

MDOC Introductory Event for running clubs

Manchester and District Orienteering Club have recently held two introductory events for running clubs. Whilst it is too early to say whether they will attract new permanent members to the sport, the 2 events were very well received and left a positive impression of the sport.

It was felt important for these events to create both a race atmosphere and to maximise the speed at which the runners were able to compete. This was done specifically because of the fitness of the target market and to give the impression of the sport as one of a navigational race rather than a walking technical search. It was also important to avoid anyone becoming hopelessly lost and therefore put off. In order to achieve this aim the event was based upon a relay format with all of the runners starting at the same time.

The key points were as follows:

- There were 4 courses in total based upon 2 first parts and two second parts
- Of the 27 Controls 13 were common (including the first and last) with 2 controls available for intermediate checkpoints
- All courses were 6 km long (red standard) with path routes possible for all route choices
- A briefing was given to all runners before the start and all maps were handed out 10 minutes before the start
- The maps were pre-printed with control descriptions (written) on the front
- Needle punches were used as we were working on low manpower, this did not seem to detract from this event
- Times across the 2 events (same courses with different clubs) were in the range 48 to 80 minutes

It is proposed to repeat the events in the spring as a feed in to the Club's summer evening series.

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