

More Mile “Cheviot 2” fell running shoe



This is an “own brand” fell running shoe, designed and produced for Start Fitness and available in store and on-line.

Retailing at only £30, these shoes are between £30 & £50 cheaper than the most popular alternative shoes on the market. So on the face of it, it is a bit of a “no-brainer”. But how do they compare to existing products? Are they good value, or are they “cheap and chatty”?

I have been running in mine for about 5 months now, in a variety of situations, both racing and training, and so thought it might help to share my experiences with everyone by doing a review.

I am scoring them from 1 to 10, with 10 being best.

Comfort & fit

The uppers are soft and of a one-piece construction. They were very comfortable straight from the box, and there are no joins, lace sections, or firm pieces that rub when running, and the tongue stays in place and protects the top of the foot well.

The fit is appropriately snug for rough terrain, whilst not cramping the toe area. The heel area holds well when ascending, with no sign of heel-slip. I have done 4 hr + training runs and races in them, and they are as comfortable at the end as they are at the start. The laces are rather annoyingly long, but stay fastened quite well even over long runs.

Score 9

Support

The shoe is quite soft, but holds the foot well, even when contouring. Despite being soft, it doesn't appear to loosen noticeable when wet, so generally maintains its support in all conditions. It may feel softer than some people would like, but I'm not sure that any support is lost by it.

The shoe is a little higher off the ground than some on the market, but not by much, and that provides good underfoot support without any noticeable loss of stability. The cushioning is sufficient not to notice stony or rocky ground, and enable confident descending at speed on rough tracks, such as the miners' trail on the Causey Pike race.

Score 8

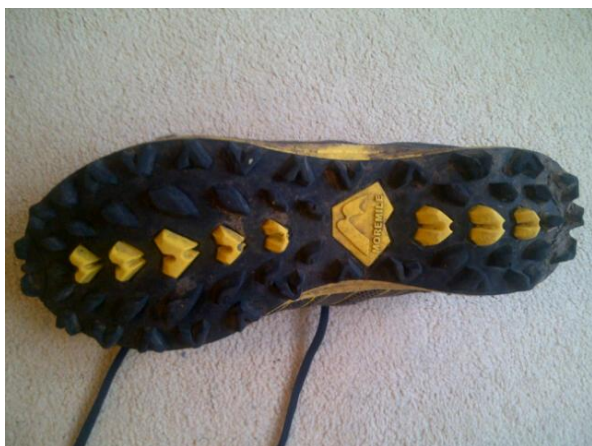
Weight

I don't know what the official weight of the shoe is, but it is certainly light enough to race in, and I have done on several occasions. It isn't as light as the INOV8 Talon, Mudclaw 272 or the Walsh Racer, but is certainly no heavier than the Mudclaw 330. Because it is soft, flexible and comfortable, it feels quite light on your feet, which is just as important as the actual weight.

If you would normally do longer-distance running, and opt for more robust shoes for that, then these would be a very effective alternative.

Score 8

Grip



The tread is very aggressive and compares favourably with, what for me is the class-leader for grip, the INOV8 Mudclaw. There is little between them for grip, but the Mudclaw is a marginally lower shoe, so feels a little different.

I have ascended and descended everything from boggy ground, through heather and peat, to rocks and hard trails and even including several inches of fresh snow in the Alps in February, and they have coped superbly with everything.

The durable compound used for the sole gives, if anything, a little less traction on wet rock than the Mudclaw sole, but the Mudclaw sole is in turn less durable, and no-one would expect to be able to fly over wet rock without a degree of caution in any shoe.

Score 9

Durability

The uppers on both of my shoes have split where my foot bends. The material used is soft, which helps comfort and flexibility, but appears to be not very hard wearing.

The sole has virtually no sign of wear at all, and clearly is of a much more durable design than the upper. I suspect the wear on the upper will govern the life of the shoe, and when it becomes no longer usable, the sole will still have considerable life left in it.



Uppers score 5
Sole score 9

Value for money

Ultimately, this is what matters. The average score of my 6 categories is 8 out of 10. For a £30 shoe, judged over a wide range of conditions and surfaces, over a 5-month period, that has to be considered a pretty impressive performance in anyone's books.

My main reservation is over the durability of the uppers, which I think in most cases will dictate the life of the shoe. I have used mine quite a lot over 5 months, and they look well used. The soles however, remain in excellent shape. I would say a realistic lifespan is probably 6 - 8 months, depending on how you use them. That isn't bad at all for the price. Some shoe uppers will outlive that, but the sole may wear out. Fell running shoes get a lot of stick, and no fell shoe remains usable beyond a year really.

But to get a comfortable, supportive shoe, with excellent traction in the majority of conditions, for £30, does it matter that much that you may have to buy 3 in the time period that you may only have bought 2 of your normal shoe choice? At the price, it would still in most cases be cheaper overall. And let's be honest, for many of us, it will cost more than £30 in fuel to travel to many of the fell races that we do!

I will certainly be replacing mine; a shoe well worth having in your shoe cupboard, and an excellent choice for people who only do a little bit of fell running and don't want to fork out £75 or more for a fell shoe that will only get occasional use.

It does of course have the "More Mile" logo, which may put off the poser-types, who like to sport the top brand names! But once the shoe is caked in mud, who can tell anyway? And since when did a posh brand name make you run any faster up a Lakeland fell side?!

Score 9