

Urban Rogue – Friday 4 December 2015

So it's Saturday and I'm at a party. Hey ... you should join us next Friday night at the race. Well, it never takes much to convince me so by Monday, Paul had added me to their team and I paid my pizza-party-fees. Yep – I'm in! Lucky for me there is no need to prepare for these things because Friday is not that many nights after Monday!

Friday finally rolls round. Yes – remember the race is in December and I registered already in November (albeit the 30th)!

With the last day of school school-run done I thought I should find some stuff to take. A bag, water bladder, little bit of powerade, shoes, socks and a change of clothes and off I trekked to HQ via the kids drop-off depot (haha).

With little traffic on the roads I was there in no time and had a bit of time to kill. This extra time had me nominated to do the novice briefing due to someone else being late. It did however earn me the front of the line on map handout (yay!!)

I really hope none of the novice teams got too lost because that may reflect poorly on my briefing. Yes guys, this was my first briefing – I'm glad the 50 odd people went easy on me (hopefully it wasn't because they were so confused they decided not to ask).

Map handout was quickly done and we were off marking up the maps. This race was all about letting the novice (Kim) do it all when it came to the maps. So while Kim was busy making decisions on the map Craig was pottering around and I was just daydreaming (shhh don't tell my team that).

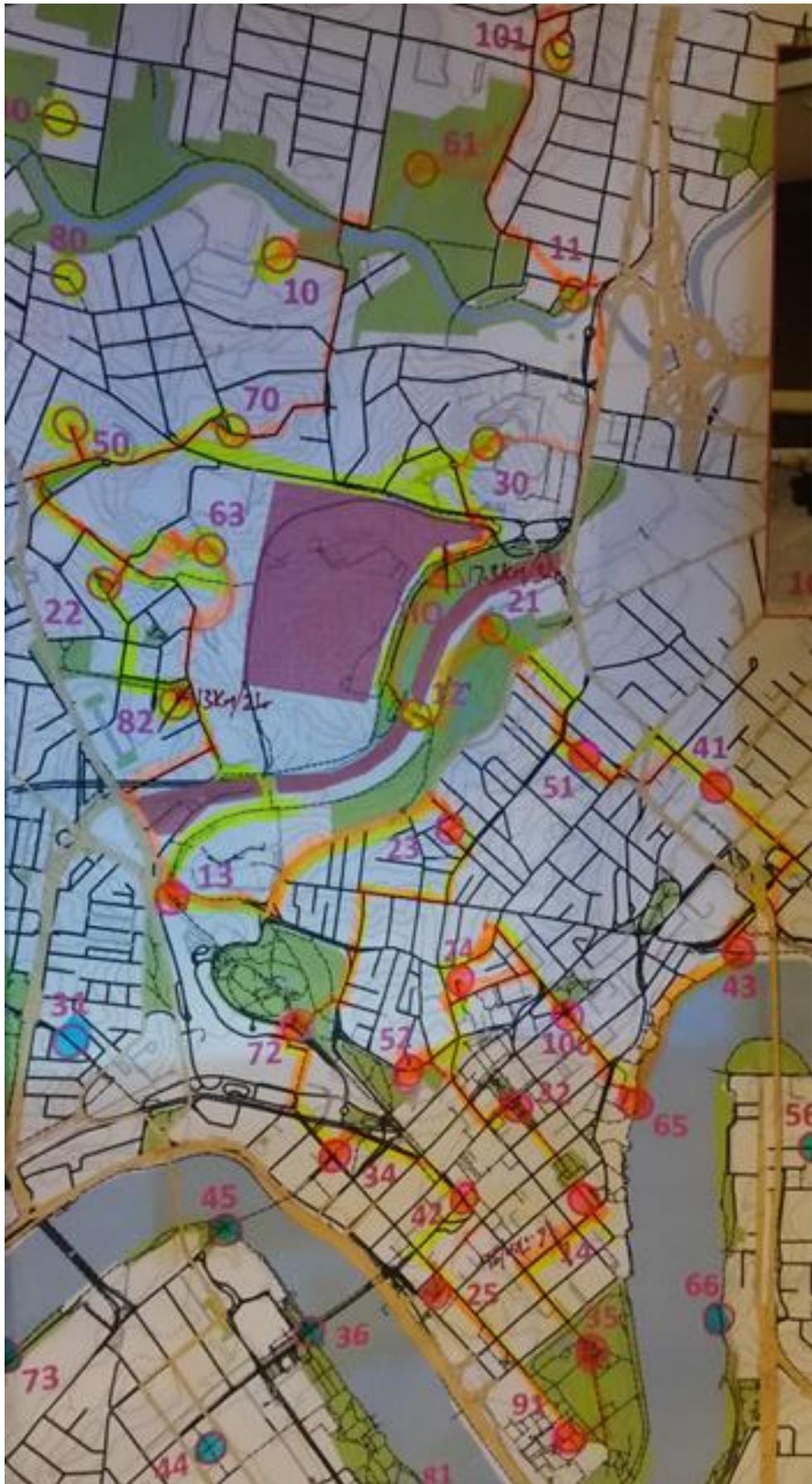
We soon had decided on a plan of attack as they had already planned our speed prior to arriving.

Map 1: Marked up and ready to go. Craig then copied this map for himself. We made a few adjustments to the course during this stage. Map 2 marked up and Map 1 remarked. Then I copied the map. Oops a few more changes meant Map 1 was now a bit of a mess and Map 3 was looking the best.

With a complete map shuffle we gave Craig the crappy map (as we knew this would slow him down if he tried to steal the navving off us) and handed Map 3 to our primary navigator (Kim)! Go Kim!!!! Craig was in charge of the check point descriptions and answers while I played backup nav (yes – the fun job).

6:30 and off we go! CHARGE! With so many teams entered it was no surprise that we spent the first 4 checkpoints with a bunch of people. What was surprising (well it never ceases to amaze me) was that after these first checkpoints we found ourselves all alone. We did run into teams near every checkpoint in town but then when we headed to CP 23 we spent pretty much the rest of the night alone – only seeing people again a few metres from HQ.

The whole course went smoothly. For those that know Liam's races – this is of no surprise. I mean – he always pulls a good crowd for a reason! Yes Liam we love your events.



We did find a few small glitches in the course but these weren't too hard to overcome. We made 1 small nav error. It sounds like A LOT of people made this error. We approached CP 14 from CP 32. Past the church, across the road and straight ahead. We spent a few minutes (maybe 2) hunting for the CP. Craig and I both had this feeling we were not in the right place and soon realised we had shot straight down the road which ran parallel to the laneway. A quick scoot around the corner to the west and up the few stairs and bingo CP 14 was there waiting for us! Woohoo!!!

We also had a CP description error when Craig was hunting the answer for CP90 while we were standing at CP91. For the record: CP90's answer is NOT at CP91. But when Kim and I worked this out we were off again – another 2 minute breather eer I mean pitstop!

Kim navved this whole section alone with me following her choices and supporting her decisions when she asked for it.

We changed our route from CP13 to CP82. Initially we were going to head to the crossing but at CP13 decided to go over the bridge and past the hotel to scoot down the diagonal road (marked on my map). This road was hidden away as it did not intersect the road we were on but was easy to locate using the basic logic that 'those houses on top of the hill must join a road somewhere!'. This was the quietest and darkest road we visited.

CP82 was quickly located although Craig doubted my judgement on the answer. I am not surprised because the question said the FIRST carpark clearance. There was actually 2 carparks in here. One was 2.3 and the other was 2.2. We struggled a little with the 'which is first' but with no 2.2 on the options list we decided 2.3 was the first carpark. This followed CP23 where the 'gate' appeared to be NE not NW.

We were still tracking well by CP 50 (about 45mins to go), so we decided to change our flight plan and instead of going from CP 70 to CP 30 we thought we would add in CP 10 (maybe), CP 61, CP 101 and CP11. This signified the end of Kim as lead nav. She was starting to feel the pinch and did not have the map marked up to confidently get us to these extra CPs in the time needed. This meant that I became lead nav while Craig became backup.

CP 61 was a nice win for the night. I didn't know the area so didn't know what the green area was going to be. However it was a great feeling to pick a diagonal line from the corner of the 'green' across to the water and discover we had run a perfect line from the corner straight to the CP! Win! We then were nicely surprised we could continue across this green section as it was a hockey field. Double win! CP 101 in the bag and we were heading home. By this stage Kim was just hanging in there. She asked for a bit of reassurance a few times as to the distance and I think at one stage she was nicely surprised. She was hoping it was only about 2km's left and was relieved when we said it was only 1km max! However, we didn't tell her it was going to be all uphill from the main road to CP 30. That was nasty but it did make the downhill to the finish all the sweeter!

We jogged to the finish with Dan Browning and his teammate and clocked in with 2 minutes to spare! No Craig – we couldn't have found anything extra to pick up in that last 2 minutes! I was happy we didn't have to lose those 10 points we picked up as we were going to skip CP 10 initially.

Ample pizza was waiting at the finish line but the Coke was much more inviting. Kim was a tiny bit disappointed we didn't quite make the 20kms but I am stoked with our efforts and lets face it – isn't it more impressive to get so many points with LESS km's on the clock? By the way we clocked up about 19.75kms (so we weren't far off the 20) and picked up 1,230points.

I had an amazing night and the weather turned out to be PERFECT! A race like this is always bitter sweet as it was so much fun but it also signifies the end of the year and a few months break before we get to do it all over again!

Thanks to Liam for putting the race on with Qld Rogaine; Qld Rogaine for adding me to the team at late notice; Liam's family for babysitting his daughter so he can organise the race for us; Craig for inviting me; Kim for the great night, great nav and putting up with me; Wazz for doing 'kids duty' and my legs for not caving in on me! Oh and I almost forgot: A massive thank you to whoever put on the fireworks display! We were running along and heard 'bang bang' (near St Andrew's hospital). We came around a corner and had a clear view of the fireworks! What an amazing time to have picked to be heading up that dead straight road heading straight for the fireworks! It was spectacular and funny that just as we were about to go out of view of them the fireworks ended! Could not have picked better timing!

I believe we came 3rd in the mixed open category and about 14th overall but am not sure if that included the wheelies.

Merry Xmas to all and I hope you all have a safe break!

Suwati