

Long Course Planning at IOC2017

Terrain

- Open area with many boulders. Some very technical, the rest middle-technical.
- Decent runnability but some parts rough for juniors and vets
- Not much climb. I was able to ignore climb when planning. A great luxury.

Limitations

- River (and road) a major limitation for long legs on technical courses
- I took the decision that the river was uncrossable over most of its length.
- Few linear features for non-technical courses
- Knolls were very shallow & couldn't hide a control, let alone a person
- Difficult to use boulders as controls because there were so many it would not be possible to describe which one
- In some places I would like to have used more controls but it would have been difficult to keep enough distance between controls
- High Visibility. Following & finding controls via others is a problem.
- Many boulders in some areas made it difficult for the mapper
- Not a very big area making the longest courses a little bit tricky. Some more terrain could have been used but I decided not to for various reasons.

- Previous version of map was in 2 parts and I wasn't happy with them. Frank asked Pat to update and produce a single map.
- Pat used a different version of OCAD to me which caused some problems
- Map rotation due to GPS vs MN caused some problems

Weather

- Had to assume river would be uncrossable – plan courses not to cross river at difficult sections
- Had to assume visibility would be perfect – make sure controls were well obscured, avoid following
- Had to assume visibility would be 0
- Had to assume heavy Rain, Cold & Wind – possible cagule rule, care with course planning, terrain choice
- Had to assume Heat – water station at road crossing

Calculating Course Lengths

- Had planned here before
- Had results from previous event here
- Had results from previous events on similar terrain
- Had results from LOC
- IOC guidelines
- Calculated speeds for each class/course on paper. I'm sorry I didn't spreadsheet it.
- Guidelines have some oddities

- Different classes on the same course could each have very different optimum lengths.
- Are vets being short changed by short EWTs?
- Added course for W70+. Shorter than spec and I made a lot of effort to reduce downhill & rough terrain. I had considered using a separate start and driving runners to it in batches but was able to merge starts when I moved the main start. In the end, only 2 people on this course. Should maybe have added M80
- Most courses could have been about 10% shorter

Selecting Start & Finish

- Assembly only had one possible location
- Start/Finish dictated mainly by M/W10 and M/W70+
- With a small team, remote or multiple starts/finishes are not really an option
- Finish self-selected. Was the start location for I3D 2012. Has good access back to assembly
- Changed start location late as shorter technical courses would have been dull & M/W10s would have used road
- Had a problem with first controls as this area was very visible and control features small. Would have liked another first control to spread load & add confusion but none were available.

Initial Planning

- Use a line symbol to draw as long a course as reasonably possible. Put in as many long legs as possible. On complex terrain like this, no need to worry about control locations.
- If too short, consider map exchange
- Do same for M/W70+
- Do same for M/W10
- Reassess start & finish locations

Controls

- I ended up with 64 controls
- Martin's Three phases of Control selection:
 1. Adding courses: Add more controls as needed - maybe up to 90 controls. Courses based on combinations of 2 or 3 themes.
 2. Course editing & control checking: Rationalise by choice & forced
 3. Towards the end: Any problems, throw a control at it
- Control loading- I kept a close eye on loading. Initially using last years entries, then actual entries. For most controls we will never overload but first & last controls are important.
- In some places I tried to plan like a relay with clusters of 2 or 3 controls. This gives a lot of leg variation & limits following.

Control Placement

- I tagged all controls using a short bamboo with red duck tape on top. No codes
- Only 5 controls described as boulders but many were actually hidden by a boulder
- I would like to think that very few people were able to see controls before finding the feature.
- Some sites were difficult due to high visibility. Before selecting a site, I tried to imagine where runners would come from and how well a control/other runner would be hidden. I should have brought a kite & stake with me.

- Event was on Sunday. I took Thursday & Friday off work to hang controls
- The weather on Thursday was good so I hung 53 controls in 4 batches. It took about 7 hours.
- Carried up to approx 20 stakes in a large rucksack. Hung kites from the side using luggage straps. Carried controls, in order, on a string.
- Mixes WEGO BSF7 controls with CNOG BSF8 controls. CNOG controls permanently attached to stakes.
- I posted photos of some controls to Facebook in real-time. I thought this might help to build up a bit of buzz before the event.
- I left 11, near road, for Sunday morning. Pat hung these

Printing

- Pat edited & I reviewed. Normally, it should be the other way around
- Some courses 1:10, some 1:15, some both
- Lines & circles needed to be cut
- Control descriptions could be different for 1:10 & 1:15

M/W10

- Very few linear features
- Terrain quite rough
- Streams hard to see
- Could have been shorter
- Most were shadowed
- Can this class be supported on this type of terrain?
- In hindsight:
 - Remove 3-6. Maybe add a couple later on to make up for them.
 - Simplify map by removing formlines & small boulders. Maybe thicken useful features.

M/W14

- Probably too difficult
- Not many big features and most of these are up high
- Would it be better to remove small features from the map?

M21E & other technical courses

- Tried to add long legs with route choice
- This makes some terrain unavailable for other controls
- Long legs on less technical terrain, shorter legs on technical parts
- Frequent change of direction
- Varied leg length
- Traversing downhill legs
- Long legs over less technical terrain ending on technical terrain
- Changes of navigation speed
- Maximise use of more technical south side

M Elite:

11 – First leg I wanted. The longest. Options:

- Low traverse, very technical
- Use larger features near the top, may involve more climb & slow running
- Take your lumps and climb to the top. Flatter ground with quicker running

3 & 7 – longish. Originally to be the same legs with slightly different start & finish. Would runners make the same decisions. Options:

- Straight, more marshes, climb & rough bouldery terrain
- Up and around on flatter ground. Longer but better running

4 – Traversing Downhill

5 - Steep terrain. Options:

- Down & up
- Straight (everyone seems to have gone for this option)
- Up & down

16 Longish with medium difficulty. Options:

- Traverse over rougher vegetation
- Climb to better running on fatter terrain

18 Longish across medium difficulty into complex terrain

Other Classes

- Cut down version of sections of elite
- Fewer opportunities for long legs

Problems

- Control 62 was not where I thought. No tag, didn't look familiar.
- 'No stake' for control 79
- 'Injured' competitor
- Dodgy SI control 225. Low battery, Wrong time, Stopped recording
- Bug in Ór when downloading start box for some v5 cards
- Water

• **GPS**

- Fachtna Healy used in 2007 SOR. I didn't see the point at the time.
- I used Trekbuddy for IOC 2013 & I2D 2014
- Saves hours when new to terrain & map checking
- Fantastic for control checking & tagging
- Saves a lot of time when hanging controls. Also, ensures control placement matches control on map
- One slight problem is that you can rely on it and not properly review the map.

• **Android Applications**

- Voice Recorder on phone for taking notes, control descriptions
- Avenza Maps when geotiff available

- Trekbuddy for navigation when geotiff not available
- "Map Notes" good for taking notes but not easy to import to OCAD
- "GPS Keeper Lite" to keep GPS active
- Turn off "Autorotate"