

## **SE MIDDLE DISTANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS WIMBLEDON COMMON 11 APRIL 2010**

### **PLANNER'S REPORT**

Wimbledon Common is in many ways SLOW's home area as for many years our club training evening was based on a clubhouse on the western side of the map. So it could be argued that I knew what I was letting myself in for when I volunteered to plan this event. The Common is in fact quite a technical challenge for an area so far inside the boundaries of London but the golf course, which is out of bounds until 3pm on every Sunday, does provide a significant constraint on planning. In addition I had to handle the (self imposed) need to get the Assembly/Start/Finish in one place as close to the car park as feasible.

Middle races should be technical without long route choices. I tried to achieve that with high control density to minimise path running and mixing low visibility holly forest with flat and fast heath land to require a change in technique. In the end was reasonably happy with the end result although I felt that Course 2 suffered for being too long to fit 'inside' the golf course, whilst being a tight fit to go round it.

However I do need to make a couple of apologies.

1. To competitors on Course 8 (White). Because of the lack of a suitable linear feature from control 8 (#199) to 9 (#173) I had set out tapes as a handrail. Despite mentioning these in the final details and setting up a marked route in the OCAD course planning they were not listed in the control descriptions – a fact I missed. I know that this caused confusion for a couple of competitors at a vulnerable stage in their orienteering
2. There was much discussion of control 200 (thicket – west side) and the vagueness around it. This was a late choice and in retrospect instead of updating the map I should have found a different control site, although they were a bit sparse in the area. Having said that, the other thickets around it were mapped reasonably well, but some people had difficulty distinguishing the pale green against the yellow stipple of 'rough open with scattered trees'.
3. And finally, for some reason that I still haven't fathomed out, we ran out of loose control descriptions on Course 3 (only). Despite my desperate recycling from some finishers I know that a few people had to start without these – I hope it didn't affect your run too much.

Alan Leakey SLOW

### **CONTROLLER'S REPORT**

I was impressed to be asked to control this event well in advance – so much so that there was plenty of time to forget about it (but I had made a note in last year's diary).

Alan is an experienced planner and knows the common well so there was really very little for me to do. He made sure everybody got their fair share of holly bushes and brambles as well as paths and heather covered grassland. On the day the SLOW organisation worked as well as ever and the assembly area even though it was such a long walk from the car parking was conducive to much post race comment and analysis (and the weather helped).

Some of this comment related to control 200 (thicket – west side). On revisiting the site afterwards I did think the control had been placed rather too far South compared to the circle on the map, but also the mapping of the thickets to the North and East of the control site could do with some revision on next use of the map.

Congratulations to all the winners and podium places, and I hope the also rans enjoyed their outings.

Simon Ling  
MV