

## **Pennine Fell Runners - Safety Page**

### **Introduction.**

Fell running is an extreme sport and injuries and fatalities do happen. Pennine does not take responsibility for anyone who runs with the club on organised events and it's therefore essential that each individual takes responsibility for his/her own safety. As well as the handicaps and other special events, this also applies to any Thursday night run. These are not structured training sessions, so there is no designated organiser or run leader, which means that it's possible there might not be anyone there with more hill experience than you. Therefore you should take all the standard precautions that you would on any solo training run. The decision to take part in any fell running event (FRA race, Pennine handicap, relay event etc) is the responsibility of the individual runner, and nobody else.

### **Kit requirements**

What kit you wear and carry depends on the weather, the route, the time of year, and your personal circumstances. At a minimum, and in line with FRA best practice guidelines, you should carry full body cover (waterproof or windproof according to conditions), hat, gloves, map, compass, whistle and emergency food. Extra items could include a spare top, survival bag, torch, spare batteries, water bottle, electrolyte tablets, emergency shelter and first aid kit. This is what the club advises, but the responsibility for carrying appropriate kit rests with the individual runner, and not with the club.

### **Hypothermia**

The FRA produce a useful guide on the risks and how to minimise them ([FRA Hypothermia Leaflet](#)). It's important to remember that wind chill significantly reduces the apparent temperature. You should always have enough kit to keep you warm if you have to walk off the hill in any weather conditions.

### **Navigation**

The club offers numerous opportunities to practice basic map and compass navigation in familiar areas. Specific training sessions have also been organised when there is sufficient interest from members.

Five golden rules to prevent you getting lost are:

- Distance – how far in total? and how far between significant points en route?
- Direction – use compass bearings – if the path you're supposed to be on runs north/south, you shouldn't be going east or west
- Duration – how long will it take overall? And between significant points? If what you're looking for is over a mile away you're not going to get there in less than 5 minutes
- Description – determine in advance what you expect to see, what type of ground you will be covering, climbs and descents, significant features eg ridge, wall, and tick off these elements as you run along
- Destination – clarify to yourself and with others where you are actually trying to reach and have in mind a feature which will tell you if you have overshoot.

There has been much discussion about the use of GPS in fell running. No one is saying it should not be used in an emergency situation or if something has gone wrong and you need to get yourself safely off the

hill. However, technology can fail for many reasons so it should not be your only means of navigating on the fells.

## **Links**

General safety on the fells; Fell Runners Association Safety Requirements

Hypothermia; FRA guide

Mountain Weather Information Service: [www.mwis.org.uk](http://www.mwis.org.uk)