

BOC2014 Controller's Report

BOC2014 on 31st May produced excellent winning doubles for Women's Elite Claire Ward and Men's Elite Graham Gristwood, fresh from their success at the 2014 Scottish Championships the previous weekend.

There is a long list of dedicated volunteers to whom I would offer a sincere vote of thanks for their regular input over the last couple of years in presenting the annual British Championship event in a technically interesting and physically challenging venue. There are many orienteers and supporters within the NEOA whom I did not meet individually, but whose input is greatly appreciated.

My main contact was with the Planning team including Alan Cranke, Adrian Barnes, Frank Shillitoe and Chris Wright who divided the 28 Championship and 6 Colour Coded courses very effectively between them.

The planners were faced with several challenges throughout Thrunton Wood and Callaly during course preparation and, as is often the case in event planning, were handed some additional unexpected factors close to the event. The appearance of a rare bird created an exclusion zone near the finish; late thinning and extraction reduced the runnability of a section of forest; midwinter gales producing random patches of wind damage; and an exceptionally mild and frost free winter allowed the low growth of blueberries to proliferate in the weeks before the event.

Competitors using the relatively distant Blue Start mainly appreciated the opportunity which that presented to run in the technically contrasting areas of western Callaly and eastern Thrunton. Long course competitors using the Red Start had additional leg length variety. Winning times on many courses were close to expectations although feedback around the finish included some comments on the physical nature of the terrain.

Coordination and organisation by Alasdair Wilson Craw and Boris Spence kept the wheels of the event turning smoothly and they even managed to arrange some decent weather for the weekend. Other valuable support for the event came from The TA cadets, Northumberland Parks Mountain Rescue Team, the First Aid team and the many members of the download/results group.

Ian Turner
Controller BOC2014