

Redditch Night Street League 22nd November 2018

Results

Pos	Name	Club	Class	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	Controls	Points	Time	Penalties	Score
1	Peter Langmaid	HOC	M50	10				10	10			20		20	20	20	20				30		30	30	30	30	30		15	330	58:12		330
2	Adrian Bailey	HOC	M50	10				10	10			20	20	20	20		20	20			30		30	30	30	30	30		15	330	59:22		330
3	Robert Rose	HOC	M35			10	10		10		10	20			20	20	20	20	20	20		30	30	30		30		30	16	330	59:29		330
4	Brian Laycock	HOC	M70	10		10		10	10	10			20	20	20		20							30	30	30	30		13	250	57:48		250
5	Ian Gamlen	COBOC	M50	10		10		10	10	10			20	20	20		20				30			30	30		30		13	250	59:36		250
6	Marian White	HOC	W55	10		10						20	20		20	20	20	20			30		30	30		30		12	260	61:20	14	246	
7	Mike Baggott	OD	M65	10	10	10			10	10			20	20	20						30			30	30		30		12	230	58:56		230
8	Robert Vickers	HOC	M75			10				10		20				20	20	20			30		30	30		30		10	220	58:04		220	
9	Nigel Cousins	HOC	M65						10	10		20			20	20		20			30		30			30		9	190	57:16		190	
10	Barry Houghton	HOC	M70	10				10		10			20	20							30			30	30		30		9	190	60:00		190
11	Colin Palmer	HOC	M70	10					10				20	20	20						30			30	30				8	170	56:22		170
12	Andy White	HOC	M60	10				10		10			20	20							30			30	30				8	160	39:49		160
13	Geoffrey Foster	IND		10		10				10			20		20													6	100	55:13		100	
14	Kieran Rose	HOC	M12							10	10		20		20													5	90	48:41		90	

Comments

Well, that was eventful! Thank you to everyone who turned out for my first attempt at planning. Particular thanks to Babs for holding the fort as I disappeared to undertake a last-minute risk assessment of the fluid situation and subsequent manual map edits; Peter L for the induction to the technology; Andy W for relaying the messages about possible alterations; and John L for some very useful feedback on the draft course.

I chose the area because I know it well and had access to a suitable event centre. I thought it would offer a nice mix of 'traditional' street orienteering and something a bit different with the paths of the new-town. I hadn't banked on quite how many paths I was going to have to map myself, so I was relieved when I only received one report of a map error. In actual fact, the 'dead-end' to the north west of 33 is accurate, but the way it has printed does look like there may be a way through- especially in the dark. A lesson for me on checking not just how it looks on the screen, but also how it looks when printed.

I woke up on Thursday morning confident that everything was ready. That illusion was soon shattered when I arrived at work to find thousands of gallons of water pouring out of the road in front of the event centre. Fortunately the contours were favourable for us, and although the far end of the car park had become a lake, the water was flowing around our building to the impromptu reservoir on the construction site behind. I naively assumed that the water would soon be turned off and so there would be no risk to the event. It turns out that to have done so would have cut the supply to the hospital, and so despite many local houses having their supply cut to reduce the overall pressure in the system, the leak itself was allowed to flow. And flow. And flow.

A quick trip to the pub across the road and I had a reserve event centre that wouldn't have made any real difference to the course. It turned out that we didn't need this, as just over 12 hours after the initial leak it was decided to pump the water south along Studley Road. This saved the event centre, but sent the water along to a notorious flooding spot, with inevitable consequences. After two buses and a Severn Trent van had to be towed out by the fire brigade, the road was officially closed. This meant that we lost the best route from 22 to the start/finish. No great problem, but a bit of a shame as I had been expecting this to be popular. As it turns out, more than half still chose this leg, despite the extra distance and climb using the alternative of Woodrow North to the west.

We were still on and using 'Plan A', but I left it to the last minute to go and assess the flooding and undertake some emergency manual map edits. All sorted. But the drama didn't end there. Colin was knocked off his bike, somewhat ironically after using a route I had recommended to avoid a small but nasty roundabout- thankfully he was unhurt. Andy H had to leave as soon as he had arrived, after I received an urgent message from Penny- I was relieved to hear from Andy later saying that this wasn't quite the emergency that it had at first appeared. And then, despite the BBC insisting that there was only a 3% chance of rain, the precipitation started just as we walked off to the hastily re-positioned start. I had printed sufficient control description sheets for everyone to have two- one for the holder and one to keep dry for answers. But with everything else that was going on, I forgot to hand these out- apologies to those who returned with a pile of pulp.

But 'all's well that ends well'. I get the impression that my initial aim of offering an interesting, challenging and enjoyable twist on the standard street-O was largely achieved. I'm glad that every control was visited by at least one person, as this suggests I succeeded in giving a good balance of options. Everyone seemed to embrace the challenge of the complex path networks, with almost everyone visiting 33, often in preference to the easier pickings surrounding it.

I was a little disappointed that I only managed to tempt one person to the west of the A441. I thought this was a really nice loop that offered some respite from the confusing path networks on the other side. I guess that having to commit to the whole loop on the far side of the map posed too much of a risk. Having spent quite a bit of time bending lines in Purple Pen, I know that the actual running distance on this loop is equivalent to the group of controls in the south; and it's much quicker under foot and easier to navigate. But that's not easy to spot on a first glance, where it looks like there are significantly bigger distances between controls. (As an aside, the loop offers glimpses of Southcrest Wood, which Mike B told me is mapped. Despite being too small for an event by itself, there may be options to link to another area, or perhaps even try a 'mixed terrain' event.)

I was a little surprised at how many people going north chose the 800m of dead running along the Studley Road to/from 32. I had intentionally placed the 30 point control as a temptation to do this, but it appears to have been a bit too tempting! Only Robert R chose the much more 'efficient' route to 32 via 23 and 15, with a return via 25 and 12. Robert had selected a winning route, but difficulties finding 30, and then calculating that he didn't have enough time to make the short detour to 16, left him without the 40 points that would have secured a comfortable victory. Unfortunate for Robert, but lucky for Peter L who collected his 330 points just over a minute more quickly than Adrian collected his. These two selected an almost identical route, but (I think) ran it in opposite directions.

It appears that Robert wasn't the only one who struggled to find 30. I had been concerned that being out in the open at the top of a hill was a bit too visible for a high-value control, but concluded that it was fair reward for getting to the top. Another learning point for me: something that's obvious for someone who walks around the area three times a week is not necessarily obvious for someone visiting the area for the first time in the dark...

The 'score course route-choice award' is shared between Robert V, Adrian and Peter who all averaged 22 points per control, with Marian not far behind on 21.7 before her 14 point penalty (which was incurred by squeezing in 21, so worth the hit).

I had said that I was planning to offer something that was 'anything but dull'. And so it turned out; just not quite in the way that I was anticipating.

Peter Rose