

SummerNav Courses Philosophy

Basic SummerNav Course Structure

An Auckland Orienteering Summer Series event consists of a minimum four courses. You are welcome to add anything else for variety. The basic four courses have the following structure:

Course 1

- As difficult as you can set within a park, usually about 6-7 km in length - depending on the type of terrain and scope of the map. On some road maps could be longer, absolute maximum 10k.
- If you end up with a particularly long course 1 you may like to consider an **additional course 1b** as well so that there is not too big a gap back to course 2.
- Try to give as many route choice legs as you can. You can often provide interesting route choice even on a very straightforward map.
- Will be done mainly by fit club orienteers so it wants to give them something to make them feel it has been worthwhile coming.
- Variety in length of legs with some long legs – not too many controls.

Course 2

- This should almost always be a subset of course 1 (the same difficulty as course 1)
- About 4.5-5.0 km if on physically easy terrain, shorter if physically demanding.
- The people doing this course are likely to be less keen to have purely running legs with little thought required – i.e. avoid long road runs.
- It should also not be too physically demanding but try to include the 'nicer' part of the map with pleasant views etc.

Course 3

- Of medium difficulty - a stepping stone from course 4 to enable people to progress to course 2 so can have a few controls that are not straight forward but still close to obvious features with handrails that can get them near.
- Likely to be used by adults who want to go for a pleasant, interesting stroll so important to try and get it to nice areas e.g. take up onto a hill to get a view, rather than skirt the bottom, but make sure the route is not too strenuous or difficult. It should not include rough or slippery parts of the map.
- About 3 km.

Course 4

- Easy without being completely boring.
- Handrails all the way and very visible controls - particularly the 1st.
- However still try and make it pleasant and interesting!
- Try to give variety of control sites – i.e. not all track junctions and man made objects if you can avoid it.
- Contour features are great as long as the control can be easily seen. Good to meet the different types of features in an environment where they can't miss them.
- May be done by very young children so keep well away from traffic or other dangers.

- Should almost always be no road crossing.
- Should it be unavoidable to cross a quiet internal road warning notices must be put up and where feasible signs put on the road.
- If at all possible make it pushchair friendly.
- Definitely make sure there are no difficult fences to cross, or parts that are difficult physically for preschool aged children, older folks etc.
- Controls need to be reachable by young children.
- Basically no overlapping legs with course 3 as quite a few will do both.
- Usually a bit under 2 km.

Additional Orienteers Challenge Course (Optional)

In addition to the above four courses, you are encouraged to have something a bit different, aimed at the orienteers. Anything you think could be a change or worthwhile exercise. Examples include:

- **Memory course** – Each control on the memory course has a laminated part of the map attached by string that only shows the next leg of the course. Participants do not have their own map and must rely on memory to navigate around the course. It is a good idea to have spare map pieces in case a control is lost or damaged during the event. Need to be sure enough map is shown to show all route choices and north is marked on the piece.
- **Line Course** – The course controls are not marked on the map. Instead, the map has a course line drawn on it that participants must follow exactly. Any control found to be on the line is clipped. Additional challenge can be added by combining a Line course with a contour only map.
- **Contours only map** – The map only has contours and control sites marked (and black uncrossable objects if appropriate) . Participants must navigate using contour features only. You do need to be careful, however that there are not uncrossable places, green vegetation etc in the way which would have a major influence on the route taken, not visible on a contour only map (and known by some but not all competitors) ie it must be fair and safe. Uncrossable objects such as cliffs or out of bounds areas should be marked on the map.
- **MicrO** – In one part of the course competitors compete on a very detailed blown up piece of the map with many controls and they have to visit the correct ones – The centre of the circle has a dot and you can have controls, for example on 2 sides of the same tree. Use of Sport Ident is helpful for this portion of the course
- **Maze** – a maze is constructed somewhere on the course. Use of Sport Ident is helpful for this portion of the course
- **Anything else you can think of!!**.

A few other general comments.

- Ensure you know what has been advertised as the start/finish area.
- Before starting make sure you look at the map information file in your event dropbox to see if there are any particular restrictions for your map
- Begin by thinking about the general direction you want your courses to go and to what parts of the map.
- For the more difficult courses, think about legs you would like to include which offer good route choice.
- Once you have a series of good legs you can think about how you will connect these up.
- At this stage you are selecting a control site in the general area you want it. You will very often change this a little bit when you visit the map as long as it does not affect the leg. It is the leg that is important, not the control site itself so you start by planning the legs, not by selecting control sites.
- Avoid doglegs – i.e. in and out on almost the same route.
- Try not to set courses with the control sites all around the edges of the map – it is very easy to run to the edge and then find the control. This is particularly important for course 1 and 2.
- Try to have variety in leg length
- Try to have as much change in direction of legs as possible – this makes for a much more interesting course than just going around in one loop.
- You need to think about the placement of the controls. We mainly use free standing controls, and on some maps this is compulsory (such as the Domain) but in some maps with bush areas or long

grass you can use the older controls which go into the ground, if you feel they are more appropriate. You need to make sure that you use the appropriate letters for the type of control.

- ❑ The line between 2 controls should not pass through another control.
- ❑ Try to avoid control sites of seats and picnic tables if they are likely to be in use during the event.
- ❑ The control description needs to be as marked on the map – e.g. if a raised garden is marked as a cliff then this is its description - not garden. Also endeavour to use standard orienteering control descriptions although a little poetic license is sometimes necessary!!
- ❑ The map must be accurate in the area of a control. Corrections to the map should be made if it is wrong. Let your controller know if you notice any errors on the map – either they will correct the map or one of the other club members will do so (Stewarts, Selwyn Palmer, Martin Crosby to name a few)
- ❑ Avoid too much unnecessary climb or difficult terrain.
- ❑ Check your course does not go through a sensitive or out of bounds area. The parks, particularly if they include a volcanic cone are likely to have regions we are not permitted to use. These should be detailed in the map information file so make sure you have read it. If you think your map could have sensitive areas not listed check with our permissions people Selwyn Palmer or Nadia Clark for details.
- ❑ Ensure that competitors will not be tempted to travel through anywhere where they could cause damage to the environment (eg gardens, young trees or manicured lawns). Unless no one can see we have been there we will lose access to the parks.
- ❑ Controls should not be hidden - the aim is to find your way to the correct area - the control should then be able to be seen. For course 3 and 4 the control should be visible as the orienteer approaches. For 1 and 2 they can be on the opposite side of a thicket etc as long as the control description makes it plain where it will be. It is not a treasure hunt! The controls are short so will be hard enough to see at any rate. If there is some reason why it will be harder to see than usual (e.g. growth on the ground) use a long stake control if it is permitted.
- ❑ Within reason try to avoid using too many controls - they take too long to put out. Some maps do require more controls than others but use a subset of the course 1 sites for course 2 and some of the course 3 or 4 sites on 1 and 2 - it is the leg that is important for these courses - not the control site.
- ❑ Safety must be a prime concern:
 - If any course has to cross a major road competitors must be forced to cross at safe crossing points. They can subtract waiting time from their run time. Instructions must be given and if appropriate a control placed to force them the safe way.
 - If crossing minor roads set the course so they will have a wide choice as to where and when they cross – i.e. can run up the road until road clear.
 - Avoid steep banks that become dangerous in wet weather.
 - Try to not place the control anywhere where anyone tampering with it could throw it anywhere where it could cause a danger (we had one dropped off an overbridge on to a motorway which could have been disastrous!!) Controls beside water can often also end up swimming. If it is just as good to place it a wee bit off the water then do so but don't sacrifice going to a nice location to achieve this.