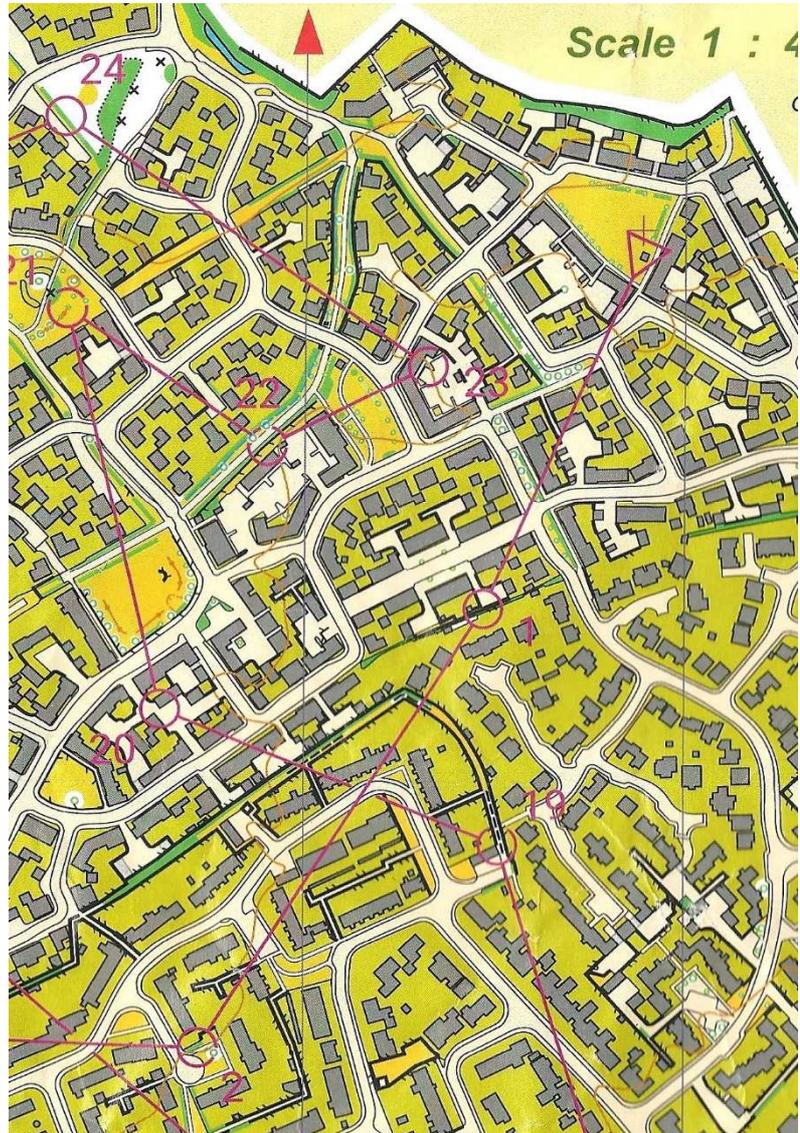


## KEEP CALNE AND CARRY ON!

Ian Byrne recently ran the urban orienteering event in Calne, Wiltshire, hosted by North Wiltshire Orienteers. Here are three lessons he learned while running in the 28°C heat.

### 1. Long Straight legs may not be as long as you think

I had picked up the map and was off. For once, I even knew where to find the start triangle on the map, so could concentrate on the first leg. This was a long straight leg, with an apparently uncrossable green lane traversing it – probably representing the boundary between the newest housing, where we had started, and older estates. The best route was clearly West, then turning South about 100m before the control. In the heat it was a bit of a slog, but after 3½ minutes I pressed my Emit brick into the seat, observing the quick red flash with satisfaction. Now where was control 2? Urghh, I see a problem. *This* is control 2 (I had reoriented the map so the numbers were no longer upside down). So where was control 1? Back towards the start, slap in the middle of that long straight. Brief thoughts of abandoning the run were banished – after all I had driven two hours to get to Calne! As occasionally happens, the error meant that although I was by more than 3 minutes the slowest on control 1, I was – by 2 seconds – the fastest on control 2, as I knew exactly where to go!



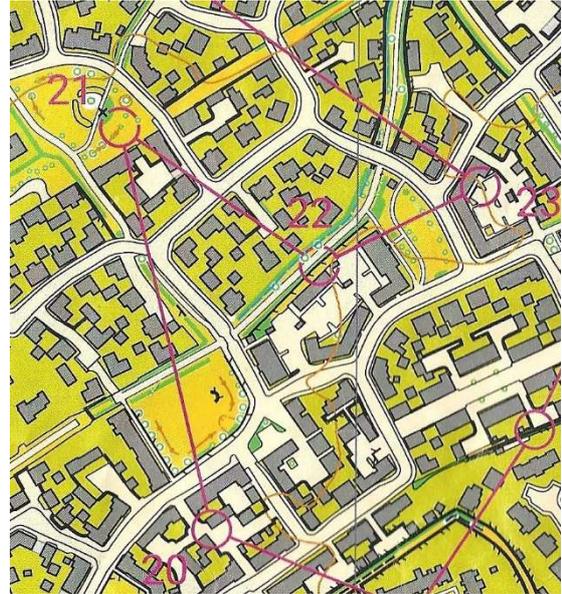
KEEP  
CALNE  
AND  
CARRY  
ON

There are several lessons here, really. One is to look especially hard at long straight legs; the number “1” was well hidden by a building, but I should have spotted the control circle, and very slight kink in the red line. Another is that there is no more point giving up if you mess up the first control, than if you mess up the last one: the time lost doesn’t multiply itself just because it’s at the start, and there can be a perverse satisfaction if the results show you steadily climbing back through the field (from 21<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>). And the third is to remember what Eric Morecambe might have said to Andrew Preview (*sic*) about visiting all the controls, but not necessarily in the right order.

The other two lessons came at the end of the run, when everyone was tired and exhausted.

## 2. Check the control description when it is on a long linear feature accessible from both sides

This was a classic trap laid by the planner for tired orienteers. Leg 21 to 22 looked straightforward, if you ignore the obvious temptation to follow the red line into the cul-de-sac. But control 22 was on a long uncrossable hedge, and the control circle wasn't very helpful as to which side. With SI Air, it might not matter too much as it was likely the dibber would register the control from either side but we were using Emit, which is a tougher master. The control description was clear – the control was on the Southeast side, presumably accessed from the grass by the buildings, not from the path. And for once, I got this right, but it took a degree of confidence to find the narrow gap to the right of the electricity substation in the photo, rather than to run down that nice tempting path. And as the second photo shows, that hedge could not be crossed if you hadn't read the control descriptions.



## 3. Planners sometimes like to have the last laugh

Almost done now – I could soon stop hallucinating about a glass of water! But the planner had one last trick up his sleeve. Control 24

to finish is easy – come out of the wood and run West to the crossable fence.

Except the crossable fence was crossable in theory only, as at the end of an 8k run I'm not going to climb over one that must have been 4 feet tall! Luckily there was a gap about 30m North, but I can just see his evil smile when he planned that leg!

Of course, the real lesson is **KEEP CALME AND CARRY ON!**

