



MOURNE MOUNTAIN MARATHON

Health & Safety Plan 2023 v1.0

Coronavirus Measures are covered in a separate document

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. There is also a one day score event. 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, except for the one day 'Score class' event. Each control is marked by an orange and white flag and has a SPORTident electronic timing box at which they register their visit 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 if 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 teams are started between 8:00am and 8:45am and follow courses in a similar fashion to Day 1, back to the Event Centre. Day 2 is generally easier and shorter than Day 1 with teams finishing from 11am onwards. Competitors who retire on the Sunday morning may return to the Event Centre with the organisers, once the camp has been cleared.

A one day 'Score Class' event will be taking place on the Saturday. For this event there is no fixed course, however risks are similar to the 2 day event, therefore minimum safety equipment must be carried.

Coastal mountain areas 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.

For more information see the website at www.mourne2day.com or email mmadmin@mourne2day.com
Additional risk assessments are in place.

Key Role /duties	Name
Race Director	Jim Brown
Safety Officer & Timing	Mark Pruzina
Course Planner	Terry McQueen
Course Controller	Gareth McKeown



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* and 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. The MMM mobile contact number is printed on competitors' route cards.

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 with 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) which is spot-checked 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 2nd day with full kit. Spot checks are also performed at the finish and a team may be disqualified if found to be lacking.

Rule for Retirement

In the event of teams withdrawing from the event they must inform the organiser as soon as possible so that rescuer services 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 '*Leave No Trace*' principles shall be promoted to help protect the mountain environment. Competitors will be encouraged to share transport.



Event Centre – Shimna College, Newcastle

The event centre is 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 it is busiest and people are in a hurry.
- The event centre is accommodated indoors. 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 and Officials are clearly identified by high visibility vests
- Toilets are provided on site.
- Electricity is provided by site mains or, if not available, by a small portable generator with suitable protective devices.
- Mains water will provided at the Event Centre.

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 - 2 Day Event, 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 planned clearly marked with signs and tapes and with time/distance. Road safety is considered where appropriate There is no shelter provided at the start(s) but the allocated start-times system ensures that teams should 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.

Starts - Score Event

The Score race takes place alongside the other classes. Starts will be between 9.00am-10.00am at 2 min intervals in order to minimise waiting time for bus returns at the finish.



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*”. 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 Marshaling

Two controls on each course on Day 1 are run by at least two experienced and suitably briefed marshals. 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

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 on the event if they are concerned about drinking mountain water. Teams must be totally self-sufficient for a mountain camp and the only facilities provided are portaloos and rubbish bins.

Fire Safety

Given the close confines of many tents and lots of tired people using a variety of cooking stoves, fire extinguishers are provided and placed around the campsite.

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

The *Organiser* and team are based in the operational *Control Centre*: a large tent or van 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**

Occasionally teams 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 using the contact number they gave when entering.

- **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).

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 when accompanied by a suitably experienced adult aged 21 or over. Additional measures are taken to ensure their safety including

- A young person can only enter when accompanied by their parent, guardian, or responsible adult over 21 years of age.
- A parental consent form is required which has a clear briefing about the event.
- The accompanying adult is required to have significant of mountain skills experience and to describe this on the consent form. All experience is carefully checked for suitability before the entry is accepted.
- These teams must carry a mobile phone for emergencies

Insurance

The event is run under permit from NIMRA (Northern Ireland Mountain Runners Association). Insurance is provided through a specialist insurance broker (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	07845 659503 (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 Hospitals	Daisy Hill Hospital, 5 Hospital Road, Newry, BT35 8DR
Email	mmmadmin@mourne2day.com
Web address	www.mourne2day.com