

Lagganlia training camp diary – by Hebe Darwin

Saturday

Waking up at 5.30am was not fun, but it was worth it. There were planned engineering works on the East-coast main line, so Taylor and I were dropped at Milton Keynes. We waited anxiously for the train from London Euston. It was 15mins late. This was a problem, because we had a tight connection at Preston (7 minutes). Both trains were late, so we could have got the connection, except that it was full! Then, it stayed there for another 15mins because there was no guard. We waited 50 minutes for the next train to Edinburgh and got off at Haymarket. We waved to Dan and the WCOC and YHOAJ's juniors, to come down, because our next train was leaving soon. They told us to come up, and by the time we had told them the situation, the next train to Aviemore was pulling out of the station. The next trains were cancelled because someone was hit by a train further down the track, so we had to wait two hours in Haymarket with the others till we caught another train going to Aviemore. We were picked up from Aviemore by a minibus and taken to the Badaguish Centre where we met up with the people who arrived on other trains or drove there earlier. We then had tea and played games to get to know each other, with help from Roger Thetford,

Sunday

We woke up early, as Lyra had her duty of breakfast prep. After breakfast and standing outside (Tommy and Lyra set off the fire alarm with a piece of burnt toast), we lined up for a Lagganlia photo. We then had a briefing about what we would be doing, and went to Moor of Alvie for the first day of training. We focussed on bearings, compass-work and pacing – as we did most of the week. I went around first with Nick, and got a bit lost as my bearings weren't very good. Then I did my pacing with 34 on path and 44 on terrain – very long strides for my height. Then I went around with Scarlett and we focussed on going exactly in a straight line, which by the end I did much better. I was using the bezel on a borrowed compass, which I will definitely use again. Finally, I went around with Don, the tour manager, and he told me to focus on looking up, as apparently I look at my feet or the compass, getting me to do splits - memorising the map, then doing it without it to maintain the flow between the controls. I have learnt a lot already. We then moved base to do a star relay: a relay comprising three in a team, with a cuddly toy. We came 5th, which I was happy about as it was only the first day. After coming back we had cake and showers. We then had a talk in our groups with our coaches about the day and some of the maps we brought with us of past areas. In the evening we had a talk by Leckie, Lead coach, about simplification of the map and contours. It was really interesting.

Monday

Last night, we stayed up till 11.30 talking, then woke up at 6.45, because we wanted to get up the earliest. It contributed to a tiring day. After breakfast, we had a briefing from Lecky in the food hall, and drew our sketch maps of Loch Vaa, which we were to run in a few hours. I used a lot of description for visualisation, and although we were meant to simplify it, I simplified it too much and didn't include what were to be important details. We got to Loch Vaa, and did a group warm up, of a ten minute run and lots of drills run by Lecky. Next, we did 500m at our race pace, on track and terrain. On track, I got 2.21, but on terrain I got 3.35, because I lost track of the tapes and went too far right, so lost 20+seconds. This was to see how much quicker we were on track vs. terrain. (Track time/terrain time) the bigger it was, the faster you were on track vs. terrain, for route choice. We then moved up to a different location, and ran our sketch maps. I, like lots of other people got lost 2-3, but relocated via help and found Ellie, and we then jogged/walked to the finish. I then was shadowed by Lecky, and he showed me a newish technique, and I was just a bit below race pace by the end, but with really accurate bearings, I think. I mislaid two compasses, one which we found

quickly. We got back late, had a bit of cake and looked at tomorrow's map of Roseisle: wooded sand dunes. Then had a nice pesto pasta, talk by Katherine Bett, interviewing the junior coaches about different ways to contribute in O e.g. in upcoming events, talent squads, mapping, planning, coaching, and Sue Bett's favourite events. We then went to bed.

Tuesday

Today, we braved the 1.5 hour drive to Roseisle, for an amazing day on terrain: wooded sand dunes. To start off, we went for a 10m warm up, and then I was shadowed around the pick north by Don, finding a control in the wrong place, and finding the navigation excellent. Then I went alone on another course, and got very lost, but found myself with help from Scarlett, then stormed round pick south, and to be honest found it quite easy. We then moved to across the railway to take part in the lines course, using bearings to try and follow a course and spot the number of controls. Then took part in a peg (tape) relay, for which I got 3 pieces of tape, and came joint 6th in the girls, all right.

Wednesday

Today was the 'rest day'. Actually, we did the knockout sprints, a new version of orienteering. I didn't run the first heats because I didn't need to and I didn't want to hurt my knee, but a few of us watched the runners at the butterfly loop control. We then went to Glenmore Lodge, to do the semi-finals and finals. As I didn't run the heats, I was put in Semi-final B, the lower one, although in reality, it was mostly the people in the running for a woods JK top 5. After a muck up at number 1, 3.5mins, I had a decent run, but that wasn't enough for me to qualify for the finals. The map scale was 1:1500 which made most of us mess up on the first leg. At the finals, Kristin, a GB orienteering sprinter did the start, and they set off. The boys and girls had the same course, but results totally different. The girls were mostly together with Lyra about 5m ahead, whereas the boys were very spread out. In the end; 3rd: Ellie and Lawrence, 2nd: Ruth and Ben, 1st: Lyra and Tommy. We then headed back to Badaguish, to complete the rings. Kate, Taylor, Austin and Yokub completed them. I just fell in on the first one, but most people got stuck in the end and had to jump in. After drying up, we spent an hour free time in Aviemore itself, and everyone went to the sweetshop and Tesco and mostly bought sweets, of course. Next we had a talk from Kristin, about her recent events, and sprint training. We had lots of fun dancing at a Ceilidh, followed by an eventful game of football against the National Biathlon Youth Team, and played a game of football, which we lost, 4-1. We were disadvantaged by a lack of headtorches... Probably our mistake at 10pm.

Thursday

Today was the last training day. In Culbin. To start off with, Dan and I walked round the line course, getting used to this terrain, and getting lost of course. Then, I walked/jogged around the Traffic Lights course, which I did perfectly, also being shadowed for half of it by Scarlett. But I was very happy. Then, everyone else did an odds and evens relay, but Freya, Ciara and I sat out of this as we were injured. By the last 2 days lots of people had picked up injuries. We then got a briefing about the tour champs tomorrow, and looked over it with the group.

Friday

The last day of Lagganlia... Today was the Tour Champs, in North Granish. Very bad weather. My compass felt off from the start, but I kept on going. Then, at control 5/20, I noticed a bubble and it stopped my compass working. One of the worst things to happen in Scottish woodland. Thankfully, there were a lot of line features, so I did well. In the end, I finished next to last, excluding those who dns or dnf from injuries. A very happy run, given my situation. Still raining heavily... We were then meant to do some Sprint Relays, but it was cancelled by the rain and fact that half of the group was pretty much injured or exhausted. In coaching groups, we made SMART targets, to work on for the next 6 months or so, and we will be checked back on them by Strava. Finally was the Evening

Dinner. For this, lots of people put on Face paint to celebrate Halloween and people's birthdays on Saturday. This was a three-course meal, with it being served to us by fancy dress junior coaches and a lot of dancing, singing and jumping. Then came the prizes for the day, guessing radio codenames of coaches, winning sweets and medal awarding for everyone, for example, Taylor got the 'Artist' award and Ellie got the 'Sweet Tooth' award. We then went to bed and most people planned to sneak out at 11.30pm that night. Our dorm watched them do it via the boys' bedroom window and run away, later to be caught by the coaches and get a big telling off from Wendy, our housekeeper and resident photographer.

Saturday

Another long train journey, but without any drama.

