

10th Mediterranean Open Championships

by Christine Robinson SLOW

"Follow the sun" is the slogan adopted by MOC, the Mediterranean Open Championships. In need of a winter dose of Vitamin D, I duly followed their directive and headed for beautiful Tuscany to take part in the 10th anniversary of MOC. Day 1 was a sprint in the Parco Termale in the delightful spa town of Montecatini Terme. The finish area was probably the most spectacular I have ever seen with the stunning Leopoldine baths as a back drop. Excellent planning produced some surprisingly tricky orienteering. With the last control doubling as a spectator control a few minutes before the end of each course, there was ample opportunity for lazing around on the grass in the spring sunshine, watching the speed punching technique of the world's elite orienteers and fellow lesser mortals. We headed off to the coast for Day 2 to the forested sand-dunes of Pineta di Cecina, near Livorno. The finish was located on the beach making the run-in hard work in the pleasantly warm sun, but with the race arena based at an adjacent cafe, competitors were soon revitalised with an espresso, gelato or pizza, or all three in some cases. An hour or so later, most competitors were to be found admiring the wonders of Pisa, on the way back to our base at Montecatini. It was disappointing for both the organisers and competitors to lose permission for central Florence, resulting in the finale being held in the technically unchallenging, very long thin Parco delle Cascine beside the River Arno, instead of amongst the magnificent Florentine architecture. However, the excellent commentary, as on each day, brought the races alive, with the focus on the Elite classes running a chasing start. There were efficient and generous prize-giving ceremonies each day, with overall prizes awarded on this last day as well.

All in all, a very pleasant few days, with everything you could wish for: orienteering well-organised and presented, even if lacking the technical challenge of the previous year's races, lovely warm sunshine, fabulous food and hotels, sight-seeing in beautiful cities, friends for socialising and some British successes to celebrate. I will certainly be following the sun again in future. 300 competitors from 19 different countries attended



Elite Top 3. Can you name them all?

MOC ver.10 which was held 13th - 15th March 2014. Day 1 courses were planned by Piepaolo Corona and the excellent map drawn by Roberto Pradel. In the Elite race (Men's shown) it



Controller's Conundrum Solution

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G1 Map: Check that the map or maps are actually at the stated scale. (It's been wrong in my experience). The OS 1:25,000 map and a ruler are useful for this.

G2 Courses: Are they the stated length? It's quite easy to get confused in OCAD between the actual map scale and the printed scale if these are different, so that courses end up too long. This has happened. Measure them on the map.

G3 Courses: Are they an appropriate length? A spreadsheet using Course Length Ratios which includes the allowance for climb is useful. Bear in mind the speed of competitors on the longest course, who may run much faster than you ever did.

G4 Courses: Are they all of the correct difficulty? Most planners and controllers don't compete on TD1, 2, 3 or 4 courses, so close attention to the planning guide in Appendix B is required. Too easy is better than too difficult, which is a very bad thing.

G5 Control sites: If these are hidden by vegetation (seasonal or otherwise)

they must be vetoed. Competitors must not have to fight their way to them. Some mappers include small features which are hard to recognise without a control kite in place. These also should be vetoed.

G6 Control sites: Is the description correct? It should agree with the map and the IOF definition of the feature.

G7 Planning: Remember that you are not the planner so don't try to re-plan courses. But do remember that if the planning is inappropriate (e.g. a Classic course planned like a Middle Distance race) then it is necessary to sort it out with the planner. If the planner is inexperienced, then your job may well include mentoring.

G8 Planning: The planner may assume that competitors will take a particular route between controls. This is an unsafe assumption. The control site has to be fair when approached from any possible direction.

G9 Control sites: You need to be quite certain that the control is in the right place before the event, especially when the planner has help putting them out from others. The only way to achieve this is to visit them yourself. (But others can check that they are still there before the event starts.)

G10 Control sites: Beware of control

putters-out who try to hide the kite, and move the stake if necessary. The bottom of a small pit, or behind a tree, are not good places for a kite.

G11 Organisation: Are you confident that the event has enough experienced helpers to run smoothly and without problems?

G12 Safety: Motor vehicle traffic is potentially the most dangerous issue.

G13 As controller you have the final say (Rule 15.13). However you must give reasons for changes that you want made. An analytical approach is necessary.

G14 We all get things wrong sometimes. If you do, don't deny it but apologise, and try not to make the same mistake again...

This is my final Conundrum, which I started writing seven years ago. I have greatly enjoyed exploring some of the more esoteric corners of the rules, but am now running short of inspiration. So if you are a controller interested in continuing this column, please contact the Editor without delay.

Many thanks to Arthur for providing such a variety of Conundrum's over the years. I am sure many readers, like myself, have learnt a great deal by reading them. - Ed.

was Danish double victory in women elite – Emma Klingenberg ahead of Maja Alm and Sabine Hauswirth from Switzerland and 4th place Catherine Taylor from Great Britain. Men's race was also very thrilling – at the end, Sprint European Champion Jonas Leanderson SWE won by few

seconds ahead of Daniel Hubmann SUI, the 4 times World Champion, and Yannick Michiels – the tall guy from Belgium – who wants to improve his 12 place from WOC in Finland for maybe a medal – it's possible and would be great – for sure.

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Italy provides some excellent race venues which MOC capitalises on every edition.



MOC is not just for the elite! Veteran Age Class winners.



Day 2 Race Arena.