

## Organising Street O by John Britton (MDOC)

### How to set up a Street O SROC Style:

- Get the 1:25000 OS map of your chosen area.
- Scan it into your PC at the best black-and-white resolution you can manage.
- Start a new normal orienteering map with OCAD, setting scale to 1:25000 and template to your new jpg or whatever your scanner produced.
- Register your new map with BOF, and get the number for it. Include this and the acknowledgement to OS in the map.
- Trace over the roads on your map with appropriate symbols eg. road with infill for major roads, simple black line for most roads, footpaths for tracks and alleys, paths, etc; maybe the odd railway or blue line for canals and rivers (though blue isn't great when printed in black and white). For the perfectionists, car parks can be done with brown areas; open grass / parks with yellow areas (again depending on expected printing technology) ... but this is only necessary where it may affect route choices and planning options.
- If in doubt, use Google Earth or Microsoft's [www.maps.live.com](http://www.maps.live.com) to get an aerial view.
- Don't even think about trying to do contours
- Tracing over the roads may be easiest done with line segments - a more professional feel needs a bit more care and bezier curves.
- So far, you'll have spent 5-10 hours, depending on your skill level.
- Now get your bike out, and check the whole map area thoroughly. You're looking for paths / entries / ways-through / discontinuities / new estates or roads, etc. It may take most of a day to get round the whole map checking and recording corrections, and an hour or two back at the PC to get them in.
- Now do the stuff round the edges - and in particular, choose what scale you'll print at. Rather than mess with the map scale, just print at 1:15000 or 1:10000 or whatever (any scale in this kind of range is perfectly usable).
- Now you have your base map.
- Start a new course-setting-for-orienteering file, and edit the Control Circle symbol to have a purple dot in the centre. This may sound pernickety but it is extremely helpful in ensuring clarity about exactly where the control is meant to be.
- Place the Start symbol on your intended venue, and start scattering control circles around the map - you'll want to end up with 40 or 50, so maybe start with 60. Junctions are best (as they mean runners have choices about arrival and departure); dead-ends are useful for adding distance if you're struggling. Keep away from busy roads. A good way of causing runners to think is to find circles which are close on the paper but a surprisingly long distance apart on the road.
- It isn't necessary to have planning skills or think too hard - more or less any decent scattering will do nicely. At this point don't worry about what control numbers are assigned - but you'll need to print an all-controls map with numbers on for the next bit.
- Before going any further, check how far a reasonable all-controls circuit would be. An easy way to do this is by picking a line symbol (eg. river) and do a line segment continuous line all round the map. Then the "measure" tool gives you your distance. Work out how far you need to ensure none of your clientele can get them all in the time allowed. SROC winners typically do around 17k in 75 minutes, but there are much faster people around. You might need to drop some outer controls, add some doglegs or push some controls further out to get the maximum distance to what you want.
- Now get the bike out again, and find some street furniture at each of your circles. I like Green Boxes, Telegraph Posts, Hydrants (especially if on a lamppost or telegraph post), Post boxes, substations, street names. Try not to use people's houses (numbers or names) as they may get irritated by having their house stared at by strangers. Phone numbers on shops, dates on memorials, etc, make for variety but can be hard to find - which is not really the idea. Some road signs have numbers on them. Avoid

lampposts unless desperate, as they can often be deduced from other ones, and there are often so many your dot will have to be very carefully placed for the control to be fair. You should be able to get round 60 circles in 3 hours or so (ie. one every 3 minutes), and you'll have to be prepared to give up on some, and nudge all of them a bit. You'll need some time on OCAD again to do the nudging and reduce the controls down to your target number.

- Now the clever bit. Assign values to your controls. The SROC Street League uses a convention where controls are numbered 10-49 or 10-59, with 10-19 worth 10, 20-29 worth 20, etc. The easy way to do this is simply draw rings round groups of 5 and assign a number from each range to each group without any great strategy. This actually works out fine because people will all be going in different directions at different speeds and will make difficulties for themselves more or less whatever you do. While you're doing this you'll want to remember the mapping from the original number (which you've got control-description notes for) to the new number. This bit can take a couple of hours up to several days depending how clever you are trying to be.
- Now get the control description sheet and fill in the boxes with your chosen clues. This needs considerable care.
- Get the bike out again and check you've got everything right (only a couple of hours) or (much better) ask a friend to act as Controller and do it for you.