

## TRAINING & PREPARATION

The Rob Roy Challenge is a tough event requiring serious training and careful preparation. A 16 mile walk followed by 39 miles on a bicycle through the Scottish glens requires some thought into how you can best prepare your bodies for the challenge.

Below I have outlined some tips that I have personally put into practice, and have successfully passed on to others who have taken up other similar challenges in the past.

### Good luck.

*David Fox-Pitt*  
Director  
Events & Activities Ltd

### Training for walking

- Get into the habit of walking everywhere. Walk to work and back home again if you can. If necessary, join a gym and ask the instructor to put you on a training plan.
- Take part in other sports like tennis, squash, jogging etc to build up your cardiovascular system.
- At weekends aim to go for long walks incorporating hills, starting off with a five mile walk followed by a 10 mile walk over a period of three to four months. Walk with your team as much as possible so that you can support and encourage each other. Explore a different part of the country and stretch yourself further each time.
- Get into the habit of stretching once you have warmed up after say 10 minutes of walking, during the walk and after the walk. Stretching will reduce your likelihood of injury and muscle/ tendon strains.

### Training for cycling

- Once again, try to cycle as much as possible before the event.
- Use cycle machines and stair-masters at the gym.
- Become familiar with your bicycle, insuring that the seat is comfortable and make sure the saddle is set at the correct height.
- Wear cycle shorts as this will reduce rubbing and chaffing.
- Ensure your helmet fits and become familiar with the gears and puncture repairs.
- We recommend you put in a few 15-25 mile training sessions mixed in with some walking beforehand.

### Top tips

- **Feet** - Toughen your feet by walking as much as possible. Trim toenails and use foot powder. Tape your feet with Zinc Oxide (Army type recommended) before you start to protect areas prone to blisters. Walk about at home in bare feet as much as possible.
- **Socks** - Smart wool socks. Change your socks at each checkpoint. It is important to keep your feet as dry as possible.

- **Boots** - Light Goretex type boots are fine. Make sure they fit, allow for foot expansion and insure they are well broken in.
- **Trainers** - Fine in dry weather on most of the Rob Roy Way, although not recommended in wet conditions. Alternate with walking boots.
- **Rubbing** - Wear lycra cycle shorts and use Vaseline to prevent chaffing.
- **Stretching** - Warm up before stretching and stretch both during and after walking. Remember to stretch down after the event.
- **Hydration** - Drink regularly. We recommend at least 2-3 litres of water between each check point. Use the Camelback/ Platypus water container. Mix energy drinks with water. Drink plenty of tea (herbal or decaffeinated is best), soup, water and eat plenty of fruit.
- **Dehydration symptoms** - Thirsty, not going to the loo, dark coloured urine and minor headaches.
- **Blisters** - If you feel a potential blister forming, stop and deal with it there and then. Puncture the blister with a pinprick, drain and dress it. Zinc Oxide Tape, if properly applied will prevent most blisters forming in the first place.
- **Temperature** - Maintain a constant body temperature and prevent your body from overheating by continuously adjusting your clothing. Zip tops make this easier. If you feel cold put your hat on.
- **Check points and support teams** - Keep stops at checkpoints to a maximum of 20 minutes or your muscles will begin to seize-up. Support team members must make sure that they are well prepared to receive the walkers with chairs, food, clothes and sock changes, first aid and replenishment of water a food supplies.

### Recommended kit list

- 15 litre small day sack.
- Map of the Rob Roy Route and compass.
- Camelback/platypus water container (3 litre recommended) and energy drinks.
- Well broken in pair of walking boots and trainers.
- Full set of waterproofs.
- Spare change of clothes and towel.
- Wide rimmed sun hat, sun cream and sun glasses.
- Midge repellent and midge net.
- Cycle shorts and Vaseline.
- Basic first-aid kit.
- Energy food (nuts, fruit, chocolate and energy bars).
- Head torch with spare batteries.
- Mobile phone and whistle.
- Woolly hat and gloves.
- 2 pairs of spare socks.