

Lagganlia report 2024

I appeared cool, calm and (mostly) collected as I set off from Kings Cross station on 3 August 2024 for my journey to Aviemore, from where a bunch of us 'athletes' were being collected to drive to Lagganlia. After waving good-bye, Mum promptly went off for a slap-up brunch with another orienteering mother, to reward herself for a 0630 departure from home. In contrast, I found myself on a train for 5 hours to Edinburgh, sitting with Jake H for company, and doing lots of reading. Luckily, I like reading.

I was nervous going on my first large trip on my own but, on this outward journey, all the trains ran on time, including our change at Edinburgh, which helped. Unfortunately, I was deep into my book-world when the train stopped at Aviemore, so I had to exit very quickly once I realised why the train wasn't moving. The return journey threw other problems at everyone trying to go south. My train pulled into Newcastle and didn't pull out again. Thanks to Mrs Bett and the Darley sisters, Jake and I found seats on a different train south, and I eventually opted for a long stop-over in Peterborough before winding up in Cambridge station at 6pm. I was over an hour late but, ironically, I arrived there at the exact same time as Mum, who had been trapped on her own train down to London before discovering that I wouldn't be joining her there! Since my sister had her own travel disruption when she went to Bagaduish, perhaps this should be seen as a perennial part of the educational value of the trip.

Staying at Lagganlia camp was quite pleasant. There were two bedrooms for boys and two for girls. We had chores to do each day, which were rotated between 6 teams of 4 people, so it felt fair. We had briefings and de-briefings, ample time to check for ticks (which was necessary every day), and time to chill out. The food was tasty and there was plenty of it. We made packed lunches in the morning and had the athlete-baked cakes in the afternoon. A tip to future athletes: collect your slice of cake the moment you return to camp in the afternoon otherwise there will be none left! Our phones were safeguarded during the day, as promised, which was fine by me, to be honest.

The training structure was usually going on an exercise (sometimes shadowed, sometimes not) and getting feedback from the coaches. There was a peg relay one day, and a knock-out sprint on another. Often the exercises practiced one specific skill over a few controls and the main thing that was different from our local areas was the sheer number of contours on every map! I have described a few of the exercises below.

On the last day there were various rituals to observe. The Tour Champs race took place, and I was really pleased with my route choices and running speed until I left control 15 (of 18). I went off on an incorrect bearing and lost all the time I had gained. Still, I had made a good fist of it up to that point. That night, there was a light-hearted awards ceremony, along with a 'red-white-blue' dress theme (I'm still not sure why!), and then the optional 'break-out' challenge in the evening. I hid successfully for over an hour by lying in a bush, but made sure I had returned by the curfew, so that no-one was too worried. I saw a few people being chased by coaches but no-one found me. I then discovered that the "edible prize" we had been promised for surviving was a Graze bar, which I don't like...

Thank you to everyone who has helped me to qualify for the training camp. Overall, I enjoyed the opportunity very much. *Alex*



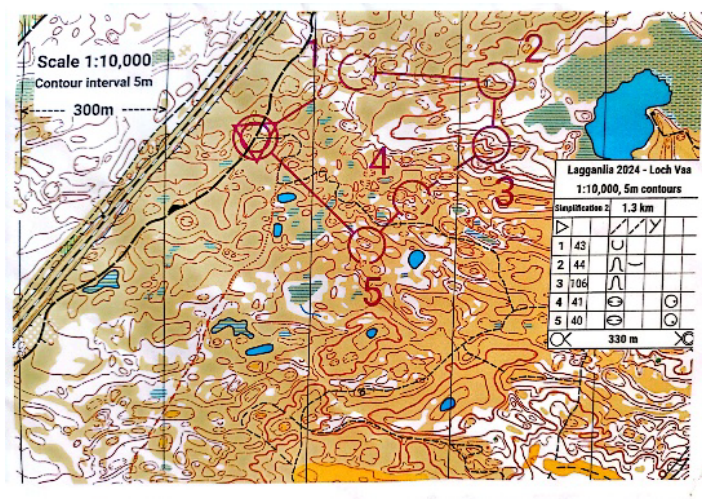
Some action shots



Photo credits: Jonathan Hooton; Dan.

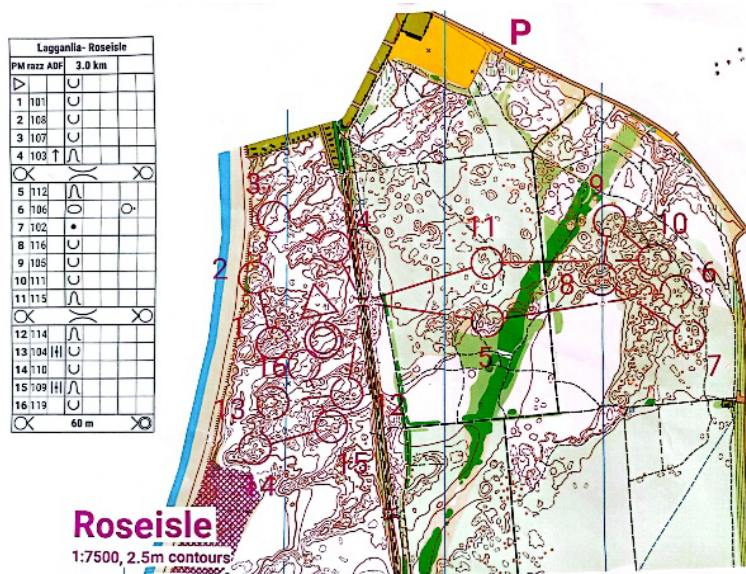
Loch Vaa simplification exercise

This was the most common type of exercise, having around 6 controls mapped to emphasise a specific skill. The first control was alright, and I remember simplifying the map to 2 depressions followed by woods. Control 2 on the other hand, was a complete headache for me. I was planning to just follow the spur and stop at the tower when I saw it (though I wasn't sure what type of tower it would be). It turns out I went on a similar spur further north and went off the map. Eventually, I went south-east to find the swamp and relocate, and I found the control by chance on the way. The old, wooden shooting tower was barely visible even then, camouflaged by a tree. Thankfully, I found the next few controls without any problems.



Roseisle Distractions Race

Probably the most unique bit of training we did on the tour was a race filled with distractions, from cameramen chasing us around to cheering from onlookers. There was even a control box that didn't work (so we had to pin-punch instead). This was to simulate the pressures and distractions in large events which might prevent you from navigating correctly. I did rather well, only getting slightly lost once. Roseisle really made me understand the value in training in areas with lots of contours, which we can't often do in East Anglia.

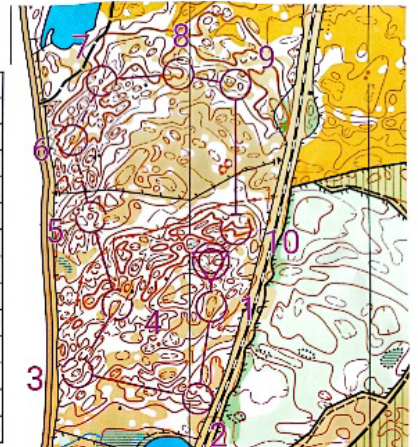


North Granish Sketch

In the sketch map exercise, we had 10 minutes to draw the most important parts of the course which we would then have to use (this explains the quality of mine). This was essentially an easier version of simplification, without the visualisation of the map, and having time beforehand to prepare. I thought I had done quite a good job of drawing what was necessary but once the 10 minutes were up I noticed that I had no North lines! Luckily, these were not required because I could use the side of the control descriptions, but it was scary at first. I included adequate detail for most of the controls, but on control 7 my proportions were off and I overshot the control.

North Granish Scale: 1:7,500

Lagganlia 2023 Day 3			
Sketch	1.5 km		
1	46	T	
2	47	T	
3	37	U	
4	43	U	U
5	45	U	U
6	42	U	U
7	112	U	U
8	39	T	
9	104	X	
10	41	U	



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