

SN Trophy 2023 Mytchett and Congo Stream

It's many years since I had an opportunity to plan SN's major event of the year, but I got lucky in 2023 - a great area, a great map, a great SN team to support me, and a large entry to make the effort worthwhile.

The hosting of the Army Inter Corps Championships and the desire to have an "arena finish" dictated the latter part of the courses after the road crossing, and using the narrow hilly strip between the road and the railway effectively dictated the general shape of the last 2.5k of most courses.

Areas like Mytchett inevitably offer path runs as route choices on many legs, but the opportunity to go straighter was often there within the many areas of runnable forest and heath. My aim on all courses was to keep you thinking through the early controls, before a leg stretch to the top of the ridge and beyond on some easier longer legs. And then a sting in the tail, with some truly technical and physical exertions to see if everything was still working well as fatigue started to set in.

Thank you to Charles (controller) for his constructive advice and a few suggested tweaks to control sites to improve route options. The unpredictability of tracks in areas used by mountain bikers led to an early decision that we could not map everything without the risk of cluttering and obscuring the underlying shape of the land. There was already more than enough going on within some of the circles, and careful interpretation of control descriptions was needed to pinpoint the exact features being used.

I hope that you all enjoyed your runs and appreciated Mytchett at this time of year. Only I and a couple of trusty helpers got to see the whole area under crisp blue skies as we put out stakes and kites on Saturday, but I'll happily claim that as "planner's privilege"!

Paul Fox, SN