

Deeside 2026

25/07/2026 – 01/08/2026

By Erik Biernacki-Jabłoński (WAOC)



On the 25th of July 2026, I got on the train to Edinburgh with Ethan and Marcus, after having been dropped off at Peterborough station by my dad. We were on our way to the Deeside training camp for M/W15s, based in a campsite near Aberdeen. In addition to us, 17 other athletes from around the UK had been selected, with the majority from England and a few from Scotland. The camp focused on developing techniques to improve our forest orienteering, with a day focusing on Plan, Direction and Picture, as well as a day to consolidate any new techniques before the Tour Championships on the last day.

The journey to Aberdeen was smooth, with no delays and plenty of time to change at Edinburgh. In Aberdeen, we were picked up by the camp organisers, and taken to the campsite, where the Scottish athletes were already waiting. We then had to set up our tents and unpack our sleeping bags and roll mats, after which we were divided into four

teams. I was in team one, which we called 'Team Won', and consisted of Lucas Baikie (FVO), Hannah Chapman (SYO), Thomas Puschmann (NN) and Alice Evans (SAX). Each team had two coaches and was what we would score points for in the various competitions.

The first competitions were later that day, after a teambuilding exercise where we had to shout out each other's names and throw an egg, gently catching it so it didn't break. This was not always successful. The first competition was an egg and spoon race, after which came a sack race. Our team won both, putting us in an early lead.



After these first competitions, we received our Deeside tops, which were black and orange sprint vests, and were given the opportunity to try them out in the evening [MicrO](#), which is orienteering in a very small area with the controls having no kites, meaning you have to be very accurate. I didn't do very well at this as I couldn't find number two as it was hidden under the branches of a tree. Marcus Richardson (NOR) won the boys side of the competition, while Hannah won the girls' competition, also beating Marcus. We then had dinner and went to sleep in our tents.

The next day, we had breakfast and packed lunch for the day of training ahead. We were heading to [Easter Clune](#), which is a steep, forested hill with lots of rocks in some areas. The focus for the day was 'plan', so making a good plan before the leg was emphasised. There were lots of features on the ground, so it was a good area for practicing more

complex plans rather than just taking bearings to the controls. After lunch, there was a head-to-head race around the area in which Sam Crook (AIRE) came first. We then had the opportunity to go swimming in a river, but since it was quite cold, not many people did.

On Monday, we went to [Balmedie](#), an area of sand dunes by the sea. We began with an exercise where we walked to the main start, trying to find where the control circles were on the ground along the way, sort of like a TrailO. Once at the start, the focus of the day was having a clear picture, mostly using contours – identifying both large and small shapes in the terrain, to help with more precise as well as broader navigation. We mostly used contour only maps, but there were also some [versions that included other features](#), which were not actually on the ground, as distractions. As on the day before, we also did a race at the end, but this one was much more heavily gaffled. We also had an opportunity to swim in the sea.

The day after, we went to [Glen Dye](#), which was where the final tour championships would be, to work on direction. There were lots of exercises involving taking bearings as well as a focus on using and moving between vaguer line features, such as lines of depressions or changes in slope. After that, we all collected bilberries to use for a crumble for dessert. This day also had a competition at the end which was a peg relay. I got the joint most number of pegs, but I ran to the wrong control at the end and had to turn back, meaning I got second overall. We then again had a chance to go swimming in a river, where for the first time everyone went in, as it was warmer than the start of the trip and there was a rock you could jump from. We then returned to the campsite for dinner, before heading out again for a NightO at [Crathes](#). I felt like this was a lot more difficult than in the day, as it was much harder to make out specific features in the terrain. We returned to the freshly made bilberry crumble, which was and still is the best crumble I have ever had.

After this late orienteering, we had the opportunity to sleep in the next day, which was the rest day, where we only did a [sprint](#) around the campsite. We all wore our Deeside vests for the event. It was a great success for Team Won, as me, Thomas and Lucas came first, second and third respectively on the boys' side, and Alice and Hannah were the top two on the girls' netting us the maximum possible points for an event! In the afternoon, we went to Aberdeen to swim in a heated saltwater lido, where there was even a slide! We then had the chance to go into town, but before that we all got free ice cream. We had to be careful, because the seagulls were circling.

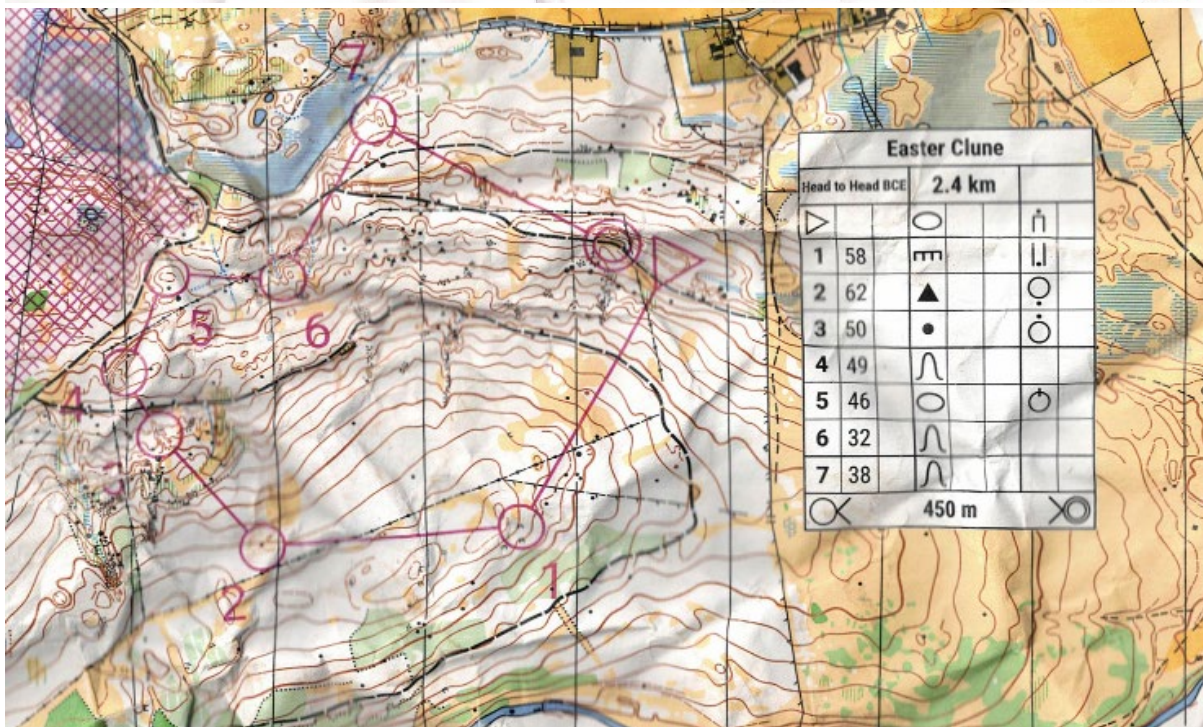
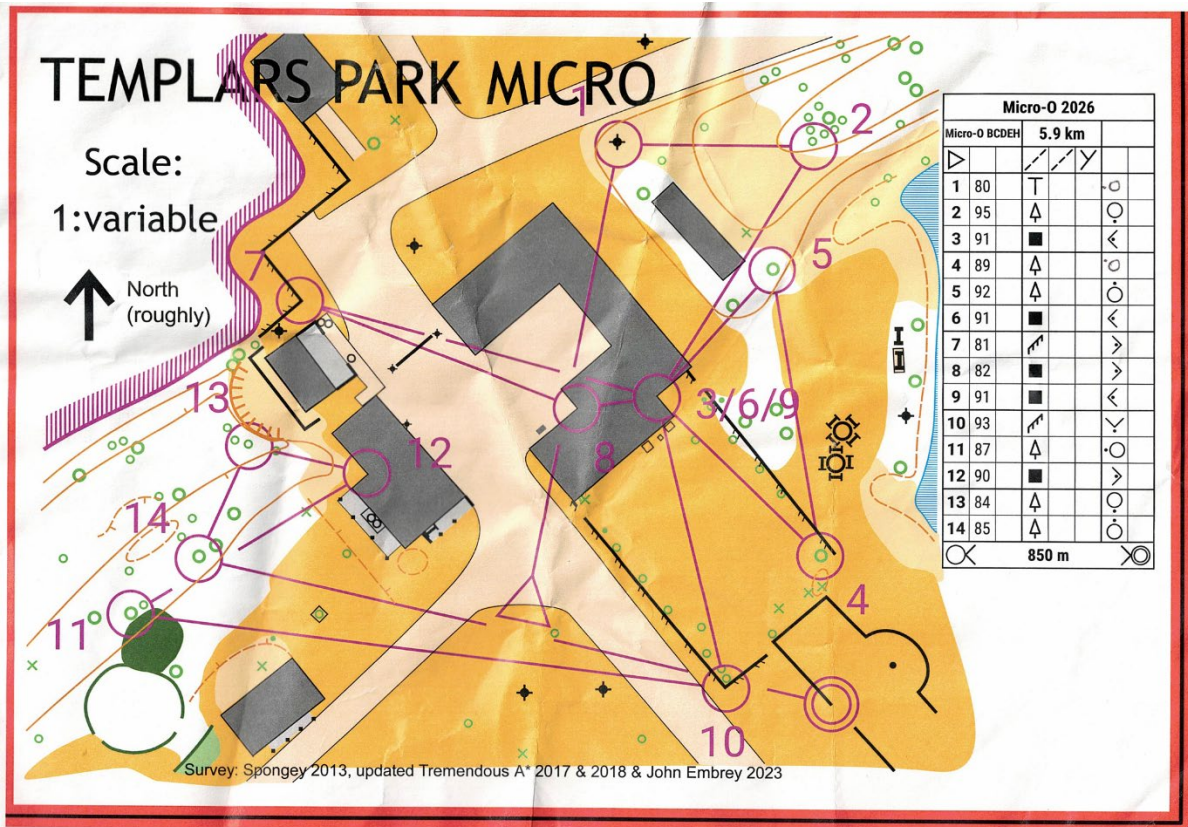
On Thursday, we went to [Birsemore](#), which is a forested hill with lots of cliffs and rock features on one side, where we consolidated everything we had learned over the last few days, ready for the Tour Champs on the Friday. I mostly trained map memory and simplification, as well as holding a bearing without the map to help me.

Friday was the final day of orienteering, where we had the [Tour Championships](#) in a different part of Glen Dye. The course consisted of a more technical middle at the start with lots of shorter controls, before some longer legs at the end to combine with the middle to form a long, giving two opportunities to win points. I did quite well in the middle, managing to come third despite some mistakes to controls 8 and 10, before catching up to a long train of people looking for control 11, luckily finding it just as I got there. After control 13, the long section of the course began, with the leg to 14 stretching most of the way across the map. After that, the legs shortened to more reasonable distances the rest of the way to the finish. Lucas managed to gain multiple minutes on everyone in this second section, largely on the rocky slope between 14 and 15, going from 2nd in the middle to 1st overall. I also moved up a spot to 2nd overall.

In the end, Team Won did in fact win, largely thanks to Hannah, who won almost every event, and Lucas, who was in the top 3 for all of them, with the rest of the team also contributing points to the total.

We then stayed up for most if not all of the night, going for a run just after midnight to mark the start of August. In the morning, we ate breakfast, packed up, and headed to the train station, with some people going home, while others – like me – were off to the Lake District for the Lakes5Days. The training must have been useful, because I ended in 4th place, just after 3 upper year M16s.

Thank you to all the coaches who gave up their time to help with the camp, as well as EAOA and WAOC for sponsoring my participation.



at 2021 - GISamap - major updates to

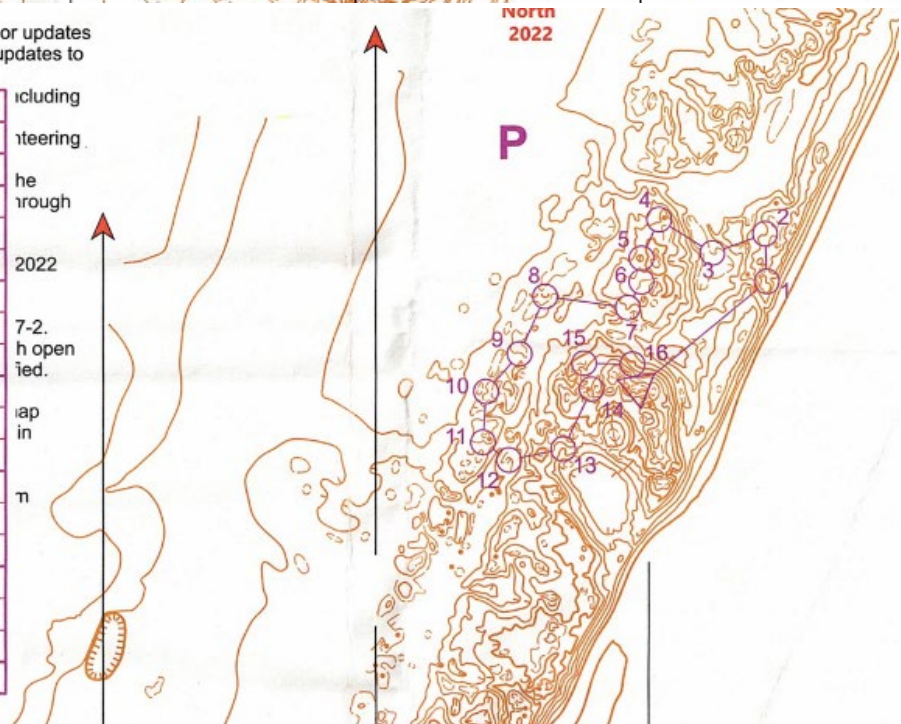
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November 2021 - GISamap - Minor updates
August 2021 - GISamap - Major updates to
paths, vegetation and terrain

		picture!	
	small shape	1.0 km	
1	109		∧
2	110	∧	
3	111	⊢	♀
4	112	∧	
5	113	○	
6	114	∧	~
7	115	⊢	♀
8	116	∪	
9	117	∧	
10	118	∧	
11	119	∧	~
12	120	∧	
13	121	∧	
14	122	•	○
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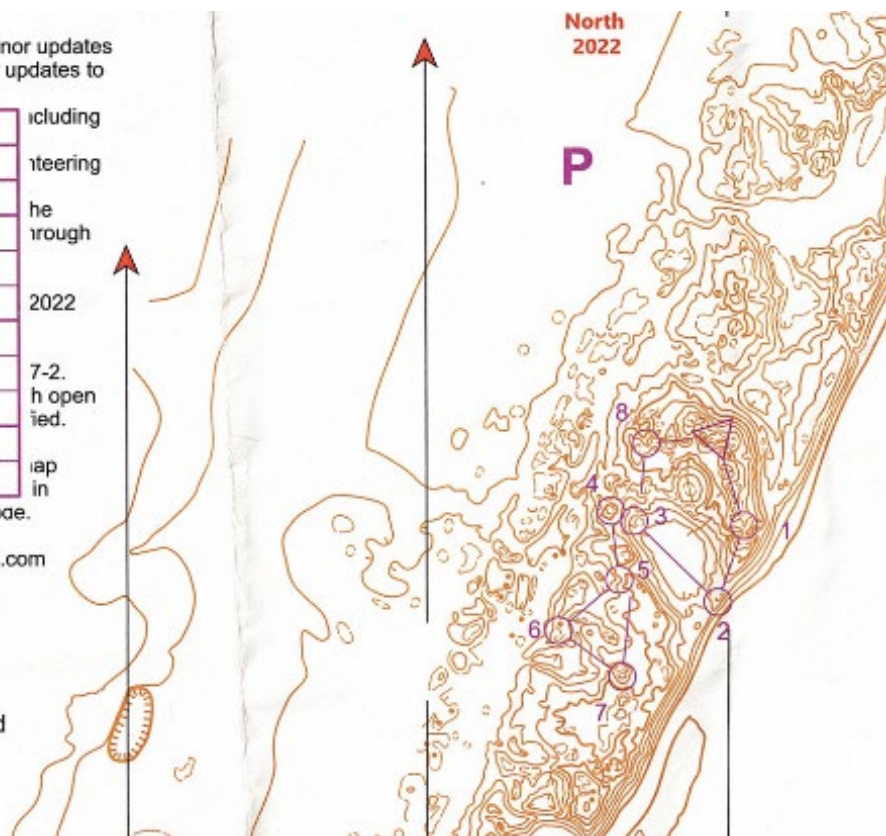
picture!				
big shape	0.8 km			
1	101			♀
2	102			♀
3	103			♀
4	104			
5	105			
6	106			
7	107			
8	108			♀

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Special symbols

Rough open land

Sandy ground



August 2021 - GISamap - Major updates to
 paths, vegetation and terrain

picture!				
pairs mm	1.8 km			
1	104			
2	119			
3	108			♀
4	115			♀
5	112			
6	109			
7	101			♀
8	105			
9	120			
10	117			
11	125			
12	126			

Special symbols

Rough open land



parts: vegetation and terrain

picture!			
ABCEFGH	2.2 km	100 m	
1	130	Λ	
2	131	Λ	
3	132	Λ	
4	133	Λ	○
5	134	Λ	
6	130	Λ	
7	135	Λ	
8	136	Λ	
9	137	Λ	
10	138	Λ	
11	139	○	○
12	140	Λ	
13	133	Λ	○
14	141	Λ	
15	142	○	
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17	143	Λ	
18	131	Λ	
19	138	Λ	
80 m			



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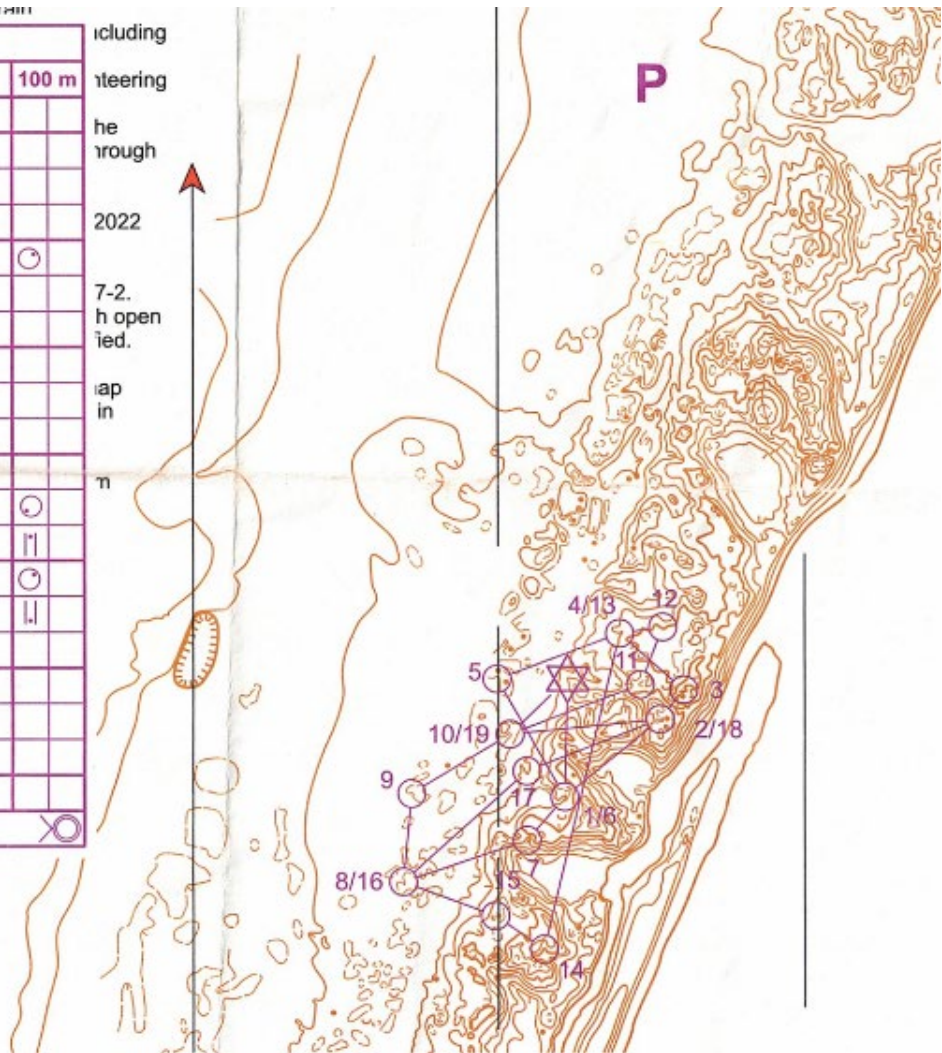
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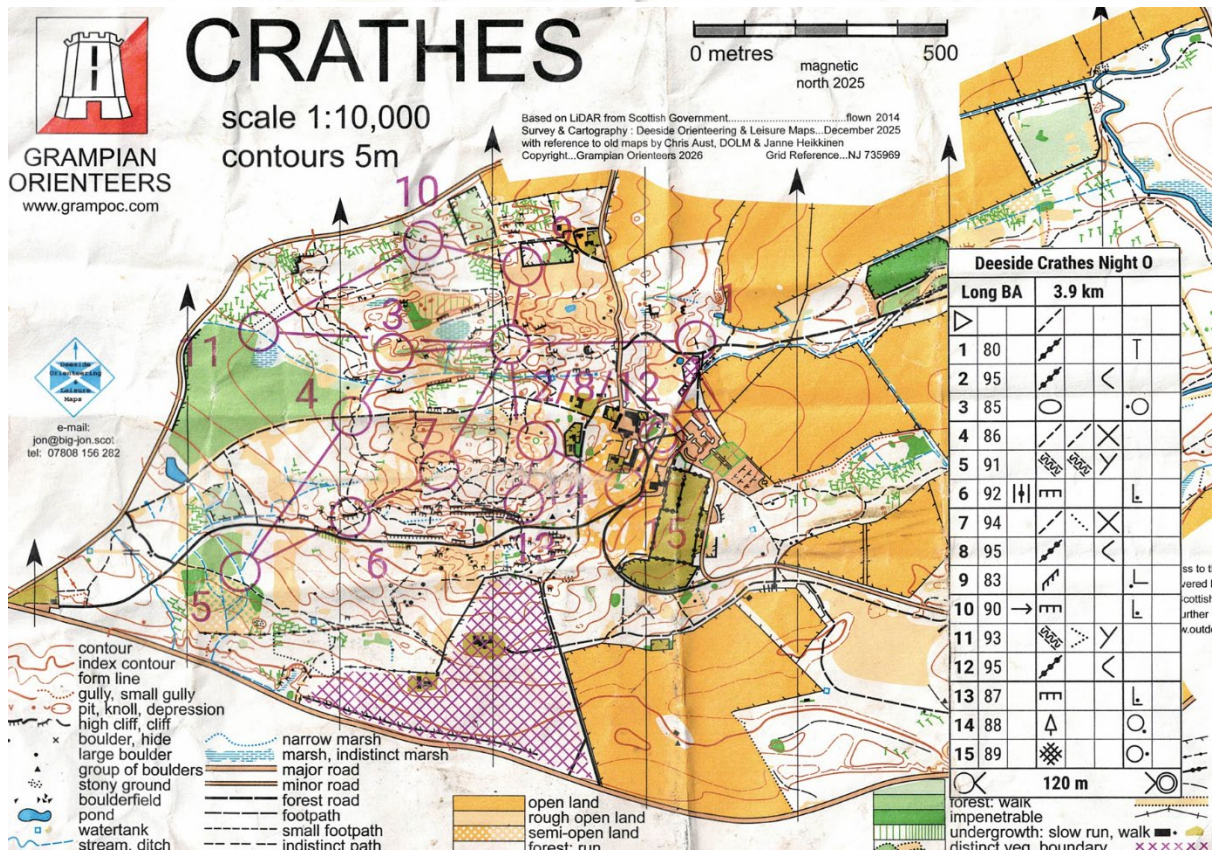
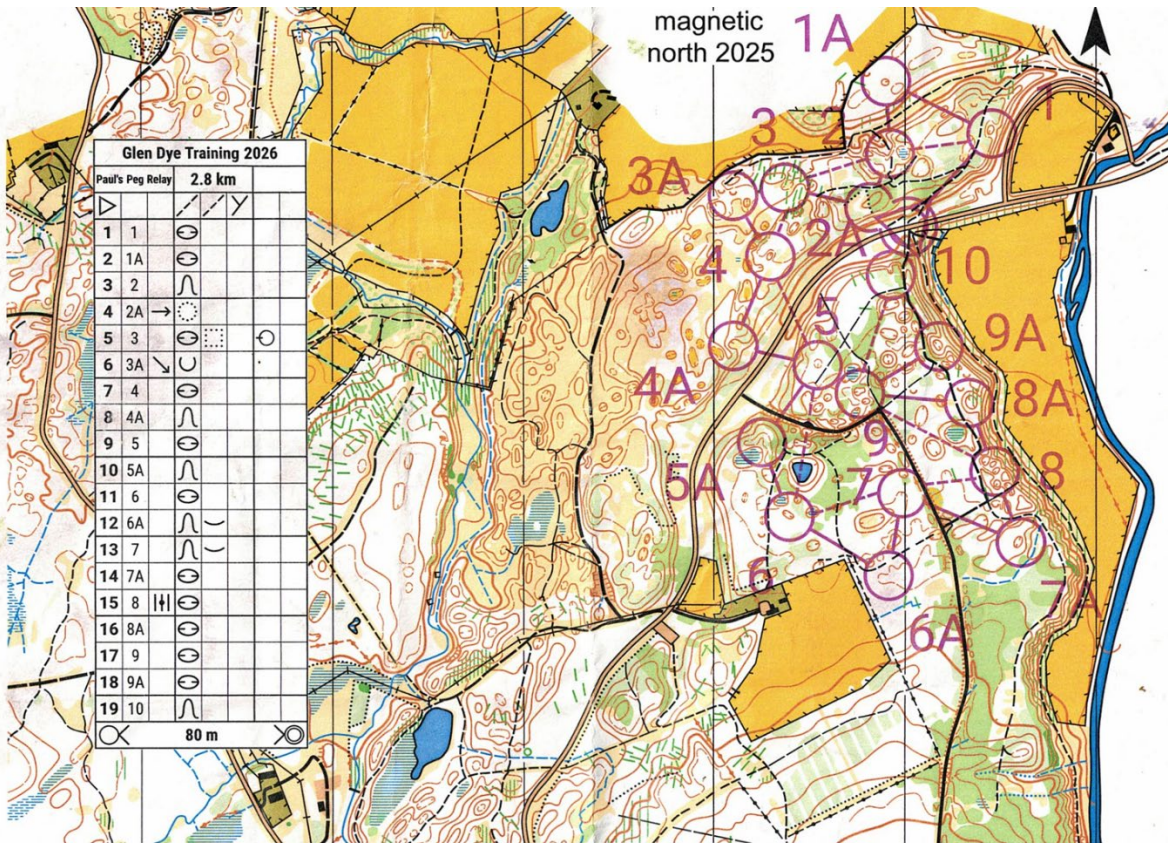
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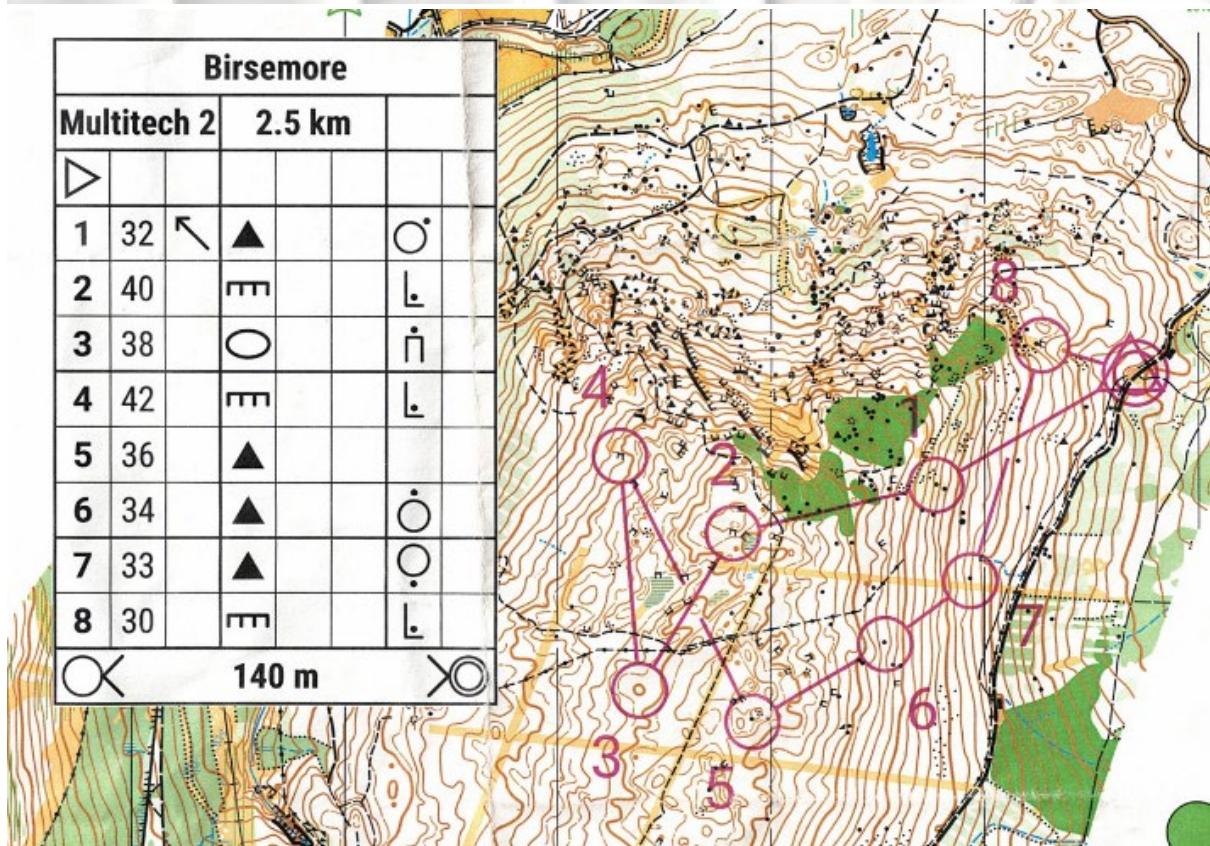
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JROS Tour Champs 2026				
Boys		5.8 km	220 m	
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1	71	∩		
2	73	∪		
3	72	⊖		
4	74	∩		
5	77	○		⊙
6	76	○		⊙
7	78	⊖		
8	79	⊖		
9	84	∇		
10	90	⚠		
11	92	∩		
12	85	▲		
13	87	∩		
14	82	∩		
15	88	▲		♀
16	91	∩		
17	80	↗▲		
		330 m	X⊙	

330 m

Glen
Dye

our
contour
line
small gully
noll, depression
cliff, cliff
ter, hide
boulder
of boulders
ground
terfield

1:10,000
Contours 5m

