



## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT FOR THE AGM, JULY 2014**

### Introduction

This report summarises the work of the Executive Committee since the 2013 AGM. On your behalf we are grateful for the support of the whole Committee during the year and for the many hours they have spent ensuring the organisation functions smoothly. We would also like to give special thanks to the many race organisers and their teams. Without them fellrunning in England would not happen.

### FRA Limited Accounts

The Treasurer's report gives full details of the accounts for 2013. This was the first full year under the new organisation. Our financial position is sound but the Committee is proposing an increase to the subscription rates which we hope members will agree still provides good value for money.

### Incident at Buttermere Sailbeck Race 29<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Following the death of Brian Belfield at the above event, an Inquest was held in September 2013 in Cockermouth. This was a difficult time for all those involved, particularly the family of Brian Belfield, the race organiser Mike Robinson and his wife Hazel, and for the witnesses who gave evidence (including Graham Breeze who represented the FRA, having been Chairman at the time of the incident). The Coroner found that the cause of death was exposure and hypothermia. He issued a Regulation 28 Report, including a narrative verdict, in which he expressed the opinion that action should be taken on seven matters of concern to reduce the risk of further deaths.

### FRA Safety Requirements

In response to the Coroner's 'matters of concern' the Safety, Equipment and Rules Subcommittee reviewed the FRA safety requirements, and the revised requirements were issued with effect from 1 January 2014. Their introduction was supported with a series of eight workshops for race organisers, which were attended by around 200 organisers. These were well received and provided for the sharing of views on the new requirements and the identification of issues needing further clarification. A report of the workshops was published in *The Fellrunner*. The FRA also purchased five more sets of radios for use by race organisers.

The safety documentation is currently being re-written to make it concise and readable, with no change to the underlying requirements. The guidance offered to race organisers has been enhanced (with a lot of material coming from the race organisers' meetings), and

more will be done in future to expand this valuable resource. The sub-committee is being assisted in its work by a reference group of experts with particular expertise (eg law, safety, insurance). Race organisers are also being consulted, and the new documents will shortly be made available to all members via the FRA website.

A recent serious injury to a fell runner caused by cattle on the race route reminds us that we cannot be complacent about the hazards of fell running, and the need to keep the safety requirements continually updated in the light of experience.

### The Fell Running Year

Junior running continues to flourish. The English Schools Championships was held in the autumn, and a junior England training day attracted over 30 promising junior runners in the spring. Junior championship races are well-supported, and by the time of the AGM the end of season presentation will undoubtedly have taken place, with the usual sense of occasion and celebration. The FRA jointly with Welsh Athletics organised two 'mountain running development camps' during 2013, and two will be held this year with additional participation from Scottish Athletics.

An Under 20s Championship was established for runners making the transition from Junior to Senior fell and mountain running. 2013 saw a hard-fought battle and some fantastic results, especially among the young men. For 2014 the format has changed slightly, with an extra medium category race, and runners counting in any four of the championship races. The series coordinator is Lauren Jeska, supported by the FRA Junior Coordinator (Duncan Richards).

Training and coaching are important areas. The FRA-sponsored Navigation Course, coordinated by Margaret Batley, has run for many years training generations of fell runners in this basic technique, and continues to be fully subscribed. FRA Coaching Coordinator Graeme Woodward has introduced several innovations into the fell running coaching courses, giving a greater number of courses and more options on location. He also introduced a higher level coaching qualification (Fell and Mountain Event Specialist) and the first course has been very successful.

The Senior Championships are in progress, and are as competitive and exciting as ever. Plans are being finalised for the 2015 races, to include some races new to the Championships, and will be formally announced at the Annual Presentation in Telford in November.

A new FRA Editor (Richard Reeve) has now taken over from Britta Sendlhofer, and will bring his professional expertise to bear in production of *The Fellrunner*, which continues to be highly appreciated by fell runners. Behind the scenes the volunteers on the FRA Committee devote a huge amount of personal effort and commitment to sustaining and promoting our sport. The work of the Secretary never stops, nor does that of the Fixtures Secretary as the race calendar changes. And of course, we have to maintain the FRA

website to provide useful information for members and, depending on one's point of view, a variety of entertainment via the Forum!

**Madeleine Watson, Chair / Nick Harris, Secretary**

**July 2014**