

Explanations of parts of the Route Instructions

Regularity One

Pre-plot issued an hour before your start time. Straightforward spot heights shouldn't have caused any problems as pre-plot, and generally didn't. However, two crews missed the first ITC by not departing East from the 34 spotheight. I did say "read every letter" at the briefing, so the West approach to the EOR should have made you take the next left after SH 83 and T right at Wormbridge by Trelough. The last ITC was 200yds before Trelough. I guess that's the reason four cars missed the ITC and why another seven cars had a higher than usual penalty there – realised their error as they arrived at Whitfield, and went back (quite legitimately).

Regularity Two

Plot and Bash (a few seconds). Crossing gridlines and exiting gridsquares in various forms. I'm hugely impressed that, with a few exceptions, the penalties into the first two ITC's were so small. I set the start average speed deliberately slow to allow more time for the navigators to plot, and the long B road up to Vowchurch should have helped there too. It is tricky there with the northings and eastings both the same, so well done! The area around Llanvihangel is complicated, so it is not surprising that 8 of you missed the little yellow loop (the old A465 which is now a wide yellow) near Wern Gifford and the PH symbol. After ITC5 at W322200 approx, you should have joined the A465 for about 800yds and turned left and immediately right near the 136 spotheight. This takes you up the yellow to the PH (where the RC board was) and then back down the A465 to slot left (east, now) just north of SH 136. The change of depiction of gridsquare exits (to bottom, top, left & right) was supposed to alleviate the boredom a bit – the novices were warned about it in their F.I. notes – however it appears that some experts (and a few masters) had to get the brain cells working to decipher BRT & L. The cyclists were a bit of a surprise and a pain to us as course cars, and I hope they didn't affect you competitors too much. The stories about the hedge-cutting tractor were well heard by us, and with 27 cars affected (so the marshal at R2 ITC8 reported), we felt it fairer to cancel the penalties into that control. Yes, we could have left them in and stood our ground on the principle of Force Majeure, which we would have done if only a handful or dozen cars had been affected. But when over half the field were affected, we felt it fairer to scrub it.

Regularity Three

Just one map reference to plot for a 17 mile section, so although plotting was minimal, sorting the route should have taken a little longer. The joys of the River Monnow with no bridges between Skenfrith and Pontrilas. The EOR had an approach given that forced you to use the yellow out of Ewyas Harold and past the SAS Training area, rather than the brown road to Abbey Dore, and it looks as if most of you did that at the first attempt, rather than getting to the EOR without finding the ITC.

Regularity Four

The first few miles had been given at the start to get you into the route; I didn't want you lost among those lanes with the number of houses and horses around. But you had to plot the rest of the route from leaving the A465 for the second time. Quite a maze of roads, but safe at 20mph I thought, and 8 of you missed the first (pre-plotted triangle). The RC board on the yellow/brown loop (PC4C) went missing after about car 22 – I assume it was nicked

by a member of the public without a brain, so we cancelled the PC/RC penalties there. The change from depart junctions to approach junctions was supposed to make you think a little further ahead, and I'm pleased to say that the ITC penalties did not grow as much as I feared. Well done again.

Regularity Five

One straightline diagram was pre-plotted at the Start, with the other two as plot and bash. There was a lot of astoundingly accurate speed keeping by a lot of crews into ITC's 1 and 2 here, and not just the Masters and Experts. To do that while plotting the rest of the straight-line diagrams is excellent work. Things got a little tricky when people tried to find the slot left at Audit's Bridge. The 'three ply' road (grass between to strips of asphalt) doesn't look like a proper yellow road, and the adjoining entrance through the white gate posts looks more like a private drive than a white. Finally the telephone box that is on the map was dismantled about four months ago. Can't think why I used that road and had a control within a few hundred yards..... That slot appeared to catch a good couple of dozen of you, including half the Masters. Fairly standard navigation really, but somewhat intricate in places.

Regularity Six

Plot and bash with five minutes to get you into ready-to-go mode. Clockface departs from junctions to start with took you eastwards to Mitcheldean and then north and west to Lea Bailey. The switch to approaches and departs took you west through Pontshill and almost back to where you started the section. The clockface approaches-only towards the end were again there to give a slightly different slant on the navigation. From the 'Care' T junction, you were supposed to be doing 28 mph until you left the B road at Walford Court and the final speed change to 24mph. However, despite my three route/navigation checkers finding the odd error in the six regularity routecards, they didn't spot my mistake of missing out that line of speed instruction. We were able to re-calculate the ideal time using 22mph along the B road and did not have to delete the section. Travelling along that B road at 22 mph must have raised a few eyebrows, with navigators checking the required speed more than once. But it is a nod in my direction when I stress, to those that wish to have less speed changes on the event, that all my speed changes are for road conditions rather than to be awkward.

If anybody wants more clarification on any part of the event navigation, please contact me.

Simon