

Burpham & Merrow Street O - Organiser's report

Thank you to everyone for coming, particularly those who travelled from far afield, I hope you all found it worthwhile and gained lots of enjoyment from the event.

Unfortunately, there appeared to be some glitches with the results but I understand the problems were understood by my colleagues with more technical expertise than I and hopefully being resolved. I want to say to those that were experiencing a MapRun Street O for the first time that this is not a normal occurrence and very much hope it doesn't put anyone off from coming to a future event.

My thanks also to our good friends at Guildford Orienteers for allowing us to intrude on their area and I was delighted to see more of their members giving our Street event a go.

I chose Burpham & Merrow as a venue for several reasons. I took part on GO's urban event in 2025 and recognised it to be an ideal area for part of our Street O series. Although we hadn't strayed this far west before, I was pleased with the turn out and hope one day we will be allowed to return. The intricate road and path network within some of the estates on offer was just too enticing to ignore, although I accept a score event doesn't necessarily enable the network to be exploited to its fullest potential. Lastly, how could I ignore the ford? I can't think of anywhere else in our region (*happy to be corrected*) where a ford remains as part of the road network and hat's off to those that literally took the plunge!

Talking of which, MV have been trying to urge more Street event competitors to "dip their toes" into forest events. My contribution towards that aim, albeit diminutive, was to use the new innovation provided by MapRun, that gives the planner the freedom to use control sites that no longer require a written answer. It opens up a whole new selection of sites for the planner to use. So using sites like "middle tree", "westernmost tree," or "south end of fence", descriptions that occur more frequently on forest events, I hoped would be a way of introducing these terms to Street O regulars.

Because I enlarged the scale to provide more clarity within the more complex areas I had to add distance by increasing the usual number of controls. As a result there was probably more dead-end running than I like. I prefer to provide a run that flows through the controls albeit in a complex pattern, but this was done again to add distance. Regarding the paths within the large open area that I deemed unusable. I was going to use them and had the event been run entirely in daylight I probably would have kept them in as it could have provided some interesting route choices. I did actually navigate around them in the dark but many were unsurfaced and not entirely visible with a head torch, so I decided they would be an adventure too far for the novices.

Accepting the route choice was immense, in the end, if you had the wit of Einstein and the stamina of a horse, my "shortest" course of 15.5km would be: 10, 30 (via paths), 21, 50 (via paths), 20, 40, 31 (via path parallel to green area), 11, 55, 23, 51, 12 (via the park), 24, 33, 42, 53 (via the paths alongside the stream), 15, 43 (via the driveway north of 15), 34, 16, 44, 29 (via a diagonal run across the open area), 35, 22, 52, 45, 32, 18, 41, 25 (via the footpath under the railway), 14, 39, 17, 58, 38 (across the open area), 56, 47, 19, 49, 48 (via nice long path), 57, 37 (via the "permitted" path alongside the NW edge of the open area), 54, 27, 46, 28, 59 (via the recreation field), 36, back under the railway to 26 and 13.

As I write, results are not clear for the reasons given above so I can't congratulate particular individuals but well done to everyone for taking part, especially our newcomers, for navigating round a fairly technical, challenging course. We love to see you all and it makes the effort put in to provide the fun all the more satisfying.

My thanks to Julie and all the staff at the Anchor & Horseshoes for accommodating us and making us all feel so welcome. Also Justin for putting up with my ineptitude at times, for his patience and help and of course for producing all the maps again.

David Fisher, Organiser

