

Colin's Comments.

Sadly, this is likely to be the last night event at Old Hills, as the Madresfield Estate feel that night events pose too much potential disturbance to farm stock and wildlife. No doubt a really imaginative planner could create a challenging 1:5,000 course on the common only (which is managed by the Malvern Hills Conservators) - but that thought is for the future.

Probably the area providing the best opportunities for losing contact with the map is the area with the complex path network adjacent to the wood in the centre of the map - so this is where (with the assistance of the rather excellent WEE scoring format) that around 30% of the controls were placed.

The basic planning concept was a clover leaf design with a central axis close to controls 18 & 22. These were positioned to make the gates and gaps a natural route choice out of the wood or field. The aim was to permit shorter courses to be relatively easily identified by omitting the outliers, leaving controls in the southern fields for the fleetest of foot.

For example, an efficient, if rather messy 2.4km 110 pointer could be 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 18, 22 plus options of adding controls 17, 19, 20 at the end of the run if time allowed.

An extra "leg" (controls 23 & 24) was included to stretch the fastest even further, with Richard Perkis the only competitor to reach them, albeit at the cost of a few minutes of lateness.

David W and Ifor Powell both visited all but these last two controls, with David continuing his winning ways with a slightly faster time.

Finally, the mea culpa's. Apologies to those who had problems with controls 10 & 15 - both, I'm afraid as a result of planner errors. I hadn't spotted the potential confusion between stile and gate at control 10, and a last minute move of control 15 some 30m away from the public footpath was not accompanied by a move of the control circle. I hope these errors did not spoil your runs.

Colin Palmer