigate, a wrong turn can leave you heading down the wrong side of a mountain and a very long way off your route. The ramifications of a minor error can lead to tragedy and thus it is your responsibility to yourself, those around you, race organisers, marshals and mountain rescue to make sure you are competent in navigation.

Scottish Hill Runners

Navigation course for hill runners

Aberfoyle, Trossachs, 7th/8th May 2011

To include:

- Map interpretation
- Compass work
- Tricks to successful navigation
- Relocation
- Pre-race navigation planning
- Safety on the hills
- Nutrition for longer days out
- What should be in everyone's bum bag!

For details: See SHR website or contact David Scott 07754 756145

Closing date for applications: 8th April 2011

Amendments to the SHR printed “Calendar of Hill Races”

Please note the following:

Cioch Mhor date has changed to **9 April** (from 16 April)

Add Race:

Sat 4 June

2.30pm **Gargunnoch**

Gargunnoch Agricultural Show Field

7.5km/300m, £4.50/£6.50, Over 16

Jane Milne 01786 860661, jane-milne@hotmail.co.uk

Sat 4 June

Glas Tulaichean.

NB that the title should read “+ fun run” NOT “+ junior fun run”.

Sun 5 June

Scolty Junior Race on 5 June is NOT a WMRA Youth Challenge trial

End Notes.

The summer edition of the Newsletter will be being put together in due course and I'll be looking for articles to put into it. If anyone or any club have anything they would like to put forward for publication then please forward it on to me.

Ken Macdougall. tintohillrunners@yahoo.com.