

Juniors Report 2022 AGM

Lewis Ashton

Junior Coordinator

I will be stepping down from the Junior Coordinator role at the 2023 AGM (if I'm not deposed at the 2022 AGM). I've been in post since 2017.

We are now in a position where we have runs (almost) every term-time Sunday morning, based on a philosophy of enjoyment of running and being in the hills, rather than elite performance. We have a core of regular runners in both the U11 and O11 groups. There is a program for training leaders & maintaining DBS checks for them.

Membership

Membership stands at 33 active and paid up members. Since 2017 we have signed up 72 Juniors, some of whom have successfully transitioned into the senior ranks; at least one of whom has fully arrived in the senior ranks, but has yet to officially leave the Juniors.

Leaders

We continue to train new leaders through the UKA Leader in Running Fitness (LiRF) Scheme. Jess Lishman has completed her training & is now licensed. James Halse is in the process currently.

The FRA used to run LiRF course with a fell and hill bias. That has gone by the wayside through covid. So the standard training route is now via UKA for the basic course. FRA offer a top up for fell and hill running. We have one candidate about to take that extension up. This has extra cost attached to it £120.

We have not yet put anyone through the higher level qualification: Coach in Running fitness (CiRF), but we continue to offer this accreditation route.

In the next year we expect to put two leaders through LiRF (£190), two through the FRA extension (£120) and we would hope to put one through CiRF (£255) - although this last is still an ambition to be achieved upon!

We are open to discussions about alternative leader development routes, but realisation of such plans would be referred to the committee.

English Junior National Championships

Whilst there have been some good and determined showings in the national championships, this year has been fairly lean as all of the races have been in the Lake District, or the north Pennines, have coincided with holidays AND almost all have occurred in the exam period. A full report will be published when the final race is over in early July.

We have to acknowledge Euan Patton's performance in the senior ranks. Not least his 9th in the English/British championship race at Buckden Pike. He is still a Junior!

Blog

We now endeavour to post a weekly update on the dedicated Juniors Blog page on the club website (<https://www.dpfr.org.uk/blog/index?blog=4&category=0>) - Thanks very much to John Dalton for setting that up. Its a great resource but it is another task that needs to be fulfilled, with a level of diligence to make it viable.

Wild Camp

We do look to have a wild camp each summer, to build on that theme of adventure in the hills. It's not clear this is going to happen this year as we do not have a volunteer to organise it. Organising this being in the Dark Peak vein; all children are accompanied by a parent, so its mostly about picking an assembly point (pub tea) and a location to camp / bivvi.

Development Plans

Run leaders & youth Development

The most time consuming activity running the Juniors is getting volunteers to lead the Sunday sessions. In order to supplement the regular participation of parent helpers, it would be good if we could offer a £10 allowance for leaders for each session. This would not have to be claimed, but its availability would help with volunteer costs. In parallel to this, a key strand of development that would be good to support would be bringing in some younger people (15+) to assist with sessions. This would help learning and development of some valuable group leading and coaching skills. There are a number of Juniors & DP family members training for sport related careers who would hugely benefit from this experience. Ensuring they are not out of pocket would be the most basic of provisions.

In the event that this gets a high level of take up, consideration would have to be given to charging a small fee (£1?) for a session. This should be monitored though the committee meetings.

Thanks

It's important to recognise that a number of people have helped a great deal over the last five years with leading, coaching and the development of the plans. Many of whom have seen their kids join, develop and move on. Some of whom still have kids involved. I want to pay special thanks to Helen & Glen for their support in the shaping of the Juniors and particularly for their persistent willingness to step in and lead groups when all other options have been exhausted. Kris Groom has been a coaching stalwart! He puts a huge amount of effort into planning and structuring sessions. His absence of late has been sorely noted. We wish him a full recovery and look forward to the plotted return in the autumn. Adam Taylor has helped a great deal and provided his professional services freely to the group on a persistent basis; we wish him ongoing recovery from his injury.

It would also be remiss of me not to thank the other leaders and supporters who are new regulars to the proceedings, including Jess, Michael Griffiths, Graham Cooper, Tom Moss, Mark Whitworth, Alenka Brooks, Beth Cooper, Jenny Caddick. And guest appearances from Tom Saville.

Anybody else who would like to share their love of the hills with enthusiastic kids is always welcome. We can help, support and accommodate you for a one off, or for repeat visits. The commitment asked for is limited and endlessly flexible; we have some who just do a session a year. It all helps!

Get out there and enjoy the hills!

Lewis