

Atherton Metrogaine – 3 Hour Hike Event Winner’s Report,

by Darren Osmond and Matt Poulsen, Team TAS.

There was a bit of pressure to perform at the Atherton Metrogaine. There was pressure on the organisers to run as good an event as the last couple of 3-hour metrogainies in both Innisfail and Mareeba. There was also pressure on Matt and I to win as we had done in the previous two three-hour hike metrogainies.

Our first reaction to the map was that it was a very large and complex course. We also noted that it would be a difficult course to plan as many checkpoints would have to be left out. As our attached map shows, we colour code the checkpoints to have yellow as the top third of the point values, pink and the middle third and blue as the bottom third. This allows us to plan a course at a glance which optimises points gained. Our plan for this event was to get as many high-value controls as possible. The biggest checkpoint value was 100 points, which was 20-times the value of the lowest point value. This is slightly different to normal event scoring and meant that 5- and even 10-pointers really were a waste of time for this event.

We headed west initially to a large pointer (#37) then down through 4 more high point value controls to the south-west corner of the map. #45 gave us a significant amount of trouble as it was in a relatively difficult location for a metrogaine event. This part of the map was slow and hilly, but quite pleasant with bright green re-growth after the recent fires. Crossing the railway line near #5 signified the end of the bush section of the course, with an interesting run up a large cow paddock to #56 and then #33. With an hour to go we decided to get the medium-value checkpoints on and around Halloran’s Hill and then to run down through the conservation park towards some other medium point-value controls immediately north of and close to the hash house. We finished on #24 with 11 minutes remaining so called it a day at that, finishing with 3 minutes to spare.

Thanks to course setters and organisers Mark, Leasia and Michael.