

Gothenburg Tour 2025 – Hebe’s Final Report

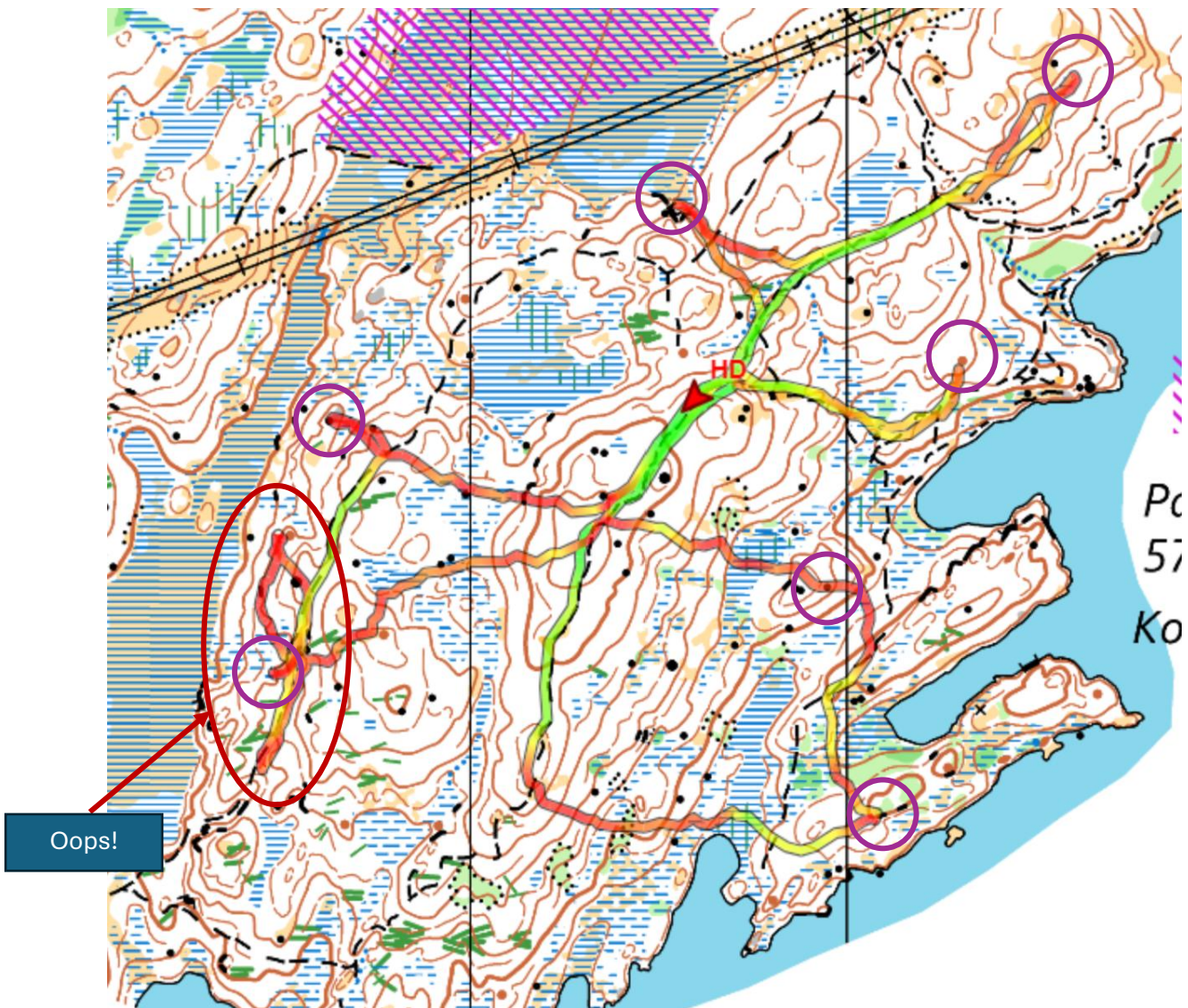
Day 1 – Travel

The travel to this year’s tour was unlike any of the other tours I’d done before; I travelled to Gothenburg on a train, instead of by plane! This was because my mammoth summer had led me to spend 2 weeks already in Sweden, with a Pre-JWOC Camp in Karlskrona, south Sweden, and a family holiday in Jonkoping and Stockholm. As I was travelling alone, I arrived just after the Heathrow group went out for a shakeout run. This was lucky, as I didn’t get stung by wasps on the run, and saw a moose in front of the club hut that we were staying in (Thanks, Savedalens)! Once everyone but Ruth had arrived, she missed her connection and had to stay a night in Amsterdam, we planned the cooking and training for the week ahead.

Day 2 – Middle and Clock Relay

For most days, we ended up going to two un-named areas for training; one in the morning and one in the afternoon. For the first morning, we went to do a middle mock-event planned by Tommy, getting a shuttle car to the area. This was my first experience in Gothenburg terrain; completely different to anything that I’d been in before. The overall altitude in the area was not much higher than East Anglia; however, the undergrowth was much, much thicker. The marshes were filled with ankle-high tussocks, comprised of grasses and bog myrtle taller than me. Even outside of the marshes, the heather and blaeberry bushes were shin-knee deep and energy sapping. Add to that lots of very steep crags which had 5-15m drops below them and you have quite an interesting area to navigate. At least the boulders and paths were obvious! (Though they weren’t all on the maps of course...). We finished the training by running back to the hut for a late lunch and going for a brief dip the Stora Kasjon; the lake 100m from the hut. We had a lot of resting time as we waited for Ruth’s flight from Amsterdam to get in before we went to do a clock relay.

For this, we ran 2km across boardwalks near the hut to get to the start. A clock relay is a unique form of training and it’s high pace with long legs; 400m to a control and 400m back, navigating as well! I am happy to say that our team came third, but unfortunately, we could’ve won if I hadn’t messed up running along a path past the control I was looking for 3 times, not seeing it because the kite was hidden behind a tree! With a full day’s training in the legs, we settled down to sleep in the club hut’s office, with a packed room of girls on sleeping mats.



Day 3 – Talk-O and Mass starts.

When I woke up this morning, I was not feeling very well at all. Most people who have been on a squad tour of whatever format agree that the first sleep after training is always the worst; but fearing illness before school return, I took the sensible decision to skip the morning's Talk-O/Map Memory session for another hour's nap and extra recovery. In retrospect, I am extremely glad to have done this, as I may have been coming down with the COVID that everyone else had later in the week, and prevented it – or was just very tired, who knows? Anyway, I was definitely well-rested for the mass starts in the afternoon. These were 1km terrain + nav interval sessions in groups, with (you guessed it), mass starts. I started in the top girl's group with Ruth, Freya, and Charlotte, but was dropped to the second group as I was struggling in the terrain. After catching up my replacement in that group in the second mass start, I completed the other three rounds with them, or rather, behind them, but really enjoyed it. It was good to be able to race with others that I knew well and see how their technique differed from mine. It was good to know that we didn't really differ much in navigational ability; they were just able to get through the terrain much faster than I could – a focus for next year! Having done this afternoon training a lot earlier than the previous night, we had a long time back at the hut to debrief/swim/sauna/hang out before bedtime – a luxury.

Day 4 – Long Legs + Peg Relay

Day 4 was the day that I did the most training, by far, on this camp. This was because I was organising the Peg Relay with Ellie. Helpfully though, the morning training was a long legs course on the area only a 2km jog from our hut. This was a contrasting area; some of the white open bits were beautiful, Stockholm-like runnable woodland with nothing underfoot. Other bits were marsh-like, with lots and lots of heather etc. on the floor. Whilst most people didn't do the training or cut it short between control 5 and the finish, we chose the slightly (0.1km) shorter cut-off, from 2 to 7. This was the wrong move, as it took us through the most physical area we were going to go through in the week, with knee-deep heather, energetic dogs, and wasps galore. After having gone out as one of the first, we came back as one of the last, with a short gap until our Peg Relay started. We rushed Coach Toni out of the house as soon as she came back from control collecting, into the car and out to control hang the afternoon. This was as uneventful as expected when I'm organising an event; I had a panic attack due to snakes, we forgot the maps, lost my rucksack – but hey, at least the controls were in the right place! – Oh, wait, we didn't have a plan for control collecting... At least the runners enjoyed the course, and Freya got a peg mohawk, job done. We finished the day with quite a sparse meal if I may say so myself; as someone who doesn't eat mashed potatoes and thus visited the local ICA on the bus at 9pm to get some vital supplies before getting to bed.

Day 5 – Sprint + Club training

Today was the day that I was really looking forward to – the sprint. This was promised to be a very techy course, with 22 barriers (changing depending on your map!) and 22 controls. Unfortunately, my stomach wasn't feeling great on this day, so I couldn't push as hard as I wanted to, but I still enjoyed the hard course. However, it was a 3.2km optimal route course originally – which was turned into 5km quickly with the barriers. The other benefit of the sprint is that it was over quickly; we then had a very long rest until club training at 6pm and used it effectively – I did nothing but made a map of my school! I consequently skipped out on the club training as well, as my right ankle was causing me some anxiety (note to self: 6 weeks of orienteering is not good for the ankles) and had a slight mental breakdown with homesickness and loneliness. There were only 3 of us who stayed in the hut, but at least once the others got back we had the week's winning dish to cheer me up – chicken pasta and Rory's legendary Banana Bread.

Day 6 – Rest day

Finally, a rest day! Don't get me wrong – I love orienteering this much – but sometimes a girl just needs to rest. Which is the opposite of what Ruth, Ellie and I did, granted, but still.... Whilst most of the groups went into town to explore Gothenburg, we went to the Tradgarden and then sprinted for a ferry to the Southern Archipelago (we got there with 20 seconds left!). We stayed on the ferry to its terminus, Vrango, and got off with only 7 other people. What was instantly obvious was the silence. It was beautiful; no sounds, no cars in sight (or even parking spaces!), transporter bikes galore and the fresh sea air. In hindsight, an island which mostly serves fish in its restaurants, however, is not the best place to take a vegetarian for lunch. After having solved that problem, we took a couple of Hittaut Orienteering maps of the island archipelagos and went exploring. We jumped across the rocks, playing grass is lava, till we hit a track and then made our way back along it, obviously visiting the permanent orienteering control on the way to the ferry. That took up most of the day, as the ferry was 1hr 15mins each way; but we still had

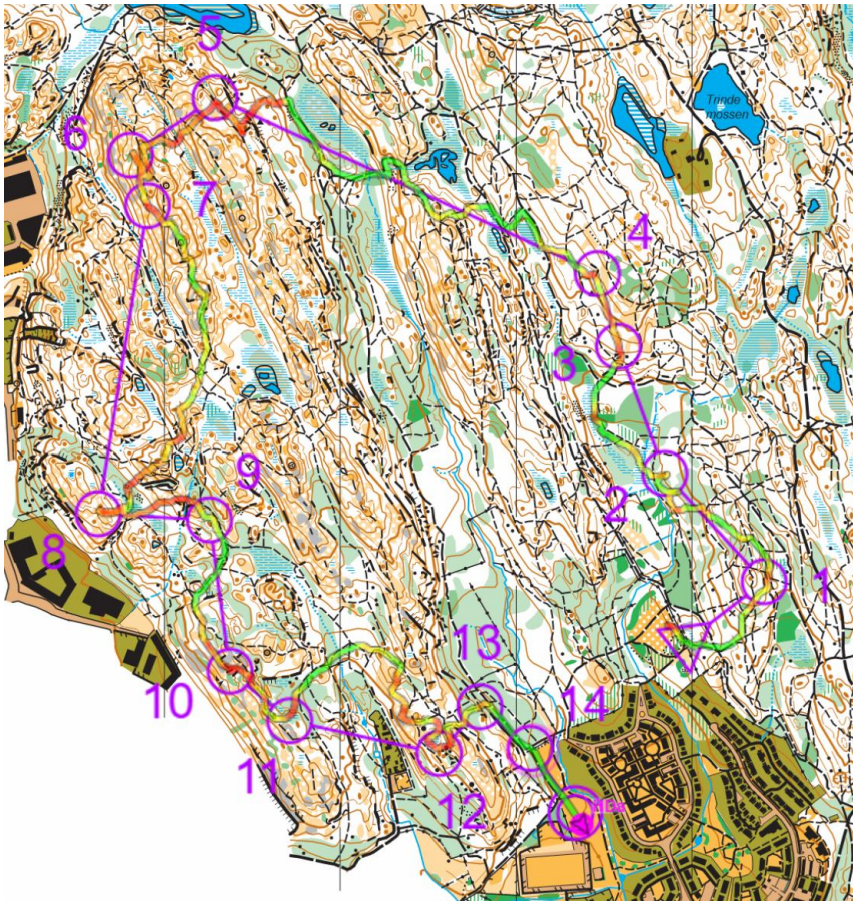
time for some thrift shopping before we headed back to the hut for Pesto Pasta (or Pasta Pesto, who cares?!).



Day 7 – Control Pick, Vampire-O, Night-O

This was our last ever day of training on a JROS Tour! I found that really sad, but no-one else seemed to realise it. At least we had a good time doing a 25-control control pick – I only did the second half as my confidence in terrain had been knocked during the Peg Relay and I didn't want to go a long way this day. In the afternoon, we then did Vampire-O, which was even more fun as I wasn't the vampire for both sessions, like I was at Czechia! Unfortunately, I didn't manage to score any points as I was out of time on the first round and caught at the end on the second. I decided not to do the night-o, as I was exhausted from the past 3 weeks of training and my ankle was playing up again, also, did I forget to mention that I was cooking dinner that night? We mostly cooked left-over veg and eggs into a very tasty egg-fried rice with cold pasta salad and my home-made red velvet cake. Whilst it didn't get any votes on the last night for best meal of the week, everyone was enjoying it whilst we went over the results from the EOC KO Sprint Qualifiers – or went crazy out on the Night-O course.

Day 8 – Middle



A nice long lie-in today, with a middle at 5pm in the evening! This was mostly spent lazing around in the hut; Ruth and I managed to get lots of work done, with significant progress made on my map before we got the bus to the event. The other groups were planning to go visit Gothenburg again before the event, but they took the bus 20 minutes before us, so, no surprise, they didn't really have time to go around Gothenburg. The middle itself was a very scrappy race for me, I started off too fast in a very path-heavy area, so kept on getting lost and relocating, but found relocating quite hard. I found all of the controls but could not focus due to the time of day of the race and thus did not place as highly as I had been hoping. We came back for a lovely heated-up meal of what we'd cooked the previous night (but didn't get any credit!). Ruth, Ellie, and I had a nice early bedtime, whereas the others went to bed at 3am...

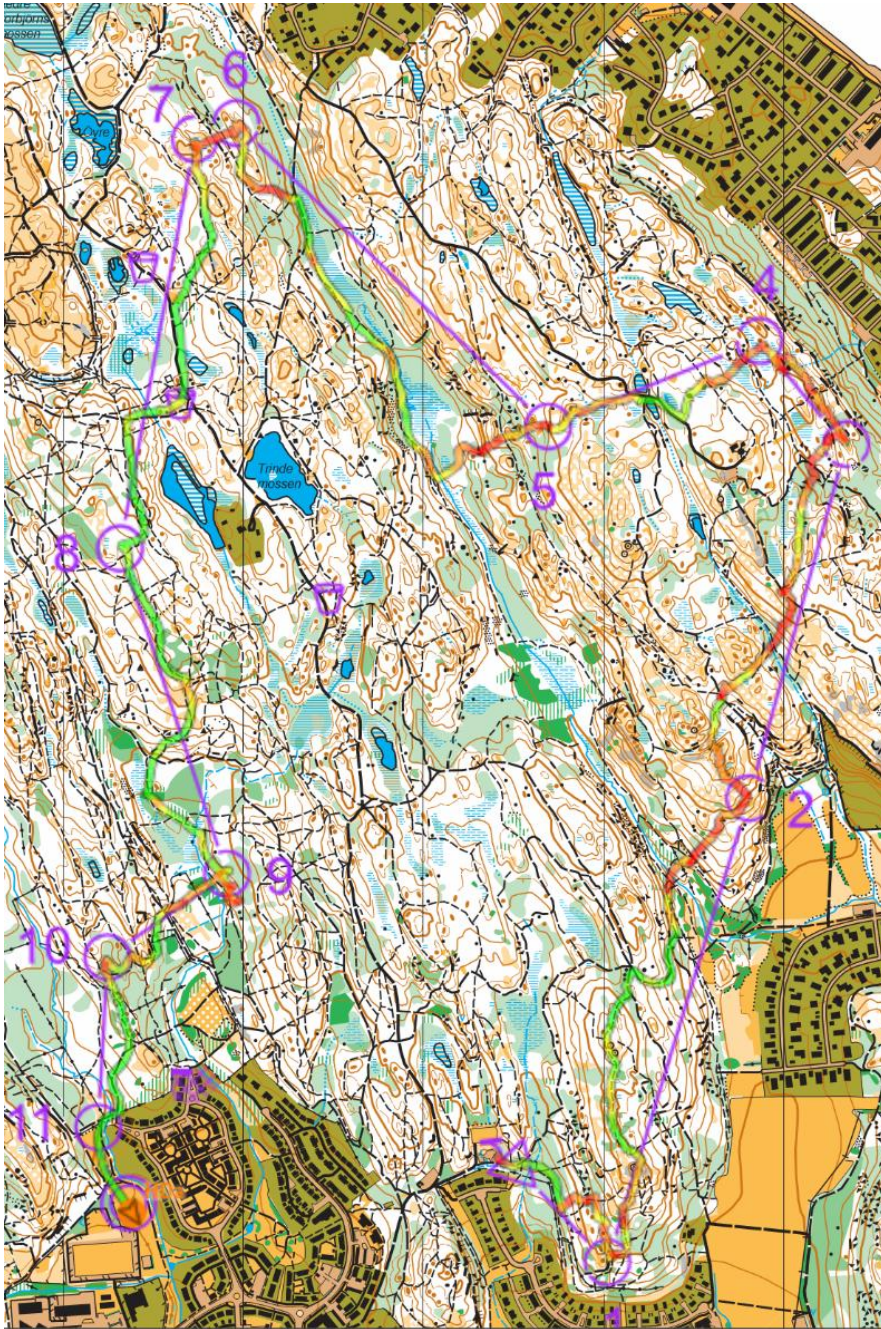
Day 9 – Sprint



Thankfully, the race today was at a more reasonable time than the middle. I had the first start of the girls at 10.17, which did mean leaving at 8.45 but that's fine because I was waking up naturally at 6am anyway. This was probably one of the best races that I did in Sweden this year; I caught up the Swede starting a minute ahead of me very early on and then sped round the course; hardly messing up, and feeling good. This allowed me to get into the position of 3rd Brit and 7th Overall on the course – my highest ranking yet on a Swedish race! I would've hoped to go faster if I hadn't had so much fatigue in the legs, but apart from that it was a very, very good race. In the afternoon, we then picked up Ruth from the club hut and went to the only place you have to go when you're in Sweden, IKEA. Whilst there weren't many purchases for us in IKEA – we managed to stave off the desire – I did manage to get a free IKEA Pencil and measuring tape! We then briefly popped into a sports store where the only Swedish sport they didn't stock was

orienteering – seriously, they had pistol shooting and frisbee golf but not orienteering! – before getting the long bus back to the hut to learn how to fry eggs.

Day 10 – Long



For about half of the group, this was the travel day, but not me. We said goodbye to the many early fliers to Edinburgh and Manchester (Sheffield) in the morning before getting buses to the event. Unfortunately, despite having left 30 minutes before everyone else, Ruth, Matthew and I missed our 2-minute connection, so were joined by everyone else on the train before missing our next bus because the train was late. All in all, I was hoping to get to the start 1.5 hours before starting, instead it was 35 minutes with a large toilet queue to battle. The result of this was that when I did start – on time, I might add – I was not in the right mindset for racing and so struggled until #4. I then unexpectedly caught up the Swede who started 2 mins ahead of me and this encouraged me to race for the rest of the course. I finished surprisingly high up given the

circumstances and the fact that I wasn't wearing my own shoes – as I had picked up someone else's! The afternoon had a different feeling as most people were gone and the rest of us were packing, but it was made up for by the trip we had to a pizzeria nearby and the ICA to exchange our 'pants' (cans) for Swedish Krona (a whole 30p worth!). I also bought my breakfast and snacks there, as I didn't want to have to buy anything extortionate at the Airport the next day and would be getting up quite early.

Day 11 – Travel

Last day of my last JROS tour today! Unfortunately, I didn't really see anyone before I left for the airport, as they were all enjoying a lie-in. As I was the only EA person there, I was the only one on my flight to Stansted at 10.30 – everyone else's flights were at 13.00 to 16.00. The flight was longer and hotter than I'd expected, but that's probably because I slept for lots of it with my head against the window with the sun coming in. When we touched down, I like to not hang around so speed-walked to get my suitcase and get on the train back to Cambridge. However, by the time I got into Cambridge, it was raining quite hard and I had to sprint across the plaza for a bus with malfunctioning doors! Walking from the bus-stop in the torrential rain was also another experience that I wasn't prepared for - this was my first proper bit of rain for about 4 weeks, having always just avoided it in Sweden.

Overall, I loved this camp, but it definitely had a different feeling to all of the others; it was more lax and athlete-lead, but I've learnt that I quite enjoy having a clear schedule for the day. It was a great one to finish my JROS journey on, with many people creating their Edinburgh University timetables on tour, and with most of the people we started with. I am looking forward to coming back to Gothenburg for O-Ringen next year and would definitely recommend the areas! A massive thank you has to go to Mark and Alice for having organized the camp for the last 12 years and set such a high standard. This was their last Gothenburg camp, and I know that next year's group will be sorry not to be doing it with the OG coaches, but Toni and Andy were amazing as well and will carry on their tradition of hosting a high-quality athlete-lead Gothenburg Camp. To anybody who is thinking about coming on these JROS Tours; I'd say just do it! They are a life-changing experience, and I will never forget the people I have befriended and the memories that I have made. What comes next, who knows? But I know it will be good!