



DEESIDE ORIENTEERING
CLUB
Local Event
Frodsham Hill
21/3/2010
Officials' Comments



Organiser's Comments (John Padget)

It was a relief to finally hold the event after its cancellation on the original date in Feb due to heavy snow in the early hours of the morning. We could hardly have had a bigger contrast in the weather which was distinctly Spring like. We were very keen to re-arrange the event as the area was at its best after the very cold winter had killed off much of the vegetation and as the maps had all been printed for the previous date. We are especially grateful to Chris Fowles (the farmer) for delaying the ploughing of the parking field, and to the other landowners (Woodland Trust; Tim Kirwin, John Roberts and Simon Crookes) and Natural England to agreeing to the new date. Thanks also to Barbara Majumdar for stepping in late to the SI co-ordinator job, and of course to all the other helpers. Having previously planned at Frodsham I appreciate the difficulties involved in minimizing the climb and think that Mike and Andrew did a very good job.

Planner's Comments (Mike Smithard)

Was the last time Andrew and I had a joint involvement with an event when I assisted him mapping Halkyn in 1980 (?). The day before the event was glorious - trouble was we were in the eye of a storm and we had 6" of snow on the Saturday night, so it was cancelled. Hmm.

Planners often talk about the calm beauty of the forest early on a Sunday morning so I was lucky, I did it twice for the same event, once at 8am in pristine snow in February collecting controls in and again last Sunday - both calm and bright days. But I am getting a little bored going round the same set of control sites.

I probably had more controls on the longer courses than normal in this area but tried to keep you in the forest and reading the map as much as possible. Most of the forest was very runnable only offset by the steepness of the slopes - although climbs were 'only' 4% of length, it may have felt more. The 'now not so newly' planted area is growing up and offered a bit more interest than previously - but the trees will no doubt grow together in the next couple of years and make it impenetrable again.

I hope you enjoyed the event - the weather was perfect - no icy wind across the car park as usual? (I didn't go there) - good to see several new and newer faces, especially young ones, in the forest and at the finish.

Controller's Comments (Andrew Tarr)

Our CompassSport Cup match at Frodsham in 2008 gave winning times on Blue and Brown of 51 and 66 minutes. Comparing times for the same runners suggests that most of them were 10-15% slower this time, probably because Mike used more controls to reduce path running at the north (steep) end of the map. I should have tried harder to shave half a km. off those courses; but as luck would have it, the weather at the second time of asking was perfect and everyone seems to have enjoyed their runs.

There was some discussion about leg 244 to 241 on Blue and Brown; some were keen to reach a path a.s.a.p and apparently hacked straight up among the crags. My preference is to spiral round into the re-entrant just before 241, but each to his own And control 228 (crag) seems to have thrown a few Green runners - it is the only noticeable crag near the top of this slope, but as someone pointed out, the red out-of-bounds hatching obscured useful detail on the hilltop. Showing this hatching was a condition of access to the area and may well vanish from future editions of the map.

After half a lifetime of sporadic mapping and planning at Frodsham I have finally succumbed to controlling. It felt more like being a back-seat assistant planner, but maybe my weather influence may be significant? Many thanks to all involved, especially John who keeps coming back for another bout of organising.