

Planner's comments

It seems a very long time ago when I asked Robert Jackson the then SOC Forestry Commission Liaison Officer if the 2 day British Championships would be possible in the New Forest. Unofficial enquiries did not dismiss the idea out of hand. We had the start of a project. That was in 2007, and the Championships were scheduled at that time for SCOA in 2010. Plenty of time then!

The idea became a proposal from SOC to SCOA and determined negotiations led initially by Robert (thanks for all that quite diplomacy) and later carried on by Di Smith resulted in successfully convincing the FC that BOC is just a step change from the November Classic which attracts 1000+ competitors, and would be achievable in the New Forest. I could say at this point the rest in history, but then we heard that the event was to be in 2009 and so things had to move at a considerably faster pace. Even then the date was brought forward by a fortnight!

So loads of mapping, planning re-planning changes of assembly area etc. etc. all went on, and now the event has come and gone and the result was – well you judge. As regards the courses 13-29 i.e. all the 10k maps, I am pleased that the winning times are entirely sensible.

Many thanks for the complimentary words I have already received. I hope it is not another nearly 30-year wait before the New Forest can host the BOC again. I am typing this early morning on Thursday 5th March with the snow coming down heavily outside, and thinking what luck we had with the weather for the whole weekend.

My turn for an “Oscar moment”, my thanks to both Charles and to Arthur – for his not inconsiderable help and guidance. Also a massive thanks to Joe Parkinson and the mapping team – most of which were the forest team as well. Thanks to Roger Pleasant who test ran some of the courses and worked in the forest team. But a very special thanks to Charlie Richardson who coordinated the maps for both days, and did loads of work to ensure the courses printed perfectly on the maps, as well as getting the maps up and running on Route-gadget.

It was both an honour and privilege to co-plan the Championships – a once in a lifetime experience. As a postscript my very first orienteering experience was as a pressed ganged volunteer was checking control cards at BOC 1980 at Bramshaw in the New Forest.

Colin Hicks planner courses 13-29