



# SPINE

**WINTER RACES**

**THE MONTANE WINTER SPINE - RACE PACK**



MONTANÉ

# SPINE

## WINTER RACES

### THE EVENT

The Montane Winter Spine Race is Britain's most brutal and one of the world's most challenging endurance races; an epic adventure that tests physical and mental fortitude to the limit. Competitors race 268 miles non-stop along Britain's most iconic trail - the Pennine Way. The Pennine Way is a route from Edale in Derbyshire to Kirk Yetholm, Scotland, tracing the backbone of England. It crosses some of the toughest terrain in the country, from the Peak District, through the Yorkshire Dales, across the North Pennines, over the World Heritage-listed Hadrian's Wall, on to the remote Cheviot Hills and, finally, that elusive village of Kirk Yetholm. It's a truly brutal challenge that takes place during the full intensity and ferocity of the British winter.

### OUR ETHOS

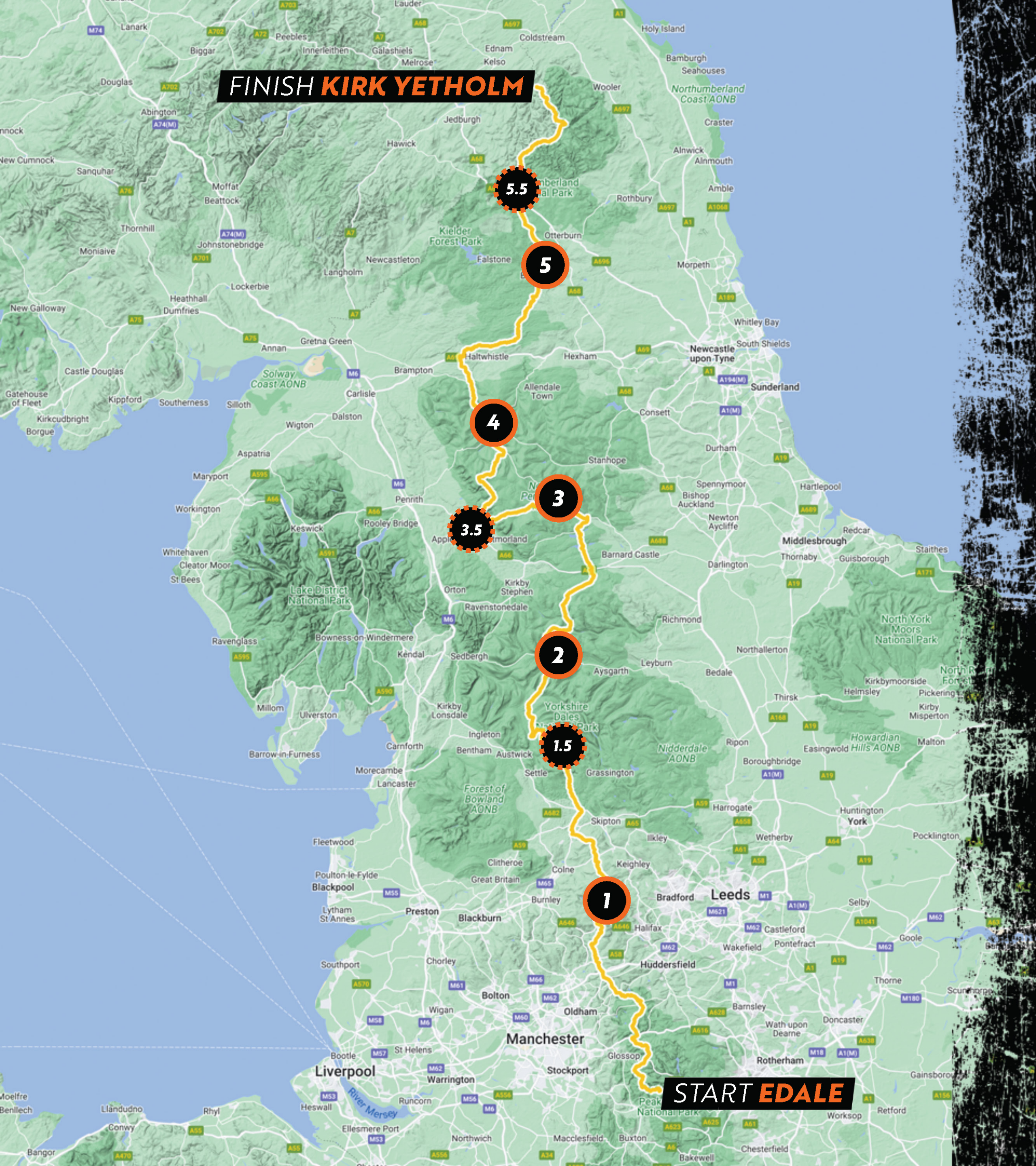
The Montane Winter Spine retains our ethos of day and night racing, self-reliance and self-management. This is what sets this race apart from others. Part of the adventure of taking on a challenge of this magnitude is building the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure you are safe in a time of need. That said, we attach a GPS tracker to you with an emergency SOS button.

### THE TEAM

The Montane Spine team will support your herculean efforts by being there when you really need us. We have a race HQ Team who monitor your progress 24hrs a day, an event safety team who will support you on the course, checkpoint teams who will provide you with some of the comforts of home when you need a rest, baggage transfers for your resupply and an excellent medical team.

### THE CHALLENGE

The Montane Winter Spine is our most feared and revered winter race. The time limit to complete the race is 168 hours. The overall course record is 72:55:05 held by Jack Scott (GBR). The current woman's record is 83:12:23 held by Jasmin Paris (GBR).



# THE ROUTE

The route is 268 miles long with five mandatory checkpoints along the way. Runners must ensure they check in and out of every checkpoint and meet the mandatory cut off times or be withdrawn.

- S** **EDALE VILLAGE HALL** SK 123 853
- 1** **HEBDEN HEY SCOUT CENTRE** SD 978 292  
Distance: 46 miles Ascent: 2,321 metres Cut-off: Arrive by 20hrs - Leave by 22hrs.
- 1.5** **MALHAM TARN** SD 893 672  
Monitoring point only Cut-off: 48 hours
- 2** **HAWES YHA** SD 868 897  
Distance: 67 miles Ascent: 2,923 metres Cut-off: 60 hours
- 3** **MIDDLETON IN TEESDALE, LANGDON BECK YHA** NY 860 304  
Distance: 42 miles Ascent: 1,482 metres Cut-off: 87 hours
- 3.5** **DUFTON VILLAGE HALL** NY 687 251  
Monitoring point only
- 4** **ALSTON YHA** NY 716 460  
Distance: 31 miles Ascent: 1,633 metres Cut-off: 110 hours
- 5** **BELLINGHAM, BROWN RIGG LODGES** NY 833 826  
Distance: 42 miles Ascent: 1,318 metres Cut-off: 136 hours
- 5.5** **BYRNES, FOREST VIEW WALKERS INN** NT 764 027  
Monitoring point only Cut-off: 148 hours
- F** **KIRK YETHOLM, BORDER HOTEL** NT 827 282  
Distance: 43 miles Ascent: 1,519 metres Cut-off: 168 hours

# ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



# YOUR EXPERIENCE

This isn't a beginner friendly race. To help runners stay safe we do require a level of relevant past experience. You must be aged 21 years or over at the time of the race.

## **AUTOMATIC QUALIFICATION**

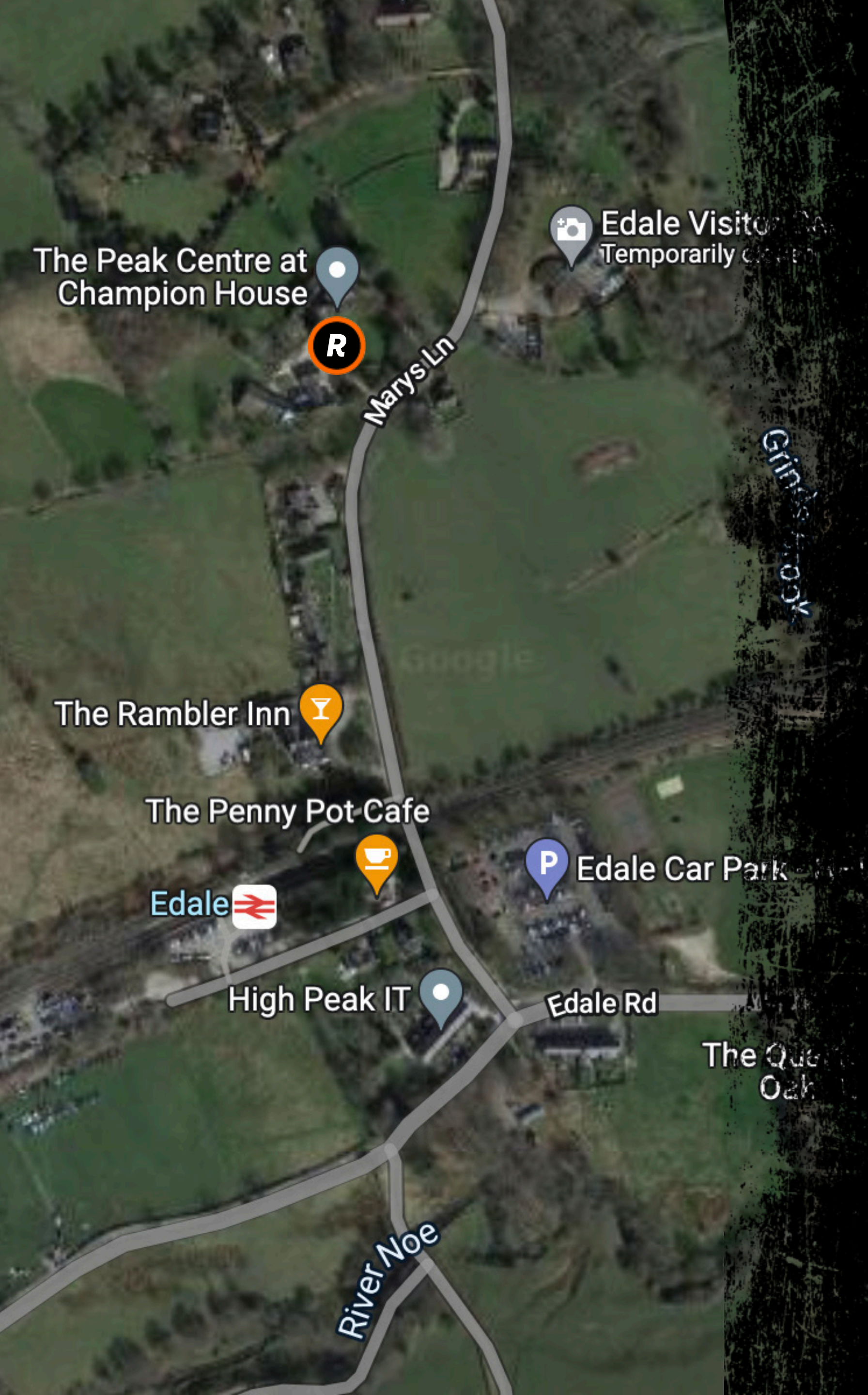
If you have run an ultra over 80 miles, and/or have previously completed The Montane Spine Challenger (North or South), then this will immediately qualify you for the race.

## **VETTING PROCESS**

If you don't meet these criteria, your experience can be drawn from other events. Mountain marathons, orienteering events, or fell races are looked on favourably. The more a challenge features mountainous terrain and elements of navigation the better.

If you feel you have skills or experience not mentioned here, include it in your entry form. We are also very happy to advise those who feel they don't yet have the experience level required, on what races or experiences they could do to gain entry.





# RACE INFORMATION

## START AND FINISH TIMES

**Race Start:** 08:00, Sunday 12th January, Edale Village Hall, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 7ZA.  
Please note: Tracker fitting will be between 06.30 and 7.30 before race start.

**Race Finish:** 08:00, Sunday 19th January, Border Hotel, The Green, Kirk Yetholm, Kelso TD5 8PQ.

## EVENT REGISTRATION

**Timings:** Race registration and equipment inspection will begin from 12:00 noon on Saturday 11th January 2025. This time is provisional and will be confirmed closer to the event. Staggered time slots for registration will be allocated to all runners. You will be asked in advance which time slot you would like to register in.

**R Location:** Peak Centre, Edale

## REGISTRATION PROCESS

Firstly, your equipment inspection will take place. Once completed, you will need to present your ID, such as your driving licence or passport in order to register. At this point, you will receive your race number and a photograph will be taken for identification purposes.

After kit check and registration, make your way to the village hall for a 30 minute in-person race briefing. If you do not need access to your drop bag, it can be checked in at the village hall after your race briefing. Alternatively, they can be checked in before tracker fitting on race day. Please ensure your bag is waterproof and does not exceed the 20kg weight limit.

# CHECKPOINT INFORMATION

## WHAT TO EXPECT AT A CHECKPOINT

- At each checkpoint you will be given ample encouragement from friendly, helpful volunteers.
- In addition, you will be provided with hot meals, hot and cold drinks including water.
- Medical support will be provided by our empathetic and highly qualified medics.
- You will have access to toilets and showers.
- Some checkpoints will offer floor space to sleep on, others have bunks, and some have camping facilities - we strongly recommend earplugs and a sleeping mask.
- There will be an 'Information Point' providing weather and race updates, notices from Race HQ, cut-off times and distances to the next checkpoint.
- The logistics team ensures your resupply bag is moved along the route from checkpoint to checkpoint. On arrival and departure of a checkpoint, each runner MUST register with a checkpoint volunteer.
- Runners are permitted to stay for a maximum of 8 hours.
- At the three monitoring stations, you will get access to medical support, hot and cold water. The maximum stay, including medical support, is 30 minutes. There will be no access to your resupply bag at either of the stations.
- You must ensure your race number is recorded by our course monitors if requested during the race. Failure to do this will incur a penalty and if it happens more than once possible penalties or expulsion.



# THE KIT LIST

**The Spine Races require an extensive amount of mandatory minimal kit for safety due to the arduous nature of the events, remoteness of the course, and potential for bad weather conditions.**

Therefore, ALL RUNNERS ARE REQUIRED TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL COMPULSORY KIT LIST with specifications and guidance. The 2025 kit list is currently being updated but you can download the 2024 list for reference via this link:

[DOWNLOAD FULL KIT LIST](#)

You may be asked to show that you have items from the compulsory list at any point on the course on arrival or departure of a checkpoint. Failure to comply may incur a range of penalties which, depending on severity, could ultimately result in disqualification. These penalties are listed in more detail in the full kit list document.

If you have any questions about the Kit Requirements you can contact our Kit Manager Lindley Chambers at [lindley@thespinerace.com](mailto:lindley@thespinerace.com)





# FAQs





# FAQs

## **YOU MAY STILL HAVE SOME QUESTIONS**

Here are a few answers of some FAQ's for those who dare to toe the line...

### **HOW WELL IS THE PENNINE WAY WAYMARKED?**

The route is a National Trail and is therefore fairly well waymarked. However, many skilled navigators have made errors, especially in bad weather or while racing at night. Good navigation skills are very important. Using a GPS unit is mandatory. We provide a GPX file of the route. As we need to engage with many stakeholders along the route to ensure the GPX file is accurate, it will not be available until very close to the race.

### **WILL I GET PENALISED FOR GOING OFF COURSE?**

We accept that the combination of sleep deprivation and night-time navigation are likely to lead to some moments of navigational embarrassment. Our rule is that once you realise you're off course, get back to the place you left the Pennine Way via the quickest route. If we judge that a significant competitive advantage has been gained, we reserve the right to issue a time penalty. Time penalties can also be issued if you do not follow signed diversions.

### **HOW DO I CONFIGURE MY GPS FOR BRITAIN?**

Your GPS needs to be configured as follows:

Position Format: British Grid / British National Grid

Map Datum: ORD SRVY GB

Your GPS will report your position with a high degree of accuracy. For simplicity we shorten this to a six digit reference in most instances. Please ensure that you understand the BRITISH GRID system on your paper maps. BRITISH GRID uses a combination of letters and numbers to signify your position.

# FAQs

## **HOW DO THE TRACKERS WORK?**

Each competitor is equipped with a GPS tracking device weighing 100 grams. We use the tracker to monitor your progress and register your finish time. There is an SOS button for emergency use only - once pressed you are out of the race. It sends a one way signal to Race HQ who will then contact you via your mobile phone and deploy a Spine Safety Team to your location. If you are with another racer who has activated their SOS button, please stay with them. Any time spent helping others will be credited back to you.

## **CAN I ACCEPT HELP EN ROUTE? WHAT ABOUT CAFES AND PUBS?**

The Spine Races are unsupported events. But you are welcome to utilise cafes and pubs en route for sustenance and shelter. There's some history of Spinners being offered sustenance by locals, which is a nice touch, so we deem that to be fine. What's not okay is pacing, receiving planned support or having a private support vehicle follow your progress.

## **DO YOU PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION PRIOR TO THE RACE START?**

No. You need to arrange your own pre-race accommodation. We strongly recommend that you book your stay at the YHA Edale or similar. Castleton YHA is in close proximity if Edale is full, but you may require transportation to the briefings and start line.

You can book your accommodation at [www.yha.org.uk/hostel/edale](http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/edale)

## **I WISH TO LEAVE MY CAR IN EDALE, WHAT ARE THE CAR PARKING ARRANGEMENTS?**

If you wish to leave a vehicle in Edale this is possible by purchasing parking via the PaybyPhone app or by getting a rover pass from High Peak Borough Council for 3 or 7 days depending on your requirements. These can be bought directly through the council but must be purchased in advance: [www.highpeak.gov.uk/article/2490/Three-and-seven-day-rover-pass](http://www.highpeak.gov.uk/article/2490/Three-and-seven-day-rover-pass)

**article/2490/Three-and-seven-day-rover-pass**

At the time of writing, the Local Authority state you need to allow 5 working days for the pass to be posted out.





## FAQs

### **I AM TRAVELLING TO THE UK AND I HAVE LUGGAGE WITH ME, CAN YOU TRANSPORT IT FOR ME? (INTERNATIONAL ONLY)**

Yes. We can transport a 1 x 20kg (max) bag for an additional fee. The bag will be transported to every checkpoint you visit along with your resupply bag, but will NOT be accessible.

Montane Winter Spine Race: £50

### **CAN I PURCHASE GAS FOR MY STOVE AT THE RACE REGISTRATION? (INTERNATIONAL ONLY)**

Yes, we have 100g screw type canisters for sale at the race registration.

### **HOW LONG CAN I ACCESS THE FINISH VENUE?**

Once you finish your event we don't just kick you out the door! However, once the race has concluded we need to clean and tidy our venues to the standards we received them. Once the race has concluded (for example after 168 hours) finish venues will be accessible for up to 4 hours.

### **HOW DO I GET HOME?**

As we never know the precise time that you will finish it is very difficult to have pre-arranged transport. We will of course help you with numbers for local taxi companies, bus and train timetables, and even a lift matching service. Please contact a member of the Checkpoint Team for information on ride-sharing. If you are a UK-based athlete it is advisable to have a family member or friend come and collect you at your finish.

### **WHERE CAN MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOLLOW THE RACE?**

Our Media Team provide rolling coverage of the entire event via our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts. Our videographers also scour the route producing daily update videos for the folks at home to watch. On top of this, your fans will be able to 'dot-watch' throughout as they follow your GPS tracker along the route via our live GPS tracking system. The media team also make their photos available for sale after the event so you can purchase proof of your amazing achievement. If friends or family wish to cheer you on, limit this to one instance during the race. Do not accept food or drink, or exchange any other items with them. Media organisations or personnel, including creation of content for YouTube channels will require HQ approval.

# FAQs

## **WHAT HAPPENS WITH LOST PROPERTY?**

Prior to your departure from the event please check the lost property box. If you realise an item has been lost when you return home, get in touch with us. If it has been found, you will be informed of any charges and how to pay this prior to us returning it.

## **IS THERE A FINISHER'S MEDAL?**

There certainly is. Although you'll need to get all the way to Kirk Yetholm to get one! You will also receive a finisher T-shirt, and a high quality A4 certificate.

## **WHAT IF I ENTER BUT CAN NO LONGER RACE?**

We would always recommend that every runner purchases appropriate insurance to cover your participation in a Montane Spine event and the costs of your entry fee, should you not be able to take part. The race has enormous infrastructure costs, most of which are fixed and committed up to twelve months in advance, which unfortunately prevents the option of a full refund. We want to be as fair as possible though, so while your entry fee includes a non-refundable deposit, if you notify us 100 days before the race (see Terms & Conditions), you will get a partial refund. Please read the T&Cs before making your payment.

## **IS THERE SOMEWHERE FOR RUNNERS TO TRADE TIPS/ADVICE ABOUT THE RACE?**

There is an Official Spine Race Group on Facebook with over 4000 members, all of whom are happy to answer your questions about kit, logistics, training or whatever else you might be wondering about. Many of those in the group are finishers of multiple Spine Race events and will have priceless advice for you. It's also a great place to meet other runners for organised recces of the route. You can request to join the group here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OfficialSpineGroup>



# CHECKPOINT FAQs

## **YOU MAY STILL HAVE SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT CHECKPOINTS**

Here are answers to some Frequently Asked Questions about the checkpoints along the route...

### **CAN I HAVE A RESUPPLY BAG AT CHECKPOINTS?**

Yes, we will transport one 20kg resupply bag for you to every checkpoint you visit. It must meet the following criteria:

Your resupply bag should be sturdy enough to not split open if thrown or dropped into the back of a vehicle or box. Your resupply bag must be either a holdall or duffel bag. DO NOT use black plastic bags or carrier bags, as these will not be taken. Everything must fit inside.

It is advisable that your resupply bag is waterproof.

### **WHAT IF I HAVE SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS?**

Any dietary requirements indicated on your race entry is noted and appropriate food will be available.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DROP OUT AT A CHECKPOINT?**

Unfortunately, some of you will not complete your race. We will help you with your transport arrangements – numbers for local taxi companies, bus and train timetables, and even a lift matching service bringing together those who have some spare capacity in their vehicle with those seeking lifts. Talk to the CP volunteers if you require help with this.





# CHECKPOINT FAQs

## **WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM TIME I CAN STAY AT A CHECKPOINT?**

There is a maximum of 8 hours allowed in the main CPs. Monitoring locations at Malham Tarn, Dufton Village Hall & Forest View Walkers Inn, Byrness are subject to a 30-minute maximum stay.

## **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I LEAVE?**

The CP team will record your departure time and check you have all your kit or that it is packed in your resupply bag. Walking poles and footwear have been popular lost property items in previous years. Ensure your resupply bag is placed in the appropriate baggage area ready for transfer to the next CP. Navigate back to the Pennine Way.

## **IS ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED AT THE FINISH?**

At the end of your race, you are permitted to use the checkpoints for a reasonable amount of time, as we understand you might be tired and in need of some rest.

The finish in Kirk Yetholm has access to a simple hall with sleeping space (floor), food, and toilet facilities. There is limited access to showers and you may have to wait at busy times.

There are accommodation options in Kirk Yetholm, but demand for this is high.

If you need to cancel pre-booked accommodation as you no longer need the room, please inform the accommodation ASAP to allow others use of this facility and to avoid upsetting the owner.

## **CAN FAMILY AND FRIENDS JOIN ME IN A CHECKPOINT?**

No. All CP buildings and car parks are for Spine personnel and athletes only. I'm sure you appreciate that checkpoints can be very busy places. We want to ensure safety teams have access at all times and that you get the support, care and attention needed to successfully complete your race.

If friends or family wish to cheer you on, limit this to one instance during the race. Do not accept food or drink, or exchange any other items with them. Media organisations or personnel, including creation of content for YouTube channels will require HQ approval.

# ***RACE TIPS***







# SPINE RACE TIPS

**FROM DAMIAN HALL, OUTDOOR JOURNALIST & WINNER OF WINTER SPINE RACE 2023**

**'Fitness is important. But running/racing fitness is less important than you might think – you can just about power-hike the race inside the cutoffs. Being topographically embarrassed in the dark and horizontal rain when sleep deprived and up to your armpits in peat bog, and being able to sort yourself out, is a better asset. Are you comfortable in that scenario?'**

Think about how you'll train mentally for the Spine. Above all else, it's your mind that'll get you to Kirk Yetholm. Practising the above will help. It's better to be undertrained and injury free than well trained but with a niggle.

Strength training and hiking are good preparation too. In training, get used to carrying that pack and using it, so you know the best place for food, maps and gloves. Add weight to your pack incrementally, so it's not too demoralising at first and there'll be less injury risk as the body adapts.

Print and laminate a check-point check list: change batteries, change map, socks, charge phone, eat, sleep, et al. You'll be deeply tired. It's surprising how much time is lost through muddle-headed faffing.

Do everything you can (avoid snotty toddlers) in the fortnight before the race. Cold and flu have caused DNFs and DNSs. Use First Defence Nasal Spray. In that final week, rest, rest, rest. Eat well.

During the race, be wary of moving to a schedule. It almost always takes longer than you think and there's no need to give yourself something extra to be demoralised about.'

# SPINE RACE TIPS

**FROM DAMIAN HALL, OUTDOOR JOURNALIST & WINNER OF WINTER SPINE RACE 2023**

**'If there's one word that sums up the successful Spiner's mindset, it's adaptability. You will face problems and setbacks. How will you deal with them, both practically and emotionally? The adaptable Spiner is more likely to get to KY.'**

Try not to totally neglect hygiene. Sure, cleaning your teeth after every snack might be overdoing it. But never cleaning teeth or washing hands or, especially, taking care of your feet, can lead to some strange and weird problems, which again could become serious and race-ending.

It's commonly thought that sleeping with legs slightly elevated delays the likelihood of feet swelling. Be nice to the race's staff and volunteers. Many of them have had less sleep than you and given up their time for free. Plus you'll likely see them again later in the race.

**Smile. Even when you're hurting. Smiling causes dopamine to be released, the brain's pleasure juice. Trick yourself into thinking you're having a fun time.'**

Damian Hall



**GOOD LUCK!**

