



BRITISH  
ATHLETICS

## **BRITISH ATHLETICS FELL AND HILL RELAY CHAMPIONSHIPS**

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



The 2021 British Athletics Fell & Hill Relay will be organised by Helm Hill Runners and will be held in the Tebay area on 16 October 2021.

The relay is held under UK Athletic (UKA) rules. All runners must be first claim members of the club they represent and must wear club vests. The use of GPS for navigation purposes, the use of running poles and the linking of runners by bungee are not allowed.

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

- Open Men
- Open Women
- Over 40 Men
- Over 40 Women

Championship entries in these categories will only be accepted from clubs that are affiliated to the UKA for fell running. However, depending on the number of entries, the organising club may:

- accept entries from clubs that are affiliated to the UKA although not for fell running
- award prizes to other categories.

Further details and entry information will be available on UKA, FRA & race websites and included in the summer edition of 'The Fellrunner'

## **Rules and Guidelines for the British Athletics Fell and Hill Relay Championships**

### **1. Format**

- 1.1 The British Athletics (BA) Fell and Hill Relay Championships are held annually, normally on the third weekend of October, for teams of six runners over four legs. Teams must be members of their respective home country registration scheme.
- 1.2 As the British national fell relay championship 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 British Athletics medals are awarded, are as follows:
  - Open men
  - Open women

Championship Medals will also be awarded to first vet 40 men's and vet 40 women's teams.

The event organiser may decide to award additional prizes including additional veterans (male and female) or mixed categories. 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.

All ages are age on day of the race.

- 1.4 Clubs may enter more than one team per event, should there be places available and the runners are of the right experience and standard for a championship event. Where Clubs wish to enter more than one team, in the first instance precedent will be given for teams to be entered into Championship categories. Depending on the maximum number of teams allowed, additional teams may be accepted later in the entry process.

### **2. Event hosting**

- 2.1 The event is normally hosted in rotation using the following sequence – Wales, England, England, Scotland, England, England, Wales.
- 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 organising 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, as long as there is one designated, named Race Organiser.

### **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 3.4 below).
  - 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 relay location with this in mind.
- 3.3 Legs 2 and 3 may be switched around with the agreement of the MRAG Race Referee, as long as this is agreed in the early planning stages.
- 3.4 The BA Fell and Hill Relay Championship is a senior event. Runners who are **16 or over and under the age of 18 on 31 December 2020** may run legs 1 or 4 and 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.
- 3.5 The event is a fell relay, 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. All check points on the leg must be visited in a pre-stated set order.
- 3.6 The overall predicted winning time for the senior men's team must be under 3 hours 30 minutes, and ideally nearer 3 hours 15 minutes.
- 3.7 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. 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 In addition a 'mass start' 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, especially in the event of adverse weather conditions.
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 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.

## **4. Facilities**

- 4.1 The following facilities must be considered obligatory:
- a) First Aid: A designated first aid tent or vehicle with qualified personnel must be at the start/finish area, with mountain rescue or similar services available for support on the hill.
  - b) Shelter: Some shelter must be provided for runners and their gear near to the start and finish.
  - c) Toilets: Unless adequate facilities are within 1km of the start, mobile toilets must be provided (including in the change-over holding pen).
- 4.2 Parking. It is desirable that a reasonable car parking area is offered within a maximum distance of 1km from the start.

## **5. Event Organisation**

- 5.1 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 British Athletics Mountain Running Advisory Group (MRAG) Race Controller.
- 5.2 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 British Athletics' key point of contact with the Race Organiser for all matters, including verifying and signing off the planned race routes for all legs.
- 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/Referee.
- 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 breaches 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 Race numbers for the event will be provided by British Athletics, with different colours used to designate each leg.
- 5.6 Whenever possible the host club should publish general course details in the Fellrunner magazine and on an event website, including leg distances, profile and indicative winning time, at least six months in advance and after agreement with the MRAG Race Controller.
- 5.7 While the checkpoints and race route of the other legs must be made publicly available to all competing teams ideally at least three months prior to the event, knowledge of the navigational leg (other than distance, climb and likely winning time) must be restricted to the race planner and the MRAG Race Controller.
- 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 120 teams to take part, and all teams should meet the minimum experience and standard requirements. The Organiser is encouraged to use the Race Controller to assist with ensuring clubs are of the correct standard if they are in any doubt.
- 5.9 As part of the race entry, teams should be provided with suitably marked maps for all legs (apart from the navigational leg) at event day registration. Maps for the navigational leg

should be given to the designated leg runners as they start the leg or after a short, flagged run out.

- 5.10 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. Maps must be signed off by the Race Controller before being printed.
- 5.11 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 British 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 members of the Club they run for and must wear club vests. A runner not wearing a club vest will normally result in disqualification of the whole team.
- 6.3 All teams must be made up of six individual runners and runners may only count for one team in the event.
- 6.4 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, the Race Organiser should place the onus on policing this requirement on the teams competing. 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.
- 6.5 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 British Athletics provides team medals for each of the two championship classes (men's and women's).
- 7.2 Championship medals funded by the Fell Championship Committee will also be awarded to the first vet 40 men's and women's teams.
- 7.3 Additional prizes, including additional veterans team awards and fastest leg awards for both men and women may be made at the discretion of the Race Organiser.
- 7.4 For avoidance of doubt, all single gender teams will automatically be eligible within the open championship classes, those teams of the requisite age may also enter the respective veterans team categories.
- 7.5 Especially if the event is held on a Sunday, prize presentations should be done as promptly as possible to enable as many people to be present before leaving on journeys home.

## **8. Finance**

- 8.1 The event is intended to breakeven/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.

- 8.2 Should the host club wish, an interest free loan can be applied for from the BA 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.
- 8.3 Event budgets and race plans from previous events can be made available to the Race Organiser via the Race Controller if requested.