

Orienteering Event Formats – Long Distance Orienteering

Orienteering courses have a number of formats, strictly these are

1. Long Distance – uses bush or forest maps
2. Middle Distance – uses bush and forest maps
3. Sprint Distance – mostly urban, sometimes forest, now includes Knockout Sprint
4. Relay
 - a. Forest relays
 - b. Sprint relay

Appendix 8 in the Orienteering Foot Rules discusses the features of the various formats.

South Australian events follow the above, but we have variations. For example urban events vary from the above, being often Middle Distance length but less technical (Twilight Series for example), and some forest events are shorter than typical long distance but use that style.

This article focuses on Middle Distance courses. As for the article on Long Distance orienteering, these comments apply specifically to Hard Navigation courses, and less so to moderate. Because of the nature of Easy and Very Easy courses, the format of these is similar for all orienteering event formats.

Middle Distance Orienteering summary

1. Focus on technical challenge, good short legs are vital
2. Hence maps generally have significant areas of complex detail
3. Emphasis is on detailed navigation
4. Requires constant concentration on map reading
5. Frequent changes in running direction out from controls
6. Changes in speed through varied terrain types
7. May have “medium” legs or a longer leg
8. Small and medium scale route choice e.g. on the medium to longer legs
9. Controls themselves are technical
10. Map scale is commonly 1:10,000 scale (map is a strict enlargement of a 1:15 000 scale map)
11. Map scale 1:7,500 for older age groups
12. Winning times all Hard and Moderate Navigation courses are 25 – 35 minutes, target should be 30 minutes.
13. Courses have more controls per km than Long Distance orienteering in order to achieve the above attributes

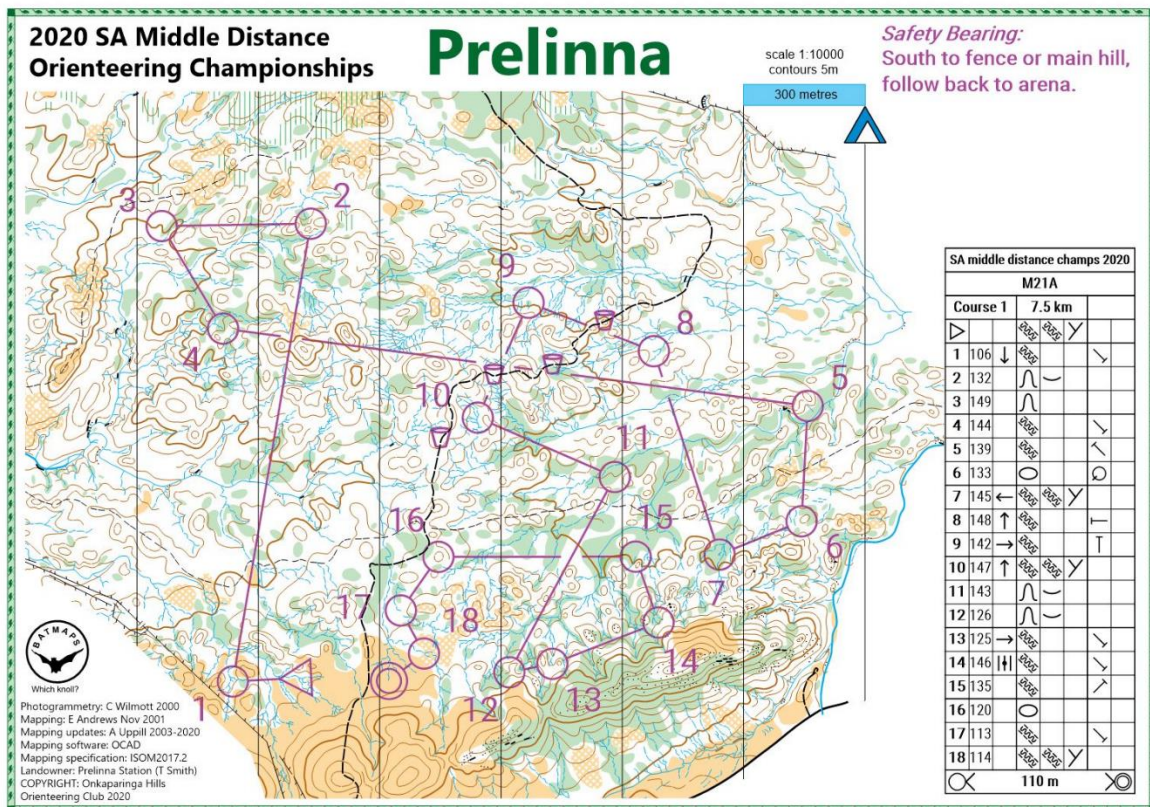
As for Long Distance Orienteering, Middle Distance courses should consider the physical abilities of those doing these courses and avoid the more physically difficult terrain and control sites for older age groups. However course planners need to pay attention to all the Hard and Moderate courses planned to ensure that all achieve the above attributes. Avoid focusing on the longer courses only and then just joining a few controls for the shorter ones, without considering whether the shorter courses meets Middle Distance format requirements.

Courses that are a “circle” or large loop with many legs of similar distance will not offer some of the important attributes above e.g. changes in running direction, good short legs with some medium and longer legs. With SPORTIdent, having crossing over legs and assist in achieving many direction changes on a course.

Moderate courses will follow the same principles as above but use less technical controls and less technical areas of the map. Principles of Moderate Navigation courses need to be considered e.g. good attack points, catching features behind the control, and options to use linear features as longer routes on some legs.

The above are best illustrated by various examples

1. SA Middle Distance Championships 2020 – Prelinna - This course had longer legs than often used on Middle Distance courses but these legs required 100% concentration for the whole leg. The course also met the requirements by having
 - a. Technical orienteering
 - b. Concentration required for most of the course
 - c. Direction changes at controls
 - d. Varied legs
 - e. Generally small – micro route choice options

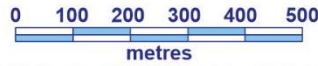


2. SA Middle Distance Championships Wirra Wirra 2019. This example course offers
 - a. Technical orienteering
 - b. Concentration required for most of the course
 - c. Direction changes at controls
 - d. Varied legs, including some longer legs with more route choice
 - e. Navigational accuracy required close to the controls

2019 SA Middle Distance Championships WIRRA WIRRA

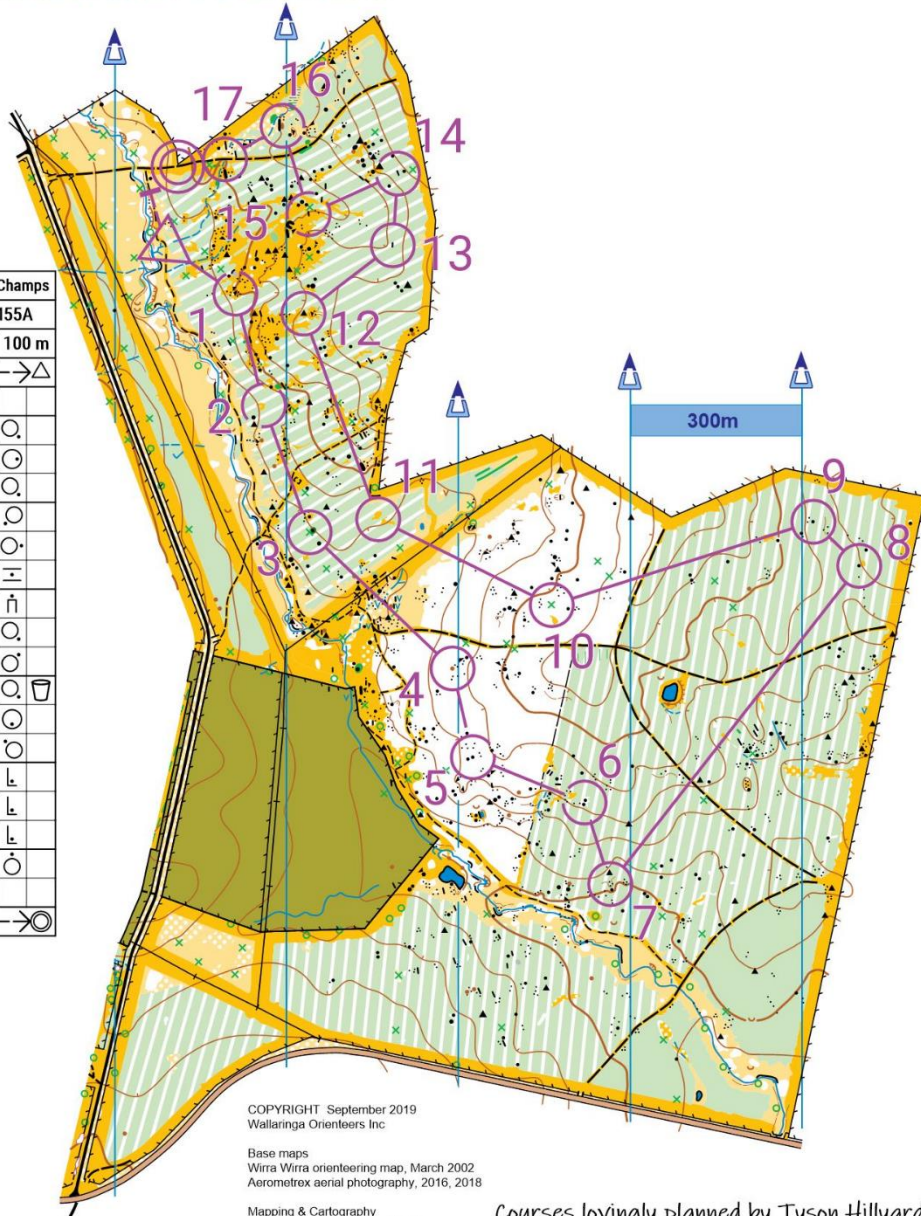


Scale 1: 10000
Contour Interval 5m



SAFETY BEARING: WEST TO DIRT ROAD

2019 SA Middle Distance Champs				
W20A, W35A, M16A, M55A				
	4	4.4 km	100 m	
100 m				
1	110	↓	8x5	○
2	113	⊙	8x15	○
3	124	⊗		○
4	123	•	1.0	○
5	122	→	1.2	○
6	147	▲▲	1.3 / 1.2	○
7	137	⊥▲	1.0	○
8	117	▲	1.0	○
9	145	▲	1.0	○
10	114	⊗		○
11	143	↑	18x9	○
12	144	▲	1.0	○
13	129	⊥	2.0	⊥
14	112	⊥	1.3	⊥
15	130	⊥	0.8	⊥
16	127	•	2.5	○
17	109	⊥		○

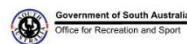


COPYRIGHT September 2019
Wallaringa Orienteers Inc

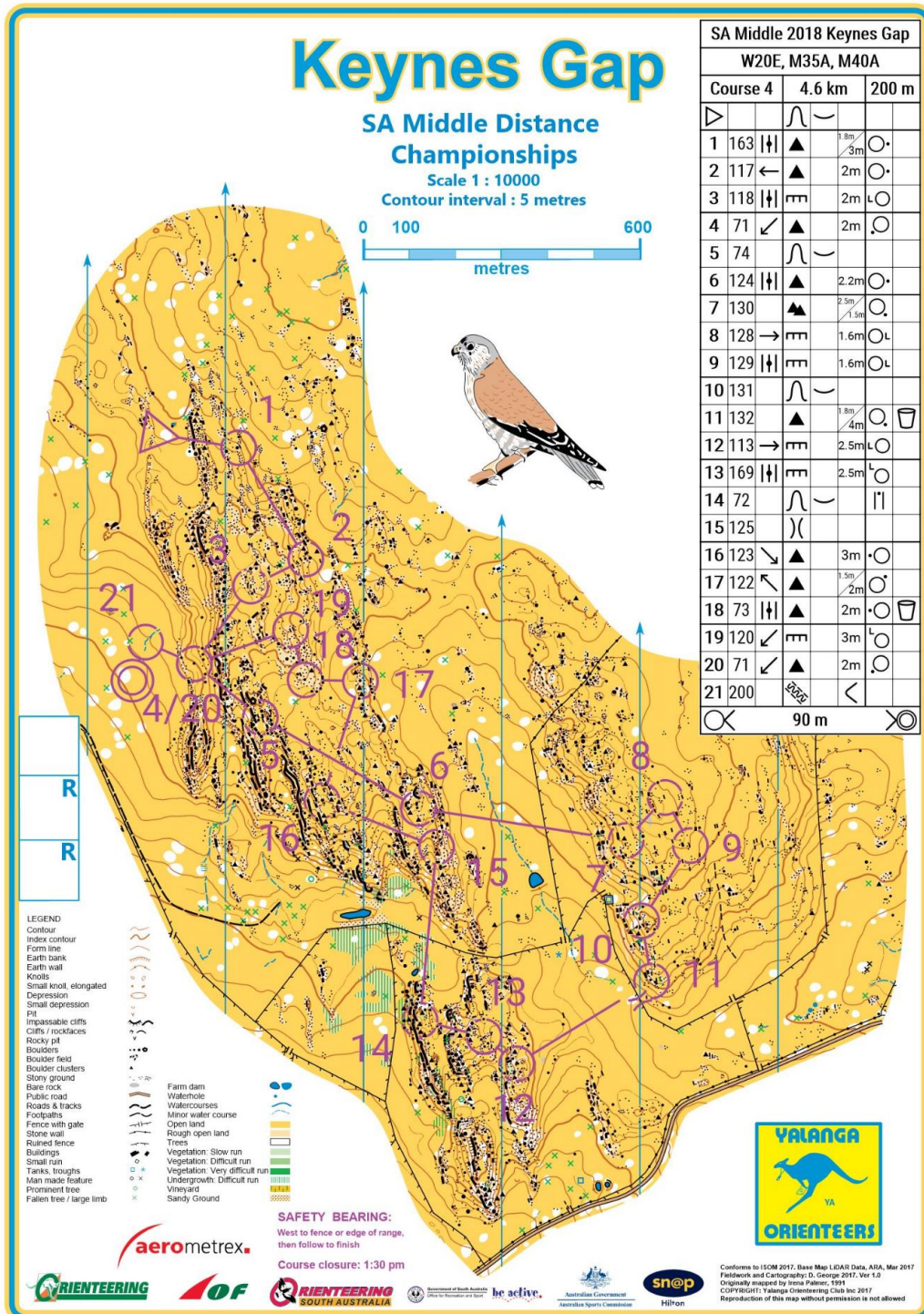
Base maps
Wirra Wirra orienteering map, March 2002
Aerometrex aerial photography, 2016, 2018

Mapping & Cartography
East part: AO Uppill, March 2017
West part update: S Raus, March 2017
Conversion to ISOM 2017 and
updates: A Uppill, March 2018
T Hillyard September 2019

Courses lovingly planned by Tyson Hillyard

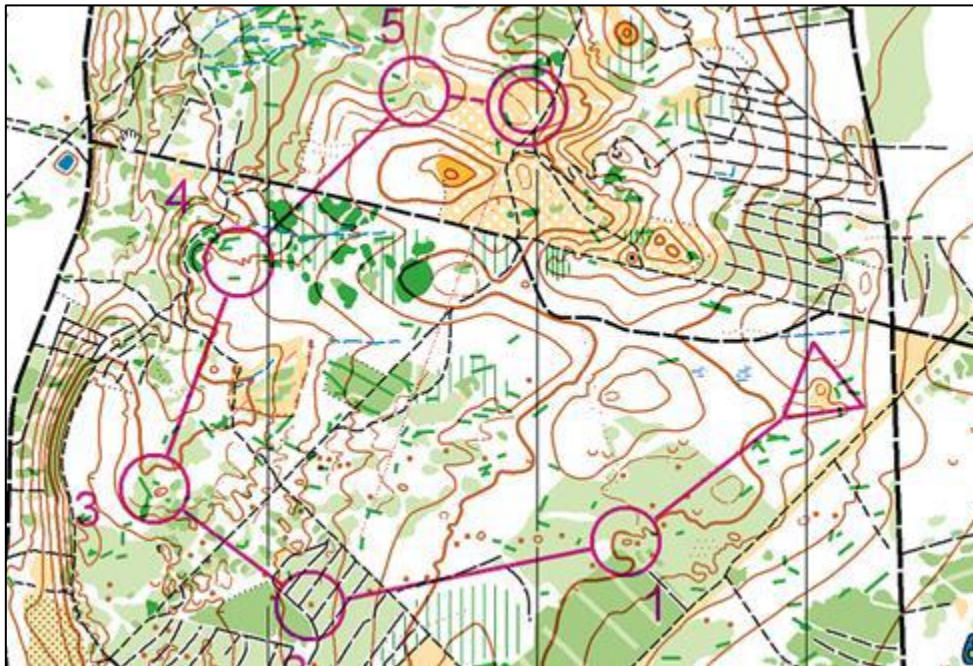


3. Keynes Gap SA Middle Distance 2018. This course also shows the same feature as the above example, and also offered a spectator control making use of the terrain above the assembly area



4. Examples that do not fully meet the requirements
 - a. European Example –

- i. Insufficient change in angle.
- ii. Insufficient difference in length of legs.
- iii. Note that the single legs may be acceptable, but the course is not



b. Spur Gully Example = Length 4.2 km

- i. Meets some requirements – various leg length
- ii. Limited changes in direction e.g. controls 6 – 9 are all in the same direction
- iii. Could have made better use of the more technical areas of the map

