

Minutes of Runfurther Meeting 18 January 2014 at The Dusty Miller, Mytholmroyd

Attendance list

Alison Brind
Emma David
Chris Davies
Nick Ham
Duncan Harris
Kevin Hoult
Raj Madhas
Carol Morgan
Karen Nash
Helen Price
Martyn Price
Andy Robinson
Mark Robinson
Sandra Scott
Stephen Scott
Dick Scroop
John Vernon
Jenny Wyles
Ken Wyles
Chris Buck
Mick Cooper
Jacqueline Cooper
Lynda Hargreaves

Informal welcome and Introduction (AR)

Andy explained that initially we want to give information, introduce the four of us (Andy Robinson, Nick Ham, Dick Scroop and Karen Nash) as the pro tem Runfurther committee. The idea is to turn RF into a 'club' for all of us that run the ultra races in the series and then a few minutes later obtain agreement that it will become a company owned by all of us.

History and background (NH)

Nick explained that Mark Hartell set up the series in 2006 to promote ultra running in the UK. He was soon joined by Simon Berry and Karen McDonald as organisers. Mark then married and moved to the USA leaving the other two largely handling the running of the series. It was a Limited Company owned by the 3 of them. Work commitments meant that by 2012 they were struggling to cope with the time and effort that RF required. At the end of 2012 Mark Barnes was given a 70% controlling interest in the company. Jon Steele was also initially going to be involved. Unfortunately for a variety of reasons Mark Barnes was not able to commit time to RF. Jon was unable to change this situation. For most of 2013 the four of us have tried to keep RF going by maintaining a presence at races, putting up the flags and by Andy publishing an unofficial results spreadsheet. By the very end of 2013, with help from Mark Hartell, Simon and Karen we have reached the situation where we have an informal agreement that if we can show during 2014 that we have the enthusiasm and

ability to make RF work then it will be handed over to us. In the meantime we have permission to use the name. Despite the flags at races we were not able to obtain any sponsorship for 2013: we did not have permission or right to do so. We want to avoid this situation being repeated and so want to see a company owned by the runners in the series.

Company Limited by guarantee (DS)

Dick explained that we need to set up an association first and then register as a company. We can register the company as Runfurther because the 'old' company had a different name. We propose that membership is free but that to vote you must have run in at least 2 races included in the series that year or the previous year. We hope this will give stability and keep RF going with a committee that can easily change if and when necessary. In a company limited by guarantee Ordinary Members can vote, stand for election and will be liable only for £1 to meet any company debts. This will allow a legal identity in a way that a Club would not and is important if we wish to attract sponsorship. The Articles of Association have been made available on the Runfurther website and at the meeting today. These are broad and will need a meeting to change them. The rules and constitution have also been made available and were circulated at the meeting. These will be easier to change if necessary. Money cannot be taken out of the company except to further the Objectives set out in the documents mentioned. We propose that the first AGM will be in November or December 2014, it will be formally announced. We hope the website can be used to disseminate information, gain feedback from all members and to obtain ideas for the 2015 series. There were no questions for Dick but many positive murmurs.

Financial statement (AR)

Andy thanked Mark H, Simon B and Karen McD for all their help over the recent months. Andy then gave an outline of the finances explaining that we do not have any assets from the old company (excepting the prizes which Karen provided from Montane) and yet we have already incurred costs in setting up the website, printing flyers and membership forms and will incur costs setting up the company. We do have £150 promised from Simon Berry and he has provided generous prizes. We do not yet have sponsorship in place for 2014 as this is difficult with no company or bank account but we do expect to get some. Andy explained our proposal of a voluntary donation, which will be properly accounted for. There was general agreement for this and a hat passed around. Counting of the money later in the meeting showed £174.55 had been raised.

Although the meeting is informal we propose to run it in a similar way to an AGM.

Membership and Voting.

AR explained the difference between ordinary and associate members and those who run a race but do not actually join by filling in a membership form. Associate members would have no vote, have signed up/joined but have not raced the two races in the series. Membership forms were circulated and filled in by all present. They are also available on the website and will be taken to future races. He proposed Honorary membership for those who do not run but help RF in other ways. These members can vote but not hold committee posts. An attendance list was passed round and signed by those present at this meeting.

Voting Run further into existence.

- To agree to create the Association. This was unanimous.
- To accept the Articles, Constitution and Rules as currently on the website and available as paper copies at the meeting (subject to the proviso that minor changes may be necessary when we register as a company and if so these changes would be reported back at the AGM). This vote was also unanimous.

Election of executive committee (of the Association and once it exists of the company)

There are four named posts in the Articles and an executive of six. AR explained the pro tem committee are hoping to be formally elected into positions although others could be proposed now.

Chairman- Martyn Price proposed Andy Robinson. Seconded by Mark Robinson. No others standing.

General Secretary – Emma David proposed Karen Nash. Seconded by Mark Robinson. No others standing.

Assistant Secretary – Chris Davis proposed Dick Scroop. Seconded by Mark Robinson. No others standing.

Treasurer- Mark Robinson proposed Nick Ham. Seconded by John Vernon. No others standing.

As these posts were unopposed the above people were formally elected.

Members were invited to stand for the remaining two places on the executive, ideally to help with sponsorship and artwork. There were no volunteers from the meeting and these posts remain vacant for the time being. The likely location for these meetings was asked about. It is likely that it will be before or after a race in the series as we do not live close to each other. All meetings will be published on the web in advance and all members are welcome to attend. (NB offers of help with sponsorship from Steve Scott.)

Appointment of auditor.

Kevin Hault, an accountant, explained we will not need an audit as such as our turnover will be below the threshold and our Articles do not require it. He is happy to check the books and confirm to members that a qualified non-executive committee member has done so. This will not be a full audit with certificate etc.

Election of Honorary Members

AR explained that these would be for a 5 year period and to acknowledge help with RF.

He proposed Mark Hartell, Karen McDonald, Simon Berry as the 'old RF' and for all their help allowing us to reach this stage. Each one received a unanimous vote. He also proposed Mike Bate for his help with the website and on line membership package. Again he received a unanimous vote.

2014 Race series

This was an open discussion with the committee explaining the choices made and others giving opinions and asking questions. We feel we should drop some races as this is the only way to introduce new ones and prevent the series from becoming stale. Some will be re-introduced later but others do not need us as they fill quickly. We also feel it is important that entries are available for all those wanting one. Some asked why not just introduce more races but others were keen to keep it to 12 so a Grand Slam was possible and so that there was more true competition between the leading runners running head to head at the same races. We also explained our wish to spread the races over a large portion of the UK. It is hoped that Kintyre will be different enough to be worth the travel and we have included both distances due to the cut-offs. We were assured it was excellent. 3 Rings of Shap is good value and although not a race they do publish times. The Vegan Welsh 3000s means we have a mountain summit race in the series for a change. A warning has already been posted on the website re Crib Goch. The Grand Tour of Skiddaw is only in its 2nd year and includes trails and mountains.

It was noted that Jon Steele had been very supportive and the problems of 2013 were not caused by him. Comments in the room included reducing the amount of road in our chosen races, choosing those with few rules and late /EOD options. Some liked returning to known races and favourites, others liked discovering new races each year, some were prepared to travel further than others.

2015 and beyond

We do not propose big changes but are keen to hear what others would like. Suggestions for specific races will be invited in the autumn. The idea of a truly National series was discussed. Duncan felt strongly we should stick to 12 races for head to head competition and that people will not be prepared to travel far. Andy explained the options of expanding to include the south and the idea of including more southern runners, which could mean 16 races and 8 that those in London could easily travel to. Several felt this should be a long term aspiration, that we should include some each year like Evesham, MCN, Shires and Spires etc so that those further south have 4 they could travel to. It was thought by some (Chris, Duncan) that they can already pick 4, that 16 races would dilute competition. Duncan wondered if a compulsory core and optional others in the series could be the answer. It was acknowledged that we need some southern runners to talk to re suitable races, travel and level of interest. A few did volunteer to contact friends. It is never going to be easy to meet the numerous and varied opinions, even selecting this year's races took weeks and many emails and that was with only 4 people involved.

AOB

1. Data protection- members were assured that their data would not be shared or sold and would be held securely. Best practice will be followed eg blind copy emails. This will also be added to the website.
2. 2014 AGM and Presentation of prizes. Likely to be Nov-Dec. Suggestions of an informal run first, based on a LDWA event. Ideas are welcome.
3. Steve Scott suggested a V70 class and it was confirmed that if there were runners in this category it would happen.

The hat of donations was collected in and the meeting formally closed.
Light refreshments and the prize giving followed.