

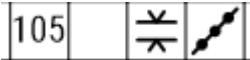
Protest at Harwich Urban 21/5/23

Jury: Clive Wilkinson, Mike Bickle, Alan Rosen (Chair)

The jury has met to consider control 105 which was visited by courses 1 to 5. It was located in a tunnel in Beacon Hill Fort.

Did the control meet Rule 23.2? (*The control banner must be hung at the feature indicated on the map in accordance with the control description. The control banner must be visible to the competitors when they see the described position.*)

The control was positioned correctly on the feature indicated on the map.

The control description didn't describe which wall or side.  However, that didn't make finding the control harder.

The jury concluded that the lack of visibility of the flag caused problems for some competitors.

The final details said: *Some controls have been placed in tunnels, but have only been placed at points where they can be seen using natural light.* This may have encouraged some competitors not to spend time searching in darker areas.

The jury therefore confirm that the siting of 105 did not meet Rule 23.2.

Consideration of the problem (BOF Rules, Appendix A Event Systems 5.2)

The jury noted that the problem affected several competitors although we are aware of some with longer splits whose difficulty was not in the circle but caused, for example, by looking on the track above the tunnel. Nevertheless, some competitors including the complainant, did lose significant time in the control circle.

Action to be taken

The jury has considered at length the pros and cons of voiding the various legs leading to 105. Most places would be unaffected but a small number of competitors in the higher places would move up or down a place. This might 'reward' someone who had made an error on the leg as described above. In other words, voiding the legs might remove one source of unfairness but introduce another.

The event attracts BOF Ranking points and points for four Leagues. BOF Ranking points are based on time and therefore a small number of competitors affected by the control will get fewer points than if the leg was voided. The League events are based on position; looking at the splits, a small number of competitors would be affected but typically by only one point either way.

Recommendations

The jury therefore agree that the results should stand while acknowledging that there was a degree of unfairness for some competitors with control 105.

The problem arose in the Beacon Hill Fort area with the 1:2500 section of map. This was much more complex than the rest of the map and enhanced the event. We recommend that the organising club take steps to ensure that, should the Fort be used again, the Planner and Controller are made aware of this event's issue.