

EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT

RSABI GREAT GLEN CHALLENGE 2019

Friday 30 August 2019

Event: Multi-sport endurance challenge

Location: Fort Augustus to Banavie, Great Glen, Highland Region

Date: Friday 30 August 2019

Organiser: Nina Clancy

Organisation: RSABI

Trail event licence: Issued by Bruce Kocjan-Briggs, The Highland Council, following a two stage approval process based on the detailed event plan and the event risk assessment.

The event has been held annually for 7 years. The route has been revised on several occasions to improve logistics and lower risk. The 2019 course remains the same as 2018 with a carefully planned route divided in 4 separate sections. The route schedule document, including emergency contact details and maps for each stage, is in place and published to all competitors with a matching route card.

Up to 27 teams of 4 people plus a support driver are active in the Glen on trail, loch and road between 9am and approximately 3.30pm. The event involves 4 sporting disciplines over approximately 46km. Between 96-108 competitors work concurrently in different stage locations. All are registered, listed and carry numbers on the course.

The 2019 event is the 8th annual running of RSABI Great Glen Challenge. There have been no previous incidents recorded.

Activity 1: Mountain Biking

Bike route selected largely on Great Glen Way trail. A short section of minor road connects the trail through Achnacarry. A marshal, stewards and signage manage the route and the trail transition. Bikers cycle alone from a staggered start and are requested to cycle in groups of no more than 2 or 3 at any stage on the route. Support vehicles are on call along the route. A small number of marshals and stewards are in place at set locations, carefully chosen for safety on the route. Signage is also sited to maximise awareness and safety throughout the route. Overall signage has been increased since 2016. Bikers are issued with their own map with the route having been chosen to minimise the risk of becoming lost – essentially the route follows the Great Glen Way. Standard mountain bikes are used rather than faster hybrids or cyclocross versions.

Mountain bike route on Great Glen trail – regular way points are in place to supervise safety on route and provide first aid. A portaloos has been provided at a key marshal point. Competitors briefed to be respectful of public and to take care on towpaths owing to proximity to water.

- 1. Hazard:** road accident or fall from bike or failure to follow route
- 2. Who is at risk:** All competitors
- 3. Level of risk:** Road accident (unlikely + major injury = **low risk**); Fall (unlikely + first aid case/major injury casualty evacuation = **low risk**); Failure to follow route (unlikely + minor impact=**low risk**)
- 4. Control Measures to reduce risk:** avoid busy roads and particularly rough trail. The route is largely flat. Start and finish points chosen to minimise any disruption on the trail and to avoid congestion for dropping off and picking up. Appropriate safety equipment and visible clothing in place. Maps are provided to avoid getting lost. Markers are regularly placed on parts of the route. Sections are pre-planned; a support vehicle is in the locality carrying first aid kit. Regular marshal points are planned and biking will not take place in extremely poor weather conditions (e.g. heavy fog). Water stops planned at safe off-road locations, bin bags are provided for waste collection. Bikes are owned and maintained by competitors who are responsible for their own personal safety in terms of kit and behaviour. Cyclists are signed out and in at the beginning and end of the ride.

Activity 2: Kayaking

Rockhopper Sea Kayaking are sub-contracted to manage the kayaking section and supply high quality plastic mould kayaks and all modern safety equipment. Rockhopper, who is an experienced provider with 6 years previous experience of the Challenge event, has supplied a separate company risk assessment and public liability insurance statement appropriate for the numbers of competitors involved in terms of instructor ratio, covering their overall professional activities prior to the event. Each year RSABI confirm approval for this documentation by authorising the overall risk assessment and submitting it to Highland Council. Kayakers will travel on sheltered water throughout, in small groups of 8/9 competitors, each supervised by a qualified Rockhopper instructor on the water. The RSABI volunteer marshal and vehicle is present and in contact at all times with groups on the loch. A further kayak qualified volunteer usually attends lochside each year. An additional shore based safety vehicle is provided by Rockhopper equipped with further safety kit. A mobile emergency ambulance is contracted for the whole event and attends the kayak section start and finish point. A short time trial section will operate between marked buoys in a sheltered area on completion of the route. This will be supervised (1/6 ratio approx.).

- 1. Hazard:** Capsize and hypothermia. Rough, cold conditions
- 2. Who is at risk:** All competitors
- 3. Level of risk:** Capsize and hypothermia (unlikely + minor injury = **low risk**).
In the event of rough weather, an appreciation will be made on site regarding supervision ratio and number of groups. In very rough conditions, kayaking may be cancelled and alternative arrangements made to walk instead.
- 4. Control Measures to reduce risk:** Loch Oich is chosen as a sheltered loch and August temperatures are temperate. Care taken to plan route with safe pre-planned short sections and clearly defined entry and exit points to water. Groups enter the water at Bridge of Oich and are briefed to stay clear of the weir feature by instructors. Kayakers paddle in groups on a safe route well clear of any hazards. The briefing will cover

capsize drills. Less experienced kayakers and weaker swimmers may be teamed up in twin cockpit kayaks. Instructors will give competitors additional coaching on the water prior to the start.

The guide is qualified in first aid, able to recognise first signs of hypothermia. Site is not remote so quick casevac if required.

Overall length and time on water is not excessive. Regular breaks are scheduled and mutual support is planned at shore locations. An on-shore safety vehicle is on duty should a competitor wish to leave the water at any point. Waterproof communications in place to shore. All equipment, including safety kit, is hired, modern and checked to be in good order.

Kayaking will not take place in excessively choppy conditions or very poor weather. Route selected with safety in mind – this section takes place in relatively sheltered, non-remote loch with quick access by road to shore. Competitors are required to be swim capable at registration, and work in supervised groups.

Kayakers are briefed to be respectful to other route users and are supervised throughout; groups will remain clear of any larger craft.

Activity 3: Walking

Walkers tackle a relatively flat, accessible section of the trail alone or in small groups. The beginning of the route is on a forest track that follows the marked Great Glen Way. There is a 50m section following an A road where a pavement and barrier is in place. The middle section of the walk takes place on a minor single track tarmac road with grass verges and rough edges (traffic usage is extremely limited). Maps and additional signage are provided. A marshal and steward are in place with a support vehicle. The final section returns to well-maintained forest track to the finish. The event mobile ambulance is on call and holds a key to give access to gated forest sections.

1. **Hazard:** slip or fall or failure to follow route
2. **Who is at risk:** All competitors
3. **Level of risk:** fall (unlikely + first aid case/minor injury=**low risk**); Failure to follow route (unlikely + minor impact=**low risk**)
4. **Control Measures to reduce risk:** walkers requested to avoid the edge of trail by water. A relatively flat section of the trail chosen for activity. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Maps are provided to avoid getting lost. The trail follows the line of a main road should anyone get lost. Markers are regularly placed on parts of the route. Walkers are signed out and in at the beginning and end of the walk.

Activity 4: Running

Runners tackle pre-planned designated sign posted route, the majority on the trail. A quiet section of B class road connects the route to the trail at the start. Start carefully chosen to manage transition from initial large group to individual runners. A safety/support vehicle will be in the area ahead of the lead runners. Small numbers run individually or in small groups of 2 or 3 runners. Marshal and stewards in attendance to manage route crossing via Bridge at Gairloch.

- 1. Hazard:** Trips and falls. Road vehicle collision or failure to follow route
- 2. Who is at risk:** All competitors
- 3. Level of risk:** Trips/falls (unlikely + first aid case = **low risk**); Collision (unlikely + first aid case/major injury casualty evacuation = **low risk**); Failure to follow route (unlikely + minor impact=**low risk**)
- 4. Control Measures to reduce risk:** care taken to plan a route largely avoiding roads – completely avoiding A class roads. Flat trails selected as norm. A safety vehicle will be in the locality. Extra signage warning motorists sited. Pre-planned way points in regular designated locations are planned where water is available. Medical kit with marshal for trips and falls. Mobile phone contacts in place. Wear appropriate footwear and bright clothing. Runners are signed out and in at the beginning and end of the route. Maps are provided to avoid getting lost. Markers are regularly placed on parts of the route. Runners are signed out and in at the beginning and end of the run.

All Activities

Competitors in each of 4 sections are listed by name and race number on separate route documents held by the marshals. All competitors are registered at the start of each section and recorded at the finishing points. Staff, transport and communications are in place should a search be necessary.

In the event of competitor injury, Marshals carry a basic first aid kit and a mobile 4x4 ambulance unit (Rescue Medics UK) is hired and will be in attendance during the day, on call for potential casualty evacuation as well as basic first aid. Rockhopper kayak guides are first aid qualified.

Cancellation

In the unlikely event that the Great Glen Challenge needs to be cancelled, the organiser undertakes to text message all team captains and volunteers to inform them and the reason why. An update will also be available on the RSABI website.

General and Safety and Volunteers

Each of 4 event sections is controlled by a designated marshal and steward. This team is co-ordinated by an event director. In addition, a small number of volunteers are provided by supporting organisations to guide competitors at key locations such as at bridges and road junctions, to provide water and give basic first aid as required.

First aid packs are carried by all RSABI marshals and may be carried by individual teams. A small number of staff, volunteers and competitors are first aider trained, sited throughout the route. A mobile 4x4 ambulance unit (Rescue Medics UK) is hired and will be in attendance during the day, on call for potential casualty evacuation as well as basic first aid. Rockhopper kayak guides are first aid qualified.

Multiple RSABI and partner support vehicles are in place in the Glen and on call.

A detailed Route Pack, containing extensive professionally produced maps, lists contact details for all staff and emergency contact details for local emergency services including Coastguard.

Care is to be taken when arriving or leaving designated drop off points on the route. The route is marked by event signs and marshals, stewards and volunteer stewards

wear high visibility jackets. Marshals and stewards are alerted to a briefing document (Route schedule) that emphasises their own safety.

Care to be taken on towpath and trail close to water. Stewards are located at designated points along route to supervise competitors. These locations are chosen to enhance safety for all competitors - for example, when crossing a bridge or road.

Public liability insurance checks have been carried out for RSABI and Rockhopper Sea Kayaking. A stage II licence is issued to operate in the Great Glen by Highland Council.

Name of Assessor: Nina Clancy, RSABI Chief Executive and Event Director

May 2019