



SCOTLAND'S FRIENDLY SOCIABLE WONDER MOUNTAIN MARATHON

The GMC is a Two-Day Mountain Marathon type event organised by Grampian Orienteers. It is held approximately every two years in late Autumn / early Winter. It is always in the Grampian Mountains area, and up to now, has always been somewhere accessible from Deeside.

Each day will normally have a significant section of Mountain Marathon type hill land to navigate through using a 1:40 or 50k map, via a series of 'control' points, plus a shorter Orienteering section, typically on a 1:10k map. This Orienteering section could be at the start, end, or part through each day.

To make the event more 'comfortable' for competitors, kit bags are transported to the mid-camp, where a heated marquee (or large tents), hot drinks, snacks and an evening meal are provided.

The event is still tough. The weather could be white-out full winter conditions and blowing a hoolie. The terrain to be crossed can be some of the most rugged in the UK. Competitors are still required to carry essentials for a full day in such conditions plus emergency kit. Do not enter unless you are happy, competent and prepared to spend two days in such conditions!

Information and Rules – GMC 2023 – 7th & 8th October (NOT November as per previous years).

Entries Open on SiEntries on 1 May 2023. Maximum number of entries: 125 people.

Keep an eye on the Gramp website for a link to this nearer the time.

Revisions to this information will be available on the Grampian Orienteers website as required. Please keep an eye out for revisions with a later date than this one. Final details will be confirmed on the website 1 week before the event. If the event is cancelled due to bad weather, this will be announced no later than 3 days before the event.

Registration & Drop-off for Overnight Kit Bags.

Please register between 7.30 and 8.30am on Day One, at Mar Lodge Bunkhouse common room. This can be reached by turning north / right off the Braemar to Linn o'Dee road at Victoria Bridge and following signs. The Bunkhouse is to the east of Mar Lodge itself and is the original stable building (WTW ///richest.hedgehog.plodding, and post code AB35 5YJ).

There will be car parking close by which will be directed / sign-posted. We do encourage car share as much as possible.

The start will be about a 10-minute walk from the Hall. As well as Registering, please allow time for a potential kit check, and a weigh-in of your overnight bag before it goes for transportation. Please ensure your overnight bags ARE NOT OVER THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF 14KG, as you will be asked to remove items and may end up at the back of the queue if others are waiting. ALSO, 1 OR 2 PERSON TENTS PERMITTED ONLY AT MID CAMP AND PAIR COMPETITORS MUST SHARE A 2-PERSON TENT (a requirement of the land-owner).

Accommodation for the Friday Night

There are 12 spaces only available in the Mar Lodge Bunk House at an extra cost of £40 per space. As long as spaces are available, booking of these should be possible on SI too, done at the same time as event booking.

There are various Hotels, Hostels & B&Bs fairly close by. The Ballater Hostel (01339 753752) in particular has been supportive of the event, and we're sure will be very welcoming to competitors. There is a slight chance that some Friday night camping will be possible at Mar Lodge. If permitted, this will be advised on future revisions of this document.

Starts:

The Start on Day 1 will be about a 10 minute way-marked walk from Mar Lodge Bunk House.

Day One

From 8.00 – 9.00am

The Start on Day 2 will be about 10 minutes from the mid camp.

Day Two

From 7.30 – 8.15am

Finish:

Day 2 Finish will be a short walk from Mar Lodge Meeting Room (very close to the bunk room where Registration was) which will be used for Download. All competitors must report to Download.

There is a compulsory course closure time of 5pm on Day 1 and 3.30pm on Day 2.

Competitors finishing after this will be classed as DNF and may not be permitted to compete on Day 2. There may be controls on the courses with latest cut-off times applied (which will be advised in advance), and anyone reaching these controls after this time will need to just go straight to that day's finish.

Categories and Prizes:

There are six categories

A Pair, A Solo (approx. 57km 2300m over 2 days)

B Pair, B Solo (approx. 47km 1900m over 2 days)

C Pair, C Solo (approx. 37km 1500m over 2 days)

Terrain is rough on all courses.

Prizes will be awarded for first place on each course if possible. Other sub-categories may be created and prizes may be awarded too, depending on the make-up of the entries.

Hopefully this will include the previously hotly contested Parent & Offspring prize within the C course again. Prize-giving, if we can have it this year, will be around 2:30pm on Day 2 at the Mar Lodge Meeting Room.

Participants:

Teams or solo entries must have suitable experience walking or running off paths in Scottish hills in what could be wintery conditions and should operate within their limitations. All participants will be asked when they enter to quote relevant experience and the organisers may require them to enter a shorter course (or even cancel their entry) if they don't have suitable experience.

No participants under 16 on the day of the event.

Participants aged between 16 and 18 may enter as one of a pair, with a responsible adult. Parental permission is required for under 18s to enter (the form will be posted on the Gramp website in due course and will be available at Registration).

The accompanying adult must accept responsibility for the under 18 for the duration of the event.

Pairs must stay together within speaking and visual distance while on the course each day. If one team member cannot complete the course, their partner must stay with them whilst they get off the hill and to safety (except as described below under 'Accidents'), and cannot continue to compete as a Solo or with another pair.

Participants may be required to complete a Covid declaration and take a test prior to attending. This will be advised if necessary.

Entries:

Entries are via sientries.co.uk. The entry fee is £62.00 for a solo entry and £124.00 for a pair entry. The maximum number of entries is 125 people, regardless of the distribution between singles and pairs.

Refunds will be available (minus SI admin charges) up to 15 July whatever the circumstances. Refunds will be similarly given up to 31 August if a replacement person / team are available, and substitutions can be made up to this date too. Substitutions will also need to quote relevant experience and may be barred if they don't have this.

After 31 August, no refund will be given, even if the Organisers manage to fill your place or even fill the maximum number of places on the event. If the event is cancelled due to reasons beyond the organisers' control (weather or Covid typically), refunds will be given, with deductions taken off to cover incurred, non-returnable event expenses.

Maps:

Maps will be supplied and handed out at the starts on both days.

The maps will feature two scales – one for the orienteering sections and another for the hill sections. Maps will be printed on waterproof paper and will be printed back-to-back on the same sheet.

Courses and control descriptions will be overprinted on the maps.

Electronic Timing:

SI (SportsIndent) timing will be used. Those with their own dibber may use their own. A short beep indicates a successful punch. One dibber will be issued per team. The dibber must be carried by the same person at all times. Lost dibbers will be charged for.

Visiting Controls:

Both participants in a pair must visit each control.

Mid Camp:

It is a requirement of our permission to use the estate land we are on that at the mid-camp, competitors use 1 and 2-person tents only and competitor in pairs share a 2-person tent.

We can confirm that there WILL be portable toilets at the Mid Camp and not just trenches. As described below, competitor's kit bags (one waterproof bag per competitor, max weight per bag - 14kg) will be transported to the mid camp and back. It is planned for the mid camp to have heated socialising marquee(s). A hot meal will be supplied at the mid camp, although competitors will wish to bring additional food to supplement the meal (pack your own rubbish back out in your transported kit bag). Please notify us of any dietary requirements at the time of entry.

Beer (a selection of ales and lagers at £2 or more donation to charity each) and free hot water & drinks will be available in the evening as availability permits. Boiling water & hot drinks will be available in the morning (again as availability permits). No Breakfast will be provided.

Water:

Drinking water will be available at the mid camp. Water on the hill may be obtained from streams, although having a full water bottle at the start is advisable. Take water from flowing streams only and check for animal activity.

Retirements:

All retirements must report to the Download location for the Day where possible (Mid Camp on Day 1, the Mar Lodge Download on Day 2), or where this is not possible, to one of the emergency contacts. Mobile phone numbers will be provided on the maps for the Emergency Contacts. The Organiser will be the first, and the Controller the second. These two people will not always be in Mobile reception area, so a third Emergency Contact will have their number on the map. This person will always be in an area with mobile reception.

Retired competitors should be prepared to make their own way from the mid camp to the finish if not seriously injured, as transport will be limited.

Accidents:

If you are injured and cannot make it to the mid camp or finish or otherwise get safely off the hill, then you should get into your spare clothing and survival bag and use your phone / whistle to summon help. If more than one person is present, a casualty should only be left if help cannot be summoned. Mobile phone coverage in the area is poor to non-existent. Emergency text messages may work better if there is a poor signal. Mobile phones should be registered to send emergency 999 texts (see <https://www.emergencysms.net/>).

Marshals will be on the course but will be moving. There may be an Emergency Tent within the competition area. If there is, it will contain warm clothing and a sleeping bag and can be used to seek emergency refuge.

If you encounter an injured competitor you must stop to assist, including going for help if required. Your result will be adjusted to take account of this.

Crossing Fences/Rivers:

Some fences may require to be crossed at designated crossing points. These will be shown on the map. Such crossing points may be Marshalled. Other fences should be crossed at strainer posts if there is no available crossing point. Deer fences should not be climbed.

When looking for a stream/river crossing point move upstream. Streams will swell in wet weather. If in doubt do not cross. Some courses may be planned to allow very logical use of existing bridges etc. In such cases, these must be used.

Wildlife:

The land crossed is a mixture of grazing and working shooting estates with hare, grouse and deer. Please do not unduly disturb any wildlife.

Out of Bounds Areas

Any areas marked on the maps as Out of Bounds must be obeyed.

Kit List

The following **must** be worn or carried by **each** competitor **each** day:

Leggings or trousers– if you prefer to take part in shorts you must carry longs
Base Layer – wicking thermal variety suggested – not a cotton T-shirt
Fell running/orienteering shoes or hillwalking boots.
Waterproof jacket - pertex/windproof not acceptable
Waterproof trousers - pertex/windproof not acceptable
Additional warm clothing – including longs if you run in shorts
Hat, gloves
Compass, whistle
Food & water bottle for the day
Emergency food equivalent to 2 mars bars
Head torch
Survival bag (foil blanket not acceptable)
First aid kit - to contain at least one triangular bandage, one 5cm x 5cm sterile dressing, plus some plasters.
Permanent pen or chinagraph pencil for marking up map
Money – in case you are stranded away from the finish.

You must carry one mobile phone per team, but this is only for emergency use. GPS's should not be used for navigation, however GPS watches are permitted to record route taken – do not use for navigation.

You must carry enough equipment in your day sack to survive overnight in bad weather if injured or lost. The above is the compulsory minimum. There will be kit checks. If you feel, given the weather forecast, that you wish to carry more, do so.

Competitors' Mid Camp Kit:

MAX WEIGHT 14KG PER COMPETITOR

This will be transported from Registration to the mid camp and back to the finish. One rucksack or zipped or roll top bag per competitor (either waterproof or with internal waterproof bags – it may spend time lying on the open ground in the rain!), labelled with name and course.

1 or 2-person Tent

Document compiled 24th February 2023

Sleeping bag

Sleeping mat

Warm clothing

Clothing to be worn on day two

Torch

Stove (not essential)

Additional food/drink

Day two breakfast

Day two hill food - including extra emergency food in case original is used on day one

First Aid – any extras such as blister plasters, personal medication you may require Plastic bag for rubbish – to be packed and taken home Toiletries including alcohol gel.