

## **Minutes Of Annual General Meeting of Scottish Hill Runners**

**Symington Village Hall, Symington**

**Saturday 11 November 2017**

### **Agenda:**

1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2. Adoption of Minutes of 2016 AGM
3. Convenor's Report
4. Secretary's Report
5. Treasurer's Report, Adoption of accounts and appointment of auditor
6. Subscriptions for 2018
7. Election of Officers and Committee
8. Motions
9. Any Other Business
  - Online entry for races
  - Introduction of a 5 year age category race
  - Long Classics mugs

### **Members Present:**

Ron Fraser, David Duncan, Hugh McPherson, Richard Toller, Stewart Davidson, Owen Bass, Nick Mardall, Alan Smith, Dick Wall, Joanne Anderson, Joanne Thin, Jamie Thin, Angela Mudge, Andy Spenceley, David Scott, Gordon Pryde, Neil Gilmore, Roderick Pugh, Ian Hawkins and Hilary Ritchie.

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Chris Upson, Ronnie Gallagher, Graham Arthur, Hilary Spenceley, Richard Gatehouse, Ian Nimmo and Anne Nimmo.

## **2. Adoption Of Minutes of 2016 AGM**

Roderick Pugh asked the meeting to consider whether the minutes as circulated, accurately reflected what was agreed last year. Proposed by Angela Mudge and seconded by Gordon Pryde, the minutes were approved by the meeting.

## **3. Convenor's Report**

Roderick Pugh presented his report (see Appendix 1)

## **4. Secretary's Report**

Hilary Ritchie presented her report (see Appendix 2)

## **5. Treasurer's Report, Adoption Of Accounts and Appointment of Auditor**

Ian Hawkins presented his report (see Appendix 3)

The accounts for 2016 were adopted as published and the meeting approved the audited accounts, proposed by Angela Mudge and seconded by Dave Scott.

The meeting agreed to continue with the Auditor David Hirst, proposed by Gordon Pryde and seconded by Jamie Thin.

## **6. Subscriptions for 2018**

The meeting endorsed the committee's proposal that the subscription for 2018 be increased for senior members from £8 to £10, additional members sharing the same address from £4 to £5 and juniors/students from £2 to £5. Proposed by Jamie Thin, seconded by Dick Wall.

## **7. Election of Officers and Committee**

No changes were proposed. There committee would therefore remain as:

Roderick Pugh	Convenor
Hilary Ritchie	Secretary
Ian Hawkins	Treasurer

David Scott	Committee Member
Ronnie Gallagher	Committee Member
Angela Mudge	Committee Member
Chris Upson	Committee Member

#### **Co-Opted Positions**

Gordon Pryde	(Membership)
Andy Spenceley	(Statistician)
Graham Arthur	(Web Support)
Neil Gilmore	(Race Results, Website & Calendar)

### **8. Motions**

There were no motions raised.

### **9. Any Other Business**

- Online entry for races – concern around this was raised by a number of members.

*Nick Mardall from Deeside reported a widespread feeling amongst hill runners that the trend towards online entry was detrimental to the ethos of the sport, spoiling its simplicity and penalising runners who didn't have access to computers. He accepted there were advantages to ROs but believed that pre-entry was pushing some people away from the sport. He asked the committee to endorse the setting up of a working group to look into this and try to find a solution that would suit everyone which could be trialled and refined as necessary. The possibility of a runner's tag, similar to the Parkrun barcode system was raised.*

*Jamie Thin outlined the advantages of pre-entry from the perspective of the RO – simplicity, no money handling, quick results.*

*RP presented the views and experience of Warren Burgess, submitted by email. He described the Webscorer system used by Deeside which Warren believes improves race administration efficiency without forcing competitors to pre-pay when entering online. He has offered to share this with anyone who is interested.*

Joanne Anderson expressed concern about entries opening too far in advance of the race. This was resulting in races filling up fast but a substantial proportion of runners not turning up on the day.

RP was sympathetic to both sides but pointed out that the shr couldn't impose terms on ROs. The committee agreed to consider endorsing a working group and the drawing up of guidelines for good practice. Jamie and Nick offered to help. To be discussed at the next committee meeting.

- Introduction of a 5year age category race – Jamie Thin – Jamie summarised an argument he had made at a previous committee meeting. 10-year age groups are too big, more categories will increase competition and participation. This system is used at the World Masters Hill Running Championships as well as the Masters Cross Country and English Championships.

There had been no appetite amongst the committee for change to the shr championship, but the possibility of a single race had been raised. Dave Scott had looked at the figures for number of runners in each category in the Scottish Athletics championship race and reported that there may be some scope for it in the 45-50 age range for men but less so for women.

Jamie commented that although the numbers in some categories may be small now, that may change once the new categories are established. He plans to try it out in his own race, Red Moss Kips and suggested we should encourage other ROs to do the same.

An informal show of hands demonstrated the majority of the meeting would be in favour of trying the 5 year categories.

RP agreed the committee would give it some thought but will take no action at this time.

- Long Classics mug – Jane Oliver – Jane emailed the committee to propose that a mug be awarded to all runners who completed the Long Classics series. There were 41 this year. GP was concerned about the costs. RP suggested mugs could be awarded instead of trophies. DS agreed there was a case for looking at an alternative to the trophies. AS felt that awarding a mug for this series would take something away from the main shr series mug. No decision was made, to be further considered at the next committee meeting.

- Cut-Offs – Joanne Thin – *Joanne was concerned that older women are being discouraged from taking part in some races due to the tough cut-off times. The general feeling of the meeting was that cut-offs were necessary (for safety of runners and marshals) and in practice there was often a degree of flexibility, though this wasn't advertised by Race Organisers. RP suggested that cut-off times may need to be relaxed for championship races in order to allow the full age range of runners to compete. JT suggested an early start option could address this.*

## Appendix 1

### **Convenor's Report – Roderick Pugh**

This is my first AGM as convenor of Scottish Hill Runners, and Hilary's first as secretary so I hope you will bear with us. I'd like to thank Hilary, Gordon, Harry and all the members of the committee for their advice, support and guidance throughout the year.

The SHR Championship this year started with Criffel in March and finished at the Devil's Beeftub in September. All six races enjoyed good weather but the mud at Criffel was challenging, to say the least.

For the senior men, Finlay Wild won his second title ahead of Murray Strain, who had a good victory over Finlay at Goatfell (and a win at the Three Peaks Race in April).

In the over-40s, there was a new winner in Dessie Flanagan of Carnethy, and in the over 50s, a more familiar winner from Carnethy, six time champion Stewart Whitley. In the over 60s there was another deserved new winner in Phil Kammer of Cosmics, with Dougie Milligan winning the over 70s.

For the senior women, Stephanie Provan of Deeside won her second consecutive title but only after a close fought battle at the Beeftub, with Miranda Grant and Jill Stephen (both HBT) second equal.

In the over 40s, another new winner, Fiona McDonald of Cosmics with her teammate Veronique Oldham claiming her second over 50s title. A very special mention goes to Chrissie Menhennet of Westerlands for winning the over 60s thus completing a full set of victories in all age categories in the women's championships, a fantastic achievement.

In the team events, HBT women triumphed in the senior event, with Fife winning the over 40s. Carnethy regained the senior men's title, with the over 40s title shared between Carnethy and Shettleston, who were crowned British over 40s champions at the FRA relays at Llanberis.

There were 93 winners of the much sought after SHR Championship mugs.

Next year's races look like another good and varied selection, visiting all parts of Scotland, with the added bonus of the Ben Nevis Race as a British Championship counter. Can Finlay be challenged? Can the record be beaten? Will any of us get entries?

In the Long Classics, a total of 41 runners completed 4 or more races, with an amazing 903 runners completing at least one race. Andy Fallas (Carnethy) finished first for the men and Jill Stephen first for the women. Jill also triumphed in the Bog and Burn series, with James Espie of Deeside winning for the men.

This year's prize-giving lunch and talk took place in the Masonic Halls in Alva, after the Run of the Mills race. Around 50 members and guests enjoyed an excellent lunch supplied by the caterers of the last two years. This was followed by a great talk from Jim Mann who spoke about his running background, his record breaking 24 hour Munros run, his winter completion of the three classic rounds and his plans for a continuous circuit of all the Munros.

Thanks to Dave and Angela for organising the prize-giving and speaker.

In March, the navigation course was held once again in the Pentland Hills. Map and compass skills while running are essential for all hill runners, and the courses are good fun and great value for members. Thanks again to Steve Fallon who leads the courses, and to Dave Scott for organising.

On the subject of safety in the hills, at the end of Two Breweries Race, the race organiser John Hamer announced that his main objectives had been achieved-everyone had finished safely and nobody had died. I remember thinking that this was rather a glib statement, but it's absolutely true.

I like to think that the safety message is getting through and that fewer runners are turning up underprepared and without the full kit requirements. It was disappointing therefore at the Kilpatrick's race where three runners had to be disqualified for not carrying full kit (It was even more disappointing because one of them had pipped me for the over 60s prize and he had already left with his melon and bottle of beer).

I now realise how much I took for granted in hill running before I joined the committee. Just turn up, do the race, have a chat with friends, go home. I didn't give much thought to how races were planned and organised, how they were insured, who devised and implemented the safety rules and why. How the website worked, how results just appeared on it along with all the relevant statistics. Or to how the subs were collected and how the bills were paid. Or how the championship races were chosen, how the prizes just appeared at a function that just seemed to happen, with a speaker thrown in. I could go on. After a year in the post of convenor, I now realise how effective and hardworking all the other members of the committee are and I am very grateful to them all for their efforts and for their guidance and help to me.

## Appendix 2

### **Secretary's report – Hilary Ritchie**

It's been another successful year for shr and as Roddy has already covered most of what's gone on, I'm just going to give a brief report of my experience of my first year in the role of Secretary.

When Harry asked me to consider taking it on he promised there wasn't too much to it. Attending meetings, taking minutes and answering the odd email. And that's largely how it has worked out.

I have to admit I struggled a bit with the first meeting - I sat on the edge of the group in a noisy pub, struggling to hear what everyone was saying and I chose a meal that required the use of a fork and a knife which left me with no spare hand to take the minutes as the rest of the committee continued talking and eating at the same time... However, I think I've got it sussed now ... and I even manage to participate in the discussions as well!

Sitting on the committee has been interesting. As well as the regular items such as finances, the Championship, arrangements for the prizegiving and 'do', the Navigation course and the journal; other topics discussed this year have included the rules around counting for a second claim team in the championship, changes to age-group categories, race entry on the day, safety rules, including what constitutes a compass! And a complaint about how someone was represented in the journal which I'm pleased to say was happily resolved.

Like Roddy, I hadn't given much thought to what went on behind the scenes. Aside from the organisational tasks done by the Office bearers, there is a vast amount of work done by the rest of the committee. Roddy has done an excellent job in his first year as Convener, your money couldn't be in safer hands than Ian's and Harry does lots of fantastic work with the calendar, results, news items for the website and his regular Facebook posts. I also want to acknowledge (in no particular order) the efforts of Gordon who handles the Membership, Angela for selecting the championship races and Andy who does the statistics, Dave for his organisation of the Navigation course, Ronnie who does the journal, Graham for his work on the website, Chris with the Long Classics and Bog and Burn series. These are just some examples, I know you all do a lot more besides.

The other thing that kept me busy this year was dealing with general enquiries, mostly in the form of those emails Harry told me about. I hadn't realised how many people turn to us for information and advice, frequently non-members. Sometimes they are just simple enquiries about joining the shr or asking if an event can be included in the calendar but mostly people are asking for general information on hillrunning eg runners asking what clubs in their area do hills, parents wanting to know how their children can get selected to run for Scotland, one woman even asked if we could help find someone to run with her dog! But the most common request is for help and advice on organising a race. That one I can answer, I direct them to the excellent RO pack, safety guidelines and insurance information on our website. I think this is an area where we provide an invaluable service. In fact, I think the shr does a tremendous job for Scottish hill running in general and I'm proud to be a part of it.

I'd like to finish by saying thank you very much to my fellow committee members for having me, for all the support you've given me as I find my feet, for being so welcoming and making my first year as secretary an interesting and enjoyable one.

## Appendix 3

### **Treasurer's Report – Ian Hawkins**

#### **SCOTTISH HILL RUNNERS AGM TREASURER'S REPORT NOVEMBER 2017**

As with last year, I have split my report into sections to discuss the 2016 audited accounts and 2017 forecast separately. In addition, I include narrative at the end of this paper in support of the Committee's proposal to increase subscription rates for 2018.

##### Audited accounts – December 2016

In the final analysis, the attached audited accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016 show a deficit of £889 compared to a deficit of £971 in the previous year. So, a slight improvement in the reported deficit but overall this equates to a cumulative loss of £1,860 over the two years which is clearly unsustainable in the long term.

The main points to highlight for 2016 are as follows:

Donations – down by £414 year on year, mainly due to a large (£300) "catch up" donation from Cosmics in 2015. We have had more success with funds from donations in the current year which is discussed later in this report.

Advertising – a fall of £145 in 2016 reflecting the difficulty we had in attracting sponsors of the calendar, a situation which persists in 2017.

Championship trophies – costs here were up by circa £100 as we purchased more trophies than in the previous year and had to contend with a small price hike from our supplier.

Website hosting – on the face of it a £114 increase in expenditure but partly this was due to timing, £71 being related to the 2015 year. Also, quite bit more work and effort has gone into enhancing our website offering.

Bank position – the annual deficit of £889 has resulted in a fall in our bank deposit to £6,829 at 31 December 2016.

My thanks once again go to David Hirst of Deeside runners who carried out the audit of the 2016 numbers. I am pleased to report that David has once again agreed to stay on as auditor for another year.

##### Accounts forecast – December 2017

Attached to this report is my forecast end of year outturn for 2017. These figures have been estimated based on actual experience for the 10 months to October plus best estimates for the remaining two months. With only a few months of the year remaining, I would be surprised if the forecast deficit of £939 was too far off the mark.

Some comments then on the main year on year variances:

Subscription income – this is £280 below that of the previous year. Although taking into account timing differences, I believe a more accurate variance to be only £180. There would appear to be a fall in the membership of about 20 people and I know this is a matter which the Committee would be happy to take questions on later.

Donations – it is pleasing to see a rise here of £159 and thanks go to HHR, Lomonds, Cosmics running clubs and the Cort ma Law RO for their support.

Advertising income – a further fall in 2017 of £160 and this, of course, makes the net cost of producing the Calendar that much higher.

Nav course – we had 13 participants this year but 2 dropped out at the last minute and were refunded. Next year refunds will only be made if a replacement can be found. The higher numbers necessitated the presence of two guides (only one required in 2016) and hall costs were also up.

Website – we have had some success this year attracting Run & Become to advertise on the SHR web page and the £200 income this has generated is very welcome.

In summary, assuming the remainder of 2017 pans out as forecast then our deficit will have increased by £50 compared to 2016 with bank funding falling to roughly £5,900.

#### Proposal to increase subs in 2018

It is easy to get bogged down in the minutiae of the accounts, especially when the figures reported are disappointing. That type of analysis is important to fully understand the reasons for the deficits. However, it is of equal importance to stand back from the detail from time to time and consider the overall funding position and whether action requires to be taken to support the dwindling bank deposits.

The last three years (2015-2017) have seen annual deficits of £971, £889 and £939 respectively. That's a cumulative deficit of £2,800. During that period the amount of funds in our bank account have fallen from £8,689 to £5,889.

Faced with three years of large deficits, the Committee has come to the decision that we need to raise additional funds to ensure the bank position does not deteriorate further. As such, it is proposed to increase subscription rates for 2018 for senior members from £8 to £10, additional members (same address) from £4 to £5 and juniors from £2 to £5. This proposal to be voted on under point 6 on the agenda.

It is hoped the above rate rises will boost next year's subs income by circa £800-£900 and significantly reduce the deficit.

Ian Hawkins  
November 2017