## HIGHLAND GAMES

The Highland Games and various Gatherings around Scotland are a large part of the Scottish athletics tradition, including as they do all areas of athletics excellence. Many of the top athletes in the country have at one time or another taken part in such an event

Every summer from mid-May through until mid September over 60 Highland games are held under the auspices of the Scottish Highland Games Association. These games are spread the length and breadth of the country as well as the Western Isles, and take place almost every Saturday and Sunday as well as midweek during the height of the season during July and August.

The history books show Games probably date back to the 14th century but in their modern form they are about 150 years old. There has been many changes over the years, probably one of the most significant of these came in 1993 with the introduction of 'Open' athletics, this arrangement allowed 'amateurs' to compete alongside 'professionals' and accept monetary prizes without fear of jeopardising their amateur status. Nowadays events at all Highland games are OPEN to members of all of Scotland's athletic clubs as well as unattached athletes.

What makes the Highland Games unique is the test for the athletes to compete in simple natural conditions and to adapt to these conditions. Nearly all running, jumping and throwing events take place on a grass surface.

All of the games feature running and throwing [heavy] events, many also stage long, high and triple jump with the odd one or two pole vault. Several competitors in Highland Games have also gone on to compete in the Commonwealth and Olympic Games.

Tug of War which was once an Olympic sport also takes place at many of the games.

People often ask, what do the Highland Games now represent, indeed what have they always represented? The Games are the essence of recreational athletics and always have been. There is nothing like them anywhere in the world and they are something we must cherish and support.


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SCOTTISH HIGHLAND GAMES ASSOCIATION
SHGA

*Pictures courtesy of Bill Robertson, Sauchie*

www.shga.co.uk
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## GETTING STARTED IN HIGHLAND GAMES

### ATHLETICS

This attracts many runners throughout the season and as such is more controlled in terms of entering, many of the events are pre entry and needs to be made usually one week before the event, many of the running events however at the Northern games are by entry on the day.

To establish which events are pre entry check the SHGA website and go to the event you wish to attend, if there is a handicapper listed this would indicate you need to enter in advance., usually a week All athletes must be registered with the SHGA before competing this can be done on the day but preferably before by visiting www.shga.co.uk. Age group for Youth events is 9 - 15 years. Open events 16 years and upwards.

Competitors for the Jumps events should just enter with the judge on the day.

### HEAVY EVENTS

Entering the heavy [throwing] events is straightforward. Entry is usually made on the day of the games with the judge.

Athletes should be capable in handling the various pieces of equipment in a safe and competent manner There is also a dress code which applies to the heavy events. All athletes must be registered before competing this can be done on the day but preferably before by visiting www.shga.co.uk

### CYCLING

Cycling is a popular event but does require equipment which is standardised for grass track, details in rules on website, in terms of entering, many of the events are pre entry and entry needs to be made usually one week before the event, many of the Northern events however are enter on the day. To establish which events are pre entry please check the website and go to the event you wish to attend, and if there is a "Handicapper" listed this would indicate that you would need to enter in advance.
All cyclists must be registered before competing this can be done on the day but preferably before by visiting the website www.shga.co.uk

Age Groups - there are two age groups Juniors which cover 10yrs to15yrs and Adult from 16yrs upwards.

## Advertising & Sponsorship Opportunities

We service tens of thousands of visits to our website and handle enquiries from around the globe about Highland Games and all things Scottish

We can structure a varied package – from adverts online and in the Yearbook, to named leagues, championships, and even branded registration cards, winners certificates and running numbers – there are variations to suit a broad range of requirements.

## Contact Us

Scottish Highland Games Association has high standards and we're primarily interested in sponsors who also stand for quality. If your organization is interested in getting more involved in sponsorship, please get in touch with the treasurer.


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## TUG o WAR

Normally teams just turn up on the day and enter with Judge, competitions can be for 5, 6 or 8 man teams and some events are weight restricted, please check with Games secretary which event they are hosting.

A full list of rules and regulations for competing can be found at Scottish Highland Games Association and further information is available from the SHGA secretary Ian Grieve at 01334 476305 or email ig2shga@gmail.com

## HIGHLAND DANCING

Scottish Highland Dancing is regarded as being one of the most sophisticated forms of national dancing in the world. It is highly technical and demands grace of movement combined with stamina and strength. The origins are a little lost in the mist of time and it is almost impossible for dance historians to separate fact from fiction as in the background to the following dance. The Highland Fling is probably the most famous of the Scottish Highland Dances. Legend has it that a shepherd boy on a hillside watched stags rearing and wheeling. The boy tried to copy the stag's antics and also raised his hands and arms above his head in a graceful curve depicting the stag's antlers.

Highland Dancing is mostly solo dancing and the dancer is judged as an individual even in a dance for 4 people such as the Reels. Scottish Country Dancing on the other hand is for teams.

Scots living in far flung parts of the world look to Scotland for guidance in all things Scottish and Scottish Highland Dancing at Scottish Highland Games is always high on the agenda.

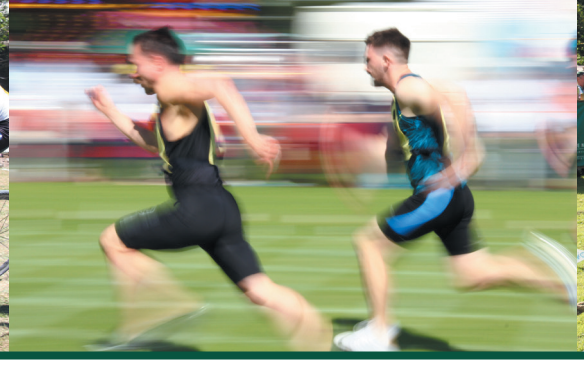
## DID YOU KNOW?

The SHGA run leagues throughout the season to encourage excellence in athletes and participation at members' events.

They champion athlete welfare by providing free personal injury insurance to all fully registered athletes

They target specific athletic clubs and associated sporting bodies to increase awareness of the opportunities Games provide and boost participation.

They demonstrate a commitment to clean sport by providing the only Highland Games drug testing service in the UK.



| | MAY | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| Mon | | | 1 | | 2 | Mon |
| Tue | | | 2 | | 3 | Tue |
| Wed | 1 | | 3 KENMORE | | 4 | Wed |
| Thu | 2 | | 4 | 1 | 5 | Thu |
| Fri | 3 | | 5 | 2 DORNOCH | 6 | Fri |
| Sat | 4 | 1 CORNHILL, HELENSBURGH & LOMOND | 6 THORNTON, LUSS | 3 ABOYNE, NEWTONMORE, ABERLOUR STRATHSPEY, INVERKEITHING | 7 BRAEMAR | Sat |
| Sun | 5 | 2 MARKINCH | 7 | 4 BRIDGE OF ALLAN | 8 BLAIRGOWRIE & RATTRAY | Sun |
| Mon | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 9 | Mon |
| Tue | 7 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 10 | Tue |
| Wed | 8 | 5 | 10 | 7 ISLE OF SKYE | 11 | Wed |
| Thu | 9 | 6 | 11 | 8 BALLATER | 12 | Thu |
| Fri | 10 | 7 | 12 | 9 ASSYNT | 13 | Fri |
| Sat | 11 | 8 BEARSDEN & MILNGAVIE | 13 ALVA, TAIN, BRAEMAR JUNIOR GAMES, LOCH LOMOND | 10 ABERNETHY, ABERFELDY SHOW, STRATHPEFFER, NORTH BERWICK | 14 PITLOCHRY | Sat |
| Sun | 12 | 9 STRATHMORE | 14 ROSNEATH PENINSULA | 11 PERTH | 15 | Sun |
| Mon | 13 | 10 | 15 BURNTISLAND | 12 | 16 | Mon |
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| Wed | 15 | 12 | 17 | 14 | 18 | Wed |
| Thu | 16 | 13 | 18 MULL | 15 | 19 | Thu |
| Fri | 17 | 14 | 19 | 16 | 20 | Fri |
| Sat | 18 | 15 OLDMELDRUM | 20 BALQUIDDER, LOCHCARRON, LOCHEARNHEAD & STRATHYRE,TOMINTOUL | 17 HELMSDALE, STIRLING | 21 INVERCHARRON | Sat |
| Sun | 19 GORDON CASTLE | 16 ABERDEEN, CUPAR | 21 STONEHAVEN | 18 CRIEFF | 22 | Sun |
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| Wed | 22 | 19 | 24 | 21 | 25 | Wed |
| Thu | 23 | 20 | 25 | 22 ARGYLLSHIRE - OBAN | 26 | Thu |
| Fri | 24 | 22 | 26 DURNESS | 23 | 27 | Fri |
| Sat | 25 BLACKFORD | 22 DRUMTOCHTY | 27 AIRTH, DUFFTOWN, HALKIRK | 24 GLENURQUHART, LONACH, STRATHARDLE | 28 | Sat |
| Sun | 26 BLAIR ATHOLL, CARMUNNOCK | 23 | 28 ST ANDREWS | 25 | 29 | Sun |
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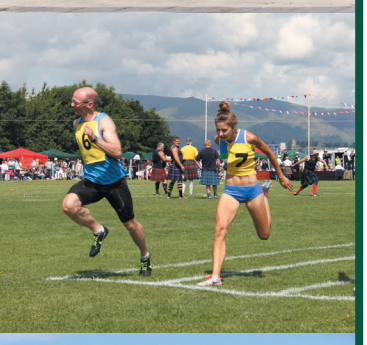
New Year Sprint Gala - Monday 30th December 2019 & Wednesday 1st January 2020