



**DEESIDE ORIENTEERING
CLUB**
Regional Event
Delamere Forest
8th February 2009
Officials' Comments



Organiser's Comments (Barbara Majumdar)

The sight of a fleet of experienced and unbelievably willing Deeside helpers' cars rolling early into the Delamere car park, and the tents going up as if by magic, was wonderfully reassuring. Great helpers, Steve's courses and an unexpectedly lovely day made it a happy and successful event.

Both Andrew and Steve share a great eye for detail and a wealth of orienteering knowledge and experience which I find awesome. I know that Steve and his daughter Elspeth put in hours and hours of time in the forest and at their desks preparing the courses, and many people came back to assembly enthusing about the great courses on a lovely day. Many thanks to them for giving of their time and expertise, and to Andrew Gregory for controlling wisely and helpfully.

When, some time ago, I asked Andrew Williams to look after the starts, and Richard Hill to look after the string course, I hadn't quite realised the extent to which it would enable me to hang around at assembly, socialising, for most of the day. Clare and Simon Crocker did their usual splendid job with the SI and were therefore there from beginning to end, as well as busy before and after. Many thanks to all these, and to all the other Deeside helpers who made the day so enjoyable.

Planner's Comments (Steve Ingleby)

I hope you enjoyed your visit to Delamere. Fortunately the weather was really nice whilst people were out in the forest and the forecast snow only started as we were bringing in controls.

Looking at the results, the courses appear to be on the long side in general. The lengths were almost identical to those in our last Delamere Regional Event, held in November 2007. However I was relying on the runnability being much better in February in order to increase the speed of competitors through the forest. Unfortunately the modern policy of contracting out the extraction of timber results in a considerable amount of brashings being left on the forest floor. In addition the bracken seems not to have died down this year to the same extent as in previous years - some areas that have been lightning fast when I have been out in the forest a few years ago were a much tougher proposition today.

The map of Delamere needs much correcting. We tried to update the most relevant bits of the forest but we did not have time to do as thorough a job as I would have liked. I apologise if your route choice was adversely affected by how the runnability was shown on the map.

Apologies are also due to those competitors who were not able to run on the course of their choice due to the lack of maps. It appears that a very large number of competitors nowadays expect to be able to enter at a very late stage and we, as organising clubs have to respond to that demand. We had a very disappointing entry when the first closing date was past, but after the maps had been printed by our neighbouring club, the entries just started to flood in. Printing maps

at the event is, to my mind, an excellent system, although somewhat impractical for A3 size of maps. Printing a considerable number of spare maps is clearly one option - although if using A3 waterproof paper this could be disastrous to the event finances! Perhaps standard paper copies with provision of polybags for EOD is the way to handle the issue. I will keep a close watch on what other clubs do in the future to hopefully learn a few tricks.

Finally I have a few "thank you"s to make:-

- Firstly to John Padget for acting as liaison officer to the Forestry Commission and also for surveying some of the necessary changes to the original map.
- Next to the control collectors, Rachel Majumdar together with Andy and Sara Campbell who had the unenviable task of going out into the forest again after the snowstorm had started.
- I would like to thank our friends in MDOC, especially Eddie Speak and Steve Lang for arranging for provision of equipment and printing of A3 maps respectively
- Organising a Regional Event is a large undertaking at the best of times, but when it is very shortly after a hip replacement it is an exceptional achievement - so I would like to thank Barbara Majumdar, on your behalf, for her (and Budha's) efforts.
- When you are planning an event it is really helpful if your Controller lets you get on with developing the courses but is always there with helpful suggestions. Andrew Gregory of MDOC was this and more - I would like to thank Andrew sincerely for his assistance in preparing for the event and his help on the weekend.
- Finally, and by no means least, a very big thank you to my daughter, Elspeth, who provided help during all aspects of the event. She spent days in the forest redrawing many of the most important map corrections, provided very constructive comments on the location of controls and did more than her fair share of putting out, checking and collection controls.

Controller's Comments (Andrew Gregory, MDOC)

Congratulations to Deeside for running a very successful winter event in Delamere forest.

Steve Ingleby planned an excellent set of courses, and also spent a considerable amount of time updating the map in the areas around the control sites. He made very good use of the variety of terrain in the different areas of the forest, and a good mixture of detailed navigation and longer route choice legs. The forest was slower than had been predicted, with snow-covered brashings presenting one of the main hazards. This resulted in many winning times being longer than the guidelines. Apologies for not predicting this, but hopefully many competitors enjoyed a good run at this time of year.

Barbara Majumdar very efficiently organised her large team of Deeside helpers, and all areas of the organization appeared to run very smoothly. The snow even held off until the last competitors were in.

I would emphasize Steve Ingleby's point about the importance of pre-entering events to ensure that you can run the course you want. Printing A3 size maps on the day is not really practical, and the reliability of any equipment can be affected by very cold weather, as was found when trying to read the SI start and check boxes at the end of the event.

At some events courses are squeezed so as to fit onto a sheet of A4 paper, which is easier to print on the day. However it then becomes quite possible inadvertently to run off the map, and many competitors prefer a map of the whole forest.

Overall, many thanks to Deeside for an excellent team effort.

Lost Property: 1 navy Gelert fleece-lined hat with peak, size L
1 woollen child's glove – grey with stripes
1 set earphones

Please contact Barbara 0151 632 4027