



# SKYRUNNER® UK • IRELAND SERIES

## \*\*\* FINAL INSTRUCTIONS \*\*\*

There is just a few days until our Mourne Skyline Mountain-Trail Race.

### Below are the 'Final Race Day Instructions'...

This email includes ESSENTIAL Final Instructions for the event. These will also be made available (with course maps) in the 'Final Race Day Instructions' article at [www.mourneskylinemtr.com/latest-news](http://www.mourneskylinemtr.com/latest-news)

Please ensure that you have a read through the instructions below thoroughly.

**IMPORTANT** - If you have entered a friend or family member in the race, please ensure that you pass on these instructions as they are extremely important.

**Mourne Skyline Mountain-Trail Race**  
Skyrunner UK & Ireland National Series  
Saturday 2nd October 2021 (Race Start: 9am)  
*35k – 3,370m of ascent*

The 7<sup>th</sup> annual Mourne Skyline Mountain-Trail Race is just a few days away! We hope that your training has gone well and that you are looking forward to the event as much as we are!

To ensure that registration and race day operations run as smoothly as possible, we have included some important final instructions for competitors.

Please also make sure you have read our COVID-19 Operational Delivery Plan [HERE](#).

Please read on...

## **RUNNER INSTRUCTIONS:**

### **Race HQ:**

**Race HQ is located at NEWCASTLE BAPTIST CHURCH HALL, 17 Bryansford Road, Newcastle, BT33 ODU.**

There is **NO CAR PARKING AT RACE HQ**. The official race car park is within the grounds of Donard Park; it is the commonly used 'overspill car park'. A map is available [HERE](#). Please do not use the large Donard Park Car Park as we have been asked to leave this free for visitors to Newcastle.

In the car park, please be aware of your surroundings and socially distance at all times. Do not gather in groups.

As per our COVID-19 Operational Delivery Plan, random temperature checks will be carried out at the entrance of Race HQ. Please also use the hand sanitiser just inside the entrance.

**Please wear a face covering / mask at all times at Race HQ and when queuing to get in (even if this is outside!).**

At Race HQ you will be expected to wait OUTSIDE, so please dress appropriately in case you have to wait. No gatherings inside ANY buildings, or confined spaces will be permitted.

You must not leave any belongings at RACE HQ as when registration closes, the building will be closed and deep cleaned – race day operations will then be coordinated from the start and finish area in Donard Park Playing Fields.

### **Toilets / Showers / Changing:**

Public toilets are available in Donard Car Park, in between the official race car park and Race HQ; also, within 30metres of the start and finish area.

There will be NO changing facilities available. Participants should come to the race ready to compete, and then have enough warm clothing with them to put on until they can get a warm shower and get changed. There will be NO showering facilities available.

## **Registration:**

There will be a strict one-way system in operation within Race HQ. It is ESSENTIAL that participants follow this and do not gather within the hall at any time. This will NOT be permitted, in-line with our COVID-19 Risk Assessment.

Registration for the Mourne Skyline MTR will take place during the following times:

Saturday 2nd October 2021: 7am to 8:30am

We would encourage everyone to arrive as early as possible to help reduce congestion closer to the race start time. Race HQ and Registration will close STRICTLY at 8.30am, with absolutely NO exceptions.

After our 'fitness to compete' and 'mandatory kit' questions at registration, you will be given your race pack, this will include:

- Your race number;
- SportIdent Timing Card / Dibber Device;
- a course map;
- Mars Bar (can be used as essential food);
- Mourne Skyline MTR face-covering;
- Mourne Skyline MTR T-Shirt.

Please take the race number to the next table, which is the PRIMAL TRACKING TEAM, who will scan your number and allocate you a 'tracker'. The tracker will then be secured to your race vest/belt in which you carry your mandatory kit, so please bring this with you to Race HQ.

## **Kit Check:**

In-line with our COVID-19 Risk Assessment, we will not physically check your mandatory kit (listed within these instructions) at registration, however, you will be formally asked if you have it. It is then your responsibility to have the listed kit should you need it.

Our race team, with appropriate PPE, will also be carrying out spot checks on the start line prior to the race getting underway. Random checks will take place on the course and at the finish line.

## **Mandatory Kit:**

Given the nature of the event and course, and in the interests of YOUR safety, we have put together a list of mandatory kit that you **MUST** bring with you to the kit check. This kit is listed below:

- Waterproof Jacket with Hood (must have taped seams)
- Waterproof Trousers
- Hat or Buff (buff can be used as face-covering)
- Face Covering (as above, buff can be used as face-covering)
- Gloves
- Whistle
- Space / Foil Blanket
- Emergency Food (Mars Bar will be provided at registration)
- Container/s Capable of Carrying 500ml of Water
- Course Map (this will be provided alongside your race number)
- Compass
- Head Torch (with Spare Batteries)
- Hand Sanitiser (small 50ml bottle)
- Fully charged Mobile Phone (see below)

We insist that every runner carries a mobile phone, with the following emergency numbers programmed into it:

- Ryan Maxwell, Race Director – 07754 718 760
- Justin Maxwell, Course Director – 07739 960 393
- Ricky Cowan, Assistant Race Director – 07803 136 002

In the event of an emergency, Ryan should be the first point of contact. He will then liaise with ProParamedics or other emergency services as appropriate. If contact cannot be made with Ryan, please call Justin next and then Ricky.

**Please Note:** In case of risk to life emergency, there is also an SOS button on your tracking device. This will alert the Primal Tracking Team that you need URGENT assistance.

**IMPORTANT:** The above mandatory kit list is provisional and understandably, may be subject to change because of extreme or unexpected weather conditions. A final mandatory kit list will be available at Race HQ during registration. You will **NOT** be asked to carry any item which is not listed above.

### **Baggage Area:**

We cannot stress this enough. Our baggage area, which will be located beside the START / FINISH AREA in DONARD PARK PLAYING FIELDS, is only for use by those who have no other way of storing their belongings whilst out on the course.

If you have a car, or access to a car, please use it! The car park is approximately 30 metres from the start and finish area.

If you must use our baggage tent, you do so on the condition that hand sanitiser is used before and after entering the tent, and you must wear your face covering throughout! Only one person must be in the tent at any one time.

### **Hiking/Racing Poles:**

Hiking/Racing Poles may be used during the event but must not be open and used within the Start/Finish Area; this is for the safety of all competitors. We would also ask anyone using hiking/racing poles to be aware of people around them whilst using poles. If you start with poles, you must finish with them. You must not leave, or collect, poles from any place or person on the course.

### **Race Briefing:**

In-line with our COVID-19 risk assessment, a race briefing will be emailed to all competitors and published on our social media pages and official website on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. This briefing will include important weather, safety, and course information, including any changes to the proposed route. It is essential that ALL participants read this.

Any late changes will be notified when you are in your Holding Area at 8:55am on race day – so please make sure you are in your Holding Area by this time!

### **Race Numbers:**

Your race number MUST be clearly visible at all times! Please place your race number on the front of your vest/t-shirt/jacket etc. Do NOT fold it, this is not clearly visible!

If circumstances arise, where you have to put on or take off clothing, which means that your race number is covered, please make it visible as you approach each marshal and the finish line.

### **Race Start:**

The race will start at exactly 9am on Saturday 2nd October 2021.

The race will start in DONARD PARK PLAYING FIELDS.

**ATHLETES WILL BE ASKED TO WAIT IN 'HOLDING AREAS' ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR PREDICTED FINISH TIME.**

**Please be in your HOLDING AREA by 08:55hrs at the very latest!**

These Holding Areas will be split in the following way:

- 3hrs – 5hrs Finish Time;
- 5hrs – 6hrs Finish Time;
- 6hrs – 7hrs Finish Time;
- 7hrs – 8hrs Finish Time.

Please only enter your holding area via the official entrance, ie where our Race Team member is standing.

Race Team members will be at the entrance to each holding area to 'clear' your SportIdent Dibber one final time, so please enter your hold area from the official entrances. Face coverings MUST be worn whilst in the Holding Areas, up until you are advised to removed them approximately 30 seconds before you are released onto the course.

We recommend that you use your Mourne Skyline MTR face covering, given to you as part of your race pack, in the start area, then keep it within your race vest / belt, for interactions with our race team on the course, then at the finish area.

Participants should wait in the 'Holding Areas' and listen carefully for announcements from the Race Team. During this time, everyone MUST always observe social distancing.

A map of how the START AREA will look is available [HERE](#).

**Aid Station / Bag Drop:**

In line with our COVID-19 risk assessment, there is only one official aid station on the course.

This is located at Fofanny Dam (**marked as CP3 on your course map**) and will be managed by Race Team members in PPE. Please note there is a DROP BAG facility here and you should use this to ensure that you have adequate nutritional items with you to complete the course safely.

When leaving your Drop Bag at Race HQ, you MUST mark it clearly as it will be your responsibility to find it at Fofanny Dam. To avoid 'close contact' our Race Team will be asked NOT to hand you your drop bag or interact with you in close proximity unless in an emergency.

Please remember, your drop bag is there for you to collect additional nutritional items. No other equipment must be left in these, nor dropped off at Fofanny Dam. Anything left at Fofanny Dam after the checkpoint closes will be taken straight to the local Refuge / Recycling Centre.

### **‘Withdrawing at Half-Way’ – Fofanny Dam:**

Participants must only start the event if they are fit enough to complete the distance.

If you must withdraw at Fofanny Dam, please surrender your race number, tracker, and SportIdent Dibber to our Race Team. Please follow the instructions of our officials there – you will be asked to sanitise your hands before removing the items and then place them on the ground, where our official will recover them having donned sufficient PPE.

In previous years, we have heard of athletes who have started the event with the intention of “seeing how they are” or withdrawing at half-way (Fofanny Dam) and getting transport back with our Race Team.

This practice **MUST** cease.

In-line with our COVID-19 risk assessment, car sharing (outside of bubbles) between Race Team and Participants will **NOT** be permitted. Anyone withdrawing at half-way will be expected to use their mobile phone (part of their mandatory kit) to arrange their own return to Donard Park.

The only exception to this is those who do not make the official cut-off and those our Medical Team (ProParamedics) deem to require medical assistance. If someone requires medical assistance, the ProParamedics team will provide transfer by ambulance.

### **Summit Checkpoints:**

For the safety of participants, there will be marshal points on the following summits:

- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Bearnagh (outward)
- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Meelmore (outward)
- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Loughshannagh (return)
- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Meelbeg (return)
- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Meelmore (return)
- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Bearnagh (return)
- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Commedagh (return)
- **Summit Checkpoint:** Slieve Donard (return)

Marshal’s will also be located at lower-level checkpoints at Donard /Commedagh Col, Fofanny Dam and Hares Gap.

## **Sport Ident Dibbers:**

As mentioned above, you will be issued with a SPORTident Timing Card (also referred to as an SI-Card or 'Dibber') at registration. This is worn on your finger.

Please take care not to lose this dibber – unfortunately, we must charge £30 for any lost 'dibbers'.

*You will be asked to 'Dib' at the following locations on the course:*

- As you enter the HOLD AREA at the START
- Checkpoint: Slieve Donard / Commedagh Col (outward)
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Bearnagh (outward)
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Meelmore (outward)
- Checkpoint - Fofanny Dam (approximately halfway point)
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Loughshannagh (return)
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Meelbeg (return)
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Meelmore (return)
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Bearnagh (return)
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Commedagh (return) \*This will be placed beside Commedagh Tower, on our course and not at the actual Summit\*
- Summit Checkpoint: Slieve Donard (return)
- As you cross the FINISH LINE

The station will beep or flash to show that it has recorded your information. This indicates that a time-stamp has been recorded on your card. This procedure is an essential requirement of the race, and any missed points may lead to disqualification.

As you cross the finish line you will be directed towards our SPORTident official, who will ensure that your 'dibber' is registered for the final time. You will be given a small printout showing your split times through each checkpoint on the route.

Each time you register your 'dibber' at a checkpoint, data is uploaded into SPORTident Timing Station, which will ensure that we can provide timing splits between checkpoints.



### **Athlete Tracking:**

Our Tracking System, operated by PRIMAL TRACKING, will be able to produce split times and final results. This will be the primary timing system for this year's event. It will also be used as a health and safety measure and can track an athlete's location.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Should you need to retire during the event, wherever possible please hand in your SportIdent Dibber and Athlete Tracker to a member of our Race Team on the route, or at the finish area.

**MAKE SURE YOU TELL THE RACE DIRECTOR YOU HAVE WITHDRAWN AND ARE SAFE** via phone call or in person. This is absolutely essential!

### **Spectators / Family and Friends:**

Every year, spectators, alongside our Race Team create the famous Mourne Skyline MTR atmosphere. Therefore, it is disappointing that we must actively encourage spectators NOT to attend the event, for everyone's safety.

To ensure that spectators can still 'watch' we will again welcome PRIMAL TRACKING as a race partner. Spectators will be able to watch the event unfold via the online tracking website.

The link to the website will be published in the days leading up to the event.

### **Cut Offs:**

Entrants must complete the course in 8 hours to guarantee a finisher's medal. We MUST be strict on this. This is not in any way an 'elitist' approach/view; it is to ensure that our marshals are also safe, as many will have been on the mountain for 10 hours, please remember this when you deal with them and respect their decisions. A 'hello and thank you' would also be nice... :o)

In addition to this and with the safety of everyone in mind, there will also be a STRICT cut off at the furthestmost point of the course, anyone who does not reach the NI Water Service Treatment Works / Fofanny Dam at Slievenaman Road, Newcastle (15k) by 12:15pm.

**Warning:** In previous years, at the Fofanny Dam cut-off, athletes have argued with officials that the race started 1-2 minutes late, hence they should be allowed additional time to pass the cut-off point – this is NOT the case. The cut off is 12:15pm; believe us when we tell you that if you are arguing over 2-3 minutes at this point, you will not make the 8-hour finish line cut-off!

If you do not make the cut-off, or you are withdrawn here for medical reasons, please make sure that you give your athlete number, SportIdent Dibber and tracker to our race team.

The only exception to this is where a runner has stopped to help another runner in trouble and this has caused him/her to miss a cut-off; in that case the runner will be referred to Ryan Maxwell (Race Director), whose decision will be final.

The Race Director/Medical Officer/Race Official reserve the right to withdraw ANY competitor at ANY time who they feel will have to spend a significant time on the course beyond the eight hour cut-off.

Transportation back to Donard Park will be provided for those athletes who do not make the cut-off. As mentioned earlier in this document, it is important to note that this transport is for athletes who do not make the cut-off, it is NOT for competitors who make the decision to 'start and see how it goes' or plan to only do half. If you plan to 'just do half', you should not be on the start line. These persons should arrange their own transport as it is likely they will have to wait for a significant amount of time in the cold.

Face coverings MUST be worn on this transport. The transport will arrive at approximately 12:00pm and leave at approximately 1pm. Please use the clothing in your mandatory kit to ensure that you stay warm if you have to wait.

### **Medical Arrangements:**

These are under the supervision of our Medical Officials, ProParamedics. ProParamedics are a very well respected independent medical provider with a high level of experience in the sports industry. They'll be patrolling the course, and an emergency ambulance is on standby throughout the race. You're reminded that YOU should ensure that you're in good health on the day of the race. Please be aware that you compete at your own risk. Please don't forget to include your 'in case of emergency' information on the back of your running number – this is for your benefit as well as ours.

### **Ongoing Medical Observations:**

If a marshal/race official is concerned about the condition of any runner at any point on the course they will be referred to our highly trained medical team (ProParamedics), Ryan Maxwell (Race Director) or Justin Maxwell (Course Director). The Medics and/or Ryan or Justin will determine what action, if any, needs to be taken: this could include a variety of measures including, if considered appropriate, instructing withdrawal from the race.

Such an instruction would only be given where it was considered necessary for your own safety and would not be taken lightly. However, it is a condition of entry that any such instruction must be followed, and the decision of the Race Officials, Official Medics or Race Director is final. Remember, any decision we make is with YOUR best interests at heart (although you may not see that at the time).

## **Litter and General Behaviour:**

The Mourne Skyline MTR course is a route of outstanding beauty, and we have worked hard to try to ensure our race is well regarded by local agencies and bodies, such as the Mourne Heritage Trust, Forestry Service, NI Water Service, NIMRA and by those living near the route, as well as others who use the Mourne Mountains.

We strongly believe that the '**LEAVE NO TRACE**' policy should be always adhered to – Anyone found intentionally dropping litter will be disqualified. Please also show consideration for walkers and other users, and **DO NOT** run-on top of/along the Mourne Wall at any stage!

## **Course Marking:**

As per International Skyrunning Federation (ISF) and Skyrunning UK & Ireland rules, the Mourne Skyline MTR course will be marked with temporary signage which will be removed immediately after the race. This will predominately take the form of florescent orange flags and florescent orange tape and in FULL visibility (where the course/path is not obvious), these will be within sight of each other. In the interests of fairness, all competitors **MUST** stay close (within 20 metres) to course markers and must **NOT** 'find the quickest way to the Summit' if it defers from the course route.

If a race official/referee reports that any participant has chosen their own route to any summit it will be investigated by the Race Director and Race Officials – This may result in the disqualification of a participant. The Race Directors decision is final.

### *Some advice for those unfamiliar with the Mourne Mountains:*

Even though the course will be marked as best as possible, you **MUST** carry a map and compass (part of your mandatory kit). **YOU** may not be able to navigate, but if you get lost, a fellow competitor or race official (or even a member of the public) with more knowledge of the area may be able to assist you by using the map and compass.

## **Race Finish:**

On completing the course, participants will arrive back at Donard Park Playing Fields.

Only race participants and Race Team members will be permitted within the event cordon (marked with black and yellow tape). This must be strictly adhered to.

On crossing the finish line, participants will be politely asked to use their face covering. They will then have their race number scanned and tracker removed by the PRIMAL TRACKING team. Their SportIdent Dibber will also be removed by the Race Team.

Due to COVID-19 risks, our famous post-race feast at Race HQ will not be available this year, but you will be directed towards a table where you can collect your well-deserved race medal and light refreshments. Hand sanitiser must be used before touching anything on the table and after touching anything on the table.

Unfortunately, medals cannot be placed around a participant's neck. They will be in individual plastic wrappers.

After collecting these items, participants must make their way out of the finish area.

A map of the race FINISH AREA is available [HERE](#).

### **Results & Prize-Giving:**

You will receive a provisional individual result print-out from our Race Team when finishing. As much as we all love to gather and chat about split times and results, can we politely request that you take this and avoid any gathering in the finish area.

In-line with our COVID-19 risk assessment, there will be no prize-giving on race day. We will hand over prizes to the top three male and female finishers and any category prize-winners we can identify quickly on race day. Any remaining prizes will be posted to winners.

Live results will be produced throughout the day – we will publish the website address for this in the run up to race day. Official results will be produced and published on the official event website at [www.mourneskylinemtr.com](http://www.mourneskylinemtr.com) as soon as possible after the event.

**Please remember 'LIVE TRACKING'**... individual progress and times will be available on the tracking website (link will be shared ahead of race day) throughout the day.

### **MP3 Players:**

'In-Ear' headphones must not be worn on the course for health and safety reasons.

This will ensure that you can hear instructions from Race Officials or indeed, from your fellow competitors, who may be warning you in relation to danger.

### **Dogs:**

Despite our love for our four-legged friends, dogs (or any other pets) are NOT permitted on the course with any participant. Failure to comply with this will result in immediate disqualification.

**A reminder of our COVID-19 procedures (as per our COVID-19 Operational Delivery Plan):**

Anyone participating in the Mourne Skyline MTR must agree to abide by our COVID-19 procedures, as laid out in our COVID-19 Operational Delivery Plan (previously emailed to all participants).

Please also take some time to update yourself on the latest COVID-19 guidance and do not attend the event if you suspect you have COVID-19 symptoms.

The latest COVID-19 guidance relating specifically to Northern Ireland is available [HERE](#).

**Further Information:**

Please ensure that you read our COVID-19 Operational Delivery Plan alongside these final race day instructions.

If you have any questions or would like to ask or clarify anything, please do not hesitate to contact Race Director, Ryan Maxwell on 07754 718 760 or by email at [mourneskylinemtr@gmail.com](mailto:mourneskylinemtr@gmail.com)