

Mapper's and Course Setter's Notes:

Map: scale 1:10,000 2.5m contours

The Hard Labor Creek Orienteering map is intended to be used at a 10,000 scale or larger. These scales permit more detail on the map to encourage and hone the map reading skills required to move through the terrain quickly and safely. A standard orienteering map is printed at 1:15,000 and has 5m contours and correspondingly less variety of point and linear features.

Though 2.5m contours emphasize the subtle undulations of the ground, there are gradations of dry ditches, gullies and ravines that serve as linear or collecting features that also indicate their crossability - easy to difficult. The Model Event course has some of these for you to get familiar with.

Most rock features are subtle (1m or less), except along the streams, as is typical of this Southern Piedmont terrain. Most of this land was cleared of trees a century ago to grow cotton. The resulting erosion created the many ditches and gullies, and the exposed rocks and stones were piled on the fields' periphery. Rock dams were constructed early in the 1900's in an effort to control erosion in the larger ditches. These are marked as short rock walls and are used as control features on several courses.

Green X's mark rootstocks that are over 1meter high. A recent windstorm has created several new ones, and these have been added to the map. These are identifiable at a distance and make very good control point or collecting features.

Courses:

These are designed according to the navigation skills required to successfully complete each level course.

A Yellow course leg will be on a linear feature such as a road, trail, stream, gully, or row of tapes; the runner finding an attack point close to the control feature. In addition to map reading, pacing and compass skills are required to locate the control.

An Orange course encourages "off trail" navigation but has obvious attack points close to the control and catching features to prevent "over running" the control. Taking the trail as a "safe" route is still an option but sacrificing the shorter route as an option. Practicing your "CAR" and "SOFA" techniques is essential to move on to advanced level orienteering.

Brown and Green courses will test all the skills listed above but without obvious attack points and close catching features. Compass and pacing skills are required to "keeping your line" to the control and maintaining your focus to prevent mistakes on the way to the control. Collecting features become essential factors on the way to the control. This is when the map's detail becomes particularly useful.

Good navigating!

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