

Newmillerdam Lockdown - Planner's Comments

Planning 3 fairly easy courses in Newmillerdam for a lock down event. What could be easier? 45 mins on Purple Pen followed by a two hour walk to check the control sites and update the map and away you go.

First problem arose with reports of relatively large number attending. Where to park? Realistically there are two options, the main car park (which we always use) or roadside parking opposite Seckar Woods. This would have the advantage of a brand new start and finish. Hot weather was bringing out the dog walkers and families plus the mountain bikers in droves and the roadside parking was getting worse and worse. In addition, the Council were actively using the log pile area so I reluctantly decided to use the main car park and hope that everyone would get a space eventually.

Richard Payne produced a new version of the map and georeferenced it. I did a few small updates and then found that my brand new version of OCAD would not allow me to export the correct file for James to place the pins. Step up Richard again. The weekend before the event James sent me the MapRunF files so that I could check the controls. This came as a surprise, we thought we had done the field work, so on Monday morning, Juliet and I set off with mobile phones to check that they beeped in the right place. Initially all went well and we both recognised the control sites though sometimes we were 20m apart when the phones beeped. However mine steadfastly refused to do anything by a knoll in the south of the area nor would it register at the re-entrant in the North East.

I reported the problems to James who I think added a couple of dummy controls and on Tuesday we went back again to No. 43. My phone had a flat battery and I took my I pad, Juliet had her Samsung. No joy. Eventually Juliet climbed well out of the re-entrant and got a beep. My I pad kept showing that there was no GPS signal. I joined her above the re-entrant and after two or three minutes got a beep.

Wednesday morning I drove to the small car park at 8AM and got the last spot and walked to place a warning sign about the poor signal. The main car park was half full. 10Am I cycled back down. The car park was full with cars queueing but one by one they all got parked as people left. In the end we had 43 people who ran, shuffled or walked round. The winning times were much as expected though I do wonder just where one of EPOC's elder statesmen actually went.

Looking at route gadget, a lot of people seemed to be running parallel to but 20m to the side of the main tracks. Map error or GPS inaccuracy?

I hope you enjoyed it but it was very very hot!

David Morgan