On Saturday 9th February 6 Hartfell Hill Running Club members travelled to just outside Edinburgh to race in the 49th Carnthy 5 Hill race, this is perhaps the biggest hill race in Scotland with a limit of a maximum of 610 runners taking part. The race is held to commemorate the battle of Roslin that was fought in this area in the year 1302, during the month of February.

The race is approximately six miles long with 2500ft of ascent, it covers five hill tops in the Pentland Hills: - Scald Law, South Black Hill, East Kip, West Kip, and returning via Carnethy hill, anybody who has travelled into Edinburgh on the A702 will see these hills on their left just before they get into the city’s outskirts. The race starts on top of a small hill and when the starting gun goes off it is described as more like a Highland Charge that a running race as the runners fly down the hill through the marshes until they cross a burn and start the first hard climb of the race.

Saturday’s race was on the edge of being cancelled due to the high winds, but it takes a bit more than Storm Eric to stop the hill runners getting out racing. It did make for testing conditions, especially on the hill tops, with runners being blown sideways and even coming to a stand on the downhill bits, it meant that running down was as hard as running up at times.

First mention must go to the heroine of the day Rosie Allen, while running towards the last hill she heard a scream behind her, looking back she saw a runner on the floor, as per is expected of all hill runners she went back to help, a marshal came over too, luckily for the injured runner Rosie is training to be a nurse and is a member of Moffat Mountain Rescue Team, Using her skills she splinted the suspected broken leg, and assist with some other runners and the Mountain Rescue team in carrying the man off the hill on a stretcher to the MRT Land-Rover, which then transferred the injured runner to a normal ambulance to take him to hospital. Once he was safely back in the ambulance she when back and completed the race!

Meanwhile Adam Anderson was racing home to be the first HHRC runner over the line in a very credible 1:06 given the conditions, behind him Kevin Plummer, Craig Malcolmson and friend Adam Dickie from Dumfries Running Club where having a battle between themselves with the lead changing place between them several time, Kevin was leading at the top of the last hill and maintained it until the last couple of yards of the race when Adam timed his attack perfectly to just nip in front of Kevin on the line, Craig was only seconds behind Adam and Kevin. Not too far back Darren Foley and Mark Whitelaw was racing closely together, again in a sprint finish Mark just finished 1 second ahead of Darren.

Well done to all the runners who took part racing in tough condition, especially those who stopped competing to help others. A special final thanks to the marshals and helpers of which there was 100, for turning out in such challenging conditions which allowed the race to go ahead.

At the end of the race at the meal which is provided in with your entry fee it was great to see Scotland Hill racing star of the moment; Jasmin Paris, this year’s outright winner and new record holder of the immense 268 mile Spine Ultra race, meeting the runners as they came into the hall.