

Organiser's report of the 2021 Mountain Trial

The 66th running of the Mountain Trial took place from Loweswater Village Hall. The hall provided a good base from which to run the various administrative procedures before, during and after the race, though we had to arrange for supplementary toilets. A good hall provides security against bad weather and gives us a good supply of power. It is certainly worth considering a location with indoor facilities along with the area for running when choosing a location. We were able to secure a good parking field next to the hall, and the farmer was kind enough to allow us park and camp the night before.

We had a strong entry, and whilst there were a number of people who did not start there were 86 starters on the Classic with 64 successful completions, 41 out of 46 starters completed the Medium trial and 81 out of 82 starters completed the short. A total of 214 runners.

We were not really impacted by covid restrictions. The hall asked us not have over 30 people inside at any one time and SportIdent were keen to have masks on runners at registration to reduce the chance of infection of their staff.

The weather played a big part in the success of the day, with the car park staying dry and runners happy to stay around for the presentation, enjoying their post-race meal. The catering was provided by Podium Catering and was well received. First aid was provided by Derek Allison and he gave advice to a small number of runners and guided some in small cuts and grazes. Pete Bland's van was in attendance and well supported.

The trial offers remarkable value for money for runners. This is due to significant sponsorship. La Sportiva continue to provide significant financial support for the event, and it was a pleasure to have Ben Lyon present on the day to give out prizes. Pete Band's shop provide a very generous package for the extensive prizes. Without them the entry fee would have to significantly increase.

Permissions for the use of the area was a challenge with the area to the west of the lakes having so many individual owners. We are indebted to the many farmers and commoners who gave permission. Everyone spoken to was very supportive of the event and grateful for being asked for permission. National Trust have a new system of applying for permission which worked very well.

SportIdent provided the main results service, and once again this worked very well. Raynet provided some support from some of the checkpoints which allowed us to track runners around the course. Whilst it was the Raynet reporting that highlighted a "missing" runner, the radio system has the potential for a lot of human error. We may consider supplementing the system of monitoring runners' progress by asking the planner to check for mobile signal at checkpoints and using SportIdent remote controls. This will depend upon Wifi at the registration. Some events are using trackers, which may be a future consideration when the prices come down.

The "missing" runner tested a few systems. Firstly, the lack of mobile signal on site – despite a test a couple of months previously meant that calls had to be made remotely with a short drive up the valley. Between phone calls, SportIdent downloading the start box and the use of the on the day registration forms, it was established that the runner had registered but

not started and had gone home with his dibber. An interesting scenario which has suggested a couple of extra checks and procedures that we can put in place to improve some aspects of the checking and monitoring of runners for future events.

The event is only possible due to the significant help from a number of people who take responsibility for significant aspects of the organisation, making the named organiser's task much easier. David Rosen looks after the website update and completes all the liaison with SportIdent – the entries, start times and production of various registration and start lists. Tony Richardson co-ordinates the Raynet and on the fell marshals. There are also a good number of individuals who offer their services for the many essential on the day tasks like registration, car parking etc.

There were many positive comments from the competitors who seemed to have enjoyed their day. After the covid restrictions, it was very pleasing to have such a successful day and a feeling of moving back towards normality.