

Organising a Junior Fell Race

INTRODUCTION

Organising a junior fell race can appear a daunting prospect due to the different age categories and distances involved. There are 6 age groups: U9, U11, U13, U15, U17, U19 which all cover different distances, however the U17 & U19 races can usually be started at the same time as they have a smaller number of participants. As in adult races, boys and girls race together over the same course. Properly planned and well organised, a junior fell race should provide a rewarding and fun experience for both competitors and their supporters!

English Championship (U13 to U19) and Challenge (U9 and U11) races attract a large turnout with around 300 or more entries. Car parking and provision for registration is therefore a significant consideration in your choice of venue.

All the Junior Fell race resources, documents and timing systems are ready to download and available here: www.felljunior.org.uk/FRADocs/

Due to the fast pace of changes regarding “Biosecure Guidelines”, information regarding this will be available elsewhere in FRA communications

WHAT THE FRA CAN DO FOR YOU

> **Kit:** We have a limited supply of items to borrow for hosting English Junior Championship fell races: Flags for course marking, turn-around signs and rain shield clipboards. Additionally, the FRA has kit available to borrow for FRA registered fell races (Printing timers etc). For the full list see additional documents “FRA Kit requirements and availability”)

> **A £60 grant:** English Championship fell races may be eligible to apply for a grant of up to £60 with the following caveat:

- Your entry fees must be set to cover all expected costs, including the additional cost incurred because the race is a Championship event. The FRA may consider subsidising Championship races in special circumstances (for example an unexpectedly low turnout or other unforeseen costs) upon presentation of the accounts for the race. The grant of £60 (if eligible) is available upon application to the Treasurer

Note that junior entries are typically £1.50 - £2.50, with costs usually made up by organising a bake sale or additional fund raisers on the day.

> **Access:** Fell running depends on the good will of the local landowners, villages and overarching bodies such as the National Trust or the Forestry commission. The FRA has negotiated some access agreements which means you may not have to pay a fee.

It is the responsibility of the race organiser to identify all landowners, this includes all land that the race route crosses as there may be multiple land owners. Landowner information is sensitive, so not often publicly available, therefore it is up to the race organiser to find out who owns, or has legal responsibility for the land in question.

The DEFRA “MAGIC” interactive website allows you to search for the race location and any land based designation or management schemes or existing access restrictions and is

exceptionally useful in planning a fell race of any kind. It can be found at <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Contact Pin Dhillon-Downey through juniors@fellrunner.org.uk for any assistance with this, including identifying which organisations need to be contacted and whether the land is within or near a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or subject to CRoW access restrictions.

Guidelines for applying for a Natural England Permit for races that cross SSSIs are available from Nicky Spinks on access@fellrunner.org.uk

> **Race numbers and prize vouchers:** Race numbers that are colour-coded for each age group from our sponsors & prize vouchers for 1st, 2nd & 3rd for male and female in each race age group are supplied. You may (or may not) wish to supplement these with a locally-based trophy or medal etc (at your own cost). **Ensure there is no duplication of numbers on the day as each child needs to be uniquely identifiable.**

JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP AND CHALLENGE SPONSORSHIP

The Junior Championships are fortunate to be sponsored by Pete Bland Sports. They provide:

- Colour coded numbers for each age group as set out in the FRA specification and with the sponsor's logo
- Prize vouchers for each category and gender, **those being** £15, £10, £5 for each of the eight championship races and the four challenge races at each of the six meets in the series

In return the FRA agrees that:

- The Junior Championship will be advertised as the "FRA Junior Championship, sponsored by Pete Bland Sports
- Each of the Junior Championship meets will be required to find a suitable location for the Pete Bland Sports mobile shop

This means that any conflicting or competing supplier will not be able to advertise or sell products on the day of the race.

FIRST STEPS

Once you have decided to promote and run a junior fell race, a Race License is required from the FRA: <https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/race-license/>

Once accepted, the race will be displayed in the FRA calendar and handbook

Organisers may wish to publicise the race by adding a specific page to their club websites. An example of this can be found at: <https://www.harrogate-harriers.co.uk/races/kettlewell-kaper>

COURSE DESIGN

Consider what a field full of under 9-year olds will look like on a start line and have this vision in mind when planning your course! It is hard to devise a good fell race in a space under 1 km, so this is usually a good starting point.

NB: the course maximum distances are just that, the *maximum*. They are not aspirational distances and if the course is particularly steep, rough or boggy, consider reducing these appropriately.

- Have a clear start line with a funnel / holding area taped out to count starters and final kit check if required
- Allow a wide start with a run out to space the runners well before any narrow paths, or gates. Avoid stiles and gates if at all possible, but especially early or late in the race
- If possible, select soft ground for the downhill sections (to protect joints and mitigate injury through falls)
- Ensure the course is well marked with flags which are always visible from one to the next . In younger age groups the presence of marshals can greatly assist in avoiding any confusion
- It is sensible to man any turns, gates or junctions, streams, road crossings, stiles etc
- The finish funnel should be clearly marked with tape and signposted by marshals
- Marshals and first aiders should be easily identified e.g with high visibility jackets

> **Rules for race organisers:** Rules including specific maximum distances can be found in Table 2 at the following link:

<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2020/FRA%20Requirements%20and%20Rules%20for%20Race%20Organisers%202020%2018-10-2019.pdf>

REGISTRATION

On-the-day entries are always offered for junior races, even those with online pre-entry.

The age groups with the most runners are typically the U11, U13 and U15s, so plan to have at least two people helping with each of these age groups. Multiple desks and lines are more efficient for managing the rush periods. Planning race timings needs to take into account closing entries and time taken for last-minute entrants making it to the start line. Allow sufficient time to get the race registration information (numbers of starters per course) to the starter.

If not specifically dealt with in the junior entry form, Parental consent forms **MUST** be completed for anyone under the age of 18. The parent's contact details **MUST** be legible and have a contact mobile number for the duration of the event.

The full process for parental consent can be found here:

<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2020/FRA%20Parental%20Consent%20Process%20+%20Form%202020%2007-10-2019.pdf>

The specific junior entry form can be found here:

<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2020/FRA%20Junior%20Event%20Entry%20Form%202020%2016-12-2019.pdf>

If the annual County championships are held in conjunction with a Junior Championship race they will have an additional field on the entry form to complete where the athlete will

declare their eligibility for county selection. These criteria should be advertised in the race calendar, on the website, at the race venue and made clear on the registration form.

INTER-COUNTY FELL RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIPS

These championships are run under the auspices of the UK Counties Athletics Union with the FRA Liaison officer being the lead. This event is usually held in May (avoiding exams) within one of the English Championship Fell races and does add some complexity. The race results will need to be split into inter-counties and actual championship as two independent lists, so that individual and team inter-counties results can be derived and prizes presented as well as any championship or local prize allocation. In the event of a race being an Inter-County Fell Running Championship, the FRA may assist with the cost of providing a timing system to facilitate the administration of the results in a timely manner. Costs should be agreed with the FRA Junior Coordinator in advance. Whilst ROs might be willing to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the request to be used as an Inter-county event, neither the race itself nor the prize-giving should be compromised in any way. The Junior coordinator must be notified of any integrated championships.

COUNTY TRIALS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS

Prior to the Inter-counties Championships, some counties may wish to hold trials of their own within English Fell championship fell races. It is up to the individual race organisers whether to accept this additional layer of race results processing or not, and decide what reasonable adjustments to make to accommodate the prize giving and results collation. As for the inter-county championships, the Junior Coordinator should be notified of any integrated trials or championships which should not in any way compromise the race itself.

WELFARE & SAFETY

> **Toilets:** These need to be available at registration and also close to the start . If this is not possible, ensure runners and their families are aware of the closest facilities.

> **Road crossings:** Should be carefully controlled, giving careful consideration to the line of sight up and down the road and realistic reaction times. Use plenty of signage to warn road users, maybe multiple times 500m out, 300m out. Belt and braces!

- An infrequently used track may require one marshal vs a busy road requiring a lot more consideration.
- You can pay for trained Traffic Management staff (“Chapter 8” trained)

> **Photography:** Photos of U16s must not be published or circulated on social media without parental consent

> **Results:** should not be published in a way that links a photo with the race number of a child in the results table. Removing race numbers in the final published results may be a satisfactory option.

- Two independent methods for counting runners out and back must be in place.
- The DNS and DNF system must be made clear with sweepers on every race

Police and local authority should be notified of events and a short form (SAG) should be completed so emergency services are aware and can manage as appropriate.

<https://eventsafetyplan.com/safety-advisory-groups-sag/>

> **Communication:** Radios for organisers and marshalls can be much better than mobile phones and very useful in managing incidents, accidents or giving updates – “All runners and sweeps have now turned for home”. These work on line-of-sight VHF frequencies, so must be spaced at sensible distances – test before the race.

Mobile phone batteries can fail in cold conditions and reception is not always good in the hills, so check the network availability for your event and decide on the best form of communications.

PAPERWORK

Boring stuff, but essential. To make this easier for race organisers, the links to the required documents are below, with a couple of templates to cut and paste.

- Document all permissions with any conversations followed-up in writing

Some paperwork needs to be done in advance and can be summarised on this list: Race organisers checklist (which must be kept for 3 years):

<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2020/FRA%20Race%20Organisers%20Event%20Check%20List%202020%2007-10-2019.pdf>

A dedicated liaison officer from the FRA may contact you in the weeks before your event and ask if you require any assistance. They will ask to see the “Checklist for Race Organisers” and the relevant documents, e.g. risk assessment and plans for bad weather and/or abandonment of the race.

On the race day **you need to display** the following:

- **Race license.** When you register your race with the FRA you are benefiting from insurance cover. Download your copy of it here: <https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/race-license/>
- **Requirements for runners.** Relevant parts for Juniors are #2 - 7
<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2020/FRA%20Requirements%20for%20Runners%202020%2007-10-2019.pdf>
- **Hypothermia leaflet:**
<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2020/Hypothermia%20Leaflet%202017.pdf>
- **Actual Race routes**
- **Race organisers checklist (as above)**
- **Weather forecast**
- **Risk Assessment.** See FRA documents, or other race websites for templates.

RACE ORGANISERS WILL NEED:

- First aid appropriate for the area and terrain (Mountain rescue vs St. Johns Ambulance, or qualified FRA mountain first aiders)
- An effective Race timing system. There are multiple ways of doing it (see resources document). Two cheap, tried and tested systems requiring a printing timer are :
<http://www.woodentops.org.uk/index.php?topic=home&subtopic=racesystems>
www.felljunior.org.uk/FRADocs/

Trained road crossing management (Chapter 8 Trained staff) is available for hire from Flyde Coast Runners.

OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO RACE ORGANISATION

Race organisers guidelines. Page 10 refers specifically to juniors

<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2020/FRA%20RO%20guidelines%202020%2007-10-2019.pdf>

You must be aware of and familiar with the safeguarding aspects of Junior sports participation:

<https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/welfare-and-safeguarding/>

Incident reporting form in case of accident or near miss:

<https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2019/FRA%20Race%20Organisers%20Incident%20Report%20Form%202019%2008-10-2018.pdf>

CONTACT

All resources are available at **FellJunior** www.felljunior.org.uk/FRADocs/ where you will find a full race pack for race organisers for Junior fell races

Still confused or need advice? Email the Junior Fell Coordinator :
juniors@fellrunner.org.uk