

Your club coach again this year is *Geoff Todkill*.

During this year I hope to continue to help people develop their orienteering skills. I will be available to discuss orienteering techniques at various levels, and also run coaching sessions where I will set up practice exercises.

- **At minor events** we can mark our maps before we start, so people who would like to discuss their course (or wish to try more advanced courses) have the opportunity to talk with me before they start. The 9:30 a.m. coaching for Blue and Green was well supported last year and will continue this year.
- **At N.O.Y. events** we mark our maps as part of our course time, so I will be happy to discuss your course on your return.

If you are interested in the practical coaching activities please see me to arrange the fine details.

The newsletter coaching will focus more to Orange and Red levels.

In previous newsletters I have explained the importance of Leg Analysis and Route Choice; and detailed the basic skills of Orienting the Map, Thumbing the Map, Attack Points, Contouring, Aiming Off, Relocation, and Route Choice and Speed that are used to find your way to the control.

If you would like a copy of these, back copies can be obtained from the event desk.

2005 Coaching Days

There will be two this year - **16 April** (Moving from Green to Orange) and **17 July** (Orange & Red level):

Details of the first one are on the program pages of this newsletter. In both cases you need to contact Geoff Todkill (4958 5920) in advance so that maps can be prepared. On each coaching day, activities start after a 10 a.m. briefing.

Race Procedure

A few tips to improve the consistency of your navigation.

- Try to arrive at an event early. If you get the map in advance, study it carefully. Compare it with the ground in the area of the start and car park. Decide what type of approach the map and the terrain are likely to demand. If you can see the last control, you'll know what to expect at the finish.
- Warm up before reaching the start, and arrive at the start in plenty of time. You should aim at spending 20-30 minutes warming up.
- If there are master maps, take care that you copy down the right course, and the right number of controls. A mistake here is disastrous.
- Select a safe route to the first control, and take it slowly. Try to get 'into' the map by reading it most of the way. A few extra seconds invested in the first legs are likely to repay minutes later on. Mistakes are more likely to occur before you have adapted to the map and terrain.
- During the course do not be distracted by other competitors. A lot of people looking for a control in the same place is an indication that the control is not there! You need to make a special effort to concentrate at certain times during a race: for the first one or two controls, at and just after second master maps (or map exchange), toward the end of any long legs, when tired, when being followed, and when you see someone you know. Adapt your tactics to the race as it progresses. Choose routes to suit your own physical and mental state. Use the sun (if you can see it) as well as your compass. Be prepared to stop and read the map detailed areas. Don't be put off if a later starter overtakes you.
- If you make a mistake, slow down and take more care. It is a very common experience that one mistake leads to another.
- Toward the end of the course, when you are getting tired, make some allowance for it by taking safer routes. Physical fatigue also impairs your mental ability. Don't try to make decisions while you are under severe stress (eg. whilst running up a steep hill).
- Try to plan ahead if the terrain and the map allow. It is better to study a long leg before you reach it: your rhythm will be lost if you stop, and you are more likely to choose a good route when you are fresher. It always helps to know the direction you intend to leave a control before you reach the marker. Again, rhythm is important.
- After the competition, even if it has been a disaster, try to thank the organisers. Discuss your routes and problems with other competitors, and keep a record of your route on file.

I found that once I worked out a routing that suited me and practiced following it, my navigation became much more consistent.

- Geoff Todkill