

The Planner

Thank you to Mike for his light touch and helpful controlling, to Steve for assisting with control checking on the day, and to my control collectors who ensured we were packed up and gone soon after 4pm.

I had a great day and I hope all of you did too, but I couldn't control the weather. Wisley needs frosts to flatten the bracken and we haven't had a decent frost all autumn. Perhaps the compensation of a truly glorious day made up for the extra effort of ploughing through a little more undergrowth than I had hoped. I also didn't think I would have to consider the possibility of competitors being dazzled heading into a low sun across the open areas - when the area had more trees it was less of a problem! The winning times were roughly as expected having set the courses towards the top end of distance guidelines, and I saw a lot more smiles than grimaces at the finish.

I hope that I tempted most of you away from the paths frequently enough to experience the variety of forest and heathland on offer. I tried to give all the technical courses as much of a mix as possible, with options to go straight if you were strong enough and confident of reading the map detail. Observing some of the early runners while strolling through the area in the morning sunshine, it was instructive to witness the different ways in which people tackle the navigational problems you've set. There are plenty of handrails and catching features all over the area, so the challenge came from maintaining flow and concentration through constant changes of direction and terrain. You will see from the split times that even some very experienced runners lost time on what looked like simple legs.

Thank you for your comments on the day, and sorry I put 204 in the wrong gully (I bet many of you never even noticed!).

Time for bed - it's been a long day!
Regards,
Paul

The Organiser

Everything seemed to run really well and most of you will have been blissfully unaware of the major problem that Steve McKinley had had to face beforehand. He suffered from a major computer crash when he started preparing the Start Lists and was up at 3.00 am on Saturday morning creating the "hand crafted" version that he was able to publish on our website at about midday. A few competitors were unaware of their precise start time in consequence but the Start Teams coped admirably and we had no complaints. More of a problem was competitors picking up the wrong map. The BOF system of having Long and Short course of the same colour and, in the case of Green, a Light Green course as well, does seem to cause confusion despite having very clearly labelled map boxes. The weather couldn't have been better for us on the day, although Paul Fox, our planner, would have liked to have had some frosts in the weeks before to flatten the bracken. I thoroughly enjoyed my own run (well slow jog) and it seemed to do my cold good! The donations collected by the car parking team came to nearly £250 and have been passed on to the RHS. It is the first time we have been able to use their excellent overflow car park and facilities for an event on Wisley and we hope we will be able to maintain good relations and do so again. We are also very grateful to the Surrey Wildlife Trust for land use permission and to their Ranger, Gemma Grant for her support. My personal thanks to my excellent team of helpers without whom we would not have been able to run the event.

Best wishes,

John