

SHR AGM Minutes – 15.11.21

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Present: Peter Mackie (Chair), James Callender, Andy Spenceley, Angela Mudge, Graham Arthur, Harry Gilmore, Gordon Pryde, Hugh McPherson, Jill Stephen (minutes) Neil Mclure, Richard Gatehouse, Andrew Fullwood, Roddy Pugh, Hilary Richie, Kirsty Dickson, Alan Cameron, Keith Burns, Jamie Thin, Hugh Robertson, Murdo Macleod, Phillip Kammer, Ronnie Gallagher

1. Apologies: Hilary Spenceley

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

3. Convenor's report: Peter Mackie 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 that he will be stepping down from his role. Jill will approach Stewart Whitlie about the role and otherwise we will advertise it on the website.

6: SHR Championship 2022. Angela confirmed next year's championship races. Durisdeer has been moved to a slightly later date as it is being used as a counter in the British championship.

SHR Champs:

Clachnaben 9th April

Stuc a Chroin 30th April

Trotternish Ridge 4th June

Durisdeer (British) 2nd July

Meall a' Ghiubhais 16th July

Yetholm Shephards show 1st Oct

7. SHR subs 2022. Andy Spenceley asked whether we planned to keep our subs the same for 2022. Hugh informed everyone that the accounts were healthy after a free subs year so it was decided that subs would remain the same at £10 and that we would continue efforts to promote joining SHR in order to recruit new members.

8. 5-year age categories for V50+ Jamie Thin proposed we consider new 5-year age categories for super vets (50+) for the championship. He hoped it would encourage more people to race with there being an increased chance of people winning their category. Jamie's proposal was for the men's categories although it was decided that the change should be for both men and women. Hilary Ritchie raised concerns that there were already small numbers in the women's championship and this this might dilute the field even more. Angela raised concerns about the cost of prizes with even more categories and Andy was concerned about the extra work for ROs and from a statistical point of view. In response to concerns Jamie suggested doing a trial to see how the new categories worked in real races. A vote was put to the AGM about who was for 5-year age categories for the championship and who was against it. The vote went 14 Yes and 6 No with 1 undecided. Next year's championship (2022) will have 5-year age categories as a test to see how this works. Jamie offered to help Andy by chatting to ROs on how to implement the changes along with any other help needed to set up.

9. Scottish Hill Racing website. The Scottish Hill Racing website has been down since the beginning on 2020. Alan Cameron of Queensberry running club proposed sharing the work between a few clubs or individuals to try and resurrect the website or to take the data from it and put it on the Scottish Hill Runners website, particularly information about races individuals had run. Harry had been updating the SHRacing website so was able to lend some insight into how much work maintaining the runners' stats was. He was happy for someone else to take it on but did want to let them know that it is a large volume of work due to problems with the algorithm not accepting different versions of runner's names or clubs etc. Graham Arthur updated he had restored all of Chris's database up to the beginning of the pandemic and imported all the data. The committee will discuss how best to use this data. He has also moved some maps and other historical data over to Scottish Hill Runners. Alan Cameron enquired whether getting an outside company to merge the two websites might be an easier option. Concerns were raised over this, as previously a company had helped with the Scottish Hill Runners website, and this had led to problems at a financial cost. It was decided that Graham will continue to update the Scottish Hill Runners website and as a committee we can discuss progress as it is updated.

10. Use of GPS in all Scottish races. Recently the committee decided to ban the use of GPS devices in all SHR championship races, and it was up to the ROs what to do for other races outside of the championship. James Callender proposed that we may want to add a note to our rules that whilst it is up to the discretion of the RO, as a committee the SHR think it is a matter of best practice that competitors do not use a GPS device to navigate. The committee agreed with this, with the majority feeling that it was important to promote the use of a map and compass. James will write out something to put on the website.

11. Re-election on SHR committee. Peter asked if everyone at the meeting was happy for the existing committee to continue. There were no objections.

12. Position of treasurer. Hugh informed the meeting of his intentions to step down. The committee will approach Stewart Whitley about the role and otherwise advertise it on the website. Jamie Thin suggested Hugh let the meeting know what the role entails and how time consuming it is. He also suggested Hugh added this information to any advert.

13. AOB. Kirsty Dickson asked the committee if it would consider having some ordinary members to ensure the committee was inclusive and diverse. She was specific we might want to consider a young female and maybe a male as well. Kirsty was invited to stand for the role. James Callender and Peter Mackie will ask at both Westerlands and Shettleston respectively to see if anyone there is also interested.

Keith burns asked the committee if we had reviewed our safety rules recently. We have not, so this will be an agenda point for our next committee meeting. Jamie suggested that we ask ROs for any safety points from recent races that may help us learn and shape our rules accordingly. It was suggested these points could be added as a journal article. James Callender is to follow this up.

Appendix 1: Convenor's report.

Hill racing is back, but not quite as we know it.

34 races were run in 2021 and a couple left to go. I managed to compete in one. It's been more of a virtual spectator sport for me this year, for a variety of reasons, positive COVID, work and looking after a 2-year-old. Have I enjoyed not racing, no, has it really changed my life, well, probably not? This is the boy who used to get cabin fever if a week went by and he hadn't raced. Not in the Chris Upson mould, I would add, but undoubtedly, I demonstrated some addictive traits. The lure of the open hillside, eh. They'll always be there, a wise man, once said. Luckily the Scottish Hill Racing site is down so at least my stats are frozen. I might even make my comeback as a super VET. More on both subjects, later.

The season kicked off in May with Angela's 'hijacked Maddy Moss'. The feedback was all very positive, low key, no fuss, fitting of our sport. Overall, year on year race numbers were down, but it felt like the SHR racing scene was normalising. Starting to sound like an accountant here.

Despite all the disruption, it was pleasing to witness, from my phone anyway, that we were able to successfully host the SHR champs. Some great wins too, our SHR secretary for one, Joe Symonds making a comeback, and a good one at that, and Des Crowe, Murdo Macleod and Jane Oliver ensuring that age is nothing more than a mere number. A quick stats review – we had 125 women run at least one champ's race and 392 men. That's only 14% and 10% down on numbers for 2019, a year in which I suspect very few in the community knew that a buff could have even more uses, including a mask for a pandemic.

On the British front, whilst there was only a one chance saloon individual race, by all accounts Helm Hill Runners managed the coup de grace, by staging formidable FRA relays in Tebay, last month. Not one for social media trawling, but there was a lot of love and kudos for this event. A whopping 23 teams representing Scottish clubs – I'd say that must be a record in recent years. And to top it all, Carnethy were crowned victors, with Edinburgh Uni taking third in the open female race. Special mention to Westies for finishing 3rd V60 team. Some men in their 40s (not me) didn't do too badly either, by all accounts.

It was great to see our numbers competing abroad, and even more so, setting a very high bar. Georgia Tindley, Scout Adkin (dominating everywhere) Charlotte Morgan, Ally Bevan and Robbie Simpson, to name but a few, at the top of their A games. We even had young Jamie Crowe making his debut at the marathon distance, and doing some damage too, posting 2:22. A chip off the old block or set to eclipse the old fox's success.

I've also be aware of a fair bit of activity on the big rounds, new rounds, FKT's and most notably, Carnethy never far away from controversy on the BBC www. I must admit, their Munro's in a day sounded like an absolute masterstroke, which nearly fell to bits in the last hour.

As a RO, I take great comfort that my peers, and fellow hill runners, have managed to stage and compete at races this year without any fuss, ramifications, or any known outbreak of the virus! I'm confident that Goat Fell, and indeed many other classic races will return to the calendar in 2022. There are also some new races making their debut and possibly others making a resurgence.

This was my first year as convenor, filling the sizeable shoes of a dear friend, Roddy Pugh. Whilst it's not been the year to make my mark, hopefully I've made some small inroads and bring a degree of panache.

Appendix 2: Secretary's report.

For my second year as Secretary, it's been great to see many more races taking place this year compared to last. As well as being great to catch up with old familiar faces it's also been very encouraging to see new ones trying out hill racing for the first time. As a committee we're always trying to raise the profile of Scottish Hill Running and increase the participation in races, so it's been great to see people trying out the sport. Let's see if we can encourage this into 2022.

This year we've also tried to raise our online profile with our new Instagram page. This was set up by Hamish Battle of Metro Aberdeen who has been giving me lots of help to keep it up to date. We're keen to try and attract younger runners into hill running so hope that this at least one way of highlighting our lovely sport. In addition to this we have the hard efforts of Angela who spends a great deal of time encouraging younger runners and providing them with opportunities to try our hill running.

Looking forward to next year we'll be keen to make our presence known with a stand at some of the championship races and if anyone has any ideas of how to continue to attract club members and other runners to join and support SHR then let us know!

I'd like to finish with some thanks you. Firstly, to all of the committee, as usual everyone has been very supportive, and as a committee I feel that we all work well together. Secondly, whilst we were sad to see Roddy step down but at the same time pleased to welcome Peter as our new convenor. I'm sure he'll do a great job. Thanks also must go to Hugh McPherson, as he will inform everyone, Hugh plans to step down from his role, so I'd like to say thanks to him for all his hard work keeping our accounts up-to-date and us informed of everything financial.

Jill Stephen, Secretary

Appendix 3: Treasurer's Report

With many of our usual activities cancelled, this has been a relatively easy year for the Treasurer. Although members were offered a free year for 2021, a total of £1,023 was received in subscriptions, and for this we thank those members who continued to subscribe - or maybe just forgot to cancel their standing orders!

We also give our sincere thanks to Highland Hill Runners and to Deeside Runners, who very kindly gave donations totalling £300. A further £100 of income was derived from advertising on the SHR website, with a further £200 invoiced and due by the end of the year.

On the out-going side, the main items of expenditure, in order of increasing magnitude, were Web Hosting (est. £130), SHR Mugs (est. £330), Journal Printing (£575), Championship Trophies (£600), and insurance (£1,232.95).

In preparing the attached accounts I have presented the Income and Expenditure Accounts in the usual form, including this time both actual figures to the date of preparation (9th Nov. 21) and estimated figures to 31st Dec. 2021. These figures show losses of £988.79 and £1,038.79 respectively. compared with a surplus of £1,051.50 in the previous year, the difference of around £2,000 being of the same order as the reduction in subscription income. Note that it has been the convention over the years to list "Subs in the current year" as being those received over the period January to October, with "Subs next year" being those received in November and December. For simplification of book-keeping, the latter amounts are not treated as accruals. Note also that income from items classified as "Expenditure" in the attached accounts are shown in parenthesis, denoting negative amounts. As my 3-year period in office comes to an end, I will be handing the role of Treasurer over to my successor (undecided at the time of writing) over the period from now to the end of the year. It has been an interesting and enjoyable experience serving on the Committee, and it is good that a policy is in place of changing its members every three years. Finally, I would like to thank our long-standing voluntary auditor, David Hirst of Deeside Runners, who has had the job of checking and making sense of my book-keeping efforts over the last three years.

Hugh McPherson, Treasurer, SHR. Date of Issue:9th Nov. 2021.