

31st March 2024, JK Day 3 Beaudesert – Leianne Upton

Mud, mud glorious mud! Aptly describes the two days of JK 2024 held at Beaudesert. Rain, rain and more rain in the months, weeks and days prior to the event combined with 2500+ competitors orienteering throughout the area and controls sited by (in!!!) marshes, ensured nobody escaped the brown stuff. But still some of us came off worse than others – see below!

Having completed the middle distance on the same area the previous day, I had a pretty good idea of what lay in store but a course of over 6km is substantially longer than I am used to. This added to the aforementioned mud, the resulting difficult going and the undulating terrain, meant I was somewhat concerned that, with a late start, I might not finish before the courses closed. So somewhat trepidatiously I set off for the first control.

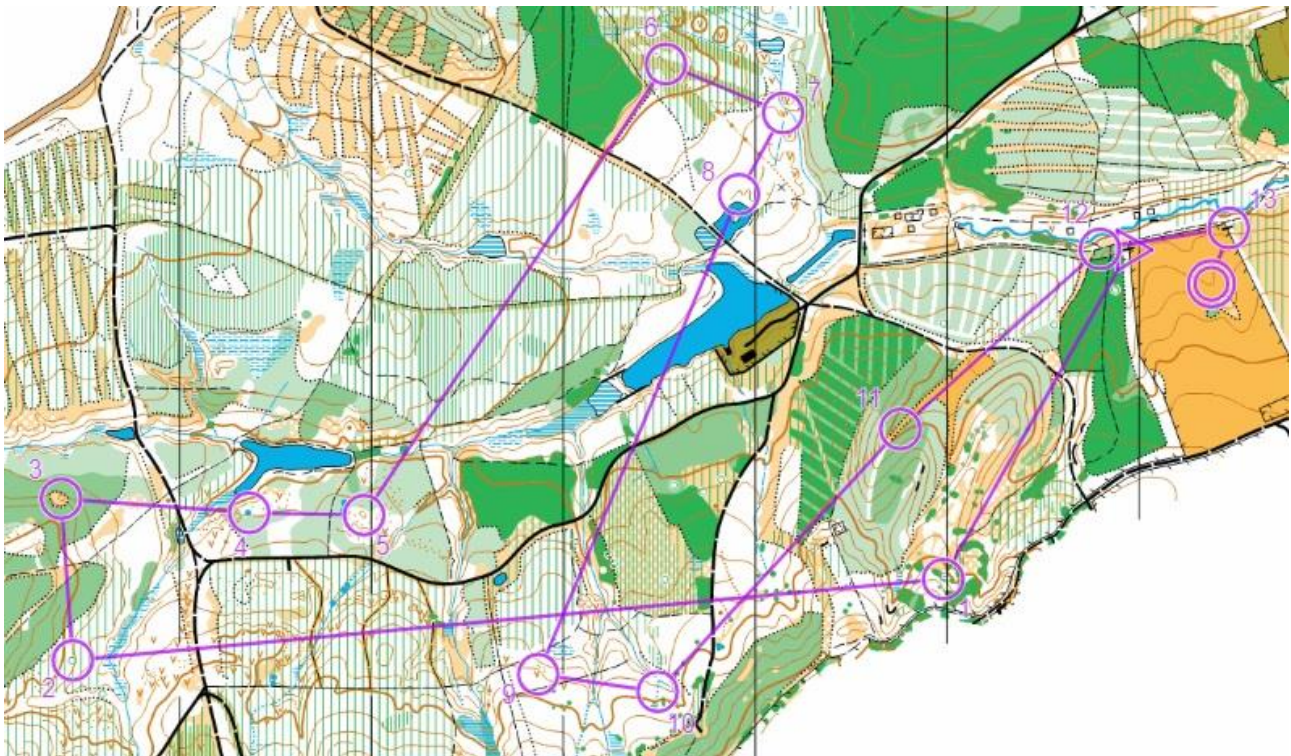
(At this point I should explain that my weekend at the JK was characterised by forgetting things. On the first sprint day, I forgot the holder for my control descriptions. On the second day, middle, I forgot my compass (resulting in a mad dash back to the tent to find it and then back to the start, where I was just in time to catch my start with 1 second to spare – phew) and on the third day (of which I now write) having remembered my control description holder and my compass, I forgot to pick up the loose controls in the start lane. Age is not being kind to me!)

Anyway, back to the first control of the long distance and I find that it is in the same direction as my first control the previous day and by now a massive brown elephant track meant the navigation to the control via the ride which led straight to it was easy but the going was not. This control actually proved quite controversial as it was sited by (definitely in!) a marsh at the top of a hill. Just getting up to it was horrendous with everyone slipping and sliding in the knee deep mud. In my effort to reach it, my right leg went deep down (above the knee) and I could not move. Luckily there were a number of lovely W60s at the control at the same time as me and we all helped pull each other out! This is going to be a long day, I thought!

Then, I looked at No. 2. I don't think I have ever had such a long control. I decided to make my way to the major path running north/south and then use the rides to get to the 4 way junction just to the east of the control. Again the navigation went well but the going was horrendous. Added to the mud and hills, there were so many people using this ride that I had to keep getting out of the way of fast moving young people who I felt breathing down my neck! Control 2 was on a distinctive fallen tree and I was grateful to find it. Total time from 1 to 2 was 27.38 minutes!

On to No. 3 and I found myself in a clearing in the dark green but could not see the control. There weren't too many tracks either – a good clue that I was in the wrong place. Saw people diverting off to the right so went to investigate and there was the control. Once finished, I realised I had been in the very small clearing almost off the map. Many stories here of folks running off the map. Including, unfortunately, one of our own moles.

Thankfully 4 and 5 were fairly straightforward. But after 5 I went north east to the stream crossing and then decided I needed to get to the bendy ride in amongst the undergrowth screening. This was a difficult decision for me as nobody else appeared to be doing so. However, I feel it paid off as it meant I could ultimately make my way to the path which led into the dark green area (again near the edge of the map) and then down past the dark green, turn left along the open area and straight into the control.



7 was easy. 8 was my only real error where I think I must have been following the stream when I thought I was following the wet ditch. I ended up too far east and relocated using the hide and pond. Getting quite tired by now but a longish run on the road at least gave my brain a rest. I didn't really spot the marsh before No. 9 (because everything around that area was pretty boggy by then!) but luckily I saw a young man pop out of a pit and he helpfully told me it was 98. Onwards to 10 which on arrival I recognised as the control I had been to the day before and had to be hauled out of the marsh by a nice man who happened to be on hand (yes – again). The control flag (which had just been a brown lump on a brown stick with a box on top the previous day) had been moved slightly further out of the marsh but it was still pretty sticky.

I knew the area from 10 to 11 as we had been there the previous day and so was grateful to find the little hill with the small fenced area behind it and thence down the valley to No 11. Running down the open area I intended to run down the vegetation boundary to the stream (as I had the day before) but there was an elephant track directly from the edge of the open area to control 12 which was a great help. Finally along the fence to No. 13. Slow down to enable enough breath/energy before the nasty uphill finish. Phew. Finished!

My total time was 110 minutes. Which is an awfully long time but I was glad to have completed it without making any major mistakes and before the courses closed.

Lots of chat afterwards about the area and its suitability for a major event! The club WhatsApp group is great for sharing stories and photos after events. Do join it if you have not already. Just contact Tim Scarbrough or Mike Bolton.

Day 3 results can be found [here](#)



*Leianne on the run in,
photo credit Tim
Scarbrough*