



## ***COSMIC BULLSHEET***

The Bulletin News-Sheet  
of Cosmic Hillbashers

**ISSUE No 29**  
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### **Editorial**

**Phill Thompson**

A bumper 20 page edition this time - many thanks for all the contributions particularly those from Dan, Claire, Andy, Margaret, Mel and Sue who have backed my "regulars" of Ewen, Elaine and Ian. Ian Searle's account is of course his last one from his epic journey as he has been back on terra firma for what seems like months now. Emm, that's probably because he has been around for months!'

Sadly, two of the articles, by Margaret and Mel record the passing of Kath Butler, a founder member of Cosmics. Both Margaret and Mel have made fitting tributes to Kath as a person and of course as a runner of some repute. Perhaps one additional aspect that deserves a mention was her artistic ability, which she used to great affect to grace the pages and enlighten the articles in editions of the Cosmic Comic. I particularly remember the one that accompanied Greg (in)famous "Mambo Party " account, something that remains probably the best non-running article to appear in the Cosmic press.

John Buchan's Crombie Mill race this year the raised £200 for the Mercy Ships, and thanks to the efforts of Tim Griffin this was matched by BP to give a total of £400. Tim has received a letter of acknowledgement and thanks from Mercy Ships and an account of the work they are currently doing in Benin. Further information is available on their website at [www.mercyships.org.uk](http://www.mercyships.org.uk)

Season's greetings and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from the Bullsheet editorial and publishing staff.

Phill

## **The Cairngorm Four 4000'ers**

### **Glenmore Lodge -Braeriach-Cairn Toul-Ben Macdhuì-Cairngorm**

**25 miles/7500ft**

**Record Attempt on Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2001 Dan Whitehead**

The Cairngorm four 4000'ers was something I have been planning to do ever since reading Mel Edwards' account of when he set the mark of 4hrs 34mins in 1979. The record was previously held by Eric Beard which he set in the late 60's, details of which I had seen on a wall poster in Glenmore Lodge. In recent decades I have heard of several fellow runners completing the circuit in around the 5 hour mark but nobody has come really close to Mel's record set some 23 years ago. This led me to believe it would be a tough record to crack.

Towards the latter part of last winter, I began to plan an assault on the record. I spent many cold days recessing sections of the route as part of my winter training, and it soon became apparent how hard the task in hand was going to be. For a low mileage runner like myself, I was quite surprised how easy it is to loose yourself in 4 or 5 hours running in the Cairngorms.

The lack of races due to Foot and Mouth, plus a warm early May weather spell allowed for the first real attempt on the entire route. My support throughout my attempts consisted of Clare Miller (dropping off and picking up, driving home after attempts) and Hayden Lorimer (running companion and navigational expertise, or lack of) and "Big Al" on the final attempt. We decided on a clockwise circuit to make use of a spring snow descent off Macdhuì down to the Lairig Ghru, the opposite direction to Mel's route. Despite the hot sun and warm temperatures, over 3 metres of snow still lay on the top of Ben Macdhuì, the type of snow you sink into not run on top of! We completed the route in over 5 and a half hours, although the descent off Macdhuì did only take about 6 minutes. This was not even the whole route as we started at the ski car park and finished at the Sugar Bowl! Although Mel also said he took over 6 hours on a previous attempt.

At the beginning of June, Hayden and I tried again, this time in the same direction as Mel. We set off from Glenmore Lodge to get an idea of his pacing. This time rather than the plus 20 degree temperature we previously enjoyed on the summits it was arctic conditions. The winter snow had all melted but several inches of fresh snow had fallen. This in addition to sub zero temperatures, gale force winds and minimal visibility resulted in us barely getting off Braeriach, turning back several hundred feet shy of the summit. (Although we got to the shoulder in 1hr 17mins).

By now the racing season had finally kicked off so October looked like the next opportunity. Alan Smith from Reindeer House at Glenmore said the summits had not been visible for most of August and September anyway.

The week after Bennachie hill race the forecast was finally for a good weekend. Saturday dawned with clear skies, little wind and high cloud. Great.

This time I started just over the river from Glenmore in the small car park off the ski road so I would not start the run with wet feet. I would therefore have to complete the route back to Glenmore and then go back across the river to my starting point.

An extra 2 minutes should allow for this. I set off up the ski road turning off at the Sugar Bowl reaching the Chalamain Gap in 30 minutes and continuing down to the Lairig up Sron nan Lairig and onto Braeriach. Although I reached Braeriach in 1' 31"15, 4 minutes down on Mel I was not too worried as I knew he set off fast, and I was running into a stiff headwind. This headwind blew me up Cairn Toul which allowed me to claw back 1 minute from Mel. Braeriach to Cairn Toul was reached in 35 minutes and I was feeling pretty good.

Mel had taken 72 minutes from Cairn Toul to the summit of Ben Macdhui. Only 2.5km in distance, the 1<sup>st</sup> km drops a sheer 2500ft straight down to the Lairig Ghru followed by a rather tough 1.5km heather climb back up Tailor's Burn to the top of Ben Macdhui. Running solo I descended fairly tentatively over the large slabs of granite knowing that a slip could spell disaster as walkers rarely venture on this part of the slope. I did manage to shave off 6 minutes from Mel's descent time followed by a further 4 minutes quicker up the climb resulting in me covering this difficult section in 62 minutes.

At the top of Ben Macdhui I was feeling pretty confident, until my juice ran out. I still had a few of the dried bananas I had stuffed down my shorts left, but had drunk all the fluid I was carrying. Alan Smith was meeting me this side of Cairngorm with food and liquid so all I had to do was get to him in a reasonable state. With several stops to drink the little trickles of streams on the plateau and nausea setting in, things started to get tough.

Was I pleased to see Alan. I forced down Coke, water, Jelly Babies and even some Macaroni pie, which to my amazement did kick in, after I had passed the summit of Cairngorm. Cairngorm was reached in 3hrs 59mins and we headed off down Windy Ridge. With still 5 unknown miles to cover things were looking pretty tight. Without Alan reaching me with food and his in-depth knowledge of these hills I doubt I would have succeeded.

The Sugar Bowl was reached in 4 hrs 17mins and I knew I could reach Glenmore in 9 minutes from here. Add on 2 minutes to get back to the car and sub 4 hours 30 minutes looked possible. Despite picking up the pace, a slight navigational problem through the recently felled woods around Glenmore Lodge resulted in a final time back at the car of 4 hours 31 minutes 26 seconds.

I finished the run feeling better than I had in all previous attempts but that I suppose is the same feeling you get when you win a big race. This now leaves me being only the third person to hold the record in four decades. Who is going to be the fourth?

It would be great to organise an annual self-sufficient race around this course maybe with marshals on each summit. Numbers would be limited and it would of course be weather dependent.



## The Exploits of a Hill Runner who Dabbles at Road Running Andrew White

(Lifted from the Metro's newsletter)

Following my less than successful run in the London Marathon I decided to turn my attentions to the annual Highland Games circuit. Following a couple of weeks rest and a few weeks of running on the hills I felt I was in reasonable enough shape to attempt my first hill race for a couple of years, the Ben Rinnes 5 Tops hill race which is part of the Dufftown Highland Games on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

Any one who knows anything about hill running in Scotland will know that this is one of the hardest and longest on the calendar, at 14 miles and 4900 ft of climbing. The route includes an ascent of the Corbet Ben Rinnes half way through the run. This year the race was part of the Scottish Hill Running Championship, which meant there was a better quality field. A record field of over 60 gathered for the off. As always the pace up the first climb was murder, I was in the top 15 or so by the start of the first climb, I managed to pass Dave Armitage and by the 2<sup>nd</sup> major climb I was catching our very own Mark Johnston who was running very well. On the descent of the 2<sup>nd</sup> hill I caught and passed Mark and never looked back. I managed to gain a couple of places going up Ben Rinnes and managed to work up to 10<sup>th</sup> place. With large gaps now between runners it was just a matter of keeping going and trying to hold on to my 10<sup>th</sup> place. On the last ascent I did managed to catch and pass Tom Bracegirdle and got into 9th place which I held to the finish. My time of 2hrs 13 mins was only 10 minutes behind the winner, Stewart Whittle from Carnethy. It was also some 30 minutes quicker than my previous times, so not a bad first effort and it was also my highest placing in a Scottish Hill Running Championship race.

Buoyed on by my performance at Dufftown I decided to enter the Aboyne Highland Games on the 4 August 2001. I had done the race once before and had a nightmare so I was determined to do better. Another large field gathered which included Fraser Clyne making a rare appearance on the hills. As usual Dan Whitehead led from the gun with Fraser in hot pursuit. I worked my way steadily through the field up the first climb into 3<sup>rd</sup> place. I was determined to try and hold on and worked hard up the 2<sup>nd</sup> climb, I managed to keep sight of Fraser the whole time although I do not think I was getting any closer. I eventually finished just over a minute behind Dan and under a minute behind Fraser, to record my highest finish to date. My time was 7 minutes quicker than I had run previously so that was encouraging.

The next stop on my mini tour was Ballater on the 9 August 2001. I had decided to take a day off work and try to do this race, as I had never done it before. I had been told it was short and steep, with steep being the operative word. A very high quality field gathered for the race including local boy Dan Whitehead, Will Law, Hayden Lorimer, Tom Bracegirdle and Ronnie Gallagher. Being Dan's local race he was off like a hare with no one else really in contention. Tom did well to pull through into 2<sup>nd</sup> place with Will Law third. I managed to scrap 6<sup>th</sup> place and the last prize which paid for my entry. The race itself is short and very steep, one for the daredevil descenders.

The following weekend saw the White family on their travels again this time to Rhynie for the Tap O' North Hill race which is part of the Rhynie Gala on the 18<sup>th</sup> August. As a consequence of the foot and mouth, and a request for less road, the route was changed. The course was extended by 1 mile and an extra 300 ft of climbing was added to give approximately 7 miles and 1400 ft climbing. A record field again this year including Keith Varney who is in training for the Vets World trial at the end of August. The usual people were there Dan, and Tom. So off up the road we went, again in pursuit of Dan and Tom, Keith worked his way through the field on the climb eventually passing Tom into second place. I was in my own personnel battle for 4/5/6<sup>th</sup> places with Martin Flynn (Carnethy), and Jeremy Whittet (Keith). After the long descent off the Tap O North I had managed to establish myself into 4<sup>th</sup> place and was very surprised to see Tom walking back down part of the last climb. He had to pull out due to injury, which meant I was now in third place. With a couple of steep descents it look like I was catching Keith so I continue to work hard and eventually finish just under a minute behind Dan and only 17 seconds behind Keith. Another pleasing result.

The long trip to Strathdon for the Lonach Hill Race on the 25<sup>th</sup> August proved to be my best result yet and problem for the whole year. A very large crowd and large field assembled for the race no doubt swelled by the presence of Billy Connelly and his 'celeb' friends plus Robin Williams in the hill race. With one loop of the track and out and up Ben Newe I found myself in second place behind race favourite Will Law. I was then relegated to 3<sup>rd</sup> place by a very fast ascending Tim Griffin on the first climb. I managed to just hold on to third place from the fast catching Jeremy Whittet from Keith. Round the last bend and just before the last descent I was just behind Tim and being hotly pursued by Jeremy, with Will way out in front. For some reason Will decide to take the wrong path off the hill which allowed the three of us to pass him. Half way down the final descent I decided it was now or never so I went for it, I passed Tim and was in the lead, with just a lap of the track to do. As I entered the ring I looked round and there behind me was Jeremy. I put in one final burst and just managed to open enough of a gap to hold on and win my first (and probably only) race in 2001.

Andrew White

...and I'm missing it already. No more the luxury of a simple existence; drive the boat, eat, sleep, drive the boat, etc. Instead I've already been in too many motorway jams. Memory is beginning to filter the unpleasant moments of the race; the cold, damp, nausea, tension, argument, coming last etc. and is instead highlighting all that was wonderful; the remote ocean, friendships, whales, dolphins, sunset, night skies...

We eventually finished just over two weeks ago, which was nearly a week behind schedule due to abnormal weather mid-Atlantic. Even then, with all its problems, the last leg from NY was definitely one of the best of the race. For the first week or so we ran parallel to the N American coast, although far enough offshore to be out of sight of land. Our track took us over the Newfoundland Grand Banks and we passed just south of Flemish Cap (of Perfect Storm fame) before heading out on the great circle route towards southern Ireland. Up to this point the race was going ok for us and we were well placed, having in previous days out-sailed Bristol, Plymouth and Liverpool on various occasions.

Two things then happened at around this point which completely changed the rest of the race for all of us. The first were the obscene terrorist attacks in the US and via our sat links we were only slightly less quickly informed than the rest of you. The added poignancy of having been in and around the whole WTC complex ourselves a couple of weeks before made it completely shocking and difficult to comprehend. I think for almost everyone the shadow of these events, and the likely consequences, were difficult to reconcile with the essentially frivolous endeavour of racing a yacht around the world.

The second event had to do with the weather. The mid-Atlantic high which is usually centred on the Azores decided to adopt an alternative position somewhat to the north. This relatively infrequent, but semi-stable, pattern then dominated the rest of the race to Jersey.

With the high so much further north, the low pressure systems coming off Nova Scotia were also pushed up way to the north of us and instead of being blown along by a storm every few days we were sailing only about half as fast in much lighter airs.

This completely wrecked our schedule into Jersey and we eventually all arrived about a week late. For most of the fleet the main consolation was that we caught up Jersey and Bristol, who had been leading by over 200 miles, and we then had a pretty close race from southern Ireland, past the Isles of Scilly and then across to the finish. I suspect Jersey weren't quite so happy, as Bristol held on to win, while Jersey slipped to 4th. This left Bristol with a comfortable lead going into the last short hop back across to Portsmouth and effectively ended Jersey's hope of overall victory.

Amongst the all dreadful news, the frustration of a slow crossing and a late homecoming, the remote ocean continued to provide distractions that made the whole thing quite magical. We had more dolphins than ever before, often with many visits each day. At night the green phosphorescent streaks of their wake were often all you could see, along with a myriad of other multi-coloured flashes from jellyfish and the like. About the best I can do to describe it is to say try to imagine what an underwater fireworks display would look like. One night when we were actually becalmed and going nowhere at all a ~30ft Minke whale spent hours and hours just circling the boat, drifting slowly underneath a few feet below the keel and performing all sorts of slow rolls and turns. A few days later we also saw the biggest whale of the whole trip when something about the same length as the boat ie ~60ft, just came up and broached a few times along either side of the boat. According to our little reference book it is likely to have been a Fin whale, which can potentially grow to second largest after the Blue whale. Whatever, it was a completely stunning.

After a quick stopover in Jersey we left for the final overnight dash to the finish in Portsmouth. This was completely unlike all the other races as it was so short with, in addition, updates to the race route being announced in the last few hours. The aim of this was to stage manage our arrival for 11am at Southsea, but for us the consequence was not always knowing much in advance which buoys we were



6 racing around. In addition the many short legs meant multiple sail changes with spinnakers going up and down like crazy. The last few hours were really hard, but totally exhilarating and we probably did as many maneuvers in one night as we had normally in a number of days. On Glasgow, we were particularly pleased as we finished in 4<sup>th</sup> position - our highest finish of the whole race. Unspectacular in the scheme of things, but significant for us.

Docking at Gunwharf Quays was pretty emotional and despite the change of date to midweek there were still many friends and family there to meet the boats. For me, it was great to see my Sis and brother-in-law and my niece and nephew, in particular. Evidently it didn't go unnoticed by these two that I was wandering around for quite a while with a bottle of fizz in each hand while at the same time finding conversation more and more difficult! After the excitement of the finish there was an inevitable sense of anticlimax and sadness over the next couple of days as we all packed up and finally departed from the small closed environment that had been the center of our life for a year.

And so that's about it. Absolutely no regrets, probably the most amazing year of my life, however I wouldn't do it again, simply because if/when I have the money and time I'll move on and do something else. Next time I go sailing I will be looking for some more comforts down below and I won't be too interested in heading out in more than a F6/7 if I can avoid it.

Just now, I'm in Aberdeen catching up on what's been going on and trying to get a little bit of running fitness back. As I start to sort out a job and somewhere to live, the only thought already starting to nag me is; What next?

Ian



## Not the SECRETARY's REPORT 2001

Those of you at the AGM will remember that Steve Rivers stole my thunder with his Captain's report on the Year's activities but for the rest here is what I might have said!

The year started well with First Mixed Team (and third Open) at Devil's Burden followed by just missing the Carnethy Broadsword when we finished second Open Team. But then disaster as Foot & Mouth struck allowing Hayden to win the informal Clachnaben.

As racing gradually returned Clare Miller, Dan Whitehead and Sonia Armitage won international vests whilst Sonia took Gold at the World Vets Hill Running Championship (0/40s!) but Keith Varney had to settle for silver after a very close race in the 0/45 category.

On the mountain marathon scene the Saunders which threatened a massive Cosmic turnout was cancelled and most Cosmics ignored the KIMM although the LAMM went ahead with Dennis and Carl doing well until a classic 180 degree error. The weather rather than their navigation then saw them add another glorious chapter to the Cosmic Ramsey Failures – but next time!

Meanwhile late in the year, after several attempts (see elsewhere in the Bullsheit) Dan Whitehead relieved Mel Edwards of one of the longest standing classic records – the Cairngorm 4000s.

Alas Elaine Stewart could not repeat her success of last year but did manage second place in the Ladies Vets Scottish Championships with David Armitage placing first in the 0/50s category.

Sadly Cosmics as a team did not figure in the Scottish Championships but as our second places at Carnethy and Meal a' Bhuccaille shows we could, nay should, be in contention every year. Other attempts to fly the Cosmic flag were defeated by the late cancellation of the Ian Hodgeson Relays and the travel that would have been involved in doing the FRAs in Wales – but next year!!

The Club Championship was well contended with 43 people doing at least one qualifying race – sadly the Secretary didn't manage any.

*Ewen*

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**Cosmic Social Events – Quarter 1 Year 2002**  
**Social Secretary – Elaine Stewart**

**Social Retrospective**

**October**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>**

Meall A' Bhuachaille Hill Race and 'Annual Do'

A few of us Cosmics went off for the weekend to compete in the hillrace, and join in the with the 'Annual Do' festivities. If that wasn't enough, we did 3 hours of gruelling mountain biking in the rain and mud the next day. Pity Stuart Hunter couldn't join us, a bit hung over I think.

**November**

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>**

A party was held at my house to celebrate the return of Ian Searle (Captain Pugwash) from the high seas. Some people entered into the spirit of things and came suitably attired in something nautical. Later on in the evening Derek and Steve were tempted to wander off down the road to another party which had young hot totty, they were drooling at the mouth, but were soon sent off packing, just a touch on the old side for the gurlies. Thanks for that bit of brie cheese Steve, it kept Keith going for the next month.

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup>**

Liz came up from Glasgow for a visit, so a few of us met up at Carmines for a pizza and a bit of chat, then it was onto the Globe for a few more drinks to finish off the evening. Shame on Stuart Hunter though, who had one too many and didn't quite make it to the Glen Clova half marathon the next day, I believe it was all Steve's fault, leading him astray.

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup>**

Washington Café

Thanks to Dan for organising a really nice evening of entertainment, with his brother Paddy providing the jazz music. The food was good too, more than any of us could eat. Must do this one again sometime.

**December**

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>**

After training social at Elaine's house, hear the gossip in the next Bullsheel.

## **Forthcoming Features**

### **January**

#### **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup>**

##### **Cosmic Xmas Party**

Chance to use your imagination and dig out some of your old clothes from the back of the wardrobe. Plenty of scope for cross-dressing here, fancy dress theme 'Pop Stars'. Venue not confirmed yet, will email when known.

### **February**

#### **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> The Carnethy Five Hill Race**

Cosmic Jolly Weekend away in Edinburgh. The same format as previous years, run starts at 2 o'clock, followed by a free meal at the school and the compulsory ceilidh at night followed by hitting the high spots of Edinburgh if you haven't yet had enough. I will provisionally book Palmerston Lodge for the accommodation, let me know if you want to reserve a bed for the night. Entry forms available from me.

### **March**

#### **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>**

##### **Ceilidh**

Thought we'd have a combined ceilidh inviting other clubs to join us in this social, like Splash n'Dash, FFT and the Sockets. Venue yet to be decided, but maybe the Station Hotel. Tickets available nearer the time.

**DON'T FORGET..... TUESDAY NIGHT IS PUB NIGHT at the Bobbin , Kings Street opposite Kings playing fields where we train. Food available.**

*Personal tribute to Kath Butler, Training Partner and Friend.*  
**Margaret Stafford**

I first met Kath during the Dyce Half Marathon in the mid 80's. I had just started running and it was my second half marathon. Susan Lamb and Kath (elite runners) were both running that day, known as the blonde bombshells!! Susan won the race and Kath was 2nd lady, I came third with a pretty respectable time and because it was Mother's Day, I was featured in the local press with a photograph of myself, Michael (my husband) and Nicole and Catherine my two daughters! Following the 'photographic shoot!' Kath approached me and asked if I was a member of a club to which I said no and she promptly stated that I should be! She encouraged me to go along to AAAC asap, and gave me her telephone number encouraging me to contact her if I fancied a training run. I felt out of my depth!! However following an unsuccessful attempt at joining AAAC, due to location problems at that time and following a debut in the Aberdeen Marathon and another respectable time, I contacted Kath who along with Mel Edwards took me under their wing. (I subsequently joined AAAC).

Mel became my coach and Kath my training partner. With their help I became fitter, stronger and faster at a time when women's running in the North East was very competitive! The names that come to mind are Linda Bain, Sonia McLaren now Armitage, Uli Simpson, Susan Harkness nee Lamb, Debbie Kilner nee Porter, Diana Germison, Heather Wisely and Marie Duthie and of course Kath Butler. Some of the titles and records achieved by these women at various distances still stand today. Kath's own claim to fame of course is her own record for the Cairngorm Tops which remains unbeaten. No mean feat as Katy Boocock, a gutsy Cosmic lady has attempted this event and was, unfortunately unsuccessful.

Kath was a familiar face at half marathons, 10k's, cross country and of course was probably the North East's first female hill runner! A founder member of not only the Cosmics but of the Lynx Pack who continue to meet at the Chris Anderson Stadium on Thursdays.

Kath's personal qualities were those of generosity and warmth, with a great capacity for encouraging all standards of runners, always shouting at competitors to relax! your doing well! lengthen your style! keep going! With her distinctive smile and voice I can still see and hear her in my mind.



I had the privilege of Kath's, Eddie her husband and Mel's company on many happy long runs in the hills and forests around Aberdeen and of course along with Mel she was a hard task master on the track! We soon all became good friends.

By the way it was Kath who gently nudged Sonia McLaren and Dave Armitage together and of course we all know what happened next! The 'Von Trap family' of running!

Kath's premature death has been a shock for many and she will be sorely missed by Eddie her husband, her son Scott and his two little boys and of course by the many people who knew her.

Margaret Stafford.

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Kath Butler arrived on the North East running scene in the early to mid nineteen eighties like a breath of fresh air, with her enthusiasm for her new- found sport. Her stamina had been well established from a background of hill walking and she soon took to the hills, roads, country and track with a desire to leave no stone unturned in her goal to get the very best out of herself as a runner.

She quickly made friends on the circuit with her friendly and helpful approach to the sport. She was well known for giving tips to runners she had just beaten so that they would have a better chance of beating her the next time around! A familiar sight at Glentanar, Countesswells and Kirkhill with her beloved spaniel Cindy (who covered about twice the ground Kath did on her runs in her quest to chase rabbits, which she never caught), Kath was a true "forest runner" and embodied the spirit of free expression as she ate up the miles in the woods and the hills. Her courage on the long ones, such as the 3 Peaks and Sierre-Zinal was forever embedded on the 4 x 4000 feet Cairngorm Tops. She established a record for the route (6 hours 44 minutes and 58 seconds) which has stood since 1988.

Kath was not an Olympic athlete but her spirit was truly Olympian and her passing leaves a huge void on the running scene.

Mel Edwards

## THE BIG 40

It's my birthday soon - no big deal! Except it's what they call the big one, you know - when life begins, it's only a number, the F word (and believe you me it feels like a swear word when people say it). Well, supposedly it's not painful. Physically I believe them but mentally I don't because for me personally it is very painful- AGONY- in fact. So painful that I have cancelled the whole thing. For someone who loves birthdays and makes a big deal about them things must be bad before it's all off. Normally I celebrate the day I came into the world and make a fuss about other peoples' birthdays - card, balloons, cake, celebrations the lot. But not this one.....

I mean how can life begin at the F word - I've already been on this planet for 39 years - what happened to them? Realistically I've got 2 choices - die or get on with it, I think I'll choose the second option.

So to all you well meaning people who have tried to convince me it's not so bad I'm going for it. Do you hear - Going for it - BIG TIME

Sue Buchan

PS I'll let all you 30 somethings know how painful it really is when it comes. Roll on December 18th 2001.

## Clothing Guidelines for Cross Country Races

The following has been produced by Chris Robison of SAF and kindly sent to us prior to official publication . The article is probably essential reading for all hill runners and is not just about cross country races.

### Introduction

Cross-country running has a large and popular following within the sport of athletics across the United Kingdom. There are a large number of events available for all the age groups and it is practised in all parts of the country.

It is a popular athletic discipline that can be fun and very enjoyable and may be used by all endurance athletes at some point in their career. Many athletes specialise in the discipline during the winter and others use it as preparation for their summer season. Due to the widespread participation across the whole running community it is essential that runners are aware of the potential dangers from running cross country in adverse weather conditions.

Due to wide geographical spread and range of weather conditions that are experienced throughout the United Kingdom, it is important that a set of guidelines are available to assist all those who have an input into the sport. The philosophy behind these guidelines is that the competitors should take primary responsibility for their own welfare and safety with regard to clothing worn during cross-country events. However, all those who are involved must also be aware of the advice and guidelines within this appendix – this may be coaches, parents, race organiser and officials.

Although rare, there are examples of cross-country races being run in severe weather conditions, and these instances are increased on those courses that are exposed and events in parts of northern Scotland. However, severe weather can be experienced in all parts of the United Kingdom.

Should weather conditions be of such severity as to endangering competitors the race organiser should consider cancelling the event. The main factor in making such a judgement must be the safety of the competitors and race organisers must be prepared to make firm decisions which may prove unpopular at the time. Consultation with medical staff, experienced officials

and coaches, plus an upto date local weather forecast will assist in making a decision in marginal conditions. It is preferable that a conclusion is reached by more than one person but the race organiser's decision is final and all must comply.

A large percentage of body heat is lost through the head and suitable headgear is recommended when there is heavy precipitation in cold conditions. This is especially important when the wind creates a wind chill factor that reduces the temperature.

The body functions far more efficiently when it is warm and athletes can experience distress when their limbs become very cold. Not only will their athletic performance suffer, but also they run the risk of mild hypothermia. Suitable body covering, such as a long sleeve jersey, lycra shorts or tights and gloves should be considered. Lightweight gloves are an excellent way of retaining sufficient heat in the hands and can be easily discarded during a race if no longer required.

It is very difficult to warm the body sufficiently and at the correct rate following exposure to extreme cold and the risk of exercise hypothermia and chilblains is increased. This can be exaggerated following physical exertion when the body is tired and may be depleted of carbohydrates. It is far safer to retain body heat in such circumstances.

Coaches and Club officials are strongly recommended to bring these recommendations to the attention of their athletes and assist young athletes in their choice of clothing when conditions are marginal.

Attention should also be paid to the amount and suitability of clothing athletes wear whilst waiting for their event and in the warm-up and post race routine. A well-educated and informed athlete should ensure they have the following equipment available to them when attending a race

- Race vest/top and shorts/pants
- Hat/headgear
- Gloves
- Long sleeved top
- Tee Shirt
- Socks
- Suitable underwear
- Rain Gear (preferable top and bottoms)



- Full change of clothing for after the event

### Exhaustion Hypothermia

There are three types of hypothermia that may occur with exposure to cold and the significant one in sport is exhaustion hypothermia:

*Gradual onset with a combination of cold, wet and wind. Starts with the person not keeping up, lack of concentration, not being realistic, and deteriorating to not caring what happens. Poor decision-making that worsens with a drop in temperature. Graduates to sleepiness and loss of consciousness.*

In endurance events (cross country, and running events in exposed venues) when the event is taking place in cold wet miserable conditions, with a strong wind factor and there is little opportunity to take shelter before and after the event the risks are highest. There will be a gradual onset of exhaustion hypothermia and the early symptoms are shivering and a chattering of teeth. The hands may become extremely cold and the athlete may experience great difficulty in trying to warm them. This can progress to staggering, shivering, and difficulty in talking. The later signs are progressive clouding of consciousness, with eventual slowing of heart to death.

### Treatment

It is crucial that everyone at a venue should be made aware of the dangers and particularly the symptoms mentioned above. This is especially so for coaches and spectators who will be more able to spot the early signs and take the necessary actions. Athletes should also be encouraged to look out for each other and be aware of the signs in their teammates.

Treatment for the conscious athlete is as follows:

1. Prevent further heat loss by removal from cold environment, if this is not possible at a remote venue remove, then take to the most sheltered area initially
2. Until indoors cover casualty (including head) with insulating material, such as blanket, dry tracksuit/rainsuit or coat
3. Remove wet clothing only when in shelter
4. Gentle slow warming (e.g. warm blankets, dry clothing)

5. Warm sweet drinks

6. Only very gentle movement

If the situation deteriorates professional medical help must be sought and consideration to take to the nearest hospital.

### Wind chill table

A strong wind can reduce the ambient air temperature significantly as the following table shows:

ambient air temperatur e	Wind speed				
	Still air temperature	5m/sec	10m/sec	15m/sec	20m/sec
	0°C	-5oC	-15oC	-18oC	-20oC
	-10oC	-21oC	-30oC	-34oC	-36oC

For example on a freezing day (0°C) with a wind of 5m/sec, the temperature against the body will feel like -5°C. What is also worth noting is that this temperature against the body will decrease further when the athlete is running into the wind. Thus, in the same example, an athlete running at typical cross-country speed would experience temperatures of -15°C.

### Summary

This Annex is given as a guide, and in most cases cross-country and other endurance events can be enjoyed with minimal risk to the athlete. If all those involved in the sport are made aware of the possible dangers, particularly in cold or deteriorating conditions then the risks remain minimal

## WEEKEND RUNS and RACES

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> December – SPLASH&DASH 5K – 11am – take a present value £2-50**

**Howes Two Miler 2<sup>nd</sup> January 11am**

**Proms 3K 4<sup>th</sup> January 1pm**

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> January – KERLOCH – meet Duthie Park 9-15am or  
out there 9-50am Grid Ref. NO 699917**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January – HILL OF FARE – meet Hazlehead 9-15am or  
there 9-50am Grid Ref. NJ 743039**

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January - EL-BRIM-ICK DASH 11-00am**

**Seniors; U16 race at 10-45am**

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January – MITHER TAP – Hazlehead 9-15am or  
Visitor Centre 10am Grid Ref. NJ 698217**

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January - DURRIS – meet Duthie Park at 9-15am or out  
there at 9-50am Grid Ref – NO 762916**

**Proms 3K 1<sup>st</sup> February 1pm**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February DEVIL'S BURDEN RELAYS, Falkland 10am.**

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February -- BENNACHIE from Rowan Tree – 9-15am at  
Hazlehead or 10am at Grid Ref. NJ693244**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February - CARNETHY FIVE & Social in Auld Reekie**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February – CARN-MON-EARN – meet Duthie Park  
at 9-15am or 9-50am Grid Ref. NJ 768916**

**Proms 3K 1<sup>st</sup> March 1pm**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March – back of CLACHNABEN from Glen Dye – meet  
Duthie Park at 9-15am or 9-50am at Grid Ref. NO649868**

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March – GLENTANAR – meet Duthie Park 9-15am or  
10am out there Grid Ref NO 479964**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March – SPEYSIDE WAY RELAY**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March – MILLSTONE and beyond – meet Hazlehead at  
9-15am or out at Donview for 9-50am Grid Ref. NJ672190**

**Saturday 3<sup>th</sup> March – CLACHNABEN PREVIEW – meet Duthie Park  
9-15am or 10am at Race Parking Point at Grid ref. NO648903**

# COSMICS at KINGS

As before, anyone who is injured but can turn up to do some time-keeping will be most welcome! Remember to cough up your £5 to Bob if you didn't pay for the whole winter season.

Anyone is free to join any group on any night - no offence will be taken. There is also the possibility of a road run - turn up and see who else fancies it!

<b>8th January</b>	4x(400m.jog,1000m.jog)
	Seaton for continuous hills
<b>15th January</b>	Up and down the clock, 300m recovery
	Seaton for hill reps
<b>22nd January</b>	300m,4x(2minutes out/back)
	Hilton for hill reps
<b>29th January</b>	4x(600m.jog,900m.jog)
	Seaton for continuous hills
<b>5th February</b>	Up and down the clock,300m recovery
	Seaton for hill reps
<b>12th February</b>	4x(400m.jog,1000m.jog)
	Hilton for hill reps
<b>19th February</b>	12x400m
	Seaton for continuous hills
<b>26<sup>th</sup> February</b>	300m,(4x2minutes out/back)
	Seaton for hill reps
<b>5<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Up and down the clock with 300m recovery
	Hilton for hill reps
<b>12th March</b>	4x(600m.jog,900m.jog)
	Seaton for continuous hills
<b>19th March</b>	12x400m
	Seaton for hill reps
<b>26<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Up and down clock with 300m recovery
	Hilton for hill reps
<b>2n<sup>d</sup> April</b>	It's KRUNCE Time