



## The Highland Cross 2025



It's not about time. Every crossing is unique. Every one a huge achievement. It's about determination, stubborn single mindedness, the will to keep going.....and, let's be honest, a little bit of insanity.

With temperatures in Memsie nudging the mid-20s and official safety warnings being issued, it was time for an emergency purchase: one cap and a bottle of factor 50!



There comes a point where it doesn't matter how many of the TEN briefing notes you've read (yes, ten) or how many packing lists you've made, you just have to leave. Last year we somehow got two bikes, two people, and all the necessary gear (of which, there is a lot) into my car. This year? Let's just say a Transit van would have been more appropriate.



My "trusty" navigator was out injured, so I was flying solo...autocorrect changed it to "babysitter," and that's probably more accurate to be fair.



Despite leaving at different times and running late, Gillian and I coincidentally met at the bike exchange. We handed over our precious bikes and transition bags to a merry band of volunteers who whisked them away onto one of three waiting lorries. That's the moment it really sinks in—no turning back now.

Inverness was still warm with a cooling breeze when I arrived, but ofcourse, more drama when I arrived at the hotel: the morning chef had called in sick. No breakfast! A "packed lunch" was offered (yes, really), so off I went to the local Mace and stocked up on... porridge I'd never tried before and baby food. The breakfast of champions.

Race day. A mixture of anxiety, excitement, and a sky full of cloud and drizzle. "Phew," I thought. If only. By the time we reached Kintail, it was blue skies and blazing sun. The atmosphere at base camp was noticeably different this year - less about chasing times and more about surviving. And because of that, it felt truly social. We stopped at every hydration point, chatting to the best volunteers you could really ask for.



The course had taken a battering from two days of rain, making it wet and technical. And I'd conveniently forgotten that even after 15 miles of running, it's still full of climbs, just different climbs. As I passed the sign saying "1 mile to go, honest" I surveyed the scene of last year's fall, I actually no idea how I fell, there was nothing to trip over. Classic!



Transition was a hive of activity, moonie sightings everywhere



Quick refuel and onto the bike. More hills (that I'd blissfully blocked from memory) and now a headwind to battle all the way home.

The welcome back this year felt next level. Every rider was cheered home with a huge round of applause. It was emotional, overwhelming, and just so appreciated. There was a real buzz, community commentary, laughter, sore legs, and even sorer bums.

Despite the heat, the hills, the questionable breakfast, and the bruised bum... I'd do it again in a heartbeat.



Proud to be part of Team of 2014. Grateful for every moment.

