



# MOURNE MOUNTAIN MARATHON

## Health & Safety Plan 2017 v1.0



### Overview

The Mourne Mountain Marathon is a two day mountain navigation race. Competitors work in teams of 2 and have to be completely self-sufficient for the two days in all aspects of hill walking including food, camping gear, navigation and safety. Competitors are responsible for ensuring they are fit and experienced enough and properly equipped for an event of this nature and must take responsibility for their own safety and actions throughout. Only fresh water, toilets and rubbish disposal are provided at the overnight camp and teams are not allowed to leave the camp.

The event starts and finishes at the *Event Centre* which is chosen to safely accommodate the needs of the expected number of competitors and visitors. Start times are staggered on the morning of the first day so as to spread the teams out over the courses. Teams are given a set of O.S. Grid references for a series of controls which they must visit in order. Each control is marked by an orange and white flag and has a SPORTident electronic timing box at which they register their passing using their SI Card. There are usually cut-off times at two of the controls along each course which are manned.

The last control on Day 1 is at overnight camp where teams pitch their tents, prepare their hot meals and get some rest. The location of the camp is chosen with safety in mind but often has limited vehicular access so visitors are discouraged. Portaloo toilets and fresh water (often from a stream) are provided and a medic is available for most of the day to treat minor injuries and offer advice. Competitors who retire from the event at this stage will be taken back to the event centre if required. Competitors with minor injuries will often stay the night to see they feel fit enough to start in the morning. However, it is always up to the competitors to decide whether they need further treatment and whether to continue the event.

On the second day all teams start from the camp site from 8am through to 9am and follow courses in a similar fashion to Day 1, back to the event centre. Day 2 is generally easier and quicker than Day 1 with teams finishing from 11am onwards. Competitors who retire in the morning may return to the event centre with the organisers once the camp has been cleared.

Mountain areas in the Ireland and Britain can have very unpredictable and severe weather and the terrain can be very difficult. Competitors are responsible for ensuring they are fit and experienced enough for an event of this nature and to take responsibility for their own safety and actions throughout.

This plan has been compiled by Mark Pruzina, MMM *Safety Officer* on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017 and will be updated closer to the event as required. For more information see the website at [www.mourne2day.com](http://www.mourne2day.com) or email [mmmadmin@mourne2day.com](mailto:mmmadmin@mourne2day.com)

Risk Assessments will be in place for particular elements of the event.

Key Role /duties	Name
Organiser	Jim Brown
Safety Officer & Timing	Mark Pruzina
Course Planner	Terry McQueen
Admin, Entries	Mark Pruzina

### The main safety features of the event are:

### **Rules of Competition**

The event is organised in accordance with the FRA Rules for Competition <http://fellrunner.org.uk/organisers.php> Competitors are advised ...as per the *Fell Running Association* safety philosophy ... mountains are dangerous places .. ' *the COMPETITOR should take primary responsibility for his/her own safety*'.

### **Organisation and communication**

An event organiser will coordinate the planning of the event, and will run the event as per FRA guidelines. An Event Centre will be established at the start/finish location for registration, kit inspection, start/finish duties. An operational *Control Centre* will be established by the *Organiser* during the event this will be located at the overnight campsite. Marshals will be located on the course, and will communicate with the Control Centre using mobile telephones and /or radio.

### **Courses**

Courses are planned by people with many years of experience in both competing in and running mountain marathons. The *Course Planner* works with the *Course Controller* to provide a range of courses that not only match the stated distance and height specifications but that are also consistent and with those of previous years and in keeping with those of other mountain marathons.

### **Competitor/Team Fitness & Skills**

The nature of mountain marathons is that they are a test of endurance, team work and mountain skills, including navigation. Once out on the mountains, competitors are under their own cognizance. Competitors are responsible for ensuring they are fit and experienced enough and properly equipped for an event of this nature and must take responsibility for their own safety and actions throughout. The information provided on the event website is comprehensive and clear and should provide competitors all the information they need in order to make informed decisions on all aspects of the event.

### **Team Equipment**

Teams are required to carry mandatory equipment (as detailed in the MMM Rules) and this is heavily spot-checked on at registration and teams found to be lacking a mandatory item are not allowed to start. Our sponsor, Jackson Sports, usually has a mobile shop on site and can supply most necessary items so there is no excuse for a team not to start fully equipped.

Dumping of mandatory equipment is not permitted at any point throughout event and the skip at the overnight camp is watched to ensure that teams do start the 2<sup>nd</sup> day with this kit. Spot checks are also performed at the finish and a team may be disqualified if found to be lacking.

### **Rules for Retirement**

In the event of teams withdrawing from the event they must inform the organiser as soon as possible so that rescuers are not put at unnecessary risk.

### **Environment**

The Mourne is a major source of drinking water; safe guards shall be put in place to help protect this. Toilets will be available at the Event Centre (start /finish) and at the overnight camp. A waste skip will be available at the overnight camp.

The Mourne is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and competitors are required to respect this by following 'Leave No Trace' principles. Anyone found littering or damaging g the environment will be disqualified. Competitors will be encouraged to share transport.

### Event Centre (location TBA)

The Event Centre will be laid out so as to ensure the safe movement of competitors and visitors. Facilities are provided as follows:

- Traffic and parking are managed on the first morning when things are most busy and people are in a hurry.
- The event may be accommodated in marquee (which is provided by an events company) and or suitable premises. This provides shelter for the competitors and organisers during registration
- Signage and tapes are used to help people find their way around the centre and to the starts
- Marshalls are clearly identified by high visibility vests
- Toilets are provided either by the site owner or using portaloos
- Electricity is provided by site mains or, if not available, by a small portable generator and which is sited safely outside the marquee.
- Water provided from mains tap or tanked supply
- Site plan – see separate document

### Weather

Competitors are reminded in the Final Instructions to check the weather forecast before the event and prepare themselves accordingly. Up to date weather forecasts are posted on the notice board at the Event Centre and Campsite on Saturday and Sunday morning respectively. Teams may change courses at the last minute if they feel conditions may be too harsh for them. In the event of extreme weather the courses may be shortened or rerouted on the day.

### Starts Day 1

On Day 1, teams start at intervals (1-4mins) between 08:30 and 10:30. There may be two start locations for the courses which provides for better course options given the need to fit long and short courses between the Start/Finish and overnight camp. Routes to the starts are clearly marked with signs and tapes and with time/distance. There is no shelter provided at the start(s) but the start-time system ensures that teams do not have to loiter at the start for very long. *Marshals* located at the start are in contact with the Event Centre via radio or mobile phone.

### Team Work

The primary safety feature of the event is that the teams of 2 must stick together at all times and that they must carry all their equipment throughout. Any team discovered breaking either of these rules is disqualified – and may be barred from future events. The rules stipulate that teams *“must maintain contact with each other throughout the entire competition”* which allows for varying terrain and weather conditions without being overly proscriptive. Whilst there are only two advertised manned controls on each course, there are also mobile marshals who do spot checks at other controls through the day.

### Course Marshalling

Two controls on each course on Day 1 are manned by at least two experienced and suitably briefed marshals. These controls have safety cut-off times after which the marshals will leave the mountain taking the control with them. Teams failing to reach these controls by the cut-off are instructed to retire for the day and make their way directly to the camp or return to the Event Centre.

The *marshals* are equipped with a radio or mobile phone, shelter tent, spare clothing and first aid kit. They are also issued with checklists of teams and are updated with actual start numbers and changes once all teams have started so that they don't waste time waiting for teams to come through who haven't started.

The manned control locations are chosen for ease of access/egress and relative shelter.

### **Overnight Camp (location TBA)**

The overnight camp is located somewhere with easy access for the MMM organising team and a good clean water supply (mains or spring water). Competitors are advised to carry water purification tablets or equipment in the event if they are concerned about drinking mountain water. Teams must be totally self-sufficient for a mountain camp as the only facilities provided are portaloos and rubbish bins. Given the close confines of many tents and lots of tired people using a variety of cooking stoves, fire extinguishers are provided and placed prominently around the campsite.

Access to the site from the mountains is planned to ensure a safe and easy finish. The route from the final control may be taped and stiles are erected over fences where required. When dusk falls the taped route is marked with Glo-Sticks.

The *Organiser* and team are based in the operational *Control Centre*: a large tent or suitable building near to the day 1 finish line. Finishing teams are checked into the computer system by the *Timing Team* using their SI Cards and then directed to set up camp. A medic is on hand for most of the day to treat minor injuries and offer advice. However, it is up to individuals to decide for themselves whether they should seek further treatment and/or retire from the event. Transport is available to take retiring competitors back to the *Event Centre* and to pick up retiring teams from around the mountains during the day.

Throughout the day the *Timing Team*, and *Control Marshals* communicate to determine the numbers of teams still out and any retirements. The Timing Team keep the Organiser updated, and post results (and retiree info) on a noticeboard in the camp.

### **Overdue teams & Emergency Services**

- **At the end of day 1**

It is not unusual for teams to fail to make the overnight camp on the first day if conditions are bad or they lose time through navigational mistakes. Competitors are expected to be able to cope with these situations and to make the right decisions for their own safety. Overdue teams should report their status to the MMM - via mobile phone, another team or a Marshall - if it is possible and safe to do so. As night falls the Timing Team will attempt to make contact with overdue teams to ascertain their status using the contact number they gave when entering but they will not call out emergency services unless there is some reason for concern.

- **At the end of day 2**

If teams decide to not finish they MUST ensure that they inform the organiser as soon as possible (see Rule for Retirement). The Organisers will attempt to confirm the status of all teams before closing the Event.

**Emergency services are only called out in the event of an accident or emergency being reported.**

### **Medical help**

A medic is on hand most of each day to treat minor injuries and offer advice at the Campsite on Saturday and back at the Event Centre on Sunday. However it is up to individuals to decide for themselves whether they should seek further treatment and/or retire from the event.

### **Young Persons**

The easier classes of the event are open to younger persons aged 16-17yrs. Additional measures are taken to ensure their safety including

- A young person can only enter when accompanied by their parent or guardian
- A parental consent form is required which has a clear briefing about the event
- Parents are required to have significant mountain marathon or mountain skills experience and state this on the Consent form
- These teams must carry a mobile phone for emergencies

## Mourne Mountain Marathon Health and Safety Plan

### **Safeguarding**

The event is run in accordance with the Fell Runners Association Welfare Policy for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. See [http://fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2017/FRA\\_welfare\\_policy%202017%20A4%2021-09-2015.pdf](http://fellrunner.org.uk/documents/2017/FRA_welfare_policy%202017%20A4%2021-09-2015.pdf) for further information.

### **Insurance**

The event is run under permit from NIMRA (Northern Ireland Mountain Runners Association) on behalf of UK Athletics and insurance is provided through them (a copy of the certificate is available on request). The event complies with UK Athletics and Fell Runner Association rules.

### **Important Contact Info**

MMM Contact number	<b>TBC</b> (Saturday and Sunday only)
Mountain Rescue	999 or 192 and ask for Mountain Rescue Mountain Rescue will not be called out by the organisers unless an accident or incident is reported.
Nearest A&E Hospital	Daisy Hill Hospital, 5 Hospital Road, Newry, BT35 8DR
Email	<a href="mailto:mmmadmin@mourne2day.com">mmmadmin@mourne2day.com</a>
Web address	<a href="http://www.mourne2day.com">www.mourne2day.com</a>