

Planner's Comments

Shame about the alarmist weather warnings, which must have contributed in some measure to the poor turnout and real thanks to those that did turn out and make it worthwhile.

The weather was not exactly kind, but the running conditions were good. The snows in December really annihilated the courses. Before then I was concerned that times would have been a bit on the long side, but in the event I have never seen the western side of Kinver so runnable. You could see some of the controls from at least 100m and run direct. Mostly impossible before the snow. Many areas I avoided would have been perfectly useable on the day.

The 'Edge' divides the area North/South into two narrow strips, so it is difficult to plan courses without unreasonable climbs, hence the slightly shorter courses. Times on the Blue and Green course were a lot quicker than I expected. I never envisaged people getting below or around 50 mins and 40 mins respectively. Well done to you all, Respect!

The snows brought down a lot of trees in the plantation area near the start, the Kinver ranger and his team did a splendid job of clearing them.

Many thanks to Adrian for taking on the organisers role at the last minute, without his input the event could not have taken place. The controller Ian Hopkins did an excellent job with the occasional comment to nudge me in the right direction. He spent a lot of time out checking control sites, even with the snow on the ground. Obviously thanks to the many other helpers standing or sitting around in the cold and wet, not tasks to relish in the conditions. Special thanks to the control collectors who having been out getting cold and wet once then took on the extra task of collecting everything in and getting cold and wet again. Thanks also to Tim who helped put out controls on Saturday in the rain and snow, and Sunday morning in the rain and snow and he still went out to collect controls, by which time he had run out of anything dry!

Barry Houghton.

Controller's Comments

Snow seems to be a recurring theme of this event. I allocated two days early December to check control sites and there was 2-4 inches of snow. Snow was again forecast for the weekend and I was checking the weather with the planner till 9:30 on Sat night.

I was concerned about having icy conditions on narrow and hilly access lanes, but Sun morning was clear and dry. As I was checking controls it was OK till 8am then the temperature dropped and the forecast snow arrived. It provided a nice dusting underfoot.

Many thanks to the planner, organiser and helpers in putting the event on, and the competitors who braved the elements and cold. Attendance was about 50% down, probably due to localised snow elsewhere making journeys difficult. Those that braved the elements were rewarded with Kinver at its best and most runnable for years.

Barry's courses were a challenge and made use of the southern area now that it is all under one ownership. I thought about making cagoules compulsory, but judging from competitors at the finish most were all wrapped up and dressed for the conditions. It was good to have parking near the farm shop which did a roaring trade in hot drinks and after-run food.

Ian Hopkins.

Organiser's comments

I last organised at Kinver on a sunny Sunday in May 2010. Suffice it to say that the January 2018 event was held under different conditions. We'd kind of decided the day before that, if the weather forecast was correct, the event would go ahead. And the forecast did seem to be correct: as I drove down the M5 in the dawn it was about zero degrees and the snow was starting lightly to fall. When I arrived on Sandy Lane the phone went ó is the event on? Er, yes. Okay, decision made. The right decision, we think. It was difficult to get to Kinver from certain directions, but most people who were going to come still came, and the event passed off very efficiently. Many thanks to all the helpers who came and stood or sat for an hour or two in the freezing conditions. This is immensely appreciated by the club, by the competitors, and by me.

In the end I think the weather was slightly worse than forecast: the snowfall was light but significant. The way the water started to cascade off the barn roof, and the way the puddles in the forest grew considerably larger as the morning went on, was testament to that. The cold and damp crept up on me, as it were, and I was very glad to have the warmth of the farm shop to disappear into for ten minutes.

Parking is always an issue at Kinver. There are certain problems with parking at the farm shop, but we are still indebted to Ian Sadler and his family and staff for the way they are so keen to help. We did wonder about the advisability of walking to/from the Start along the lane, but it wasn't a problem, especially as a lot of Sunday drivers were sensibly staying at home.

Adrian Bailey