



DEESIDE ORIENTEERING CLUB
WESTON HEATH REGIONAL EVENT
25 March 2007



Missing Property and Officials' Comments

Missing (not found) property

New Moscow thumb compass.

If found, please contact Geoff Hollins geoff@hollins28.fsnet.co.uk.

Organiser's Comments - Geoff Hollins

The idea of a joint event came when DEE asked to use Weston Heath in 2005. I was reluctant for POTOC to lose the use of our best area for four years and proposed a joint event which I would organise (having organised previous events there).

There was the usual problem of finding a car park when our 2005 car park disappeared under a field of maize. The interestingly contoured field we used was offered by Robert Taylor & Tina Skinner of Wixhill Farm. Robert installed the new gateway and stiles for the string course to access the wood specifically for us. He and Tina were unfailingly supportive of the event and spent time on the assembly area on the day. I am very grateful to them. The whole area looked very wet in February, which led to the arrangement for an overflow car park at the Hawkstone Park Hotel, which we did not need to use.

Access to the Salop Motor Club circuit is always an issue at Weston Heath. The Motor Club is welcoming, but is restricted by a Certificate of Lawful Use preventing more than a specified number of events on the area. We convinced the local district council that orienteering did not constitute an event under the terms of the Certificate. Failure to achieve this would have forced the Motor Club to reject our request to use the area, as it would have reduced the available days for their own events. I am grateful to Maggie Challinor, Motor Club Secretary, for her support. Only the M21L course actually benefited from use of the Motor Club area, but we have established the principle of its use for the future.

I was very pleased when DEE appointed Nigel Beasant to co-ordinate their side of the organisation. Nigel and Jenny Beasant are former POTOC members and their unstinting efforts in taking entries and arranging the SportIdent support with Clare & Simon Crocker was invaluable to me. Many thanks to all DEE members involved in the efficient SportIdent service on the day.

The Planning team of Robin, John and David set excellent courses and made the event the success it was. I met them for the first time at the event - all previous contact had been by e-mail, with the occasional telephone call. I know from competitors' comments that their courses were very enjoyable, as was my M50L course. I also met Allan Williams, the Controller, for the first time at the event. Allan was a very welcome volunteer and I followed his e-mail discussions with the Planners with interest.

The POTOC organising teams did their usual excellent job. POTOC is a small club and 25 Helpers is about 40% of the membership. We are never short of volunteers and I am very grateful to them.

The good weather was a bonus, although I have been very lucky with weather for the seven events I have organised. I have now probably broken my luck by saying that! I hope you all enjoyed running on this excellent area, I just wish there had been more of you. The Planners have already commented on the disappointing entry number (309) and I would welcome comments as to why this was so. If you think we could have done something better, please tell me and we will try to at the next event. You can be sure we will be back at Weston Heath in a few years time.

Planners' Comments - John Padget, Robin Tilston, David Beattie

You had a triumvirate of planners at this event. John stepped in to manage the senior courses on the ground after Robin was unable to undertake site visits; David did the junior courses; and Robin managed all the computer aspects. The map was partially updated.

We owe thanks to Geoff for arranging a car park which allowed us to plan courses which allowed use of the best part of the area. The west end of the area really is superb orienteering terrain, albeit hilly. Many previous events had used an eastern car park which constrained planning and inevitably meant that the lower grotty area had to be used, with only the longer courses visiting the best bits. The somewhat disappointingly low entry may have been in part due to a poor impression of the area caused by some such previous events, although competing events no doubt were also responsible. We did however use earlier events to help decide on course lengths and hopefully got them about right - a winning time of 72 minutes for M21L is not far out. A difficulty for planning is the amount of climbing as the terrain is so rugged it cannot be easily kept to 5%. Most of the optimum courses came out around 5.5% which, considering the terrain, is not bad, particularly as early attempts were in the region of

7.5% plus. Our initial course 1 crossed the moto cross circuit in two places, and we had to re-plan at a late stage when fortunately we realised that a recent international event might have caused these crossing places to be fenced up (they were).

Judging by comments we think that most people enjoyed their course. The only adverse reaction was not unexpected and concerned the unavoidable dead bit in the middle of Course 5, forced by lack of an acceptable control site where we needed one to get a course of suitable length. Additionally there was a glitch on Courses 5 and 6, which, despite being printed at the same time as the other courses, had one contour line missing. We are not wholly sure why this occurred - it may have been induced during compression. Apologies to any competitors who were inconvenienced by this.

Thanks to Allan Williams for his constructive controlling, to Geoff Hollins and his POTO team for organising so well, and to Claire and Simon Crocker for running the SportIdent side of the event.

Controller's comments - Allan Williams (WCH)

I enjoyed controlling the event and in general was pleased by numerous comments complimenting the planners on the quality of the courses. The location of the start allowed everyone to enjoy some of the best terrain in our region. Sadly the loss of one contour from all maps and another from courses 5 & 6 took some of the shine off the event. I am disappointed that I didn't spot the errors although it is not something I would expect to have to check for. Robin Tilston, who produced the maps, did have to replace some contours during the planning process when they disappeared unexpectedly. He thought he had overcome the problem but it obviously re-occurred. Perhaps the lesson to learn is that information about this problem should have been shared with the planning team so that we could all have been more vigilant. I'm sorry if this problem spoilt your run, if it didn't you can congratulate yourself on your ability to navigate on an incomplete map.