**Organising a Junior Fell Race 2025**

**INTRODUCTION**

There are 6 age groups: U9, U11, U13, U15, U17, U19 which all cover different maximum distances. The U17 & U19 races can be run over the same course and started at the same time as they have a smaller number of participants, provided that the maximum distance for U17 is not exceeded.  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 between 300 and 400 entries. Car parking and provision for registration is therefore a significant consideration in your choice of venue.

**WHAT THE FRA CAN DO FOR YOU**

* **FRA Loan Equipment** – see page 37 of the 2024 Handbook for details of radios, timers, tents, clock and Start/Finish banners which are available to loan free of charge. We have also invested in a PA speaker with roaming mikes which is kept in the Lake District.
* **Flags** – the FRA has also invested in several hundred coloured surveyors’ flags which match the colours of the numbers for each age group. These will be used at the first races at Duddon and will then be available for each of the subsequent races so arrangements may be required to pass them on between ROs.
* **Entries and Timing –** For 2025,the FRA have once again contracted directly with Crazy Legs Events who will administer all online entries, provide colour-coded and chipped numbers plus timing/results services for each race. Entry fees will be collected by the FRA and reasonable costs such as for portable toilets will be reimbursed. As such, there is no financial risk to organisers of Junior Championship races which are subsidised by the FRA..
* **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> Guidelines for applying for a Natural England Permit for races that cross SSSIs are available from Kathryn Miller on access@fellrunner.org.uk
* **Sponsorship** is provided by Pete Bland Sports who will supply prize vouchers for all races and a contribution towards the cost of the numbers in accordance with their contract.

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.

**FIRST STEPS**

***Once you have decided to promote and run a junior fell race a Race Licence is required from the FRA – this includes insurance cover.  If not already a Race Organiser first obtain an FRA account by going to the login page on the FRA website at:*** [***https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/myaccount***](https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/myaccount)***) and signing up.  This then allows you to enter all your race details (either from scratch or by copying and modifying an existing race).  When your race is submitted it will be reviewed by the Fixtures Secretary who will approve the race and issue the licence.  Any issues can be resolved with the Fixtures Secretary (fixtures@fellrunner.org.uk). Once approved the race will be displayed on the FRA website (and also go into the Handbook for next year if submitted in time).***

Organisers may wish to publicise the race by adding a specific page to their club websites.

**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. Crazy Legs will provide a hand held antenna to identify the starters.
* 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. It helps enormously if the flag colours match the numbers for each race. 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

**AGE CATEGORIES**

The names of Junior categories (e.g. "Under-13") reflect the age of the runners at the end of the year.

For 2025, ages for all categories are therefore **as at 31st December 2025**.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age categories(Boys and Girls)** | **Year of birth** | **Age of competitors** | **Maximum race distance** |
| based on age asat 31st December 2025 |   |   |   |
| Under 9's | 2019, 2018, 2017 | 6 (from date of 6th birthday), 7 or 8 | 1 Km |
| Under 11's | 2016, 2015 | 8, 9 or 10 | 2 Km |
| Under 13's | 2014, 2013 | 10, 11 or 12 | 3 Km |
| Under 15's | 2012, 2011 | 12, 13 or 14 | 5 Km |
| Under 17's | 2010, 2009 | 14, 15 or 16 | 7 Km |
| Under 19's | 2008, 2007 | 16, 17 or 18 | 10 Km |

**ENTRIES**

All entries will be online via Nifty Entries and managed by Crazy Legs Events with a closing date two days before the races. It is strongly recommended that there should be NO entries on the day. This is to enable clear communication with all entrants regarding compulsory kit requirements, routes etc. Race numbers are pre-allocated and there is a lot less stress on the day for the RO.

**REGISTRATION**

For 2025, we are offering “Series Entries” facilitated by Crazy Legs Events whereby juniors will be able to enter all six races for a one-off entry of £20 plus a small administration fee. Colour coded and chipped numbers will be allocated at the first race at Duddon and should be used for each of the six races. If numbers are lost or forgotten, then replacements will be available for purchase for £2. So, registration at subsequent races will need to:

* Record which juniors who have raced previously are intending to run;
* Allocate additional numbers to those who have not run in previous races;
* Allocate replacement numbers when required and collect £2 per number;
* Allocate numbers to single race entrants.

The use of numbers for the whole series really simplified registration at subsequent races in 2024. Typically, juniors turned up wearing their numbers pinned to their vests which made it very simple to mark them off on the entry list.

The age groups with the most runners are typically the U11, U13 and U15s.  Multiple desks and lines are more efficient for managing the rush periods.  Allow sufficient time to get the race registration information (numbers of registrations per course) to the starter.

If the annual County championships are held in conjunction with a Junior Championship race, they will have an additional field on the entry system 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.  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 to 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.
* For the FRA Photography and Social Media Policy, please see page 35 of the 2024 Handbook.
* **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.
* **Crazy Legs Events** will provide a manual counting and recording system in addition to their chip timing service.
* **Communication:**  Radios for organisers and marshals 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. It is often useful to give a radio to any sweepers as they will be best placed to identify any potential problems.

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.

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 licence**.  *When your race is approved the Race Licence can be downloaded by logging on and navigating to your race page – the ‘download licence’ link will then be shown.  Race Licences are available in pdf form.”*
* **Requirements for runners**. [fra-requirements-for-runners-2024.pdf (fellrunner.org.uk)](https://files.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2024/fra-requirements-for-runners-2024.pdf)
* **Hypothermia leaflet**: [FRA\_Hypothermia.pdf (fellrunner.org.uk)](https://files.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/FRA_Hypothermia.pdf)
* **Actual Race routes**
* **Race organisers checklist (as above)** [fra-race-organisers-event-check-list-2024.pdf (fellrunner.org.uk)](https://files.fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2024/fra-race-organisers-event-check-list-2024.pdf)
* **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)

**OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO RACE ORGANISATION**

Race organisers guidelines.

 <https://www.fellrunner.org.uk/articles/documents>

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