

MTBO – Coombs Wood Saturday 8th March 2014

Summary for those who can't be bothered to read everything:

- No toilets
- Park yourself on roadside NY514450
- Map 1:7500 5m contours A4 – Course A has two parts
- Starts 1200 to 1330, Courses close 1530
- SPORTident Air+ touch-free punching system; keep riding past the finish flag
- Codes on the stations are just the last two digits e.g. map 121 = station 21
- Area very steep in places, don't kill yourself; observe OOB areas
- Stick to marked paths, no cutting through the forest

There will be no toilets at the event, and I am led to believe there are no public toilets in Armathwaite either.

Parking will be by the side of the road at NY514450. It will be "Orienteering" signed from the bridge over the River Eden in Armathwaite, most of you will be approaching from this direction. Please park yourself and be tidy and sensible. Most of the verge is firm but some places are quite soft so please inspect before driving on. There are about 10-15 places in various lay-bys which are gravel – first come first served! Registration and download will be in my white Peugeot Van which will be suitably adorned with o-signs and will [hopefully] be parked in the closest lay-by to the grid ref. Start/Finish are right next to this lay-by.

Warm up is on the road, please do not enter the woods before starting the course. Starts 12 midday until 1.30pm. Courses close 3.30pm at which point controls will start being collected – please come back to the finish if you are still out by then so we don't send out a search party.

The event is using the new SPORTident Air+ touch-free punching system. Please read all the info on this below. When you are ready to start, come to the van and get issued with your card and frame mount, then proceed directly to the start. Once you have finished come directly back to the van and hand it back to download. If you remember only one thing about the system remember to keep riding past the finish, do not stop at the finish line.

Note the codes on the SPORTident stations are just the last two digits compared to the codes on the map. So for example if you are looking for control 121 it will be actually labelled 21. All are in the range 121-149 so labelled 21-49.

Coombs Wood is very steep in places, some tracks go straight up/down and some have exposed drops to one side. The most dangerous tracks have been marked out of bounds on the map, and the courses planned to avoid these areas. If downhill MTB tracks are your thing, after you have competed ask me and I will show you where the best ones are! But while competing please observe the out of bounds. The road is also out of bounds while competing and not a sensible route choice anyway. There is one path early on during the A and B courses which is a blind steep drop – there is an exclamation mark on the map near it and there will be a sign on a tree above it; it can be avoided

by going around only a short distance (it is suggested you do so, it really is steep). Please ride within yourself and dismount if necessary. Approved cycle helmets are compulsory – no caving, canoeing etc helmets please.

For those new to MTBO and a reminder for those who are not – when meeting other riders you should act akin to driving a car on the road. So keep left when for oncoming riders, overtake on the right when clear to do so, give way when joining larger paths from smaller ones.

This is the first time Coombs Wood has been used for any cycling event, not just MTBO. Please be courteous and respectful of other users – we would like to come back!

The map has been updated to MTBO standards from the existing foot-O map. It is 1:7500, 5m contours and A4. Course A will have two parts on separate pieces of paper – these will be both given out at the start.

The “Difficult to ride” paths are all just about rideable (not allowing for contours!) – the main difference with these over the “slow riding” paths is encroaching vegetation. Off the forest roads most riding in Coombs Wood is quite slow anyway so expect to use these paths. Please stick to marked paths and do not cut through the forest.

There are a handful of fallen trees across paths from the recent storms which may or may not be removed by the Forestry Commission by the time of the event – they are not mapped and don’t really affect route choice.

Deciding which little paths to put on the map and which to leave off has been difficult. There are old extraction lanes, downhill MTB tracks which never really got established, deer runs etc. Basically if the track looks like it is used reasonably regularly by humans it is on the map, otherwise it is not.

Coombs Wood is covered in small crags and small boulders, these are all unmapped as they wouldn’t help for MTBO as they are so many in number – the crags that are on the map are all > 20m high and you shouldn’t actually be near enough any of these to see them.

Because the map is based on an ageing foot-O map rather than being all new, some rough open areas which are young trees aren’t so young any more, but are still distinguishable from mature woodland.

Any foot orienteers, or others competing at MTBO for the first time who aren't sure about the map symbols can come and ask at registration. I have a couple of maps of different areas I can show you.

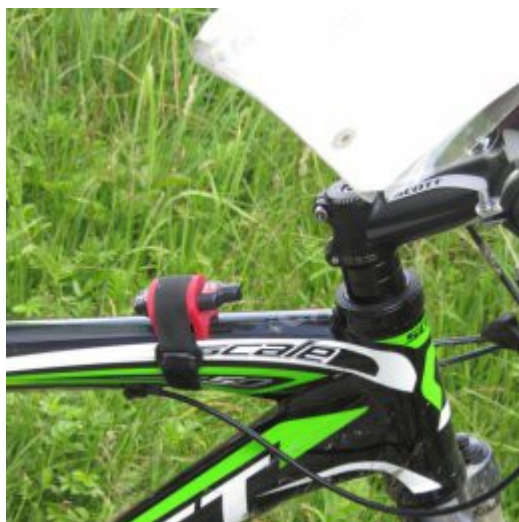
Coombs Wood is a working forest and we are told no harvesting is planned, but please obey any Forestry signs.

Entry on the day is available – just come to the van. Before the event please make sure you join BMBO for 2014 as at least an associate member (free!), print out your membership card and bring it along – www.bmbo.org.uk

SPORTident Air+ Guide

Air+ is the brand new touch-free punching system from SPORTident. The cards – named SiAC (SPORTident Active Card) are fairly similar in shape and size to their predecessors, just a bit fatter in the body. They can be used in the classic way with existing stations (firmware allowing) or with the new beacon stations as touch-free. They will shortly be available for purchase from SPORTident UK circa £60 and may well make sense to get one if you are looking to buy a new SI-Card anyway. For this event SPORTident UK are kindly loaning all kit including the SiACs free of charge.

As there is no need to manually punch anywhere the SiACs will be mounted on the frame with the appropriate SPORTident holder as per the photo. There will be a demo bike at the event which will show you how to mount the SiAC and help will be available. Please only come to registration to collect your SiAC when you are ready to go to the start.



The SiAC needs the familiar Clear/Check process, but the Check also turns the radio on. Both of these will be done for you as part of the registration process. When the radio is running the tip of the card will flash green periodically, although it can be difficult to see in bright sunlight. Please check yours is doing this after registration.

When you pass a start, control or finish the tip of the card will flash red a few times and beep at you. The station will do nothing.

The start and finish will not beep/flash until after you have passed them, this is a function of the “timing mode” gaining the most accurate time for you passing, the beeps merely confirm the process has finished rather than at the point the timing was taken. This means you must ride past the start and finish rather than stop at them. The start station will be located a few metres forward from where you actually start so this should be obvious to just ride straight past. But at the finish you can and should ride past it at full speed and only when you have received the beep/flash back off and ride straight to download. Do not stop at the flag as you will not get a beep/flash and your time may not stop!

The controls out on course will beep/flash as soon as you are in range – 1.2m. So if you are wanting to turn around and go the other way rather than ride past you just need to get within this distance of the flag, which in practice is still fairly close. The beacons we are using are specifically for MTBO and Ski-O with a longer range than for foot-O (60cm), essentially so that the proximity you have to be to the flag is appropriate for the size of your transport.

If you pass another control (or start again) which isn't the one you're going for it will beep/flash and record your visit there but as long as you do all the controls you are supposed to in the correct order it doesn't matter how many "extras" you get. They will show on your splits printout as extras.