

Planner's comments SINS 23 Day 3 Corndon

This was my third go at planning on Corndon Hill (SINS 2015 and 2003 previously)

It's supposed to get easier?

We encountered a few problems this time, starting with the late car parking and terrain ground condition changes plus bracken spread on the eastern slopes, which along with some unanticipated new map issues, meant plan A got scrapped and plan B involved an awful lot of head-scratching and legwork to make. Then miserable weather from December to end of April every time I or the controller intended to get out on the hill. Further stressed-kitten-inducing happenings continued right up until event start time. (I get it now. It was all pay-off for the glorious weather on the day)

Courses had to be shifted back to the hill-top, junior courses then had to go in the only part they could sensibly use, this fixed the finish and start(s) locations due to the short nature of middle-distance courses.

Fortunately, this fitted part of my plan, which was for SINS regulars, especially the veterans to see some areas of the hill they probably had not visited before, like the TD5 boulder field, also to tackle the hill-top from a different direction. The number of safely accessible control sites and routes around the craggy areas is surprisingly limited and although we could bounce and circle courses round a bit, going downslope too far is not sensible, even in the quarry area, due to course climb and length limitations. Most of the courses were within a 150m wide ribbon snaking around the hilltop, with only the brown and black venturing down to the eastern slopes.

Course lengths turned out to be about right for the adults – despite me being convinced they would mostly take a few minutes longer (based on previous event times). I think the late addition of lots of small sheep tracks helped to get those thinking orienteers through some of the slower running areas faster. The same sheep helped less by preventing us from taping control sites at all (we trialled using photographs of flag locations), and even chewing up the odd flag.

Dave Peel's updated map was nice and clear, but meant we had to use 1:7500 maps for the first time due to the added contour and form line detail in the quarry area.

I hope you enjoyed your run. You also got to see Corndon Hill at its absolute late-spring best in perfect weather conditions.

My thanks to controller Robert, organisers Andy and Richard, our I.T. man Richard, mapper Dave Peel, printer Mick Lucking, the control placement and recovery teams and all those who helped out on the starts and finish and event management.

.....and the skylarks.

Tony Callow (30/05/23)