

Planners' Report

Vicky T and Heather F

A big 'shout out' for the extra "leg work" out in the terrain we received from our fit and able helpers. Some initial taping by Heather, Nicola Melville and Rob Truswell. Then many more hours were spent out in the terrain by Heather, Louise and Gary Longhurst checking out and taping sites, putting out controls on Friday and other tasks at Edinchip. Also thanks to Yotam Bertrand for this year's map updates, and to Dave Robertson for his controlling work out on the area and valuable comments and advice throughout the planning process. I (Vicky) achieved the armchair course planning work providing maps to those doing all of the leg workout in the field, and then more hours computing the feedback. The planning was therefore a team effort, without which it wouldn't have got done.

Thanks also to all of you who ran our courses; the kind comments we've received both verbally and in writing makes it all worth it.

First off, the JHIs, what a great fun loving, energetic bunch of juniors and Managers you all are. It was both interesting and a joy for us to hear about some of the battles most of you had out there on your challenging, technical courses. Next up, the well attended SOL5 and yet more stories to tell about the man and woman eating terrain and all the numerous lessons learnt. It's true to say that if you didn't "go for it" out there and know where you were then those myrtle bushes, large tussocks, holes and swamps were bound to swallow you up! Knowing this we had deliberately planned the courses a bit shorter at this time of year, since had there been foul weather, we may well not have received quite so many thanks! Gladly, no one was swept down the river.

It's evident from our studies of winsplits, routegadget and livelox that the numerous route choice dilemmas provided some interesting outcomes and hopefully you guys and gals had some fun brain teasers while on the move. Please continue to put up your routes - we're having fun continuing to look - thanks.

There were plenty of stand out performances however congratulations are due to all of you who got round and made it safely back. The demanding 9k Black dominated by an excellent M21 turn out was won in just over an hour, jeez now that's some going! Someone needs to take a harder look at the mapping of those rhododendrons in future as perhaps there was a gap to #1? (or a swift crawl?) - there was unexpected time lost for those going round. #6-7 fastest right (Dan S - RGad) #23-24 fastest Alistair P (livelox) #26-27 fastest left Matthew G (RGad). Some of you chose to fly across the river (for the moorland loop) just SW of that deer fence corner not once but twice. I should mention that we were somewhat relieved that the days leading up to the event weren't wetter! Being the great sport this is to allow opportunities to develop your own

risk assessment skills you all picked your own sensible places to cross the river, evidenced on LLox and RG. Hats off to you Jenn for completing the whole course.

The near perfect run by Finlay on Brown in under an hour, is good to watch on LLox. Funny that I thought Finlay had the optimum route to #20 and along comes the gung ho Will H to fling and grabble his way up and down those embankments! On Short Brown it was quicker to go straighter #8-9 and it's obvious from splits that the leaders in the class on a few legs could have been even quicker. Obviously I'm in danger here of writing a long essay covering each and every course so hopefully you've all enjoyed reflecting on the event and doing your own analysis just as we have in the making of them.

As already mentioned there were plenty of outstanding performances and many adventures were had out there in this wonderful terrain.

Once again we have Estate Owners Jane and Brett and Manager Alex and David to thank for their friendly welcome back to their beautiful Estate after we planned the SHIs and SOL back in 2024.

Some background

The planning logistics on an area such as Edinchip was never going to be straightforward, but there again it never is for any large event. However having planned here before and with a willing and hardworking team in place the job was made easier from the outset. This was especially true due to the high level, frequent, 'rapid fire' back and forth communications between team members. Thank goodness for Strava or I would be missing Rob's movements :-)) The guy has the energy and possibly sugar consumption? of a hummingbird!

Getting the infrastructure in place from the start is always fairly key for allowing the organiser to commence operations in terms of establishing out-of-bounds, walks to assembly, start, finishes, string course, toilets, stiles, sheep moving, gates opening, farm machinery moving and hazard taping. With a decent walk from the car park at this time of year it seemed wise to keep the walk to any start and finish etc short and to a minimum and we hope that was appreciated.

The gorge, out-of-bounds areas and all the other line features on this area, coupled with the constraints already listed, will continue to present any future planner(s) wishing to design the complete set of courses from TD1 to 5 (complying as far as possible with "the said ratios") with mind taxing problems from start to finish.

A fact which worked out well for me (Vicky) as since mid-June on-wards (following a knee op and physically restricted) and finding myself very well supported by Heather, it meant I could at least mentally challenge myself working on creating the courses. I was particularly pleased with my start location and set-up, designed to get you all safely across the rickety bridge before opening your maps. However on adventuring (for me) across the assembly field with Heather, armed with orange fence netting, I spotted the bog. Rob, James and Alex to the rescue armed

with hay bales. From July onwards I was "ground control to major Tom (or rather to the terrain runners/walkers)". This hardy bunch (names previously listed) took on the task of visiting and reporting back on no less than 66 controls sites. That caused plenty of entertainment for me at home with whatsapp videos, phone calls and messages coming in thick and fast from the field, which I was eventually able to decipher, adjust the shape of the courses and utilise the best of the rough terrain and fairest control sites. The feedback also enabled a map correction list for Yotam. I also had the benefit of Controller Dave's wise advice also working from his PC from home. I was content enough with my laptop and later made it across the estate fields and round the tracks by bike. Thank goodness for the helpers.

As for the map fiasco created solely by Royal Mail with the box stuck in Heathrow from Tues to Frid. This hitch was never overly stressful given that Jack Benham (BMLprint) was quite happy to re-print and drive a second set of maps up the country to be met, near Glasgow, by Controller Dave's wife Ann. Dave delivered the maps to our campervan in Edinchip on Friday afternoon. The original set of maps arrived on our doorstep in Callander sometime on Saturday afternoon - **we could do it all again!** Ha ha.