

Next step in the stratified coaching model

Developing Juniors – Off Yellow courses

It is important that juniors learn to win at the right level of course. Progressing too quickly to the next level can knock confidence and the move from Yellow to Orange is technically quite a big step. Confident successful juniors at Yellow course level can find it disheartening when moving up and without quality coaching available as they make the move it can simply be counterproductive. Orange courses attract a wide range of novice orienteers so the junior can find themselves up against a large field which includes juniors at the older age groups and adults who are starting to progress. From being consistent winners, they see their names slide down the list of finishers.

Finding regular coaching at NGOC from Yellow to Orange can be challenging, with many coaching opportunities for juniors focussing from Orange level up at the regional squad. Having a light weight easily accessible training opportunity at every League event would help. The Off-Yellow Course is designed for this.

Off-Yellow course

This is the Yellow course as set but including additional controls already available on other courses which are just off the Yellow course route. The Off-Yellow course is run after the trainee has completed the Yellow course successfully. This allows them to understand the map, remember the route and anchor themselves in the terrain before they try again with the more difficult controls. This is also a safety mechanism as they are already comfortable with the route and are less likely to get lost

Key considerations for planners

The Off-Yellow should be asked for from planners as a standard part of any League planning. The advantage of this approach is that the controls are already identified on other courses– there is no need for additional controls to be sited.

The controls chosen should be close enough to the Yellow course route so there is limited chance of missing the control.

Orange level features should be chosen to give the trainee the chance to see what they will be looking for when they actually move up a class.

Key considerations for organisers

Off Yellow course maps should be held in the enquiries tent, not at the start. This allows the organiser to ensure that the runner has already completed the Yellow course successfully, and to record the names of anyone trying the course. No maps should be given out after the last start time to prevent this new course from extending the event past the control collection time. The enquiries tent team can also discuss the map with the novice before they go out, providing some useful coaching input.

It should be free but limited to around 10 maps until demand is understood.

MJones NGOC

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Example – Merthyr Mawr (CROESO 2024 – NGOC organised Day 1 event)

Yellow course in purple – Off Yellow controls in Red (were actual controls at the event on other courses)

