

## **JK 2011 Event Co-ordinators comments by Harold White (LVO)**

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As I come to reflect on our JK Festival a month after the event, the uppermost thought in my mind is the people – those that made it happen, those that helped us along the way, and those that competed.

When we started more than three years ago, we were unsure as to how many competitors would attend given our location and the historical background of Northern Ireland, and as a result we went out of our way to make it as an attractive proposition as possible. We also linked it with the Irish Championship in the following weekend, and were very pleased to see that a significant number of competitors stayed for it. We also felt that we needed to put some of the festival back into the weekend that has perhaps been lacking in recent years.

With the recognition that we needed to do a major marketing exercise to attract competitors we applied to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, and received from them a substantial grant. This enabled us from an early stage to distribute flyers and brochures at events both at home and abroad, and in 2010 we had a marketing presence at the O-Ringen, the World Champs, and at the European and World Trail-O Champs. This paid off handsomely with over 320 competitors attending from 23 countries outside those of the British Isles, out of the overall total of 2100. We also had a number of distinguished international competitors take part in the Trail-O competitions.

The feedback from competitors has been extremely positive, and we are glad that this has in the main been the experience. I know that there were some niggles about the course planning and other arrangements, and I hope for those affected that they did not ruin your weekend. We hope that you enjoyed the events and your time in Northern Ireland.

We would like to pass on our extreme thanks to those competitors who either abandoned or interrupted their run to attend to injured competitors. It was one of the shortcomings in our arrangements to identify these people so that they could be personally thanked. We are also extremely grateful to the seventeen people who formed a stretcher party to move an injured competitor from the depths of the sand dunes at Tyrella on the Saturday.

The staging of the event was greatly assisted by many outside parties both in the preparatory stages and at the event, and our thanks go to all of them. Key were the many landowners, and their representatives, in providing their lands for the competition and parking. Another important group for their support were the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Sport Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council, and Walsh. We are also grateful to the travel companies and accommodation providers for their assistance; to the mappers; to Sportident for dealing with entries, start lists, and results; to Raymond Shannon and team, St John, and the first aiders from LVO for medical cover; to the commentary team; and to all the other equipment and service providers.

A special word of thanks must go to Dave Peel and Helen Errington, Major Events Managers of British Orienteering, and to Mike Forrest for their assistance and advice in preparing for the event. Our thanks are also due to the members of the Major Events Group, the Rules Group, the Mapping Group, and the Elite Competitions Group for their input on various matters. Our thanks are also due to the Jury members who fortunately were only called upon on one occasion.

We were extremely fortunate in terms of the people appointed as Controllers and IOF Event Advisors (Mike Richardson, Brian Bullen, Graham Nilsen, Andy Lewsley, Ronan, and Julie Cleary) in that they formed from an early stage, good constructive relationships with our Planners and Organisers. Mike

was involved virtually from the start taking on a mentoring role, and we are especially grateful for his input and advice on all aspects of staging the event. Working with these experienced officials provided a very valuable learning experience for us all. We appointed Assistant Controllers, Richard McCourt, Anthony McGonigle, Richard Williamson, and John McCullough to be the local link between the Controller and the Planner and Organiser, and this worked well. We are grateful for the advice, support, and leadership of the Controllers and the IOF Advisors especially in dealing with the difficult situations that arose in the preparations for the event.

The last and most important group to be thanked are our officials and helpers. From the early stages those involved embarked on the project with enthusiasm and commitment, and with no previous experience of staging the JK or an event of its size and complexity, it was a case of learning what was needed from scratch. In this we developed contacts with the people involved in previous JK's and we had a full attendance at the major Events Conference in each of the three years ahead of our event. We also attended similar events, and gained experience particularly in the sprint and relay disciplines with our involvement in the Irish Championships in 2010.

We started with an organising group of about 20 that expanded to nearly 50 by the time of the event. With the close-knit orienteering community in Northern Ireland, the expertise of the officials was well known and we were extremely fortunate to have such skilled Planners and Organisers. I am full of praise to them and the other members of the organising team for the amount of work they put in, in many cases solidly for the three years running up to the event, and for the high standard of courses and facilities that they produced. Their careful preparations ensured the smooth running of the operations on the event days.

For the event weekend we had over 200 helpers in addition to the officials. Some were members and former members of Northern Ireland Orienteering, some were members of the Irish Association, some were competitors who volunteered to help, and some were friends and relatives. Our thanks go to all of them.

I have a special word of thanks for Murray Cowan, the Assistant Co-ordinator, who was also the Safety Officer and manned the Control Point at the events. With complementary skills we focussed on different aspects of the organisation but were generally of one mind in our approach to the staging of the event. I very much valued his ideas, advice, and contribution.

I have also to personally thank a small group of friends for their encouragement and support during the difficult days.

I am pleased that the massive contribution of the officials and helpers in the success of the event has been recognised in the many positive comments we have received since. Thank you for them.

Thank you all for being there.

Harold White

## **IOF Event Advisors Comments – World Ranking Events (M/W21E, Days 1 & 3)**

**By Ronan and Julie Cleary (IOF Senior Event Advisors)**

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The key objective of World Ranking Events (WREs) is to provide high quality orienteering for elite men and women. This was certainly achieved by the Team at JK2011 who provided 2 excellent races (Sprint and Long) and showcased the excellent orienteering that Northern Ireland can provide.

There is considerable detail provided by the main officials in their comments, so we will keep our comments brief and at overview level.

Stranmillis provided an excellent Sprint venue close to Belfast city centre with a good mix of detail and an excellent Arena. It is a gem of an area and had the added advantage of never previously having been used for orienteering – perfect to showcase the UK's first Sprint WRE. Igor's planning got the best out of the area while Stephen's meticulous attention to detail ensured the organisation was smooth and efficient. The Arena provided excellent spectating opportunities and provided a real "festival" atmosphere.

As mentioned in more detail elsewhere, there was an issue with a missing control feature on the 1<sup>st</sup> prints of the 2 WRE course maps and a reprint was required. Unfortunately, the reprints had a very minor element of green slippage, which partially obscured a tiny pathway through flowerbeds. We also endorse the view expressed in some of the other Officials' Comments that laser printing should be considered for Sprint maps (with the high level of fine detail they require) given that even the slightest amount of colour slippage can have a disproportionate impact.

Slieve Croob combines areas of technical complexity with physical challenge, mixed ground conditions and good route choice opportunity – ideal for the Long WRE. Bill's courses captured these elements well, but were somewhat compromised by the need to replan twice due to the late/very late loss of key parts of the terrain. The loss of one particular piece of land the week before the race could have been calamitous for the M21E course. However, Bill remained admirably calm and, virtually overnight, working with Graham (controller) found a solution that involved the elimination of 2 controls and the addition of 1 new control.

On the Thursday morning, we all met on the mountainside to approve the new course layout and the new control site, before moving on to arrange the reprint (and bagging) of the Course 1 maps that afternoon, which we oversaw. A phenomenal effort by all concerned rescued the situation and the (by necessity, given the timescales) laser-printed maps compared perfectly well for legibility with the original offset printed ones. The only compromise to the quality of the course was the need to run the butterfly loops in the opposite direction than had been originally planned resulting in some of the controls being more visible on the approach than would be ideal.

The winning times on both WRE Long courses were shorter than the guidelines, despite reference to previous running speeds on the area, other more recent running speeds on

comparable areas etc. This was in the main due to the optimal running conditions that prevailed on the day and in the previous week – the terrain was drier than had been seen for years. Unlike Graham, our previous days out on the area checking map, control sites etc. were spent mainly in very poor visibility (as low as 10m), rain and knee deep marshes – conditions that could easily have occurred over the Easter weekend. The margin of error was, therefore, intentionally on the short side, although we did not expect the WRE courses to be won in such fast times. Once again, organisation was smooth and thorough under Colin’s direction and the Arena provided good spectating opportunities of the competitors on the steep descent through the final controls.

In summary, the 2 WREs and the whole JK weekend were a great success and displayed Northern Irish orienteering at its very best. We were proud to have been involved, especially given our background from the southern side of the border. While the preparations were not without their challenges (including some apparent conflicts between the IOF Rules/WRE Guidelines and the BOF Rules/JK Guidelines which we will be taking forward), these were addressed calmly, constructively and with compromise, where needed.

We would like to thank the organisers (Stephen and Colin), planners (Igor and Bill), controllers (Mike and Graham) and assistant controllers (Richard McC. and Richard W.) for all their hard work in making our job easier. Thanks also to the WRE Jurors who made themselves available each day, but were not required to convene. Particular thanks must go to Harold White, the Co-ordinator, who oversaw the whole weekend, kept everybody focussed on the ultimate objectives and tirelessly sought solutions to the many problems thrown at him - always calmly and in good humour. He and the entire Team should be very proud to have hosted what must be considered the best orienteering events ever held in Ireland – as well as one of the best JKs ever hosted.

Ronan & Julie Cleary

## **Day 1 Organiser's Report by Stephen Gilmore (LVO)**

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Over a dish of rösti in the alpine village of Zermatt on Thursday 20 July 2006 the Northern Ireland participants of the Swiss Orienteering Week discussed the feasibility of JK2011 being held in NI. SOW 2006 was widely regarded as being pretty close to orienteering utopia with superb terrain, maps, organisation and weather, so we understood the ingredients of an excellent event. It was my opinion that although NIOA was a small association with limited experience in staging large scale events, we had sufficient technical experience, exposure to large events, and a sense of common purpose to be able to deliver. Although in the intervening years I had cause to doubt that assessment, I am glad that were generally successful in staging a good JK.

Preparation for Richard McCourt, Igor Stefko and me involved gaining an understanding of the ingredients of a good sprint by running in a number of sprint and urban races elsewhere, seeking out good races on Routegadget and staging two preliminary races at Queen's University Belfast in December 2009 with 41 competitors and University of Ulster at Coleraine in April 2010 with 200 competitors as the Irish Sprint Championships. To scale up to in excess of 1650 competitors was quite a challenge but to give some appreciation, IOC2010 had most competitors starting over a 30minute period.

Working together as a team over a number of events has been a great experience as we have each learnt to complement the strengths of each other. We have also had a great deal of fun and I hope that we can continue to work together on our next big project the Sprint Race of the World Police and Fire Games 2013 in Belfast City Centre.

From our earliest outings our JK Controller Mike Richardson was in the background observing our team dynamics and giving useful feedback and encouragement. Bringing Charlie Reid onto the team as Assistant Organiser in the past few months was an excellent decision. Charlie in his day job as IT Service Manager at Stranmillis University College was of immense help in taking care of many issues on site and making sure that all was in order with clocks, timing, SI and radio controls.

Back in 2006 sprint orienteering was still in its infancy, with the first JK elite sprint race being held in Temple Newsam in parkland surroundings. Guildford in 2008 gave the benchmark and when our Co-ordinator Harold White spotted Stranmillis University College and the adjoining Elm's Village while on final approach to Belfast City Airport we knew we had landed. The more we visited the more potential we saw in the terrain and when the suggestion emerged that we could be staging the first WRE sprint in the UK, I was confident that the area would be able to provide testing courses.

The expectation back then was that the two institutions would have merged by race day with permanent pedestrian access created. Therefore our negotiations started by engaging both institutions with Queen's Sport taking the lead from the Elms side of the "wire", delighted that the University would be staging a World Ranking Event, that QUBOC would have a legacy map and would be staging the preliminary race. Stranmillis University College were

delighted to provide accommodation during the Easter holiday and thus discussions were with Hospitality Services. Of course the vagaries of Northern Ireland politics ensured that the merger is still to happen and Assistant Controller Richard, very recently retired from a career in civil engineering (and as I discovered out when delivering letters and speaking to local residents, a former Councillor representing Alliance, Northern Ireland's cross community party), relished the little project of fence removal, "culverting a sheugh", clearing the ground and constructing a path thus achieving what Northern Ireland politicians had failed to accomplish.

The first intention was to only take the longer courses in and out of Elms but once the logistics of course layout were examined it seemed the best solution to give everyone the opportunity to experience the two contrasting terrains and also minimize the taped routes. It also allowed starters to be placed straight into unfamiliar terrain which my observation is a desirable facet of a sprint race. While we were able to keep the start close to the finish it wasn't quite possible to create an "Arena start" for the elite race, but I think we made up for that with the visible spectator controls for both elite and other courses. The elites' enclosure and opportunity for the visible interview of the elite winners as part of the ongoing commentary made a good contribution to the spectator appeal. Site visits by Dave Peel as Major Events Manager and Ronan and Julie Cleary as IOF Event Advisors gave us very helpful input in shaping the plans for the arena and the spectator appeal of the race.

The timing of the seeded elite races to conclude during the middle of the event closely followed by the prize giving and flower ceremony was the subject of ongoing debate, well beyond the point when decisions should have been made. This was embarrassing as the Principal of the College who presented the prizes had understandably been asking for a time table. There is a conflict between the requirements of Appendix M and the IOF Rules which should to be clarified well before a future JK Sprint is also a WRE.

Another aspect of the rules which requires review is the course class guidelines of Appendix F 1.1.1. The growing popularity of the sprint format in general and among the senior classes in particular means that this is no longer adequate. Laying on parallel courses at a late stage, when planning in a much more confined area, is not as simple as it appears especially with further complications of a WRE.

Parking is of course often the most difficult aspect of a large event. Paradoxically this can be easy for urban venues with good public transport and multi-storey car park availability. A suburban venue had its challenges, particularly in this situation with difficult relationships between the University College and local residents. It would have been so much more convenient to use the vehicle gate onto Cleaver Park, but an ongoing agreement with local residents that the gate was not to be used ruled that out. Seeking permission to open the gate to just provide pedestrian access was not without its difficulty.

Since the hockey pitch at Stranmillis and the adjacent cafe, showers and grassy bank seemed to provide an obvious arena, it also meant that we were able to provide parking for around half of the anticipated vehicles. As the access and exit roads threaded through the terrain

there was really no option but to restrict vehicles who wished to park on site to remain for the entire event. Investigations in searching for off-site parking the local area revealed that the nearby St Brigid's Church had the largest service of the year on Good Friday at 3pm which really meant that to minimize inconvenience it would be preferable to have off street car parking available for all competitors.

Negotiations to provide the car parking took some time. We had a good verbal indication that a large multi story car park at the Ulster Bank (part of the RBS group) offices, who are sponsors of rugby and other sports, would be available to us on the bank holiday. However, final permission was not granted "due to operational and security reasons". The consequence was seeking an additional 3 car parks bringing the total number of car parks in use to 11 car parks, but I think the pre-allocation system worked fairly well. A larger than anticipated number changed from internal to external request (or perhaps had not fully understood the choice on the entry process). This caused the Extra car park "E" to be over-subscribed but the stewards were able to reallocate to other car parks.

The advantage of being organiser of Day 1 in a reasonably secure location is that much of the preparation can be done over the preceding days. This gave good time to set up the arena which included Gavin Cairn's Amazing Maze an excellent alternative to a string course on hard standing. A grant from Belfast City Council greatly helped with the costs of hiring in barriers to create the maze and the run-in.

Our equipment officer Ivan Millar, proprietor of "Begny Hill Sawmills" designed and, following a satisfactory test at IOC 2010, manufactured 96 trestles for the controls. Having Raymond and Teresa Finlay with FermO and NWOC operating the start, Danny O'Hare with CorkO manning download and Ann and Harry Savage supervising the team from LVO running a busy information room on Day 1 was of great help.

And so race day began with more or less everything working to plan. My agenda for the day was to have little specific to do, but to check that all was on order. However what I had not particularly planned for was the Organiser's role in complaint handling. Two complaints regarding start times etc which more readily fall into the domain of the Organiser were easier to handle, but I had not anticipated handling three complaints which had the potential of voiding courses or even the entire competition. Nor had I anticipated that the process would stretch into the evening and the next day when, being a small region with many officials doubling up responsibilities, I was the Trail O Controller. I do now in retrospect note that Rule 9.1.4 does give the right to the Organiser to consult with other team members before reaching a decision, which should be respected by competitors.

One complaint involving control 118 was received late, due to being based on post-event analysis on mis-punches with the suggestion that the map circle and number were unclear. Post event analysis also reveals that mis-punches at over 6% were considerably more

prevalent on courses 6 and 8 where control 118 was the middle control of three in a straight line. There was little issue on courses 5, 7 and 9.

It is unfortunate that the map reprinting resulted in the maps for courses 1 and 2 to have a potential route unclearly printed. Courses 1, 2 and 3 all had similar legs which involved this route choice, with the unclear route to the north of a building using a path through a flower bed. It is regrettable that a slight element of unfairness was involved. I do hope that the Rules will be reviewed to consider the merits of the current generation of laser printing. I am certainly of the opinion that the consistency of laser printing is preferable to the alleged marginal increase in clarity in offset litho, particularly for sprint maps when clarity of a small detail can be vital and where the race is so short that rubbing off the ink is unlikely to be an issue.

However it is interesting to note that of the routes posted on RouteGadget two weeks after the event show that on Course 1 (Leg 11) 55% (of 29 competitors) opted for the northern route, whereas on Course 3 (Leg 10), which had the clearer map print run, only 31% (also of 29 competitors) had chosen the northern route.

In some respects the third complaint has potentially more consequences. This was a complaint that competitors were transgressing Out Of Bounds and a demand that the whole competition should be voided as stewards were not deployed. No race numbers were recorded and therefore no specific action could be taken.

Subsequent to the complaint the Planner spent some time in the terrain watching from a concealed location and did not observe any OOB transgressions. Further to the deliberations of the Jury one competitor did respond to the request to declare themselves disqualified. I applaud the sportsmanlike attitude displayed and am very much heartened. I also accept the reasoning that in the heat of the race a crossable fence bounding an out of bounds flower bed was confusing and it is not how I would have liked the map to be represented.

Areas are mapped as OOB for good reason, usually in this case at the request of the landowners. If OOB is blatantly ignored then access to an area in the future could be denied.

The IOF Rules for sprint races (Appendix 6 1.2) state that “all controls must be manned”. Restricted access to the campuses, lack of the public, and on-site security actually gave us a more secure area than a typical orienteering area. Our IOF Event Advisors accepted that the assumption on which the Rule was based is that the race would be in open public areas and permitted the use of roving marshals. Four marshals were deployed in Elms and three in Stranmillis.

Had we been obliged to provide a marshal for every WRE control and marshal OOB areas we would have required around 40 marshals and had we been able to provide them commercially it would cost the equivalent of £1.50 per competitor. I don't believe that competitors want to have to pay an increased entry fee to have themselves policed

It should be remembered that Good Friday in Northern Ireland is only a bank and government holiday, but that for most employees it is a normal working day with Easter Tuesday traditionally taken as the second Easter holiday. For example 51 members of LVO, the local club were able to enter, with a number requesting late starts to allow them to compete after work, as opposed to 73 on Saturday. All NIOA members available to help on the day were deployed.

In addition to the main event with the complex parking arrangements, TempO has a high manning requirement with 14 stewards required at the 7 stations. A whole day spent at a Queen's University volunteer fair back in October only generated one student available on the day. We however were able to arrange a youth organisation seeking a fundraising opportunity to provide a number of stewards. Belfast's leading event management company declined an invitation to quote to provide marshals on the day, with the fact that most of their workforce only work at evenings and weekends and have regular day-jobs being a factor.

It seems to me that the future of sprint racing very much relies on the goodwill of competitors to abide by the Rules. Small associations do not have the resources to provide an endless supply of manpower and if the requirements are onerous then it will mean that sprint races cannot be staged. That would achieve the same result as voiding a competition.

I am aware that other small associations are questioning their ability to stage the JK. My experience and encouragement is that JK11 has been a very good experience for NI Orienteering, helping us to focus on our strengths and has a result brought the Association closer together.

Stephen Gilmore

## **Day 1 Planner's Report by Igor Stefko (LVO)**

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I first contacted Stephen Gilmore at the time he was the LVO secretary, 7 years ago, enquiring about orienteering in Northern Ireland where I was about to move with my family. I think neither of us would have dreamt that we would be the main officials of an IOF World Ranking Event hosting more than 1600 competitors a few years later.

There were a lot of challenges from the beginning of JK preparation. The first one was finding an appropriate area in line with current trends in sprint orienteering. Complex urban areas, city centres, combinations of different terrain types, forcing competitors to take multiple decisions in split seconds while maintaining high running speed so it is "sprint for the mind". Using Stranmillis and Elms together was the only option to provide an area big and complex enough to address these challenges but created more challenges for the Organiser to ensure access and temporary merging of both sites, which was planned and physically executed mostly by the Assistant Controller Richard Mc Court.

Once the setting of the arena, the start, the finish and spectator controls are agreed and finalised then the real course planning work starts. The extra challenge but also the privilege was to plan WRE, with its requirement to have maximum control load of 2 runners per minute. That meant if the control site was used by a WRE course it could be used by just one more course. That resulted in more control sites very close to each other, so I had to watch very closely the 15/30m control distance Rule.

I have to mention also another hurdle which we as a team had to overcome that was the oversubscription of two courses, and with the start time window limited to four hours it resulted in the need to create of two extra courses.

As the area was previously unused for orienteering, a new ISSOM map was surveyed by Remo Madella, an Italian mapper, in January 2010. This created complications with clarifying the use of different types of green which had to be resolved by a BOF Map Advisor.

Because there was no previous map it was difficult to anticipate how the final details of offset litho printed map and courses would look like. This turned out to be critical and resulted in last minute reprinting of WRE courses. I would suggest considering laser printing in the future (despite IOF guidelines) which would enable to see and fine tune the print output.

In conclusion the JK sprint 2011 was a big team effort which I am glad to have been a part of and I hope to have contributed to its overall success.

Igor Stefko

## **Day 1 Controller's comments by Michael Richardson (DEE)**

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When I first visited Stranmillis and Queen's Elms in November 2008 it was clear that it offered an ideal location for the JK Sprint, except that there was no access between the sites. However, excellent relations were established with the management on both sides of the fence and they agreed that we could affect a temporary and short term merger even if negotiations for a permanent merger of Stranmillis and QUB would take longer. My Assistant Controller, Richard McCourt, was able to use his civil engineering expertise and arranged the construction of the crossing points over the ditch between the two sites. It was decided at an early stage that the start should be in Queen's Elms and this meant that the terrain was hidden from view for all competitors until the last moment.

Despite the early start made with preparations for the event, map revision took longer than expected and the final printed courses were received only 10 days before the event. At this stage, two issues were apparent; firstly, a significant number of maps appeared to suffer from a mis-register of the green but more worryingly one control feature on the Elite courses appeared to have disappeared altogether! A re-print of courses 1 and 2 was therefore requested and unfortunately for some unknown reason a short but critical length of path was obscured by 'flower bed' screen, although re-examination of the digital files showed no difference between the two versions at this point. I apologise to any competitors who may have lost time at that point as a result of uncertainty about the existence of the path in question. There would appear to be a strong case for laser printing because of the increased detail needed in sprint maps but laser-printed proofs on waterproof paper suffered from a number of other deficiencies. This issue certainly merits further study by Map Group.

With little prior experience of sprint orienteering, the key members of the Day 1 team made detailed preparations, including the planning and organisation of two earlier events. The first of these was at the Botanic Gardens / QUB campus in December 2009, followed by the first Irish Sprint Championships, held at the University of Ulster Coleraine campus in April last year. From comments received I believe that the vast majority of competitors enjoyed the challenges set by Igor which made good use of the varied terrain available. Stephen's meticulous organisation ensured that everything worked smoothly on the day, including the lighting provided at control 154 so that competitors on courses 2 and 5 were not 'left in the dark'!

With entry numbers likely to be similar to those of 2010, a decision was taken early in March to split courses 4 and 7 and have parallel courses for some age classes. With increased entries to major sprint events it is time for a re-think of the class combinations provided. I was very pleased that winning times for all but a few classes were within the recommended range, the exceptions being the youngest classes where it would appear that a more appropriate ratio for M/W10 would be 0.75 rather than 0.6.

Unfortunately, two protests were received although both were subsequently withdrawn. The first concerned a number of competitors reported to have crossed fences bordering an area in Queens Elms marked as 'flower bed' and hence out of bounds. Although the fences

themselves were not shown as uncrossable they were taped as mentioned in the final details. Before the protest was withdrawn, a Jury met to consider what action, if any, should be taken and at their suggestion a note was published asking any competitor who felt that they might have crossed the out of bounds to report this. We had one response to this, requesting disqualification, which after consideration by the Jury was accepted by a majority vote. The honesty and integrity of the competitor concerned is appreciated and I accept that the marking of the boundaries in question was potentially misleading .

The second protest arose from confusion caused by the problem with the re-printed course 1 maps already described and although they had been individually checked before issue the problem with the partially obscured path was not spotted.

Finally, a number of competitors failed to punch at control 118; this was most noticeable on courses 6 and 8 with over 6% of competitors failing to punch, whilst only 1% of competitors on other courses missed this control. Examination of the maps for those courses using this control showed that marking of control circle and number was consistent and there appears to be no obvious reason for the high proportion of some age classes who missed it.

I congratulate all those involved in planning and organising this event; Igor, Stephen, Charlie and Richard produced an event which brought much praise and Richard's efforts in particular went far beyond what is normally expected of an Assistant Controller. It was a pleasure working with you all.

Michael Richardson

## **Days 2 and 3 Organiser's Report by Colin Henderson (LVO)**

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In accepting responsibility for JK2011, NI Orienteering was aware that it would be a significant challenge for this very small association of BOF. This proved to be very true, as many hours of planning were involved late into the nights and early mornings. The successful outcome of the Festival made it all worthwhile with the excellent weather adding greatly to the enjoyment for the competitors and relieved some of the pressure on the organisational team.

I would like to acknowledge the significant input by Harold White as the Co-ordinator ensuring not only the success of the event but setting the standards for future JKs. Despite the many additional tasks he accepted he kept smiling.

I would also like to acknowledge the input by the various team leaders who played a crucial role in identifying and supporting volunteers. Many thanks.

Important considerations and lessons learnt.

### Radios and communication

We had 32 quality radios plus a base station for the event. These proved to be invaluable for general use which allowed all key personnel to know what was happening. They played a vital function when we had a number of casualties on Day 2. The base station at the Control Point was manned by Murray Cowan whose effective and efficient management of radio communication was crucial. Anyone in the role must be familiar with the resources and experienced with procedures. Radio coverage was checked out beforehand across all the areas to ensure that we had full capability. The back-up system was mobile phones and a list of key mobile numbers was issued each day along with the radios.

### Text Tank

After some research a company was identified that could provide a low cost (30p/text) service which could enable us to communicate urgent/last minute text to all who had registered their mobile phone number. Thankfully, we did not need to use this for urgent matters e.g. cancellations. We did use it for welcome messages and other messages of a non urgent nature. NI Orienteering will now look at how it can continue to use this service for communication and promotion.

### Newsletter

This is an established provision which was well received. This not only allowed an update for general interest but provided a means of communicating urgent revisions had they been required. Declan McGrellis's editing skills were complimented by a number of competitors. Declan was able to send the copy electronically and the local printing service printed and delivered the news sheets on the evening before. This took another task out of the event organisers list.

## Waste

The cost of providing the skips and waste disposal was over £1800 mainly due to land fill tax and VAT. A visual inspection of the skips at the end would indicate that most of the waste came from the traders especially from food. Should this be a cost included in the trader fees? The landowners did praise the competitors and the event organisers for the lack of litter and general thoughtfulness of those involved. Netting covers were requested in the event of a windy day.

## Portaloos

There appeared to be adequate loos and most in the correct places. There is a formula for the number of loos required i.e. 1/100 competitors. However on all days there were more toilets provided than this formula. Day 2 and 4 had 25 toilets and day 3 had 35 due to provision of toilets at the starts and en route to the starts near the car parking field. There is no formula for the number of toilet rolls. Despite asking for double the amount that are normally required we did run out. Our apologies for this. For those organising future portaloos you will require 12 rolls per loo. Depending on the quality!!!

## Volunteers/helpers

At one point in the planning we were not sure if we could identify sufficient people to help despite phone calls to all members and various recruiting attempts by the web and directly at events. Easter Sunday morning is not a good time to ask for assistance and this day required the largest number of volunteers. The gap was filled by a number of other organisations i.e. Officers from the Army Cadet Force, Duke of Edinburgh Award leaders, members of the Mourne Expedition Panel. Their support was vital and greatly appreciated.

Recognising the volunteers input was important and this was acknowledged by issuing vouchers. Vouchers were valid for food, equipment and merchandise. This system was well received both by the volunteers and the traders.

## Access - Slieve Croob Day 3

The use of the Slieve Croob area was built on the trust that LVO has gained over the many years with landowners who are supportive and recognise our approach to minimise environmental impact i.e. **Leave no Trace**. The additional areas ie Cratlieve and Slievegarran required the usual time consuming exercise of face to face discussion with land owners and the identification of boundaries. The support of the local landowners and residents was very encouraging and greatly appreciated.

Two specific incidents impacted on the loss of some of the competition area.

1. Despite our best endeavours and a verbal agreement with Forestry Services we were thwarted in gaining written permission due to the possibility of the nesting of Red Kites.

This was to have been the only forest to be used over the weekend. Despite a site meeting this could not be overcome so the start for the courses numbered 1 to 8 had to be moved and courses replanned.

2. In the final week of planning a section on Cratlieve was lost due to early introduction of sheep onto the hill because of the combination of good weather and a late Easter. This required urgent alterations to courses 1 and 5 and the printing of new maps. Thanks to Bill Simpson, Graham Nilsen, Richard Williamson, Ronan and Julie Cleary and Alan Gartside who all stepped up to the mark, under considerable time pressure, to reach a satisfactory outcome. The map quality was of a high standard and must raise questions about the policy on map printing.

### Parking

Parking in this rural location was a major challenge with 700 cars, 50 motor homes and 4 coaches. Again the local landowners were more than willing to assist and we are especially grateful to Fintan and Alastair McMullan and family for their proactive support and services.

Parking was especially challenging on Day 3 and much thought went into providing parking which would be workable in the usual Slieve Croob weather conditions – horizontal driving rain. Fields were selected that drained well and also allowed entry at the top and exit at the bottom of the field. The parking arrangement was drawn on computer to be able to work out potential car parking capacity. The entrances and exits to the fields were levelled and stoned to ease the access for vehicles. In the event of extremely bad conditions there were tractors on standby to assist with clearing the parking fields. The fields were laid out with canes and tapes and groups of helpers were briefed on the plans for parking.

Some folk managed to return to the wrong car park and more signage might have reduced the incidence of this.

Much thought went into the walking route to the assembly field from the car parks in terms of safety and we managed to avoid pedestrians walking against the traffic flow. The route to the assembly field was worked out and plans put in place to allow for wet, muddy conditions – in an area that is known for its water retention capabilities. The fine weather enjoyed on the day meant that many of the measures that had been put in place were not implemented.

My thanks also to Gordon Stephens for his support as the Assistant Organiser, for his input and his sense of humour!!!

### Access Tyrella Days 2 and 4

The area for Tyrella South required negotiation with only one landowner and the extensive support given is gratefully acknowledged for both Days 2 and 4. The main consideration was to ensure that only JK participants accessed the area. Thanks to everyone who displayed their parking permits clearly and this assisted the traffic flow.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Mark Hudson (Assistant Organiser) and his team from the 2 Royal Irish Regiment who erected the tents for Days 2 and 4, provided the bar facilities, and carried out many other jobs.

#### Arena

With the excellent weather we do hope you enjoyed the layout of the assembly and finish on each day especially at Slieve Croob. We hope you enjoyed the views of the Mourne Mountains and if you were lucky, the Red Kites. There was a firm policy to try to create a festival atmosphere on each day as there were many competitors travelling some distance to attend the event. We hope we succeeded in this policy.

#### Signage

The cost of signage was over £1000 despite having an in house process for the smaller signs, thanks to Alan Gartside. Most of the signs should have been twice the size and you cannot over sign, at it would appear that a considerable number of competitors do not read the programme including maps provided!!! We have recorded all the signs produced as it may be useful for future JKs. Available on request. The local PSNI were informed throughout the planning period and this helped avoid any clashes with other events on the busy Easter weekend.

#### First Aid

There was four levels of provision.

1. Over 20 members of LVO were trained to REC level 1. Each day the First Aiders checked in with the First Aid Co-ordinator and were briefed on the locations of the First Aid kits. These people were in and around the assembly area, out on the course, and at some of the key locations as most had volunteered for some of the many jobs that had to be covered. Perhaps, most importantly we had a willing and trained group of people ready to respond as required. This turned out to be invaluable in providing fast and effective response to the incidents on Day 2 which were compounded by occurring almost simultaneously.
2. Substantial first aid kits were sited at key locations - the starts, string courses, Trail O, plus road crossings and sites on the hill at Slieve Croob.
- 3 Two ambulances were provided by St John Ambulance, and personnel to treat minor issues. Access for the ambulances was planned to make sure that the ambulances would not be caught up in the traffic.
4. A team of four REC trainers from the Mourne Rescue Panel were on hand primarily as a response team but also to treat the walking wounded. The leader of this team, Raymond Shannon, took overall responsibility for the co-ordination of First Aid in conjunction with the Safety Officer, Murray Cowan.

Prior to the event, this level of cover was considered by some parties as an over-provision but on Day 2 all the above were in action dealing with two serious casualties in the competition area requiring teams to carry stretchers, transferring casualties to hospital and providing a first aid service at the finish. This was a very beneficial exercise for those involved and has implications for future first aid cover at all events.

The careful procedures which were in place at the starts, allowed the final check box to be used as a record of who were out on the courses. There was an arrangement on Day 3 to collect the check box part way through the event to allow checking of finished runners. Again, the fine weather and dry underfoot conditions gave the competitors less of a physical challenge and there were no significant issues. However if weather conditions had been more usual for this area, where low visibility due to mist on the mountain and wet bog is typical, then course times would have been substantially longer and the potential for incident increased.

#### Generators.

A total of 6 generators were provided for each day. The Sportident results team required a 5KVA generator and there was a back up for this. There were 4 smaller generators, Trail –O, String, Finish gantry blower, back up.

The rating plate on the blower motor stated a low power requirement, well below any of the generators capability. However, the current draw on start up of the blower motor was too large for the smaller generators and we had to use a larger generator to drive the blower. Fortunately we were able to rearrange to still maintain the back up for the SI kit which was a priority. The lesson is that the rating plate does not directly give the info for sizing a generator.

Most of the generators had an electronic voltage regulator (EVR) built in which smoothed the supply for use with sensitive computer equipment. SI run through an uninterruptable power supply (UPS) which covers the quality of supply issue as well as providing the time to make a back up before the batteries go down in the event of power failure.

Again, provision was made for cable connection with a plan for weather protection. Generators were sited to reduce the impact of noise. A refuelling plan was in place.

#### Fire Extinguishers.

10 Fire extinguishers were provided for each day – a mixture of CO<sub>2</sub>, foam and water. These were hired from a local company.

#### Equipment move lists.

There was a list prepared for each day for the equipment that had to be transferred at the end of each day to be used the following day. The lists are available on request.

#### Vehicles.

In addition to the large number of personal vehicles, there were vans hired for the period. One large Luton body transit with tail lift was used for the majority of the larger items. There were 3 medium sized vans used , one for prizes, one for Days 2&4 and one for Day 3. There was also the LVO trailer which was used as a lost property office, merchandise sale point and general inquiry location.

Marquees.

For Day 3 we hired three 9metre x 6 metre marquees. One for SI download, one for information, and one for changing for those travelling by coach. We also hired two 5 metre x 5 metre tents. One was used for First Aid and the other was used for the communication Control Point. This was later used for the setting out and arranging of the prizegiving.

The marquees and tents are the responsibility of the hirer once they are on site and insurance was only available if there is someone on site. We arranged for an over night security guard to cover this and tried to minimise the number of days that the marquees were on site.

By the end of Sunday evening, the assembly field was clear of everything except the portaloos and the skips. These were removed the following morning. Controls were collected on Sunday post the event, leaving only some of the stiles and crossings to be removed later.

The landowners were very complimentary about the condition that the area was left in and there was a lot of goodwill generated.

I hope you all enjoyed the event, if you have any questions please feel free to ask.

Colin Henderson

## **Day 2 Planner's Report by Wilbert Hollinger (LVO)**

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After the lengthy search for a suitable Day 2 venue it was a relief to get started planning the 27 courses necessary for the event. However, some initial work had to be modified when it was discovered that a new fencing programme was imminent. The need to allow for relay courses also imposed some restrictions but the central area had plenty of opportunity for numerous control sites to allow the 20 courses requiring a technical difficulty of 5. The requirements for an M or W21 are somewhat different from a M or W70, and length aside I tried to lessen the physical demands for the older age groups. With numerous fences on the longer courses, I tried to give legs which had obvious crossing points. The decision to site the finish close to the assembly area meant a rather linear end to all courses but the complex small path network kept competitors on their toes. Two short taped routes allowed the youngest orienteers to have suitable courses and avoid difficult areas.

I had estimated that the elites would manage six minutes/Km and they just about achieved this. The course length ratios were adhered to and the majority of courses had winners achieving times close to the estimated time. From an initial examination of courses on route gadget it is pleasing to note the numerous different choices, which were made by competitors, and I hope they enjoyed running in Tyrella as much as I enjoyed planning.

I must make mention of the help given to me by Brian Bullen and Anthony McGonigle. Their thoroughness in checking sites and their suggestions were invaluable.

Finally thanks to Harold and indeed to the many others who helped in a variety of ways. It was a pleasure to work with such a team.

Wilbert Hollinger

## **Day 2 Controller's Report by Brian Bullen (FVO)**

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First my thanks to all competitors, particularly those who travelled from afar, for your efforts in testing the courses, and the many kind comments we have received.

The uniquely ridge contoured stable-sand dune area of Tyrella South proved to be both technically and physically challenging with many class winning times at the upper limit of the BOF recommended winning times. However when examined in detail there seemed no overall trend, some classes were at the lower limit, with some over the upper recommended winning time - looking at the classes with the most competitors (M45L and M50L) the winning times were a minute or two longer than the lower recommended time.

My thanks to the course planner - Wilbert Hollinger - for making my job easy by planning excellent courses in line with the BOF course length ratios. With the area having limited access and with the expense of travel from Scotland it was essential that I had an Assistant Controller and I was very fortunate that Anthony McGonigle filled this role providing both technical inputs (particularly on the junior courses which are the hardest to get right) and being untiring and dedicated in the deployment and checking/waking up of the electronic units.

Many people helped or contributed in one way or another to make the day an outstanding success, on their behalf I'd like to thank the Day Organiser - Colin Henderson for a job very well done.

Though there appeared to be relatively few injuries overall, we had a small number of very serious ones, and special thanks to Murray Cowan for his contribution in manning the Control Point, and to all the volunteers, paramedics, and doctor on duty who were involved in the various injured competitor rescues.

Having an excellent map was of course fundamental, and our thanks to Mapping Co-ordinator Bill Simpson, the mapping company Stirling Surveys, and to the British Orienteering officials, particularly Major Event Manager Dave Peel, for working with us to find the best compromise to the tricky issue of map scale and contour interval to represent a unique but compact area.

Finally, but not least, we all owe some very special thanks to the Event Co-ordinator - Harold White - for day 2 we had significant problems in agreeing a suitable venue, with issues of bird conservation, access issues, sudden oak death disease in potential forest areas, and once the idea of combining Day2 with Day 4 was agreed there was issues with two races in one area.

However combining the days seemed to enhance the days, both in terms of the technical quality of the courses and the logistics of the event arenas.

My thanks again to those key officials mentioned - particularly to their partners for supporting them throughout - and also all the other "volunteers" and people who contributed to making the event a memorable success.

Brian Bullen

## **Day3 Planner's Report by Bill Simpson (LVO)**

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My first introduction to Slieve Croob terrain was in 1986, when the Irish Championships were held there and it has been my favourite local terrain ever since then. So, I was pleased to accept the challenge of planning the Day3 courses for JK2011. Nonetheless, I was happy to share the workload with my Assistant Planner, Greg McCann, who planned courses 16 to 28 including the colour coded courses.

There were a few setbacks encountered on the way. Early plans for the location of the Red Start (Courses 1 -8) were thwarted in February when a verbal agreement to access our only small area of mapped forest was withdrawn. It seems that Red Kites and Buzzards need peace and quiet during the nesting season. Fortunately, as I was also working as the Mapping Coordinator, I was able to redefine the layout of the maps to accommodate a change of location for the Red Start.

The re-planning provided an opportunity to introduce a butterfly loop into Course 1 for the M21E competitors, but yet that plan was compromised by an even later loss of terrain access. On the Wednesday before the race, we found that the owner of a critical section of Cratlieve had not been correctly identified and in spite of late negotiations we were unable to use our original access route on to that part of the mountain. Heads were scratched and courses were re-planned again, but the result was that the butterfly loop was approached from the north rather than the south, which had been the original intention. Some controls were consequently more visible from the direction of approach than we had originally intended. The late change also meant that the competition maps for courses 1 and 5 were laser printed in Belfast. There were no complaints about legibility of the laser printed 1:15,000 map and it does lead to thoughts of standardising on the much simpler digital printing process, even for Level A events.

The overall course design strategy was to use the more complex terrain for shorter technical legs and to plan long legs across blander areas, introducing an element of route choice, although "straight as an arrow" seems to have been favoured by many.

Almost 40 stiles were built to ensure that fences were not compromised by competitors and we are grateful that no damage to land boundaries was reported.

Winning times were faster than those prescribed by BOF and this was due to a combination of late re-planning and uncharacteristically fast underfoot conditions following the driest Spring that we had seen for some time. Strangely, no-one complained about seemingly running faster than expected.

Thank you to the Controller, Graham Nilsen for his guidance and patience. He was ably assisted by Richard Williamson. Thanks also to Ivan Millar for (almost) single-handedly erecting all of the stiles and to Alan Gartside, who, in the midst of running all of the JK Trial-O events, printed new maps and descriptions for courses 1 and 5 at very short notice.

Bill Simpson

### Day 3 Controller's Report by Graham Nilsen (MERO C)

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Tollymore Centre car-park, 22.30, the Wednesday before the event, 10s after I arrived from Liverpool.

Bill Simpson: "Did you get my message?"

Me: "No."

Bill: "We have a problem..."

A field which we thought was owned by one farmer was owned by another - and he wasn't happy. Ah, well, at least we only had to re-plan two courses (M21E and M21L).... and print and bag new maps. Three days before the event.

When I was appointed to the event I was assured by several people that Slieve Croob is normally enveloped by cloud, so that visibility would be an issue. In all of my visits, the only visibility issue I had was in Easter week when the Isle of Man was lost in the heat haze.

I would like to start by publicly thanking the other main officials for making my job such an enjoyable one. Colin and Gordon organised everything (including, they claim, the weather) flawlessly. I hope that you all appreciated the way in which Bill and Greg overcame the constraints of planning on a mountain to give you courses which tested your navigational skills. [Those of you on courses 29 and 30: between controls 1 and 3, your maps showed the gorse reaching the fence. That's because it did, until Greg spent a couple of weekends gardening.] Before the event, they had great hopes for the arena and the views of competitors descending through the final controls, which I admit rather mystified me: when I had checked that part of the area I hadn't looked up – my attention being somewhat distracted by the proximity of the farmer's prize bull. Most of all, though, thanks to Richard – nominally the Assistant Controller, by being on the right side of the Irish Sea he did the vast majority of the leg work (and checked all of the overprinted maps), making my job almost leisurely.

Winning times on about half of the courses were below the range of target times given in the JK rules; almost all of the others were in the lower half of their ranges (only W14A was above the range). This was undoubtedly a consequence of the exceptionally dry spring – we dared not expect the marshes to be so runnable – and the weather conditions on the day, and so does not mean that the courses should have been longer.

I was made aware of two problems during the event:

1) some competitors were unhappy that one stile was not shown on their maps. This stile was only shown on the maps of courses using it. None of the courses without the stile went over it; it was 90m from, 35m below, and clearly in a different place to, the stile which was marked on their maps.

Competitors on course 28 (M/W12A, M/W14B and Orange) may have been confused by it, for which I am sorry. Competitors on all of the other courses should have known better.

Remember that there is no requirement to show all crossing points on all maps.

2) Some competitors caused unreasonable problems to helpers at enquiries and at the starts over the requirement to carry a whistle. These included one (believed to have been in an elite class) who demanded that he be issued with one; another, turning up at the start without a whistle, was lent one which he was then seen throwing away. What follows is addressed specifically to such people.

i) the people helping at an event, even one as large as the JK, are all volunteers who deserve your thanks and respect, not abuse

- ii) carrying a whistle is standard practice on exposed terrain in this country, for safety reasons – and not necessarily just the safety of the person carrying it
- iii) elite competitors have no right to be treated any differently to anyone else in this respect. Whistles are not provided for them any more than, say, trousers are when full leg cover is required
- iv) if you find carrying a whistle too onerous then I suggest that you take up a different sport

To the vast majority of you who enjoyed yourselves and who took the trouble to say so, thank you.

Graham Nilsen

## **Day 4 Organiser's Report by Wilson McAlister (LVO)**

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After the many months of preparation by the coordinating committees and all the Teams involved – it was finally great to get started on the actual running of the JK event. Final preparations were helped by the dry and often sunny weather in the days leading up to the event and by late Sunday evening - Roxanne White, Phil Stuart and I were standing in Tyrella South looking out at something that resembled a Relay arena.

It was a fortunate decision for me that Day 4 would use the same location as Day 2 as this simplified the event somewhat in terms of organization. Approach and access to the event was the same, and we were again able to use the Army and the Cadets to solve the Tent and Parking requirements.

The Monday began at first light and the last few bits of netting, signs and the finish Gantry where erected, the Carpark opened at 7am and the traders, helpers and early competitor groups began streaming in. The 2-way radio communications were once more superb and shortly before 9:30 the OK was received from the team leads to say the course, arena, approach roads, parking, first-aid were ready and the commentary started up and welcomed everyone to the event.

Thanks to those involved with getting the competitors to the start-line with the correct map, all the mass starts went on schedule and without problem. During the day a few reasonably straightforward protests where received and dealt with whilst the remainder of the event continued reasonably hitch free, and I even got time to chat to a few folk and take a few pictures - although I missed getting a snap of the inflatable gantry collapsing when the generator ran out of fuel.

Everyone, including the helpers seemed to be enjoying the event, and as the competition drew to a close I could see that we had a lot of tired but happy people. Harold rounded off the meeting with the prize-giving at 1pm and by 2pm the sun began to shine on us again as we began dismantling the event infrastructure.

It is with huge thanks to the large band of willing and well prepared helpers that the day went so well, and a personal special mention to Roxanne White, Harold White and Colin Henderson for their vision, help and invaluable guidance that enriched my experience of JK2011.

Wilson McAlister

## **Day 4 Planner's Report by Philip Baxter (LVO)**

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From the outset it was clear that to bring a fitting end to the JK we were going to need a relay competition with challenging courses on appropriate terrain and a first class arena to keep the festival atmosphere going to the end. The landowner had originally offered the sports pitches at the back of the longer ranges as parking for Days 2 and 4, so to maintain the separate character of the two days, a relay arena to the north west of the village was planned. To lessen the impact of the late change of parking the arena was moved as far east as possible but not so far as to fatally compromise the TD2 and TD3 courses. Adjusting the contour interval from the originally mapped 2.5m to 5m also removed most of the available detail in the flatter terrain to the west, making it less useable for the technical courses and taking away the planned spectator control and final loop. I wanted to keep the TD5 courses in terrain for as long as possible, so restricted the replacement spectator control to Courses 1 and 2 only.

The TD5 course planning had 4 elements: a tough opening section in the dunes, a spectator loop where appropriate, a section through the village to induce a change of pace and a short gaffle through the gorse to reduce the long chase back to the arena. All the TD3 courses used the area to the west and edges of the gorse by the golf course while the TD2 courses looped around the woods adjacent to the arena and the golf course. Where course laps had the same TD, the gaffling linked all 3 laps; only the TD3 short laps were ungaffled although they were planned to weave around each other to reduce the chance of following. All told this lead to 67 map variations across 9 courses.

The delay in providing an agreed map at an agreed scale with an agreed contour interval (the final version only arrived in December 2010) severely reduced the time available to plan in detail. Although the shape and challenges of courses and legs had been set out and run some time before, I was not prepared to finalise legs and tag control sites until I had the map that competitors would be using.

My thanks go to Andy Lewsley for his patient advice and to John McCullough of 3ROC for his continual assistance in checking control sites and descriptions. With access limited to 'no firing weekends' and curtailed by snow, Andy's three visits were unduly pressured and immensely valuable. The moral: urgency is required to resolve discussions over map scale and contour interval (Map Advisor, Map Group, Events Committee, mappers, controllers and planners) much earlier in the planning cycle. Indeed, should we now be considering adjusting the default settings for complex sand dunes in the same way that we have for urban and sprint terrain?

Philip Baxter

## **Controller's Report by Andy Lewsley (BL)**

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My thanks to Philip, Wilson and John for making my job on the ground so easy. Many thanks as well to you the competitors for your comments after you finished (always a dangerous place to listen). The major issues were with map scale and contour interval; I felt that for the relay the optimum scale to allow people to enjoy the event was 1:7500. I also liked the map with 2.5m contours because the shape of the dunes was more obvious. Unfortunately to achieve this the line thickness would have had to be reduced and this does not conform to the Rules.

Most of you seemed to appreciate the changes in terrain as offering a different challenge and whilst the village was only 2 minutes of orienteering it created a lot of comment.

I am always aware that in relays there is a risk of mispunching, I was pleased that relatively few teams were disqualified. Generally we managed to keep the controls well apart and on very different features.

I was particularly pleased with Philip's Junior courses, we produced very close races that matched the standards despite the lack of many line features.

Winning times for each lap were generally about right, the elite women beat us but it did mean that the winners of the JK Trophy and the Women's Open were on the run in together, a true highlight.

Well done NIOA.

Andy Lewsley

The preparations for the JK TrailO programme started over three years in advance. The one-day Irish Championship was extended to a 2-day event at a single venue in 2009, was staged in different venues in 2010, and a full TempO competition was staged beside the 2010 Irish SprintO Championships. This allowed for a gauging of the planning/organising processes required to stage three consecutive days of competition.

A constraint upon the siting of the JK TrailO competition is the requirement to cater for those who wish to participate in both FootO and TrailO. This means that the venues must be reasonably close and the 2011 venues were probably at the limit of separation involving, as they did, a vehicle journey between FootO and TrailO. This meant that, even with a late opening of the start each day the start window had to remain open for much longer than was required by the number of competitors in order to allow for the transfer. This made it impossible to provide on-the-day results before competitors started to leave the venue. The separation also meant that there were no on-the-day entrants. To maximise the benefits of staging TrailO it MUST be staged alongside the FootO arena. This was not possible in 2011 because the FootO sites were too compact (Tyrella) or unsuitable for TrailO (Slieve Croob). The TempO event, which was totally entry-on-the day, showed that there is a market for TrailO competition when adjacent to the FootO arena.

TrailO is very heavy on on-the-day manpower resources, especially when, as in this case, the venues are extremely popular with the general public at Easter. The resources available after the FootO and arena requirements were met, meant that the marshalling was very limited; indeed almost all of the marshalling was provided by people from outside the orienteering community. It was good fortune that only one control site was vandalised. Marshalling needs to be a high-priority requirement in preparing for TrailO competitions.

Judging from the positive and complimentary feedback the planning seems to have been of a satisfactory standard. The TrailO venues provided a contrast of terrain. Surprisingly the dune system of Murlough did not provide for many topology controls; the dune features were large but not complex. The TempO competition, with most of its control sites in a manicured city park, showed how this discipline can be staged in what can be initially perceived as unsuitable terrain.

Alan Gartside

## **Day 1 TempO Controller's Report By Stephen Gilmore (LVO)**

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It's always a pleasure to work with Alan "The Man" Gartside, highly respected in all matters concerning TrailO throughout these islands.

With an initial request to have a quick exploratory visit to the lodge of the Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University denied, Alan's suggested to use the southern end of Botanic Gardens as a location of the TempO gave the problem of how to route competitors to the venue. Being able to use the Orchard Building to locate the registration and start adjacent to the arena, and with the agreement of the Controller and IOF Advisors of the sprint race, also to include two stations within the grounds of Stranmillis University College was a great bonus. The first station on the bridge out of the Orchard Building didn't give competitors much chance to get accustomed to the terrain.

No doubt station 3, "The Silver Elephant" caused the most debate, but I am happy that the use of "edge" as opposed to "side" could only have led to one conclusion had of course sufficient time been allocated to the decision!

The advantage of being a Ccontroller at TempO or TrailO is that you are able to compete under similar conditions to the competitors. Looking at the results most wrong answers corresponded to my answers. In a few cases some mapping issues were addressed but I am confident that again given time the correct conclusion could have been deduced.

My only disappointment is that despite this convenience and the fact that close to half the competitors were locked in on site for 6 hours, only 33 entered, essentially the same entry level as on the next two days with the TrailO being remote from the footO events.

Stephen Gilmore

## **Day 2 TrailO Controller's Report by Stephen Gilmore (LVO)**

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Wilbert Hollinger shared responsibilities for controlling both days of the TrailO with Wilbert the lead controller on JK Day 3 (Sunday) and I on JK Day 2 (Saturday) with the theory that three heads are better than two.

We did enjoy a day together on Murlough checking the courses and making a number of suggestions to enhance the courses and tweak the map.

We did have a few problems on the day with the local urchins. Fortunately I was able to make it to Murlough just in time having needed to clear up some issues from my role as Sprint Organiser and being required as a stand-by first-aider in a developing situation at Tyrella South. I was able to replace three downed canes just before the first competitors arrived to the first few clusters. Unfortunately we were not so fortunate with punches on the second part of the course with a phantom punch pincher disassembling and removing the hardware. Several disappeared but then reappeared with the net result of one lost punch.

No 6 gave the highest number of incorrect responses with all flags very close to the trail. It seems that most were caught by the optical illusion as the depression lay in the side of a shallow hill.

I note that everyone gave the correct answer for No 15 which is something of a pity, especially as we had to pull Alan back from something rather more devious, which we deemed to be unfair or let's say we thought competitors might be found "sitting on the fence". It's just a pity that competitors didn't have the opportunity to inspect the dummy woodwork constructed from that nothing less than cling film!

I'm sure that all who made the effort to get over to Murlough enjoyed Alan's courses. Alan's superb map of Murlough involving weeks of work has to be highly commended. I do hope that there will be quite a few outings there in the future.

Stephen Gilmore