

SHR AGM Minutes – 17.11.20

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Present: Roddy Pugh (Chair), James Callender, Andy Spenceley, Ronnie Gallagher, Chris Upton, Angela Mudge, Graham Arthur, Harry Gilmore, Gordon Pryde, Hugh McPherson, Jill Stephen (minutes) Al Anthony, Richard Gatehouse, Andrew Fullwood, Brian Brennan, Hilary Richie, Craig Freshwater, Gregor Malcolm, Keith Burns, Roddy Cunningham, Sharon Taylor, Jamie Proven, Murdo Macleod, Phillip Kammer, Jenn Ruddick

1. Apologies: Alister Boyer, Jamie Thin, Hilary Spenceley and Alasdair McInnes

2. Minutes of last meeting: minutes were approved and there were no issues arising from them.

3: Convenors report: Roderick Pugh presented his report (Appendix 1).

4. Secretary's report: Jill Stephen presented her report (Appendix 2)

5: Treasurer's report: Hugh McPherson presented his report (Appendix 3). Hugh informed the meeting about the generous donation of £100 from Deeside Runners. Keith Burn's asked if the committee were thinking about asking our insurance company for a rebate after there had been so few races this year. Jill Stephen said that she could ask the insurance company, but we had used them to insure races so we would only be able to ask for a rebate for the months of lockdown. We could also ask for the term of our insurance to be extended. This led to a discussion about SHR subscriptions and it was agreed that the committee will discuss the issue of next year's subscriptions and whether we will change them after the pandemic at the next committee meeting.

6: Virtual Bog and Burn round-up: Jill Stephen read out a summary of the main results of the series, organised by Alister Boyer from Westies, and let everyone know they could find the results on the SHR website.

SHR Champs: Angela let the meeting know what the races will be for next year's championship;
Stuc a Chroin (May 2021)

Eildon 3 Hills (June 2021)
Dollar (July 2021)
Glenshee 9 (August 2021)
Yetholm Shepherds Show Race (October 2021)
Cioch Mhor (October 2021)

The Eildon 3 Hills has been picked to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the race and Cioch Mhor have agreed to change their date to October so that the championship doesn't start in March when there could still be disruption.

8. U23 Championship. Gregor Malcolm asked the meeting their thoughts on how to increase participation of U23s in hill races and whether there might be a call to change the format of the U23 championship. Gregor had asked several U23s about ideas to increase participation and one thing that came out of this was to only have one championship race that changed from short/medium/long each year. It was suggested this may help increase numbers rather than a series. It was also suggested the location of the race should be accessible to younger people. Angela suggested that numbers were high at Dumyat which is an accessible race and this race seems to work in the current U23 championship. Ronnie asked why Gregor was targeting students. Jenn Ruddick said she had encountered similar participation trying to get younger teams out from Westies and supported the idea. It was agreed that Gregor will come along to the next committee meeting on the 7th of December so we can discuss this further.

9. Journal Submissions. James Callender was introduced as the new journal editor. He said he had already received submissions for next year's journal but has space for more. Submissions are to be submitted to him by the end of the year. He will be aiming to have the journal printed by the usual time in February.

10. Position of Convenor. Roddy informed the meeting of his intention to stand down from the role as convenor. He informed us he has approached someone to take over the role and awaits a response before updating us.

11. AOB. Roddy Pugh asked Chris Upson if there was a problem with the Scottish Hill Racing website as he keeps getting a security warning when he tries to go on it. Chris acknowledged he knows about the security certificate and let Roddy it was safe to proceed viewing the site.

Appendix 1: Convenor's report.

Convenor's Report 2020

The convenor's report and the secretary's report usually give a summary of the season just completed, together with an account of points of interest and relevant topics that have arisen during the running year.

This year has been unlike any other.

After a challenging Carnethy 5 race and a handful of other early season races, hill running came to an abrupt stop on 17th March, due to the Covid pandemic. And while we regret that there has been very little hill racing since then, I think that we have to keep a sense of perspective. To paraphrase Jurgen Koop, to us hill running is the most important of the less important things in life, and what really matters is the safety and wellbeing of society.

I am sure that as hill runners we have acted sensibly and followed the rules and will continue to do so.

So how have we coped since March? Runners and clubs have continued to be very active, finding new and imaginative ways to keep on running and competing in the hills. There have been virtual challenges, virtual races and even a virtual Bog and Burn series (that we will hear about shortly). There have been club races with a small number of socially distanced runners and lots of training runs, both solo and in small groups.

There have been a small number of actual races with the Lairig Ghru, the Scottish Athletics championships at Comrie Croft and a few others. These races required strict protocols, staggered starts and often a limited entry.

These races do seem to have been completed without incident.

It is clearly going to be some time before we are able to return to normal racing and I am confident that everyone in the hill running community will continue to act safely and responsibly while still getting out in the hills.

I would like to finish by thanking my fellow committee members for their hard work and support over the last year. I would particularly like to thank Jill Stephen who has just completed her first year as secretary, while also taking charge of race insurance. And finally, I would like to welcome James Callender on to the committee as editor of the SHR journal.

I will now hand you over to Jill for her first secretary's report.

Roddy Pugh, Convenor

Appendix 2: Secretary's report.

Well my first year as SHR secretary has certainly been a different to what I was expecting! It started pretty well with a lot of enthusiasm from all the committee for increasing our profile and membership particularly with the younger hill runners. Our stand at the Carnethy 5 was very successful in terms of membership and we planned to repeat this with a stand at the first SHR championship race. Then the pandemic hit, and it was a very different year to the one any of us are expecting. Despite this, and as Roddy mentioned, there have been several virtual and real race challenges throughout the year which have been very successful, and we hope as we move forward, we can continue to increase participation in hill running and support for Scottish hill runners.

From my own perspective I've had a lot of support from the committee over my first year and I would particularly like to thank Roddy for all his guidance and support. I've appreciated all his advice and the help he has given me to settle into the role. I would also like to thank both Harry Gilmore and Graham Arthur who have done a great job with the website and all things IT. Hugh McPherson has done a great job once again with our accounts, making sure we're on top of things and Gordon Pryde keeps our membership up-to-date. Thanks to Angela for sorting out the championship, it's a shame we never got to run any of the races. Angela also provides valuable links to both Scottish and British athletics and keeps us in check. Andy Spenceley has had slightly less stats to play about with this year but always provides valuable advice to the committee.

Finally, thanks to Ronnie Gallagher for his work on the journal, the mugs and race insurance for many years. Ronnie has now stepped down from these roles which gives me the opportunity to welcome some new members to the committee. James Callender has taken over as journal editor and he'll talk a little more about that in a bit and we also now have Alister Boyer joining us to design the SHR champs mugs. It's been an easy year for him so far but hopefully next year will allow us to see his great work!

Jill Stephen, Secretary

Treasurer's Report, 2020 AGM

The year started off well with subscription income received during January, February and March being much the same as that raised during the same period in 2019. Following the lock-down in March, however, income from subs decreased considerably, resulting in the amount received from 1st. January to 31st October showing a fall of approximately 15% relative to last year. This is illustrated graphically in the plot below.

Historically, income from subs received during November and December has been attributed to the following year in the Income and Expenditure Account, but not treated as an accrual in compiling the balance sheet. This practice has been continued again this year in the attached Account. It is difficult to predict what November and December's subscription figures will be, since some runners may delay re-joining until racing and the Championship are well underway again. A reasonable guess, however, might be that subs received during these last two months of the year may also be down by about 15% on last year's figure.

Regarding the first few months of next year, much might depend upon whether Covid conditions have improved to the point where the Carnethy Race is allowed to run in February, since a high proportion of members renew at that event. Should this not happen, in addition to renewals suffering, our calendar and journal distribution costs for next year will increase substantially. These costs, and that of hosting the web-site, are offset by advertising, and we still have one or two hundred pounds from this source to come in, hopefully before the end of the year.

Each year, our income from subs. is boosted by donations from clubs who very generously hand over some of their excess cash, and this year a contribution was gratefully received from Deeside Runners. Donations from other clubs may follow as the season of goodwill approaches, although the total is unlikely to approach last year's figure, which was truly exceptional.

With virtually all races this year being cancelled or postponed indefinitely from March onwards our outgoings have been minimal, consisting mainly of payment of the usual annual race insurance premium and the design, printing and distribution of the SHR Calendar and Journal. Hence our overall financial position has not suffered compared to last year, and indeed we have made a surplus some 19% greater than that for 2019. Unfortunately, the insurance premium became due before it became clear that there would be virtually no races to insure.

We do hope that membership will pick up again as racing returns, and we will once more be able to use our members' funds to support the Championship, the Long Classics and Bog and Burn series and, of course, the annual SHR 'Do'.

Hugh McPherson, Treasurer.

