



Balmoral Road Races Ltd

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ANNUAL REPORT | 2024



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I can confidently claim that this year's event proved to be one of the most successful in the 25-year history of the Balmoral races with 4302 runners taking part from an entry of 5102, which represents an excellent 84% turnout. That's the second highest number of runners we have ever seen on the estate. It was, once again, a remarkable two days, and although the mild and mainly sunny conditions we enjoyed on the Saturday were replaced by cooler temperatures and greyer skies on the Sunday, the enthusiasm of those taking part never diminished.

We witnessed some remarkable performances with Scotland international Sean Chalmers winning the Harbour Energy 5k, the Stena Drilling 10k and the Bristow 15 mile trail race, while Sam Milton won the John Clark Devil of Deeside Challenge for the third year in a row. I also applaud the magnificent achievements of Sally Wallis who set a record time in the Devil of Deeside women's competition, and youngster Millie Glass Park who ran the fastest time in the history of the MPH primary school girls 1.5k. These are excellent athletes, but we admire each and every one of the people who participated in the series of eight races over the weekend. They are all winners.



REPORT FROM THE BOARD

Reflecting on another fantastic event and looking towards an exciting future

Everyone who completed one of the races was rewarded by receiving the fourth in a series of five specially designed medals featuring well-known landmarks in and around the estate. Previous medals have shown Lochnagar, Balmoral Castle and Albert's Cairn. This year's medal showcased Crathie Kirk. Devil of Deeside participants received an additional special 'Devil' medal. The Auld Brig o'Dee will be on our 2025 medal which completes the collection.

EXCITING PLANS FOR 2025

We have exciting plans for Run Balmoral 2025, which is to be held over the weekend of April 26-27. Entries opened as soon as this year's races were finished and already we have seen a sizeable number of people signing up. And, in a major move towards improving our sustainability objectives, we are to contribute to one of the biggest nature restoration projects ever undertaken in the Cairngorms.

The River Dee Trust conservation charity has committed to planting one million native trees along the riverbank between now and 2035 as part of a massive scheme to help protect Atlantic salmon and other wildlife in and around the River Dee and its tributaries. The project was launched in 2020 and already over 460,000 native trees have been planted.

So, in 2025, instead of providing t-shirts to competitors, Run Balmoral will contribute one new tree for every runner who signs up to take part in our races. This means we could be planting more than 5,000 trees next year. It's something we have been aiming to do for some time and after discussion with our sponsors and listening to comments from runners, we feel this is the right decision to make.

We also have a new event for 2025, with the duathlon replaced by a six-mile trail race on day two. This means that the John Clark Motor Group Devil of Deeside Challenge will take a new format – the 5k and 10k on Saturday and the 6 mile and 15 mile trail races on the Sunday. This change has been introduced, again in response to suggestions from competitors, and we hope it will prove attractive to a larger number of people. At the moment we are still seeking a sponsor for the 6 mile trail race.

OUR SPONSORS

Run Balmoral could not happen without our sponsors, some of whom have been with us on a long-term basis and we are extremely grateful for everything they do. Stena Drilling (10km)

and Harbour Energy (5km) remain our overall event sponsors and continue to support Run Balmoral on a significant scale. MPH (Primary schools 1.5km), Apollo (duathlon) and Bristow (trail races) are also key players who have shown a massive commitment to the event, while NFU Mutual has backed the secondary schools 2.5km race for the past two years. John Clark Motor Group joined us this year as title-sponsors of the Devil of Deeside Challenge but the company has supported Run Balmoral in various ways since 2005. Apollo and NFU Mutual have informed us that they will not be continuing their involvement beyond 2024 but I am delighted to say that RAM Tubulars will be joining us as title sponsors of the secondary schools races for 2025.

Albyn Hospital continues its valued involvement by sponsoring the Event Village and once again this year we were able to engage local videography expert Stuart Ross Media to provide us with enhanced footage of the event, including drone coverage, courtesy of sponsors, Tidy Green Clean. Aberdeen-based Original 106FM came on board for a second year as media partners while I must also thank Aberdeen Journals for the excellent coverage they gave the event.

The support of Aberdeenshire Council, which has continued to back Run Balmoral since the event switched from being delivered by a commercial company to becoming a community event, in 2005, remains strong and is also hugely appreciated.

The contribution made by the team at Balmoral Estate, led by my fellow Director, Richard Gledson, is also immense, not only for making this wonderful venue available, but also for the dedicated work by staff to ensure everything goes so smoothly. The Estate's role this year was extended to the provision of Corporate Hospitality and this was delivered to a very high standard. Thanks are also extended to our colleagues at Run-4-It, our retail partner, who make a significant contribution to the success of the event.

Our charity programme continues to thrive and this year I am proud to say we worked closely with VSA, Kayleigh's Wee Stars, Aberdeen University Development Trust, Charlie House, Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance, Hearing Dogs For Deaf People and Poppy Scotland. As usual, significant amounts of money will have been raised for each of these worthy causes.

I must, of course sincerely thank the Run Balmoral Management Team - Jackie Stewart, Peter Jennings, Fraser Clyne, and Balmoral Estate staff - James Hamilton-Goddard, Jane Fedo and Leona Cooper - for once again delivering a fantastic event. I should also praise our commentator, Graham Anderson, who kept everyone expertly informed and entertained over the two days. Our race



timing company, Krono Sports, led by Renato Capone, also did a magnificent job as did our IT guru Jamie Ross who did all the hard work in maintaining and developing our online booking system and website.

There are many other groups, organisations and service suppliers who contribute to the success of Run Balmoral and we have mentioned them elsewhere in this document. To each and every one, I wish to express my sincere thanks.

It is, in every respect, a truly fantastic example of all sectors of the community coming together in partnership to create and enjoy what is a superb family occasion.

James Knowles, Chair, Balmoral Road Races Ltd, May 2024

RunBalmoral - *Roll of Honour 2024*

(Gun times except for Corporate Challenge and Devil O’Deeside results which are based on chip times)

MPH Primary Schools 1.5km		MPH Primary Schools 1.5km	
Boys	min:sec	Girls	min:sec
1 Liam Miller (YMR/Glashieburn)	05:37	1 Millie Glass Park (Dunecht/ YMR)	5:45
2 James Gerrard (Barthol Chapel/YMR)	05:50	2 Eilidh Murdoch (Braemar School/Banchory Stone)	6:30
3 Ethan Gravill (Albyn/YMR)	05:57	3 Hayleigh Reid (New Deer/YMR)	6:46
NFU Mutual 2.5km		NFU Mutual 2.5km	
Boys	min:sec	Girls	min:sec
1 Nathan Lawson (Albyn)	07:24	1 Jessica Needs (Aberdeen AAC/Peterhead Acad)	08:11
2 Ewan Andrews (Cults Academy)	07:45	2 Emily Christie (Falkirk VH/St Mingo's HS)	08:19
3 Cameron Scott (Cults Academy)	07:45	3 Sophie Imlach (Northfield Acdey)	08:52
Harbour Energy 5km		Harbour Energy 5km	
Men	min:sec	Women	min:sec
1 Sean Chalmers (Aberdeen AAC)	14:48	1 Jenny Bannerman (Inverness Harriers)	17:55
2 Steven Murray (Aberdeen AAC)	15:53	2 Emma Jenkins (Aberdeen AAC)	17:57
3 Lesley Morrison (Metro Aberdeen)	16:10	3 Fiona Brian (Metro Aberdeen)	18:19
Stena Drilling Tartan 10km		Stena Drilling Tartan 10km	
Men	min:sec	Women	min:sec
1 Sean Chalmers (Aberdeen AAC)	32:50:00	1 Gemma Cormack (Aberdeen AAC)	40:26:00
2 Aaron Odentz (Aberdeen AAC)	33:36:00	2 Sally Wallis (Deeside)	40:38:00
3 Ryan Mackay (Lochaber AC)	35:07:00	3 Kerry Berry (JS Kintore RC)	42:57:00
Apollo Duathlon		Apollo Duathlon	
Men	hr:min:sec	Women	hr:min:sec
1 Ewan Taylor (Kincraig)	01:18:58	1 Sally Wallis (Deeside)	01:35:17
2 Ian Russell (Fleet Feet/Aberdeen)	01:19:57	2 Kimberley Jackson	01:35:19
3 Sam Milton (Moray Road Runners)	01:20:01	3 Laura Murray(Lumphanan)	01:36:49
Bristow 15 Mile Trail Race		Bristow 15 Mile Trail Race	
Men	hr:min:sec	Women	hr:min:sec
1 Sean Chalmers (Aberdeen AAC)	01:25:29	1 Grace Pow (Carnethy Hill Runners)	01:43:33
2 Sam Milton (Moray Road Runners)	01:36:03	2 Sarah Milne (Aberdeen)	01:48:04
3 Darren Dalrymple	01:36:25	3 Sally Wallis (Deeside)	01:48:26
Bristow 3 MileTrail Race		Bristow 3 Mile Trail Race	
Men	min:sec	Women	min:sec
1 Logan Duncan (Huntly)	20:18	1 Emily Christie (Falkirk VH)	21:40
2 Robert Ferguson	25:46	2 Jessica Needs (Aberdeen AAC)	22:23
3 Christopher Frazer	26:59	3 Rebecca Baptie	22:35
John Clark Motor Group Devil of Deeside Challenge		John Clark Motor Group Devil of Deeside Challenge	
Men	hr:min:sec	Women	hr:min:sec
1 Sam Milton (Moray Road Runners)	03:49:17	1 Sally Wallis (Deeside Runners)	04:23:28
2 James Adamson (Fleet Feet)	04:10:30	2 Etera Zak (Metro Aberdeen)	04:44:53
3 Stuart Pringle (Deeside Runners)	04:15:46	3 Suzanne Matonti	05:07:53
Corporate Challenge			
	hr:min:sec		
1 Stena Drilling	4:12:17		
2 Harbour Energy	4:12:38		
3 TAQA	4:17:55		

Course Records

Based on gun times (other than Devil of Deeside which is based on chip times)

Two records were set this year. Dunecht’s Millie Glass Park (Young Meldrum Runners) smashed the course record when winning the MPH primary schools girls’ 1.5k in a time of 5min 45secs. Her performance slashed nine secs off the previous mark of 5:54 held jointly by Rebecca Eggeling (Aberdeen AAC, 2012) and Emily Christie (Falkirk Victoria Harriers, 2022). Sally Wallis set a new record in the women’s division of the John Clark Devil of Deeside competition. Her combined time of 4hr 23min 28sec slashed close to 14min off the previous best set by Aberdeen’s Kerry Prise in 2017.

Event	Name	Year	Time
1.5km boys	Stewart Millar (Cluny)	2011	5min 21sec
1.5km girls	Millie Glass Park (Dunecht/YMR)	2024	5min 45sec
2.5km boys	Liam Barnsby (East Sutherland)	2013	6min 58sec
2.5km girls	Rebecca Eggeling (Aberdeen AAC)	2016	7min 52sec
5km men	Jamie Crowe (Central AC)	2022	14min 20sec
5km women	Rhona Auckland (Banchory Stonehaven AC)	2014	15min 55sec
10km men	Robbie Simpson (Deeside Runners)	2013	31min 17sec
10km women	Ginie Barrand (Metro Aberdeen)	2022	36min 07sec
Duathlon men	Rob Brookes (Cosmic)	2018	1hr 18min 25secs
Duathlon women	Clare Whitehead (Deeside)	2018	1hr 33min 03secs
15 mile Trail race men	Andrew Douglas (Inverclyde)	2015	1hr 18min30sec
15 mile Trail race women	Angela Mudge (Carnethy)	2013	1hr 37min 31sec
3 mile Trail race men	Angus Wood	2019	19min23sec
3 mile Trail race women	Anisha Badial (Aberdeen AAC)	2016	20min 48sec
Devil of Deeside men	Sam Milton (Moray Road Runners)	2023	3hr 47min 47secs
Devil of Deeside women	Sally Wallis (Deeside Runners)	2024	4hr 23min 28sec



Millie Glass Park



Sally Wallis

Tidy Green Clean Videography by Stuart Ross Media

For the third year in a row we are pleased to have been able to enhance coverage of Run Balmoral by providing top class videography footage of the event, including the use of a drone, courtesy of our sponsor TGC (Tidy Green Clean). Stuart Ross of Stuart Ross Media was again contracted and, being an accomplished ultra distance runner with a good knowledge of the estate, he was able to do a fantastic job. TGC's support has allowed us to obtain some magnificent images of the Balmoral estate over the weekend and these have been edited into high quality videos which will be of great interest to this year's competitors and it will also be used to promote the 2025 event.



Aberdeenshire Active Schools Awards 2024

To encourage participation in the Balmoral races, Aberdeenshire Active Schools present trophies to the schools achieving the largest number of entrants. There are three categories of prizes and this year Banchory Academy regained the secondary schools trophy after losing out to Aboyne Academy last year.

Torphins ended Banchory's eight year reign when winning the 'large' (i.e. roll of 100 or more) primary schools award, while Tarland's domination of the 'small' schools competition was extended to a fifth year. The trophies were presented by Greg Welsh, a Community Sport Hubs Officer with Aberdeenshire Council.

	Secondary Schools	Large Primary Schools	Small Primary Schools
2014	Banchory Academy	Banchory	Crathes
2015	Banchory Academy	Banchory	Finzean
2016	Banchory Academy	Banchory	Finzean
2017	Banchory Academy	Banchory	Finzean
2018	Banchory Academy	Banchory	Tarland
2019	Banchory Academy	Banchory	Tarland
2022	Banchory Academy	Banchory	Tarland
2023	Aboyne Academy	Banchory	Tarland
2024	Banchory Academy	Torphins	Tarland

T Shirt Design Competition

Karley Paterson and Maia Lancaster were the winners of the 2024 Run Balmoral schools t-shirt design competition. The standard of entries was once again very high but Karley and Maia came out on top with their impressive drawings. Karley's artwork appeared on the MPH 1.5k primary schools race t-shirt and her second submission was used on the front cover of our race programme, while Maia's entry appeared on the NFU Mutual 2.5k secondary schools t-shirts. Karley also performed exceptionally well in the 1.5k girls race, finishing in fourth position.

In addition to their individual prizes, the youngsters earned £100 to donate to either their school, sports club or a charity of their choice. Karley, a pupil at Aberdeen's Charleston Primary, opted to donate her prize to the Charlie House charity. Maia, who attends Inverurie Academy in Aberdeenshire, donated her prize to the Alcohol and Drugs Action charity.

James Knowles, Chair of Run Balmoral, was impressed by the high quality of entries. He said: "The standard was exceptional, which made our decision difficult, but Karley and Maia's submissions stood out. We are grateful to all the schools and pupils who took part in the competition and would like to thank teachers and parents for encouraging so many youngsters to get involved.



Karley Paterson's design for the front of the 2024 Event Programme



Above: Tarland school runners celebrate

Right: Karley Paterson, No. 477, competing in the 1.5km



Karley Paterson's design for the MPH Primary 1.5k t-shirt

Maia Lancaster's design for the NFU Mutual 2.5k t-shirt



MPH Primary Schools 1.5km

Dunecht's Millie Glass Park (Young Meldrum Runners) smashed the course record when winning the MPH primary schools girls' 1.5k in a time of 5min 45secs. Her performance slashed nine secs off the previous mark of 5:54 held jointly by Rebecca Eggeling (Aberdeen AAC, 2012) and Emily Christie (Falkirk Victoria Harriers, 2022). The 2023 winner, Eilidh Murdoch (Braemar school), finished second in 5:57 while New Deer's Hayleigh Reid (Young Meldrum Runners) was third in 6:04.

Aberdeen's Liam Miller led Young Meldrum Runners to a clean sweep of the podium positions in the MPH primary school's boys' 1.5k race when posting a time of 5:36, which is the second best in the history of the event. Only Stewart Miller's 5:21 record from 2011 is better. James Gerrard of Barthol Chapel was second in 5:49 with his YMR clubmate Ethan Gravill (Albyn School), from Inch, finishing a further seven secs behind in third position.

More than 700 youngsters took part in the girls' and boys' races and each and every one was roared all the way to the finishing line by a large crowd of enthusiastic spectators who enjoyed the sunny weather.

Who knows what stars of the future may have been taking part this year?

Run Balmoral provides a wonderful opportunity to run in front of a big and enthusiastic crowd of family and friends in a spectacular setting. It's often the springboard to a lifelong love for running and sport in general. And when looking back through the results we can see many names which now appear in our adult races. Some budding stars of the future potentially take their first competitive steps at Run Balmoral. And while it's fantastic to see the fast runners doing well, the most important thing is that everyone taking part enjoys the occasion and is inspired to run in other events in the future.



MPH Primary Schools 1.5km

Top 3 boys - LtoR

Ethan Gravill (3rd),
Liam Miller (1st),
James Gerrard (2nd)
with Bert McIntosh



Top 3 girls LtoR

Hayleigh Reid (3rd),
Millie Glass Park (1st),
Eilidh Murdoch (2nd)
with Bert McIntosh



Millie Glass Park wins the girls race in a record time



Liam Miller wins the boys race



Aberdeen AAC's Nathan Lawson scored his second major north-east win inside a fortnight when taking top spot in the NFU Mutual secondary schools 2.5k. The Albyn school student followed up his victory in Aberdeen's P&J Live Run Fest 5k earlier in April by finishing well clear of the field in 7min 23sec. Ewan Andrews (Cults Academy) held off a strong challenge from Cameron Scott (Cults Academy) to take second position by one second in 7:44.

Peterhead Academy's Jessica Needs (Aberdeen AAC) retained the girls' title, running eight secs quicker than in 2023, to win in 8:11. Her time was bettered by only five boys in the race.

Emily Christie (Falkirk Victoria Harriers) was runner-up for the second year in a row in 8:18, while Sophie Imlach (Northfield Academy) took third position in 8:51.

Nathan and Jessica add their names to a list of illustrious previous winners of this race, such as Banchory's Robbie Simpson and Aberdeen's Naomi Lang, who progressed to become Great Britain international team members at senior level.





Emily Christie left and Jessica Needs right



Nathan Lawson scores clear win in boys race



NFU Mutual
Secondary Schools
2.5km

Top 3 girls LtoR

Sophie Imlach (3rd)
Jessica Needs (1st)
Emily Christie (2nd)



Richard Gledson (Balmoral
Estate) with Nathan Lawson
(1st) and Cameron Scott
(3rd) in boys race



Above: Top 3 women LtoR Emily Jenkins (2nd), Jenny Bannerman (1st), Fiona Brian (3rd) & Audrey Stewart, Harbour Energy

Below: Sean Chalmers wins the men's race.



Harbour Energy 5K

Scotland international Sean Chalmers produced a series of top class performances to claim a hat-trick of victories over the course of a busy weekend. The Aberdeen AAC runner won the Harbour Energy 5k and the Stena Drilling 10k on day one before going on to take top spot in the following day's Bristow 15 mile trail race to emulate the triple crown achieved by Dundee-based Jamie Crowe of Central AC in 2023. Crowe intended going head-to-head with Chalmers this year but was forced to call off at the last minute after failing to fully recover from a bout of Covid.

Chalmers, an Aberdeen schoolteacher, could have been forgiven for taking his foot off the gas in Crowe's absence, but there was no sign of that as he showed impressive form in all three events. It started with a dominating run in the 5k, which he won in 14min 48sec with his Aberdeen AAC team-mate Steven Murray taking second position in 15:53, while Metro Aberdeen's Lesley Morrison was third in 16:10.

Chalmers said: "I set off quite hard as I was looking for a fast time but after a kilometre I felt a bit shot. I've been doing a lot of half marathon training so I'm maybe missing a bit of a good turn of pace. But the support out on the course was amazing, with a lot of people cheering us on and that helped me to pick it up again, so I'm still happy with the time."

Jenny Bannerman showed real grit and determination to win the Harbour Energy women's 5k women's title for the third time over a 10-year spell during which she has now featured on the podium seven times. However, the Scotland international was made to work exceptionally hard for her latest success, with Aberdeen AAC's Emma Jenkins pushing the Scotland international all the way to the line.

After a cat-and-mouse battle, Bannerman pulled clear over the final 300m to win by two seconds in 17min 55sec but the strain of the effort left the Inverness Harriers club member lying exhausted on the ground. Metro Aberdeen's Scotland international, Fiona Brian, who won the 10k at Balmoral in 2015, took third spot in 18:19.

Bannerman, who was beaten by only 15 men from a field of 1040, was very satisfied with the outcome. She said: "I've had a few health issues recently so it was great to get back into the spirit of racing again and to get a win. It's such a good event and there were lots of people out on the course encouraging me.

"There was a group of four of us for the first kilometre, including Emma Jenkins, who I didn't know. After we got past the turnaround point Emma was on my shoulder but she was stronger than me when we hit the uphill section of the course and I had to let her go. However, I began to catch her again between 3k and 4k. I was feeling really tired but I knew I was pulling her in and I finally overtook her with about 300m to go. That final 300m felt so very long and I was so glad to get to the finishing line. I can't remember the last time I was on the floor at the end of a race."

Aberdeen AAC's Jessica Needs, who earlier won the 2.5k, was first under-20 woman in 19:40 while Fraser MacKenzie (Metro Aberdeen) was the first man under-20 in 17:15.



Harbour Energy 5km

Smiling faces from Albyn Hospital charity runners at the start



Celebrating reaching the finish line.jpg



Peterhead AC runners out in force in the 5k



Sean Chalmers had little more than an hour's rest after winning the Harbour Energy 5k before lining up for the Stena Drilling 10k. As the field of more than 1700 excited runners stretched out along the opening few kilometres he was again at the head of the pack, but this time had company in the shape of his Aberdeen clubmate Aaron Odentz.

The front runners swung past the Ballater Pipe Band at the foot of the notorious Balmoral hill and on the long strength sapping incline Odentz, who had finished third in 2023, showed he was up for the challenge by forcing the pace. But the experienced Chalmers was waiting for his moment and opened up the throttle on the descent, gradually upping the tempo and pulling away to win in 32min 50 sec. Odentz comfortably took second position in 33:36 while Lochaber AC's Ryan Mackay finished third in 35:07.

Chalmers said: "Aaron was pushing the pace at the start and I was with him for the first 5k-6k. After we came off the top of the long hill, I managed to get a bit of a gap and began to pull away. To be fair to Aaron, I think he was closing in a bit towards the end again, so it was still a hard effort for me to get the win. It's the first time I've done the 10k and the famous hill lived up to expectations. It's a real hill."

Gemma Cormack battled through the pain barrier to win the women's title in fine style after placing fourth in the 5k just an hour earlier. The 31 year-old, who competes for Moray Road Runners, was twice affected by a severe stitch which almost brought her to a standstill, but showed impressive mental strength and determination to stick to the task at hand.

She completed the challenging route in 40:26 to finish 12secs ahead of Sally Wallis (Deeside Runners) while Kerry Berry (JS Kintore Running Club) was third in 42:57. Wallis had also performed well in the 5k, taking fourth position and she would go on to win the John Clark Motor Group Devil of Deeside Challenge.

Cormack said: "I've never tried doing two big races in one day before and I didn't quite know what to expect, especially with the famous 10k hill, so I tried to start off quite conservatively. Then I got a bad stitch and I was contemplating stopping, but there was no easy way of getting back to the start so I decided to keep going. Sally passed me on the hill but once we got over the top the stitch eased off a bit and I felt better. I overtook her, but then the stitch came back for a couple of miles. As I was leading, I decided I'd have to battle through it and I was able to hang on."

Cormack has been competing at Run Balmoral for 20 years, first taking part in the primary schools race before going on to win the secondary schools run in 2006, and the 5k in 2015. She said: "I have always wanted to do the 10k and find out about the hill. I don't think you appreciate how tough it is until you run it. It's definitely a killer."

"If I hadn't got the stitch I would have enjoyed it a bit more as I like running off road. The course has a few other ups and downs which suits me much more than a flat course. There's always a good atmosphere at Run Balmoral and I love running here."

Corstorphine's Keith Hood, who won the men's race in 2009, was first in the over-50's age group this year, 19th overall, in 38:53.

Glen Chalmers (Newburgh Dunes) won the prize for the first kilted runner to complete the route, recording 45:43 to finish ahead of previous winners Ian Thom and David Scott. Helen Drewery was first kilted woman in 50:45.

Stewart Millar holds the longest surviving record in the Run Balmoral races, having set a time of 5:21 for the MPH primary schools 1.5k in 2011. This year, Inverurie-based Stewart, now 25, returned to Balmoral to take ninth position in the 10k in 37:28.



Above: Gemma Cormack wins the women's title



Above: Sean Chalmers and Aaron Odentz
Below: Helen Drewery - women's kilt champion





Sunshine through the woods



Pipers spur the runners on at the bottom of the famous hill



The top 3 kilers



Still smiling



Stena Drilling
Tartan 10k

Top 3 men LtoR

Aaron Odentz (3rd),
Sean Chalmers (1st),
Ryan Mackay (3rd)
with Stuart Wyness,
Stena Drilling



Leading women

LtoR Kerry Berry (3rd),
Gemma Cormack (1st)
with Stuart Wyness
(Stena Drilling)

Stena Drilling-Harbour Energy Corporate Team Challenge

The result of this annual battle for supremacy between corporate teams ended in drama as Stena Drilling ended Harbour Energy's long domination of the competition with the narrowest victory in the nine-year history of the event. At the conclusion of the battle in which four competitors from each team took part in the 5k and 10k, Stena emerged top of the pile by a mere 21 seconds. Harbour Energy, competing under a number of name variations, had secured the winner's magnificent trophy, made from red deer antler and sycamore wood, on seven previous occasions.

Peter Frampton, Sean Gray, Michael Thomson and Craig Thomson represented Stena in the 5k, with Jake Wilson, Jack Nicholls, Kyle Weir and Laura Murray flying the flag for the winners in the 10k.

It was also great to see two of our official charities placing teams in the top ten. Congratulations to Voluntary Service Aberdeen who finished fourth and University of Aberdeen Development Trust in 13th position. John Clark Motor Group, who sponsor the Devil of Deeside competition, placed seventh and a team from our Event Village sponsor, Albyn Hospital, finished 12th.

CORPORATE TEAM CHALLENGE - WINNERS - FIRST HELD 2013

2013	Aberdeen Sports Village
2014	Cops and Joggers
2015	Cops and Joggers
2016	Aberdeen Sports Village
2017	Cops and Joggers
2018	Cops and Joggers
2019	Cops and Joggers
2022	Harbour Harriers
2023	Harbour Harriers
2024	Stena Drilling



Team Stena Drilling celebrate success in the Corporate Challenge

Each team had to field four runners in the Harbour Energy 5km and four runners in the Stena Drilling Tartan 10K. The same runners were able to compete in both the 5km and the 10km if they so wished. Or it was open to field a fresh line-up in each race.

FULL RESULTS:-	HR:MIN:SEC
1 Stena Drilling	4:12:17
2 Harbour Energy 4:12:38	
3 TAQA	4:17:55
4 Voluntary Service Aberdeen	4:42:59
5 Chevron	4:53:11
6 Score Group	5:10:00
7 John Clark Motor Group	5:11:41
8. Petrofac	5:13:16
9. Aize	5:13:37
10. Valaris	5:20:50
11. NEO	5:28:28
12. Albyn Hospital	5:28:45
13. University of Aberdeen Development Trust	5:39:15
14. Aberdeen Drilling	6:59:43

Euan Taylor, from Kinraig blew his rivals away to win the Apollo duathlon by completing the 6k run/16k mountain bike/5k run in a combined time of 1hr 18min 58secs. Aberdeen's Ian Russell, who won in 2023, had to settle for second position in 1:19:57 with Sam Milton (Moray Road Runners) third in 1:20:01. Ballater's Dan Whitehead, the 2016 champion, won the over-50's prize when placing fourth overall in 1:21:46.

It was Taylor's first visit to Balmoral and he was full of praise for the event. He said: "I'd heard so many good things about the Run Balmoral weekend that I just had to give it a go. I've competed in multisport events all over the country and this is one of the best. It's fantastic, the marshals are so friendly and helpful and the organisation was impeccable. I can't fault it."

The 44 year-old pharmacist was made to work hard for his victory with defending champion Russell, making sure it would be a tough race. Taylor said: "I didn't want to go too hard on the first run as I wanted to pace myself. I'm mainly a cyclist, but Ian Russell came from nowhere on the bike stage to take the lead. I kept him in my sights and was confident I could catch him on the final run, which I did."

There was a thrilling finish to the women's race in which Deeside's Sally Wallis overhauled Methlick's Kimberley Jackson in the closing stages to win by two secs in 1:35:17. Lumphanan's Laura Murray, who won in 2022, was third in 1:36:49 while title-holder Jenny Stanning (Metro Aberdeen) had to settle for fourth position in 1:38:22.

Wallis, who had competed in the 5k and 10k the previous day, and would go on to win the John Clark Motor Group Devil of Deeside title, said: "I felt fresh on first run but I wasn't strong on the bike as I haven't done much biking this year so I expected to lose a few places. I held them off until about 10k, but think I was fourth at the end of the bike stage. I came through again on the second run and managed to catch them all, eventually passing the girl who finished second with only about 300m to go."



Euan Taylor leads Sam Milton in the Apollo duathlon





Tom 3 men LtoR

Ian Russell (2nd),
Ewan Taylor (1st),
Sam Milton (3rd)



Sally Wallis wins the
women's division of the
duathlon

Bristow Bristow 15 mile Trail Race

Sean Chalmers emulated the triple crown achieved by fellow Scotland international Jamie Crowe of Central AC in 2023 by scoring an emphatic victory in the Bristow 15 mile trail race to add to his 5k and 10k wins 24 hours earlier. The Aberdeen AAC runner showed no obvious signs of fatigue as he skipped along the challenging course, climbing through the Ballochbuie pine forest and along the wild paths within view of Lochnagar, before returning to the finishing line close to the Castle. He was totally dominant, completing the course in 1hr 25min 29secs to finish more than 10mins ahead of his closest rival. It's the first time he has won this race, having finished second in 2022 behind another international athlete, Inverclyde's Andy Douglas.

He said: "I was on my own from the get-go. My legs were fine after the 5k and 10k the previous day so I went out quite hard. I pushed the hills but was more reserved on the downhills. It's a beautiful route and if it was a bit closer to Aberdeen I'd be out here more often for training runs. The course is really well

marshalled, so there's no danger of going the wrong way. Overall, Run Balmoral is a great event. It's so good to see family, friends and people from work out here, so there's always a lot of support.

Chalmers claimed there's no secret behind his ability to perform so well in three hard races over such a short space of time. He said: "It's all about getting proper recovery between each race. Getting plenty protein shakes, an ice bath and lots of stretching. I'd like to do it again next year depending on other commitments. In the meantime, I'm aiming for the Amsterdam marathon in mid-October."

Sam Milton, clinched the John Clark Motor Group Devil of Deeside title by finishing second in 1:36:03, while Bathgate's Darren Dalrymple took third spot in 1:36:27. Milton said: "I got into a group of three for most of the way. We had no option but to let Sean go, but we worked together until the last two miles when it started to splinter and I was able to push on. I was delighted to get second position."

Grace Pow admits she never expected to be walking away with the top women's prize. The Edinburgh-based Carnethy Hill Running Club member only made the journey to Deeside because some of her friends were taking part, but ended up scoring a clearcut victory with a time of 1:43:33. Only five men finished ahead of her. She said: "I started off with my brother, Ewan, who was running on behalf of Aberdeen First Responders. He was carrying a 15kg bag, so after a while I decided to push on. I had no idea I was leading, so it's a real surprise to win."

Pow was impressed by the event. She said: "This is my first time here, but I really enjoyed it. Some of my friends did it in 2023 and they had a good time, so I decided to tag along this year, and it was great. I'd definitely recommend it to others. It's a good course and although I like hill running, I'm not so good over technical terrain, but it was absolutely fine."

Aberdeen's Sarah Milne took second position in 1:48:04. It was her third race of the weekend, having finished 11th in the women's division of the 5k and 15th in the 10k the previous day. Sally Wallis of Deeside Runners, filled third position in 1:48:26 as she completed her journey towards becoming the 2024 Devil of Deeside Champion.



Bristow 15 mile Trail Race

Top 3 men LtoR

Darren Dalrymple (3rd),
Sean Chalmers (1st),
Sam Milton (3rd)



Top 2 women LtoR

Sarah Milne (2nd),
Grace Pow (1st)



Women's race winner Grace Pow



Men's race winner Sean Chalmers



Huntly's Logan Duncan, a Great Britain cross country skiing representative, outpaced the small field of runners taking part in the Bristow 3 mile trail race to take top spot in 20min 18sec. It was a solid performance from the 18 year-old who was never put under any pressure and led from start to finish.

Women's champion Emily Christie (Falkirk Victoria Harriers), a Scottish Schools international, finished second overall in 21:44 to get the better of Jessica Needs (Aberdeen AAC) who was next home in 22:27. It was a reversal of the top two finishing positions in the previous day's NFU Mutual secondary school 2.5k. Needs, however, could be forgiven for feeling a little fatigued as this was her third race in little more than 24 hours as she had also placed ninth, first under-20, in the Harbour Energy 5k.

Five of the top six finishers in the trail race were women, including two-time previous winner Caris Strachan (Newburgh Dunes) who was fifth overall in 23:41.

Robert Ferguson (25:46) and Christopher Frazer (26:59) were second and third respectively in the men's division.



Above: Top 2 in women's race LtoR
Emily Christie (1st), Jessica Needs (2nd)

Below: Mens race winner Logan Duncan



Sam Milton of Moray Road Runners keeps on coming back to Balmoral for more punishment.

His success in the John Clark Motor Group Devil of Deeside Challenge completed a hat-trick of victories in this epic two-day test of endurance – and he hasn't ruled out bidding for a fourth win in 2025. While his performance was mightily impressive, it was matched by Deeside's Sally Wallis whose late decision to take part ended with her securing the women's crown with a record-breaking set of results.

Milton posted the best cumulative time of 3hr 49min 17sec from competing in the 5k, 10k, duathlon and the 15 mile trail race over a punishing two days of competition. His consistency was remarkable, finishing sixth in the 5k, fifth in the 10k, third in the duathlon and second in the 15 mile race.

He said: "Of my three wins this was probably the toughest and most satisfying as it came just a week after I competed in the Moray marathon. I recorded 2hr 40min there, which is just five mins outside my best, but that gave me the confidence to know that I was in good shape to take on the Devil. However, there was still a lot of fatigue in my legs so I'm not going to lie, I suffered quite a bit over the four races and I had to dig deep.

"The fatigue builds as the event progresses. I suffered quite badly on the bike and that was the low point, but I seemed to recover well in the two hours rest I had before the start of the trail race. I found my legs again and was able to hang in there.

So, will he return next year? "Who knows? It's a great weekend and one I always look forward to, so we'll see. Next, however, is a trip to Sicily for the Mt Etna marathon, which starts at sea level and finishes at the 3000m summit. But my big aim for the year is to break 2:30 for the marathon at Valencia in December."

Sally Wallis didn't just win the women's title, she did so in resounding fashion with a cumulative time of 4:23:28 which gave her a 20minute cushion over her closest challenger. It was a stunning performance which scythed close to 14min off the previous best set by Aberdeen's Kerry Prise in 2017. Wallis was fifth in the 5k, second in the 10k, first in the duathlon and third in the 15 mile trail race.



Devils ready for action

She said: "I only decided to do it a couple of weeks ago. My husband said he was going to put an entry in for me online, and I didn't stop him. It feels fantastic to win but I really began to feel the cumulative effects of the weekend kicking in when we got to the final third of the 15 mile trail race. I was fine in the first third, but struggled in the next third. I took a tumble on a straightforward piece of trail so I had a pause, took a gel and got going again. Then I felt better all the way to the finish. It's such a cool challenge and it feels fantastic to have won, especially as it was a last minute decision."

Steven Watters is the Marketing & Communications Manager for the Devil of Deeside sponsors, John Clark Motor Group, so it was only appropriate that he should take part in the event that his company supports. And, what a performance: Steven finished in fifth position overall with a cumulative time of 4:21:36.



Glen Chalmers - the kilted Devil



Steven Watters of John Clark Motor Group

John Clark
Motor Group
Devil of Deeside
Challenge



Sam Milton with
Chris Clark of John Clark
Motor Group

Sally Wallis with
Chris Clark of John Clark
Motor Group



Albyn Hospital Event Village

The Event Village plays an important and popular role in offering a wide range of facilities and activities for visitors to the estate over the race weekend, primarily on the Saturday. Affiliated charities were, as usual, given space alongside caterers and other exhibitors including the Event Village sponsors, Albyn Hospital. Our retail partner, Run-4-It, was also present. The key attraction was Aberdeenshire Council's "Live Life Cycling" scheme which provided children with the opportunity to test their cycling skills and learn new ones. The miniature railway was again popular.

Corporate Hospitality

Corporate hospitality was provided this year by Balmoral Estate and is available in 2025 for any company or organisation which requests this service. A high quality and varied selection of snacks and drinks are made available throughout the weekend. This year we catered for more than 500 guests.



Charities

Our charity programme continues to thrive and this year we have been working closely with five organisations this year.

GOLD Nominated Charity

- VSA:
www.vsa.org.uk

SILVER Nominated Charities

- Charlie House:
www.charliehouse.org.uk
- Kayleigh's Wee Stars
www.kayleighsweestars.co.uk
- University of Aberdeen Development Trust:
www.abdn.ac.uk
- Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance:
www.scaa.org.uk

BRONZE Nominated Charities

- Hearing Dogs For Deaf People:
www.hearingdogs.org.uk
- Poppy Scotland :
www.poppyscotland.org.uk



Sponsors, Partners,Event Supporters and Suppliers

RunBalmoral could not take place without our sponsors, partner organisations, service providers and volunteers. Hundreds of people contribute in a variety of ways to making the event a success and we are indebted to them all.

Main Sponsors and Partners

Stena Drilling, Harbour Energy, Apollo, Bristow, NFU Mutual, MPH Ltd , John Clark Motor Group, Aberdeenshire Council, Balmoral Estate, Tidy Green Clean, Albyn Hospital, Run-4-It, Original 106FM.

Event Volunteers and Supporters

Aboyne & Upper Deeside Rotary Club, Active Aberdeenshire, Aberdeenshire Leaders, Air Training Corps (NE Scotland Wing), Ballater and District Pipe Band, 1st Braemar Scouts, 1st Insch Scouts, Braemar Miniature Railway, Braemar Mountain Rescue, COTAG 4x4 Response, Crathie School, Deans of Huntly Ltd, Deeside Activity Park, Dr Ewen Mcleod, Friskis & Svettis, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service, Iain Mackenzie, Inverurie Scout Group, Herd Hire Aberdeen, Inverurie Scout Group, Local Stewards, Micaiah Jakeman Sports & Injury Clinic , Police Scotland and Police Scotland Youth Volunteers, Ronnie Finnie, Royal Lochnagar Distillery, Ruth Mackenzie,Scottishathletics, Scott Fraser.

Suppliers

Appin Sports, Astute, AV One Solutions (PA System), Bike Station Ballater, Blackford Group Limited(Insurance), Craig Scott, Craigievar Marquee and Toilet Hire, DM Forklifts, Event First Aid Services, Esslemont Marquees, Front Runner, Guy Phillips (Highland Heritage Woodworks), Genny Hire, Graham Anderson , Grampian Event Security (Jim Wilkin), Grant Considine, Greens of Haddington (Andrew Green), Herd Hire, Kevin McGarry, Krono:Sports, Laura Middleton LDM Physiotherapy, Leisurelend (Aberdeenshire Council), Invercauld Estate, Itab, J Ross IT Ltd, Lizzie Scripps (Pop-Up Soft Play Ballater), Scottish Communications, Stuart Ross Media, Sun Belt Rentals, Marathon-photos.com, Run ABC, Scottish Ambulance Service.



Participation Stats

NUMBER OF FINISHERS PER RACE 2005-2024											
10K		5K	15 Mile Trail	Duathlon	3 Mile Trail	2.5K	1.5K B	1.5K G	Mile	Other	Total
2024	1705	1040	521	165	49	107	369	346			4302
2023	1413	778	485	146	50	125	318	278			3593
2022	1438	622	449	170	35	131	303	249			3397
2019	1757	778	482	197	37	143	408	342			4154
2018	1906	790	497	230	44	202	422	376			4467
2017	1721	738	439	191	60	169	434	371			4123
2016	1735	633	437	158	35	219	426	381			4022
2015	1823	714	429	143	37	237	449	401			4233
2014	1825	692	327		55	212	414	392			3917
2013	1855	766	297			228	452	374			3972
2012	1915	641	218			215	375	324	184		3872
2011	1940	732	148			184	375	308			3687
2010	1889	819				214	354	278			3554
2009	1999	614				191	524 *				3328
2008	1884	514				185	477 *				3060
2007	1533	227				165	384 *				2309
2006	1347	76				172	347 *				1942
2005	1384									568 +	1952

Notes: * Combined boys and girls races
+ Junior race mixed ages

RUN BALMORAL 2024 ENTRY AND PARTICIPATION NUMBERS									
	2022			2023			2024		
	No. Entered	No. Participated	%Age	No. Entered	No Participated	%Age	No. Entered	No. Participated	%Age
MPH Pr. Schools 1.5km Boys	360	303	84	362	318	88	416	369	89
MPH Pr. Schools 1.5km Girls	284	249	88	336	278	83	387	346	89
NFU Sec. Schools 2.5k	205	131	64	178	125	70	149	107	72
Harbour Energy 5km	924	622	67	959	778	81	1234	1040	84
Stena Drilling 10km	2127	1438	68	1721	1413	82	2026	1705	84
Apollo Duathlon	282	170	60	189	146	77	194	165	85
Bristow 15 Mile Trail race	715	449	63	631	485	77	640	521	82
Bristow 3 Mile Race	66	35	53	63	50	79	56	49	87
Total	4963	3397	68	4439	3593	81	5102	4302	84
John Clark Motor Grp. Devil of Deeside	128	77	60	94	67	81	92	71	77

Note: Individual race numbers include Devil entrants

RUN BALMORAL 2024 PERCENTAGE OF ENTRANTS WHO PARTICIPATED						
	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	2024
MPH Primary Schools 1.5km Boys	85	91	91	84	88	89
MPH Primary Schools 1.5km Girls	85	92	87	88	83	89
NFU Secondary Schools 2.5k	68	77	82	64	70	72
Harbour Energy 5km	77	81	78	67	81	84
Stena Drilling 10km	77	78	79	68	82	84
Apollo Duathlon	75	80	78	60	77	85
Bristow 15 Mile Trail race	72	76	76	63	77	82
Bristow 3 Mile Race	74	73	82	53	79	87
Total	77	80	80	68	81	84
John Clark Motor Grp. Devil of Deeside	69	77	73	60	81	77

Note: Individual race numbers include Devil entrants

