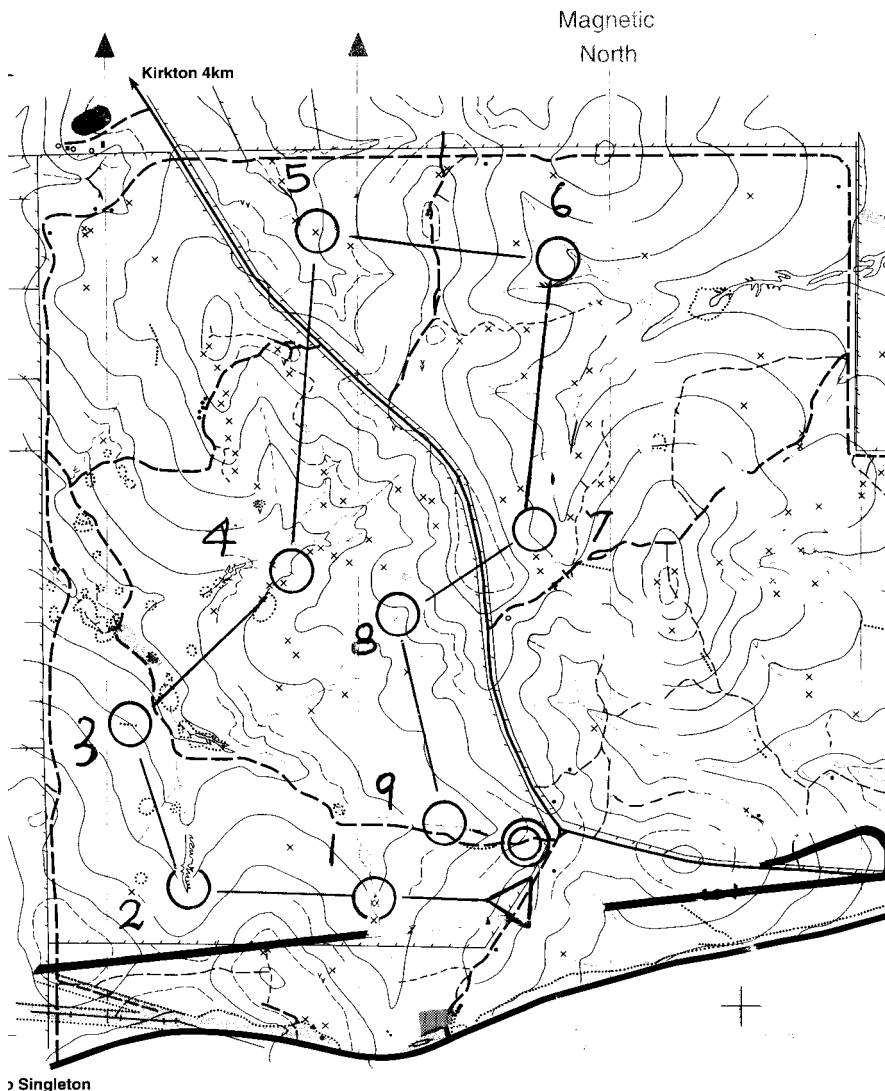


Last newsletter gave you some clues to interpret contour lines. Here is a practice exercise to help develop your orienteering skills.



This is a section of the Belford State Forest map. If you have a colour map use it to help you.

First, work out the direction of flow of the watercourses. Look for the closed loop contour lines to show tops of hills.

Blue, Green– follow the tracks and draw arrows to show uphill in each section, and where the slope of the ground changes.

Orange, Red– follow the course Start towards 1, and from 6 to finish, and draw arrows on the course line to show uphill in each section, and where the slope of the ground changes. Then draw in the route you would try to follow if you were to run that leg.

Orienteering Skills for Blue and Green Courses.

A good understanding of these skills is needed by all orienteers and forms the base for harder navigation.

Blue.

1. Orient the map (turn the map to have it facing the same way as the terrain)
2. Follow a handrail (eg. track) and recognise a change in direction (turn left or right)
3. Estimate distance travelled
4. Recognise your position on a wide handrail (eg. powerline clearings)
5. Learn what the colours mean on the map (black, yellow, etc)

Green.

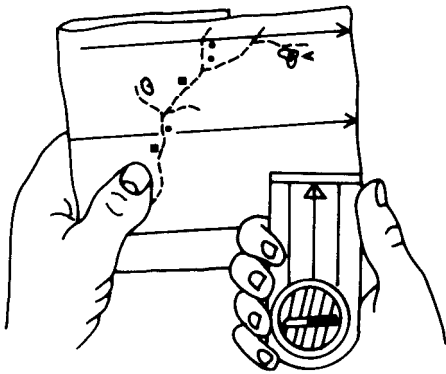
1. Orient the map
2. Follow a handrail and recognise changes in direction, and features being passed (eg. car wreck)
3. More accurate estimation distance travelled
4. Recognise the “attack point” on the handrail to find the control (eg. watercourse crosses, track junction, top of hill)
5. Interpret the contour lines to be know if you should be travelling uphill or downhill

Orienting the Map

When reading a map it must be turned around so that it always faces the same way as the ground it represents, and not like a book—always read upright. Therefore, when moving northwards, hold the map right way up, when moving southwards, read the map upside down. It is important that the orienteer ensures that the map is oriented at all times.

Changes in direction occur many times whilst competing, but the map should always face towards north. Beginning orienteers often tend to think that they are turning the map, but it is actually them doing the turning; the map remains oriented to north all the time. The map can be oriented either by the compass or by the terrain:

a. Orienting by compass



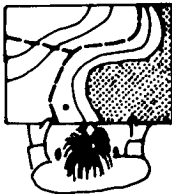
Place the compass on the map.

Turn the map until the magnetic north needle in the compass lines up with the magnetic north lines on the map; it is now facing the same way as the ground.

b. Orienting by terrain



If the exact location on the map is known the orienteer can use the features in the terrain especially linear features to orient the map.



Turn the map so that the map matches the ground.

How often should the orienteer check that the map is oriented?

Every time a change of direction is made, and every time a new linear feature (especially a track) is crossed.

- Check that the map is oriented.
- Check that the track lies in the direction shown on the map.

If not, STOP. If what is on the map does not match the terrain, something is wrong. Early recognition of an error, will save a lot of time and energy.

Coaching Available.

At the event on 20th August, we are arranging a coaching session for orienteers at Blue and Green level. We will be giving practical instruction and exercises for interested people before you begin your course for the day, then after your run we'd like you to come back and tell us how you went. Coaching will be from 9:30 and will take between 20 and 30 minutes. See event info.

At the event on 10th September, we'd like to extend the coaching to include Orange level, again with practical instruction and exercises before you begin your course for the day.

Geoff Todkill