

FROME RUNNING CLUB
PROPOSAL FOR CREATING AN OFF-ROAD SECTION

General

There has always been an element of the club who have preferred running away from the roads. The amount of people who do events like the Slaughterford 9, The Grizzly, The Terminator, The Stickler and enter Long Distance Footpath relays bear that out.

I felt that with the amount of interest shown on weekend runs alone justify a more structured approach to Off-Road running and a dedicated section would provide that.

Aim

The aim is to develop Off-Road Running within Frome Running Club.

Off-Road Running

By definition 'Off-Road Running' means running on unstable ground. This encompasses Trail Running, Multi-Terrain and Fell Running.

Why Bother?

a. Scenery.

The Mendips in snow or the coastal paths of North Devon or even early morning in the Longleat Forest rarely fail to evoke some form of emotion, be it awe, joy or trepidation.

b. Excitement.

I have yet to feel the same adrenaline rush from any road race as I have got from even the shorter, gentler off-road races.

c. Achievement.

The feeling of having achieved something is greater after running a race over fields, stiles uphill and down dale than from plodding around a boring tarmac road course.

d. Placement.

Race fields are often small, so top 10 finishes or placing in your category are definite possibilities. This can equate to prizes, albeit often cake.

e. Egalitarianism.

There are not many sports which you line up against national champions, knowing that, if you have a good day and they make a navigational error or just run badly, you can beat them.

f. Greed.

Many races start and finish at a good pub, many with food included in the entry fee. This makes for a fairly sociable sport.

g. Knees.

They last longer if you stay off the concrete.

h. Entry Fees.

Note to Brendan Foster and the like: 6 miles of running does NOT have to cost £25, nor 13 miles £40 plus; that's just what you get away with charging. Most off-road race fees vary between £2 and £10, often with food included and sometimes with a T-Shirt, beer or a mug. This is a very low cost sport to enter.

Conduct

- a. The Off-Road Section will simply be a section within the club, NOT a separate entity. I just want to give people who would like to venture off-road more opportunity to do so.
- b. It is not intended that people should dedicate themselves solely to either road running or off-road.
- c. I will produce a separate 'Off-Road Grand Prix'. This will be open to all members of the club who wish to participate.
- d. There are various mid-week off road races held by clubs such as TACH and Chepstow Harriers. It is anticipated that we could enter these as individuals or as a team where possible.
- e. Training runs starting from pubs and other venues will be researched.
- f. Runs will be by head-torch on dark evenings.
- g. Off Road sessions will be advertised on Face-book and on the club website along with details of venue, kit required etc.
- h. I would like us to enter races further afield, such as South Wales and Dartmoor.
- i. There should be a dedicated Off-Road Captain whose responsibilities will be much the same as the overall Club Captain. In that he/she will be responsible for:
 - Overseeing the weekly training sessions.
 - Acting as a POC for any queries regarding the training sessions.
 - Ensuring the training is relevant, varied, effective, safe and above all, enjoyable.
 - Making regular announcements about training sessions, races etc.
 - Reporting to the committee any issues or concerns regarding training sessions.
- j. All training and races will adhere to the guidelines laid down in the Risk Assessment attached.
- k. There is a one day course similar to the existing 'Leader' course, which is run concentrating on Off-Road and Fell Running. I'm prepared to go up and do it.

Clothing and Equipment

Depending on the type of race / run, terrain and weather, you will require certain items of kit. Indeed some races, particularly those run under the Fell Running Association's rules, insist you carry it. Items are:

- Full windproof / waterproof body cover
- Hat & gloves
- Fell / off-road shoes
- Compass, map & whistle

RISK ASSESSMENT

OFF-ROAD RUNNING

Assessment completed by: Mark Aston

Date: 15 Sep 2011

The purpose of this document is to supplement the Frome Running Club Risk Assessment documents adopted 11 May 2011 which identify the club's approach to risk assessment and provide guidance in relation to the management of risk for Section Organisers and Activity Coordinators.

This document therefore identifies and highlights specific issues relating to Off-Road Running of which Club members should be aware, when participating in such activities.

General

Off-Road Running frequently results in individuals being in remote areas in poor weather conditions in difficult terrain. The basic assumption therefore has to be that you are responsible for your own safety.

The general principles apply equally to those out running on their own, in a group (which may or may not be a club activity), or when taking part in and organised race or event.

Competitive events will normally be held under the rules of the following national bodies:

- Fell Runners Association (FRA)
 - Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA)
- The Governing body of the FRA is UK Athletics.

All these organisations have specific guidelines for safety and FRC members participating in events are advised to familiarise themselves before participating.

If in any doubt about specific requirements concerning either a competitive event or a Club outing, seek advice from the Section Leader.

Hazards Identified: Tripping on uneven surfaces, slipping on wet, icy, muddy and other slippery surfaces, running into obstructions (eg. Trees, fences rocks etc), collision with other runners and pedestrians, dehydration, heat exhaustion, cold stress, hypothermia, injury and illness, trampling by livestock, aggressive dogs and farm animals.

Who can be harmed: club runners, prospective members, members of the public.

Nature of harm: ranges from cuts, grazes, bruising to sprains and broken limbs, exhaustion, thermal stress, running injury.

Severity

High Medium X Low

Likelihood

High Medium X Low

Existing Controls:

By preparing and circulating this and other Risk Assessments, preparing and circulating a Health and Safety Policy and having an Incident Report Procedure in place which is constantly reviewed, Frome Running Club Members are made aware of the following risks associated with off-road running.

Off-Road Running – Specific Risks

1. Be aware of weather conditions and consult the latest forecasts.
2. Temperature, underfoot conditions, precipitation, visibility will all affect what to wear and what to expect.
3. Ensure your level of fitness is suitable for the event or trip which is planned. If you are inexperienced, ensure that you research or even reconnoitre the route before-hand, or alternatively run with an experienced individual.
4. Be aware of the type of country to be traversed and ensure you have experience in that type of country. Off-Road Running routes vary from paths to trails to moors to rocky boulder fields. Avoid streams and rivers in conditions of high water.
5. Wear appropriate footwear. Studs or trail shoes are essential in hilly areas. Do not wear smooth-soled road shoes.
6. Be aware of and understand the dangers of hypothermia. Understand the effects of hypothermia and be able to recognise it in others.
7. Running in very light kit represents a significantly different risk from walking or jogging with a full rucksack of spare gear.
8. Always carry the following if running in high, exposed areas:
 - Full body cover (waterproof top and over-trousers, hat, gloves)
 - Compass, map and whistle
 - Mobile Phone
 - Emergency food
 - Outside of summer months – a space blanket or survival bag & head torch.

It's very little extra weight to carry for the added safety. Conditions in the open, at altitude, can be very exposed and quite different to those at the start. Remember, if you have to stop running, you will cool down very rapidly. The extra gear could also help out another runner in difficulty.

FRA and LDWA impose specific rules (as above) as to what must be carried when participating in a competitive event. FRC members are advised to adopt the same principles when out on a club trip or as individuals.

9. Always stop to help another who is in difficulties. If in a competitive event, report the incident to the nearest marshal.
10. Carry a map of the area, with the route marked and escape routes thought out.
11. Drink plenty of fluids before starting and, on runs longer than 10 miles. Carry adequate spare food and liquid.

12. Be aware of others using the route – walkers, bikes, horses. Act with care for yourself and consideration for others. Walkers may not hear you coming from behind. Horses can be startled if you pass at speed.
13. If you drop out of an event you must report to the organisers and let them know you are retiring. Head counts are carried out at the end of events and if you are thought to be missing on the hill, an unnecessary search and rescue operation may be called out.
14. Know what to do in the event of an emergency. Identify a safe route of retreat if possible. Know how to summon help: International Mountain Distress Signal is six whistle blasts or torch flashes, repeated after a gap of one minute

OFF-ROAD RACES

	MULTI-TERRAIN	TRAIL	FELL
JAN	-ROUGH & TUMBLE (MILTON LILBORNE) -SLAUGHTERFORD (CORSHAM)		-KYMIN WINTER RACE (MONMOUTH)
FEB	-INCA TRAIL (ILCHESTER) -TERMINATOR (PEWSEY)	-IRONWOOD CHALLENGE (BRISTOL)	-SIDMOUTH 4 TRIGS -QUANTOCKS FELL (HOLFORD GREEN)
MAR	-GREAT WESTERN 10K (SHERBORNE) -BUTLEIGH MT 7.5 -THE GRIZZLY		
APR	-TROWBRIDGE 10K -HANHAM HORROR (BRISTOL) -OFFAS ORRROR (TINTERN)		-EXE TO AXE (EXMOUTH) -SUGAR LOAF (ABERGAVENNY)
MAY	-JACK & JILL (MIDSOMER NORTON) -WESSEX RELAY (DORSET!!)	-SUTTON VENY 10K -WESTBURY WANDER	
JUN	-FOREST 10 (WARMINSTER) -CHEDDAR RUGGED 10 (CHARTERHOUSE)	-KENNET KANTER (DEVIZES) -GREAT SHAFTESBURY RUN -MENDIP MASHUP (CHARTERHOUSE)	-BEACON BATCH (LOWER LANGFORD) -NORTH DEVON HALF (WOOLACOMBE)
JUL	-TINTERN TROT	-RIDGEWAY CHALLENGE (MARTINSTOWN)	-CHARMOUTH CHALLENGE
AUG		-SALISBURY 54321	-CROOK PEAK (CROSS) -GREAT WEST (OKEHAMPTON) -SIDMOUTH 10 -STICKLEPATH HORSESHOE (OKEHAMPTON) -OKE CROAK (OKEHAMPTON)
SEP	-ASH EXCELLENT 8 – (MARTOCK) -UPHILL TO WELLS RELAY	-THE BEAST (CORFE) -KING ALFREDS TORMENT (STOURHEAD)	
OCT	-MENDIP MUDDLE (CHARTERHOUSE) -CRANMORE CHASE -EXMOOR STAGGER (MINEHEAD) -THE STICKLER (SHILLINGSTONE)		
NOV	-OVER THE HILLS (BRADFORD ON AVON)	-WHITE HORSE GALLOP (WESTBURY)	-DROGO 10 (CASTLE DROGO)
DEC	-FULL MONTECUTE (STOKE-SUB-HAMDEN)		

