

2024 UK ATHLETICS FELL AND HILL RELAYS



Organised on behalf of UK Athletics (UKA) by the Mountain Running Advisory Group Sub-Committee for domestic fell running championships under UKA rules and sponsored by Pete Bland Sports

The 2024 UK Athletics Fell & Hill Relays will be organised by Wharfedale Harriers on Saturday 19th October 2024 at Appletreewick, North Yorkshire . Entries will open on (tbc).

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The relays are held under UK Athletics (UKA) rules.

UK Athletics medals will be awarded to members of the first three teams in the following categories:

- Male
- Female
- Male Over 40
- Female Over 40

The organising club may decide to include additional veterans (male and female) or mixed categories; a mixed team must contain an equal number of male and female runners, unless otherwise specified.

Entries in the Championship categories will only be accepted from clubs that are affiliated for fell running to UKA through their Home Country Athletics Federation (HCAF). If the entry limit is not reached, the organising club may accept entries for the non-championship categories from clubs that are affiliated to HCAF, but not for fell running.

All runners must be registered with their Home Country Athletics Federation (HCAF) or be members of the FRA, be first claim members of the club they represent and must wear club vests. A registration number or FRA membership number for all team members will be required on the team declaration form.

The use of GPS for navigation purposes, the use of running poles and the linking of runners by bungee are not allowed.

Further details and entry information will be made available on the UKA, FRA, SHR, WFRA & the race websites.

Rules and Guidelines for the UK Athletics Fell and Hill Relays

1. Format

- 1.1 The UK Athletics (UKA) Fell and Hill Relays are held annually, normally on the third weekend of October, for teams of six runners over four legs..
- 1.2 As the relays are the UK championships. the event should be held on challenging terrain which equates to an A Category fell race as defined by the Fell Runners Association.
- 1.3 Championship categories, for which UK Athletics medals are awarded, are as follows:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Male Over 40
 - Female Over 40
- 1.4 Non-Championship categories
The organising club may decide to award additional prizes including additional veterans (male and female) or mixed categories; a mixed team must contain an equal number of male and female runners. If additional categories are to be awarded prizes, the organisers should make this known ideally on the race entry form, but certainly in all subsequent information. A non-competitive category needs to be set up for teams who do not have sufficient numbers on the day (see 6.3); entries will not be accepted for this category.
- 1.6 All ages are age on day of the race.
- 1.7 Entries are invited from clubs that are affiliated to UKA through their Home Country Athletics Federation (HCAF) for fell running and who have runners with the right experience and standard for a championship event. The entry process will generally involve a pre-entry stage during which clubs are vetted (see paragraph 5.9 for details of the vetting process). Following the vetting process, clubs will be invited to proceed to the payment stage.

2. Event hosting

- 2.1 The event is normally hosted in rotation using the following sequence – Wales, England, England, Scotland, England, England.
- 2.2 The event hosts will be appointed by MRAG, on the advice of the MRAG Standing Sub-Committee for domestic fell running championships.
- 2.3 The hosting club will normally be appointed at least 12 months in advance of the event taking place.
- 2.4 Clubs may organise the event in conjunction with other clubs, but there must be one designated, named Race Organiser.
- 2.5 The event host should endeavour to minimise the environmental impact of the relays, for example using local suppliers, maximising recycling opportunities, and encouraging sharing of transport.

3. Courses

- 3.1 The established format for the event is two shorter legs for single runners, and two longer legs for paired runners as follows:
 - a. Leg 1: a short leg with an approximate winner's time of 30 minutes, which is at least partially flagged.

- b. Leg 2: a longer leg, run in pairs with an approximate winners' time of 60-65 minutes. The route should be equivalent to a category A medium fell race and should be at least partially flagged. If there is a route choice on leg 2, then runners must be allowed to recce in advance.
 - c. Leg 3: a longer navigational leg, run in pairs with an approximate winners' time of 60-70 minutes. The route should be equivalent to a category A medium fell race, and in addition must require navigation skills (see 3.6 below). The number of personnel involved in planning the navigational leg should be kept to a minimum, and those involved must ensure that details, other than optimal distance and climb and likely winning time, do not go beyond the navigational leg planning group.
 - d. Leg 4: a short leg with an approximate winner's time of 30 minutes, which is at least partially flagged.
- 3.2 Legs 1 and 4 are normally expected to be equivalent to category A short fell races. While there will be some discretion around this if needed, organisers should as far as possible, plan the location of the relays with this in mind.
- 3.3 Legs 2 and 3 may be switched around if appropriate (eg because of the terrain) with the agreement of the MRAG Race Referee if this is agreed in the early planning stages.
- 3.4 If possible, alternate routes should be available in the event of adverse weather conditions.
- 3.5 The UKA Fell and Hill Relays are a senior event; runners who are over 18 and over on the date of the race may be selected for any of the legs. Runners who are 16/17 on the date of the race may run legs 1 or 4 but only if the course is suitably marked and marshalled to junior standards. The Race Organiser, in agreement with the Race Referee, must make it clear in all literature and as early as possible whether junior runners will be allowed on these two legs.
- 3.6 The event is a fell race, not an orienteering one, and the navigational leg must therefore be designed to test runners' route choice between well-established features. It must not be designed to require fine navigational skills. However, to provide fair competition in the championship categories, the route should avoid footpaths/ trods where possible and use the profile of the ground to minimise the visibility of checkpoints. All check points on the leg must be visited in a pre-stated set order. Runners on the navigation leg must be notified if the leg overlaps with one of the other (flagged) legs.
- 3.7 The overall predicted winning time for the Male team must be under 3 hours 30 minutes, and ideally nearer 3 hours 15 minutes.
- 3.8 It is recommended that there is a reasonably long visible run-in to help ensure that teams are ready for the changeover. Marshals should also be deployed at the approach to the finish area to ensure that both runners finish together on legs 2 & 3 .
- 3.9 The start and finish of each leg needs to be designed so that runners starting/finishing other or the same legs do not impede each other's progress by marshals firstly, restricting entry to the changeover zone to runners who are about to take over and secondly, directing finishing runners to the 'downloading' area.
- 3.10 For safety reasons it is normal for the Race Organiser to apply a cut off time at the end of leg 2. This should be set at approximately 60% of the leader's time at the end of the leg. Therefore, if the leader's total time after leg 2 is 90 minutes, then the cut off would be 2 hours and 30 minutes. However, this is a Championship event and any teams who think they will not meet the cut off time are discouraged from taking part.

- 3.11 In addition a 'mass start'/'dib & go' should be used for all remaining leg 4 runners after an elapsed time which has been agreed in advance with the Race Referee. This should be well published to all teams and must be clearly displayed at registration on the day. Flexibility may be applied to this rule by the Race Organiser. Where possible, the championship categories should be 'true' races, i.e. the teams in contention for UK Athletics medals should not be impacted by mass starts. The objective should be to minimise the number of teams involved in mass starts whilst at the same time ensuring that runners are not held in the handover pen for long periods and marshals do not have to spend excessive time on the fells, especially in the event of adverse weather conditions.
- 3.12 For legs 2 and 3 the Race Organiser should consider either issuing a dibber to both runners per leg or deploy marshals at key check points to ensure both runners visit the control and use the dibber.
- 3.13 If dibbers are being used, the Race Organiser must advise runners what they should do in the event of losing their dibbers, specifically, how change-over/finish times are to be recorded and in what circumstances teams might be disqualified. It is at the discretion of the organising club whether they charge for lost dibbers. Every year, there are a small number of runners who have problems with 'dibbing' and it might be useful to provide a 'practice' dibber and some printed hints.
- 3.14 If there is excellent mobile phone coverage in the area, a non-contact system could be used instead of dibbers.

4. Facilities

- 4.1 The following facilities must be considered obligatory:
- a) Safety: Mountain rescue or similar support services on the course with the necessary communications. Radios are available from the Fell Runners Association – a full list of available equipment can be found on their website.
 - b) First Aid: A designated first aid tent or vehicle with qualified personnel must be at the start/finish area. First aiders should also be deployed on the course, as necessary.
 - c) Shelter: A marquee (or equivalent) must be provided that is large enough to accommodate all the runners, spectators and caterers (if used). Dry storage should be provided near to the start and finish for the runner's kit. The Fell Runners Association have tents which they make available for the event.
 - d) Refreshments; a meal is generally included in the entry fee; this is optional but teams must be advised if it is decided not to provide a meal.
 - e) An area for club tents.
 - f) Toilets: Unless adequate facilities are within 500 metres of the start, mobile toilets must be provided (including in the change-over/holding pen) & regularly checked during the event to ensure that toilet rolls are available.
 - g) A Public Address system should be provided which ideally is audible throughout the event field, but particularly the start/finish area and the holding pen. Announcers should be able to identify runners approaching the finish to enable efficient handovers.
 - h) A system should be provided so that results are available to competitors/posted on social media (but this may depend on broadband coverage).
 - i) Pete Bland Sports (PBS) are the official sponsors of UK Athletics fell running events: an area on the event field must be made available for PBS and no company that is a direct competitor of PBS must be allowed to sell merchandise during the event; if in doubt, please seek advice from MRAG.

j) An official photographer to take photos on the course & at the presentation.

4.2 Parking: It is desirable that an adequate area for parking cars and minibuses is offered within a maximum distance of 1km from the start. Parking charges are not usually included in the entry; the charge should reflect the cost of providing parking and/or at a rate that encourages car sharing.

5. Event Organisation

5.1 The UK Athletics Mountain Running Advisory Group (MRAG) will nominate a Race Controller who is responsible for ensuring consistent application of these Rules and Guidelines from year to year. The Race Controller will be UK Athletics' key point of contact with the Race Organiser for all matters, including verifying and signing off the planned race routes for all legs. All pre-event documentation (including entry forms), rules and instructions must be signed off by the Race Controller before they are published/distributed and include a version number and/or date released with changes highlighted. Team captains must be alerted to any changes.

5.2 The host club will appoint a Race Organiser who is responsible for the delivery of the event in line with these Rules and Guidelines as well as liaison with the Race Controller.

5.3 The race organiser will be asked to present their plans early in the year they host the event; this will normally be to member(s) of the MRAG Fellrunning sub-committee and the Race Controller.

5.4 MRAG will appoint a Race Referee to act on race day. The Race Controller and Race Referee may be the same person. The Race Referee and team captains must be notified of all team disqualifications. In the event of any disciplinary actions or infringements of the rules, the Race Referee's decision will be final; there is no appeal procedure except for issues relating to the eligibility of team members.

5.5 In the event of adverse weather conditions, decisions regarding event cancellation and/or route changes will be the joint responsibility of the Race Organiser and the Race Referee.

5.5 Race numbers for the event will be provided by UK Athletics, with different colours used to designate each leg. In the championship categories, a 'number' must be worn on the back of each runner showing the category in which they are competing; this is optional in the non-championship categories.

5.6 The host club will need to provide an event website which may be separate from their club website. Whenever possible the host club should publish general course details on an event website, including leg distances, profiles, and indicative winning time, at least TWO months in advance and after agreement with the Race Controller/Race Referee.

5.7 While the checkpoints and race route of the other legs must be made publicly available to all competing teams ideally at least two months prior to the event, knowledge of the navigational leg (other than distance, climb and likely winning time) must be restricted to the navigational leg planning group.

5.8 The number of teams accepted for the event is at the discretion of the Race Organiser. However, there must be room for a minimum of 150 teams to take part, and all teams should meet the minimum experience and standard requirements. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the number of teams should not exceed 250.

5.9 It is usually the case that the event is oversubscribed; therefore a 'pre-entry' system should be used in order to check that clubs are appropriately affiliated, and have runners who are of a suitable standard. If the event is still oversubscribed, the host club may increase the

capacity or instigate a selection process. The selection process should comprise the following elements:

- Where possible, at least one team should be accepted from any club which has runners who are of a suitable standard and is appropriately affiliated;
- Priority should be given to teams entered in the four championship categories; places should be reserved for the first twenty male & female teams (including 'B' teams) and the top 10 teams in the Mv40 & Fv40 categories in the previous year's relays (see Appendix A);
- Priority should be given to female teams, especially those entered in the championship categories;
- Clubs who have not entered teams in two or more of the last three relays must not receive more than two entries, and one of these entries must be a female or mixed team;
- Two ('A' and 'B') teams may be accepted in the championship categories from clubs whose runners have regularly supported British Fell Championship races; i.e. clubs that regularly fill the medal & other leading positions in the British Fell Team Championship by fielding teams in at least three races/both races from 2024;
- As only about 25% of places are likely to be available in the non-championship categories, multiple entries from a club should not normally be accepted in any single non-championship category; places should be reserved for the first three teams in the previous year's relays in the non-championship categories (see Appendix A);
- if a team from a non-championship category has been accepted, the club may switch to a different non-championship category, if they are not already fielding a team in that category. A switch from a championship category to a non-championship category should not normally be allowed unless it is the only entry from that club;
- Notwithstanding the principle behind these priorities, discretion should be used to encourage clubs from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

5.10 Clubs entering the race must ensure that the ages/sex of all team members is in accordance with the category in which the team has been entered . For example all members of a v40 team must be 40 or over on the day of the race. A mixed team must contain an equal number of male and female runners.

5.11 As part of the race entry, teams should be provided with good quality (clear and waterproof) maps for every runner (apart from the navigational leg) at event day registration. Maps for the navigational leg should be given to each navigational leg runner after a short, flagged run out.

5.12 All maps must be marked in a way which makes it very clear to competitors where mandatory routes are to be followed, where areas are out of bounds, or where walls/fences must not be crossed. Maps must have numbered grid lines so that grid references can be given, for example in emergency situations.

5.13 Maps must be signed off by the Race Referee before being printed.

5.14 The Race Organiser should make sure that pre-event literature clearly carries details of the leg 2 cut off time policy and that teams should only enter if they believe they can meet this. Cut off times will also apply to legs 3 & 4.

6. Event Rules

- 6.1 As a UK Athletics championship event the race permit (also known as the race licence) must be obtained from the relevant National Body (Fell Runners Association, Scottish Athletics or Welsh Athletics). Races must comply with the UKA Rules for Competition. Race Organisers must also ensure that their event meets the safety requirements stipulated in the race permit.
- 6.2 All runners must be fully paid-up, first-claim members of the Club they run for.
- 6.3 In accordance with UKA rules, all runners must wear registered vests of the same design and colour of the team they are representing. This rule does not preclude the possibility of being different in style between participants in the same team e.g. vests of different length, cut of sleeve or collar etc. As long as the colours, stripes, logos, etc are the same then the style can include vest, crop top, T-shirt and long sleeves. A runner not complying with this rule will normally result in disqualification of the whole team.
- 6.4 All teams must be made up of six individual runners and runners must only count for one team in the event. If, on the day a team has fewer than six runners or a mixed team has an unequal number of male/female runners, with the agreement of both the Race Organiser and the Race Referee, they may run in the relays on a non-competitive basis (either by missing a leg or with a runner from another club). It is not permitted for a runner to run more than one leg or for an individual runner to run in the 'paired' legs.
- 6.5 Given the nature of the event, individual runners need to have the experience required to cope with the conditions they may face. Given the difficulty in policing this, it is the responsibility of the club/team captain to ensure that all their team members have the appropriate experience. This must be stated on all advertising and on the entry form, which should require all teams to sign to say their runners have the experience required.
- 6.6 Runners who are serving a disciplinary suspension/ban imposed by any of the National Bodies (Fell Runners Association, Scottish Athletics, Northern Ireland Mountain Running Association or Welsh Athletics) are ineligible to compete.

7. Awards

- 7.1 UK Athletics provides team medals for each of the two championship classes (Male and Female).
- 7.2 Championship medals will also be awarded to the first vet 40 Male and Female teams.
- 7.3 Additional prizes, including additional veterans team awards and fastest leg awards for both Male and Female runners may be made at the discretion of the Race Organiser.
- 7.4 Teams are only eligible for awards/prizes in the category in which they have entered plus all single sex teams will also be eligible for awards/prizes in the two open championship categories.
- 7.5 The presentations should be done as promptly as possible to enable as many people as possible to be present before leaving on journeys home. Once the time of the presentation has been fixed, this should be adhered to, wherever possible. The presentation, ideally with a podium, should be located to maximise photo opportunities (with hills/mountains in the background)

8. Finance

- 8.1 The event is intended to break-even/make an acceptable profit for the host club. It is for the event organisers to set the race entry fee per team based on this principle. Event budgets and race plans from previous events can be made available to the Race Organiser.

- 8.2 Should the host club wish, an interest free loan can be applied for from the UKA Fell Championship account to assist with any expenses in advance of race entry fees being received. This must be paid back within one month of the event being held at the latest. Details of the amount required must be supplied by the host club to enable the authorisation of the loan.
- 8.3 Insurance for the event is provided through UK Athletics; details will be supplied on request.

APPENDIX A - RESERVED PLACES BASED ON 2023 RELAYS

MALE

- 1 Dark Peak Fell Runners
- 2 Keswick A.C.
- 3 Ambleside A.C.
- 4 Howgill Harriers
- 5 Helm Hill Runners
- 6 Matlock A.C.
- 7 Ochil Hill Runners
- 8 Carnethy HRC
- 9 Mercia Fell Runners
- 10 Keswick A.C. 'B'
- 11 Helm Hill Runners 'B'
- 12 Pennine Fell Runners
- 13 Westerlands CCC
- 14 Dark Peak Fell Runners 'B'
- 15 Black Combe Runners
- 16 Shettleston Harriers
- 17 Hunters Bog Trotters
- 18 Pudsey & Bramley A.C.
- 19 Macclesfield Harriers
- 20 Chorlton Runners

FEMALE

- Helm Hill Runners
- Ambleside A.C.
- Black Combe Runners
- Carnethy HRC
- Dark Peak Fell Runners
- Westerlands CCC
- Keswick A.C.
- Shettleston Harriers
- Wharfedale Harriers
- Mercia Fell Runners
- York Knavesmire Harriers
- Carnethy HRC 'B'
- Saddleworth RC
- Pudsey & Bramley A.C.
- Pennine Fell Runners
- Ambleside A.C. 'B'
- Hunters Bog Trotters
- Helm Hill Runners 'B'
- Eryri Harriers
- Eden Runners

MV40

- 1 Ambleside A.C.
- 2 Carnethy HRC
- 3 Dark Peak Fell Runners
- 4 Calder Valley Fell Runners
- 5 Wharfedale Harriers
- 6 Helm Hill Runners
- 7 Pennine Fell Runners
- 8 Keswick A.C.
- 9 Glossopdale Harriers
- 10 Ilkley Harriers

FV40

- Ambleside A.C.
- Dark Peak Fell Runners
- Bingley Harriers
- Todmorden Harriers
- Calder Valley Fell Runners
- Keswick A.C.
- Helm Hill Runners.
- Penistone Footpath Runners
- Derwent AC Cockermouth

MV50

- 1 Borrowdale Fell Runners
- 2 Helm Hill Runners
- 3 Dark Peak Fell Runners

FV50

- Dark Peak Fell Runners
- Keswick A.C.
- Helm Hill Runners

V60

- 1 Bowland Fell Runners
- 2 Westerlands CCC
- 3 Dark Peak Fell Runners

MIXED

- Dark Peak Fell Runners
- Howgill Harriers
- Barlick Fell Runners