



**Number Swapping Guidance
Carnegie Harriers
SCIO 51520**

August 2023

CARNEGIE HARRIERS

Guidance on Swapping Race Numbers

INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 2023, there have been several reports of runners swapping race numbers without the race organiser's consent, including some members of Carnegie Harriers.

Our governing body, ScottishAthletics, has made it very clear that runners should not run under another person's number. It may seem innocuous but can have unfortunate consequences. See below for more.

This guidance has been produced to ensure that club members are aware of the situation.

CONSEQUENCES OF UNAUTHORISED NUMBER SWAPPING

In the event of an accident or incident, as well as the wrong next of kin being notified, there is potential for someone to receive inappropriate treatment by medical personnel if the wrong medical records are accessed, eg being administered drugs to which they are allergic or not being recognised as being diabetic etc.

In addition to the potential medical impact, running under someone else's number could impact on prizes, including age category prizes and team prizes.

It could also reflect badly on the running clubs of those involved.

GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS

Club members should not swap race numbers without the consent of the race organiser. As a club, we can often arrange or help - officially - to get race numbers transferred from one runner to another but we cannot condone unofficial swaps and transfers.

Club members who can no longer take part in an event they have entered, should not seek a replacement unless they have the express consent of the race organiser.

Club members who run under another person's number in a club GP event will not be awarded GP or ARC points.

If you have any concerns or doubts over what is allowed, please get in touch.

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After a high-profile number swapping incident in 2019, the CEO of ScottishAthletics issued the following statement to all ScottishAthletics members.

ScottishAthletics has just issued a sternly worded reminder about the dangers of swapping race numbers, a practice that is strictly prohibited by the rules of the governing body.

While the emailed statement, which comes on the back of a well publicised incident at a recent scottishathletics licensed ultrarunning event, is directed at scottishathletics members, its content is worth noting by all runners.

Chief Executive Mark Munro wrote: "For organisers, this often-innocent practice can cause huge headaches, if they either do not allow transfers, or are not at least aware of them."

"Problems arise most often if a runner is taken ill during an event. The back of a race number usually carries their medical information at a road, trail or ultra event, or it is certainly detailed within the race director's database and linked to their bib number."

"If illness or injury does occur, the risks created through incorrectly identifying a runner are very real and potentially life threatening, as has been evidenced in other countries in recent years."

Munro also reminded all competitors that deciding to run in someone else's number could also have an impact, however unintentional, on their fellow competitors.

He illustrates his point by describing how undeclared number-swapping can have an impact on team positions. "Even if an athlete does not compete in a team event, they may inadvertently have an indirect impact on finishing positions in other teams."

He also notes that number swapping is unfair to other runners who might have been hoping to take part in a sold-out event: "Where entries are full and waiting lists have been created, you could be keeping someone away from a competition opportunity where they legitimately deserve that place."

He further warned that wearing another runner's number can also lead to inaccurate data being collected for Run Britain rankings, or for use within other events.

Munro closed his communication to members with a stern warning to avoid the practice, leaving no doubt where the sport's ruling body in Scotland stands on the matter: "Whilst we will work with event organisers to try to create processes (eg. swapping policies, where practical), ScottishAthletics will operate a zero-tolerance policy towards any athletes caught behaving in this manner, and sanctions may apply."