



**DEESIDE ORIENTEERING
CLUB**
British Mixed Sprint Relays
Edge Hill University
16/07/2017
Officials' Comments



Organiser's Comments (Norman Hall)

Being the northern outpost of Deeside OC and having instigated the use of Edge Hill University as an event area for the club, I felt obliged to volunteer as organiser when they agreed to host the British Mixed Sprint Relays there. Not too much travelling required as I can see the University from the back garden! Obtaining permissions went very smoothly as the University welcomes the local community to its facilities. I am grateful to Martin Hall of the University Sports Centre for his help in the provision of amenities and his willingness to help wherever possible.

On the day, the Deeside helper's machine rolled smoothly into action, with little input from me they performed their roles to perfection to produce a very efficient event, even when half a dozen of them disappeared to run their relay legs others stepped in to fill the gap. My thanks go to the team of Sara, Andy, Jean, Andy P, Jane, Graham, Anna, Bob, Pat, John, Elaine, Alan, Gwynn, Meg and Steve Round (SELOC). Hope I haven't missed anyone.

Planner Pete Owens and Controller Allan Williams (WCH) must be congratulated for the courses, despite a last minute panic when the builders suddenly decided to close off another area next to the old running track, all went well.

Planner's Comments (Pete Owens)

Edge Hill Campus is a superb sprint area and will get even better when the new student accommodation is completed on the old running track. Many thanks to George Crawford-Smith for the excellent map and his work updating it for the event. A couple of building sites appeared on the area which required very late changes to the map - one just as it was about to be printed! Unfortunately this took out one of the route choices for leg 2 (men's leg 5), but at least there were other routes available.

This was the second British Mixed Sprint Relay championship following the test event at Sheffield last year, so the guidelines for the event are still under development. This year, we put all the veterans on the same course with a single mass start. This was started after the winners of the open course had finished so that everyone could spectate what proved to be an exciting race, with the lead changing hands three times. I think we should have probably started the young juniors earlier, rather than after everyone else.

I tried to split up the pack a bit by gaffling the first leg, with a route choice very soon after the start kite. This worked well for the open course, with the first leg runners carefully studying their maps before splitting 50-50. It was not so effective on the veteran courses, with the large pack mostly taking the right hand option.

Controller's Comments (Allan Williams)

For over 30 years I have driven past Edge Hill College on trips to and from the Midlands to visit my Parents in my hometown of Southport. I've seen the site grow from one building to the campus it is

It was a pleasure to spend time on this area, which offers a nice mix of building styles making every turn of a corner a surprise. The lakes force some could route choices and Pete used them well in his courses. On the first leg of the open the six runners split equally with three going left and three right. In the other classes right appeared to tempt all but six runners.

I found the organizing team from DEE easy to work with and thank SELOC for putting their sprints on a month before as they gave me the perfect opportunity to combine races with my final controlling visit.

I think we would all like to have seen a few more teams but I appreciate this event draws from as small intersection in the orienteering Venn diagram; those who like sprints AND relays. For some it was a long way to come for less than 30 minutes of exercise, so thanks to all who made the effort. Hopefully this event can find a place in the yearly programme and attract a bigger field, perhaps combined with another bigger event.

Allan Williams, Walton Chasers.