

# Pointers for rogaïne event planning/check point placement

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## Overall course planning

Good to select likely CP locations directly on the map/Google Earth before going into the field. This helps in getting a good spread and ensuring all interesting terrain features are included in the course. Actual CP locations are then trimmed up in the field – sometimes quite major changes are made.

Try to ensure no 'best route' (that all teams may follow) – set this up particularly right from the start, so that teams do not all start towards the same first few check points. (in practice an even split in two directions is not too bad for a start point on the map edge. No 'best route' is achieved through a mixture of CP placement, and score allocations.

## Field planning

Note areas of impenetrable scrub, dangerous gorges, impassable and scrub-filled streams and mark up the map. These should be marked by bold Xs or OOB on the competition map.

Ideally every CP should be approachable in macroscale (not microscale) from all directions (i.e. from all other CPs). Not always possible or even sensible. Teams should not have to search for them (i.e. not hidden or cryptic). If you navigate to the near proximity, you should be able to see them from a few tens of metres \*distant, from the likely approach points. In practice this can be tricky and not always possible. In an open landscape like St James, the navigational challenge is less than in 'smaller scale' topography, and check points can sometimes be seen from too far away. It is therefore OK to slightly conceal them e.g. behind a matagouri bush, in a patch of trees/scrub/tall tussock or tucked into a rocky area or in the bottom of a tight gully so that they are visible from a few tens of metres. (May need to advise teams of this at the start.)

\*NZ and international rules from 24 champs events, say 40m, but this is not essential for informal events.

Think about how you would attack the CP location (is it fair) and make sure it is reasonably unique. Avoid locations which in all probability would require a grid search to find the CP.

## Using the GPS

The GPS is used to log the grid ref only after the CP location has been visually selected and described (almost as an afterthought). This is because the map is the guide for planners as well as participants. A GPS location is just a confirmatory check and for confirming/doublechecking the CP location on the map. While at the site, precisely dot and circle the location on the map, do not rely using on the grid ref in isolation of field features later.

## Describing the CP location (clue sheet)

Typical point/site features include rock outcrop, gully, vegetation feature, hilltop, saddle etc. Linear features include streams (e.g. distinctive bend) junctions of track/stream/fence etc

- a tree, a gully etc means the feature is not discernable on the map.
- The tree, the gully etc is discernable on the map (contours, symbols etc)
- If there are multiple similar features in the circle (or even outside if identification is difficult and it is difficult to navigate into the circle) and the feature is an "a" then identify which one. e.g., 'middle', 'east'. Knolls, trees, rock outcrops or even small

gullies could fall into this category. Think about how people will identify the exact point without a grid search. Particularly important if the flag is hung low (maybe in matagouri) so that passing it on the wrong side of a bush may mean it is not seen.

### Setting up a check point in the field

- Having chosen a site, assess it from different approach points wrt visibility, access etc
- Make sure the micro-location doesn't expose the flags to strong winds as it may be in place for up to 2 weeks before the event. Have in mind how the flag will be hung and note it with the description so the person placing flags is not surprised to find nowhere to hang it.
- Pinpoint the location on the map and visually ensure map location is entirely consistent with the field location. Mark it on the map. Ensure that the circle centre will be at or very close to the actual CP location.
- Describe the check point in brief words as they appear on the 'clue sheet'; also describe it more fully to guide whoever does CP placement and recovery.
- Only then get a GPS grid ref. If you have topo maps on the GPS check visually it is correct. If you don't have maps, do a credibility check that the grid ref sits correctly on the map location.
- Place marker tape for relocation and maybe take location pics to assist the flag placer.
- To label your field work, a good way is to use your initials then a sequential number – avoids problems of different people's work later. e.g. GH01, GH02 etc.

### Final placement (placing flag and punch device)

- Timing: may be done 1-2 weekend prior to event to a few days before depending on distance to and size of event )
- In most cases I've seen, the position of the tape looks fine for the flags, but just check a few metres around you for improved micro-placement, esp wrt visibility and wind protection.
- Should be easily visible from 20-40 metres away from all likely approach directions (as far as possible – not always practical)
- ...But as far as possible, not visible from 100s of metres away. If this is a problem, may tuck it behind a bush or rock outcrop, but do not turn this into a search process for teams. In such case include a micro-clue in the description, e.g., "the saddle ...25 SW of"; the "northern-most rock outcrop".
- Presume gusty NWers before the event. Seek micro shelter, tie down the flag with twine. (watch out for it twisting around itself – no looseness). Carry a few fibreglass poles but only use if necessary.
- Check placement wrt map features for the final time.
- Place flag, Navlight device (or punch, and next-destination sheet if used). Double check before you leave that you've fixed the correctly numbered Navlight device or punch – nothing worse than discovering as you place the final one its number does not match with the map.
- Re-check wording of description sheet, and don't hesitate to fine-tune this - minimise ambiguity, maximise clarity.
- Remove survey tape
- Don't leave any bits lying in the grass – could be a long walk back.
- Look around behind you as you move on – everything honky-dory?

### What if...

- If the marker tape has disappeared from the spot or cannot be found (which could mean you are in the wrong place) 'reconstruct' the site as appropriate, including

recompiling the description, and recording the grid ref and comparing with the original.

- If you need to substantively relocate a check point (on reflection, found to be unsuitable for any reason), mark the new location carefully on the map, record its grid ref for confirmation, and make a CP description (as for the initial placement).

### **Carry with you:**

Flags, twine, knife/scissors  
Navlight device or punch  
(next-destination sheet, if used)  
Say 5 Fibreglass poles  
Event map  
CP descriptions (team version plus long version) and pencil  
Preferably also a GPS

### **Allocating scores**

- Can use 10s up to 100s. I rarely use 10s as they are hardly worth approaching, though can be good to use along some routes to gather a few extra points without diverting too far. Usually use several each of 20s through to 100s. While it can be helpful and fun to assign notional scores during field planning, (e.g. to pick the 100 pointers, or the low scorers) the main scoring effort is best done with the draft map after field work.
- Have some high-scoring CPs relatively close to the start (e.g. no more than half way out on the course) so that 'beginner teams' have the satisfaction of a rewarding score for their efforts.
- Have some high score CPs on the most attractive/appealing features (e.g. look out points, fault traces, nice patches of bush features to help lure teams to the best the area has to offer.