

Planner's Comment: West Midlands Relays: 6th September 2009

Many thanks to everyone who took part in the WM Relays. It was pleasing to have a good turnout on such a windy BUT thankfully, dry day. From an orienteering prospective there were a few potentially testing routes for some runners. The area chosen offered not only beautiful scenery but the challenge of the hills and heather and linked with the opportunity to shout encouragement and friendly banter as all runners passed through the spectator control!

The ground may have been steep but as a first time planner who not taken part in a relay, the learning curve was equally abrupt. For making this experience bearable, I would like to thank Robert Vickers as Controller for his support and advice and more importantly his patience!

Additional thanks to Pete Jones for a great map, and Brian Morris and Tony Callow for introducing me to OCAD 9 and the new piece of terminology 'gaffling'. Also, I had first hand experience of assisting the National Trust in the upkeep of their footpaths at the same time as assisting the Mini-relay competitors to progress through their courses. I thank the newly-formed Wrekin Gardening Club - moorlands a speciality - for this!

I enjoyed planning the courses and hope you enjoyed them too!
p.s Just to reiterate Robert's idea that yes, Wrekin is small...but beautifully formed!

Mike Price

Organiser's Comment: West Midlands Relays: 6th September 2009

This has been my first attempt at organising an orienteering event for anything bigger than a club training event, so when Mike and I took on the roles in May, September looked a long way away. It was late July before we tracked down Robert to be our controller and he did a sterling job, supporting us all the way.

The National Trust wardens were very helpful in giving permission to use the Long Mynd and their presence at the event was acknowledged. Additionally, Mr John Allsop, allowed free car parking and toilet facilities in his field, a pleasant 25 minutes walk from the event site which gave leg muscles a chance to warm up before hitting the heather!

Organising the event was helped greatly with the assistance of the committee members, the Club Captain and the Controller who guided me through all the jobs and available at the end of the phone or email.

I thoroughly enjoyed the event itself, my first also. An early start, at 6am, meant all road signs etc were in place by 7am, helpers arrived soon afterwards and all controls out by 9am. The Arena was set up and club tents in place by 10am, despite the wind. Our Starts man, Marcus Eassom, set the Mini-relays off on time at 10.30am and all ran smoothly. Thank you to all for being so focussed, and patient about the problems the maps caused a few of you. I know I could rely on Jill Leventon to sort them for the results.

Brenda Morgan (WMOA Chair) did a sterling job on giving out the certificates and trophies, all of which were returned, as promised, before the prize-giving commenced.

I look forward in competing in next year's WM Relays and now realise how much work goes into organising every event.

Cadi Price