

Controller's Comments

The Planner, Mike Perry, was somewhat disappointed in Canterbury, as he'd anticipated more accessible narrow alleys in the city's Medieval heart with its Roman origins. These did exist, but were mostly blocked off or inaccessible to the public. This, combined with not being able to use the Cathedral and The King's School grounds, meant ingenious and imaginative planning was needed from Mike, which the majority of reactions on the day seemed to confirm he had succeeded in providing.

The idea of plunging you straight into the modern housing estate (rapidly proving to be ideal urban terrain everywhere – greatly extending future scope for urban orienteering) was the masterstroke. Thereafter though, he was heavily constrained by effectively only two railway crossing points (a level crossing, even with a pedestrian underpass, isn't a fair option).

He tried to include every opportunity in the old city centre for tricky navigation in or near control circles, with his longer courses taking you to many sites of historical interest. Did you enjoy the mound (good euphemism) conundrum? It is believed to be the Motte of a motte and bailey castle erected by William the Conqueror.

For mapper, planner and controller it was a steep learning curve on the first major urban event/map for all of us. Our considerable experience of competing in urban events (and, for the Controller, Nopesport castigations of previous hapless planners and mappers), however, helped us avoid the pitfalls of doubt and ambiguity about access or lack of it. Meticulous circle and line cutting and belt-and-braces crossing point accentuation seems to have kept us off Nope! (so far). I have great admiration for anyone producing a clear and unambiguous urban map. Dave's first one, once he'd got to grips with the illogicalities of OCAD, did the business.

I had absolute faith in the organisational abilities of Anita (unequivocal permission for every control site), especially when augmented at the last minute by Mark Glaisher, who, with the able Saxon support team, made the complicated start work like a dream.

Mike's streamlined, if, in hindsight (remember the learning curve), somewhat tight-schedule organisation of the many on-the-day control hangers, was frustrated by the forcible removal, minutes before the first start, of an entire control assembly together with the branch of a bush. Happily, it was found later 400m away, high in a tree 30m from another control, by a competitor who'd mispunched it!

Jim Prowting
TVOC