

# Simulating Sweden (or Scotland) – National Coaching Conference

Paul Taylor (SYO) – 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021

## Introduction

If I think back to my Swedish orienteering experiences, mainly at the Oringen, I recall setting off on my course and finding the first couple of controls OK. Then, I look ahead and see the 3k leg across some really challenging terrain. And whereas I'd probably get it right from my armchair on World of O, I simply fail to plan well when it's for real.

I think the skills that I'm missing are two-fold (at least!). I'm not good enough at reading the map and planning *while running in terrain*. And I'm not good enough at running in terrain *while reading the map*. Whereas it's hard to simulate the fine navigational challenge of Sweden in my local woods, I can put on exercises close to home that address these two key skills. In my session on Thursday, I thought I'd share my approach and invite contributions from other coaches on how they "simulate Sweden" with limited access to terrain.

*NB* When we planned this for the YH Juniors, we realised that a 3k Swedish leg might scare them off completely, so the exercise I'm sharing uses some more familiar, but still challenging, Scottish terrain.

## How to prepare

Attached is a map extract for you to colour print if you can. If you don't have access to a printer, please just use an old course from Sweden, Scotland, the Lakes etc. that you have in your map file.

**!! PLEASE DON'T LOOK AT THE COURSE BEFORE THE SESSION ON THURSDAY !!**

After a brief introduction, I'm going to ask you to "go on a run" for 7-8 minutes with your map. The idea is to provide a physical challenge that simulates terrain while you plan your routes from the course. If you have terrain in your back garden that's perfect. Otherwise a run round the block? You may need a headlamp, though streetlight may simulate a gloomy forest. If going outdoors isn't a good option for you, perhaps an obstacle course round your living room, brisk walking up and down the stairs (if not dangerous) or even dancing to some quiet music might do! Anything that means your brain needs to control your agility and balance while you're reading the map.