

## **Chiltern Challenge 2008 – Organiser's Report.**

As you all witnessed, the day of the Chiltern Challenge was unbelievably sunny and warm with what appeared, at first sight, a firm field for parking. That was not the case for as more cars rode the entrance it became quite soft resulting in a number of cars being unceremoniously pushed out. The car parking team also had concerns as the field gradually filled to capacity with no contingency other than the hard standing around the farm outbuildings.

It is always worrying when, after parking up and having your run, on your return the car won't start. Well not to worry for if you are a member of the RAC they will sort you out. And so they did at CC08 and a happy orienteer was on his way home waving as he went. That's what's nice about orienteers.

Not so the unhappy RAC crewman who found his vehicle well and truly stuck and digging a bigger hole for himself as he endeavoured to get out. Not to worry, he assured me, for he had a colleague in the area with a 4 x 4 and will come to his assistance.

His colleague duly arrived only to find himself in the same situation. It was now either accept a push from those orienteers still remaining or the indignity of calling out the AA. They chose the first option and eventually they were safely on their way waving as they went. That what's nice about the RAC.

Regrettably not everything went according to plan. In the corridor between Naphill and Downley Commons we suffered a vandalised control by mountain bikers. Fortunately this was seen by a senior competitor who recovered it from a holly thicket and put it back. Because they knew they had been spotted it was a case of dump it and make a get-away. The site was a path junction on the JM3 course, which is easy game for those intent on disruption. To my knowledge nobody was inconvenienced.

The event had 568 finishers. I believe we would have had more had the event not clashed with the Midlands Championships just up the road in Nottingham.

If, on viewing the numbers on the white course, you think orienteering is getting back to grass roots then it is really false optimism. I had a call from a parent who wanted to celebrate his daughter's birthday with friends. They were only 6 years old. I suggested they should do the white course if their parents were to shadow. They took this on-board and duly pre-ordered 20 maps. The total with parents made a turn out of 60 whom you may have seen enjoying an après 'O' BBQ at the far end of the assembly field.

There were 2 reported casualties on the day. A W45 from Chig with a knee injury – recovered by the Red Cross ambulance, and an M21 from TVOC with a reported injury to the shoulder. The latter was evacuated direct to hospital after a member of the public called the accident and emergency services at the Wycombe General Hospital. As this evacuation was not done through our event channels I cannot throw any more light on the situation at the time of writing.

Finally thank you to all who came on the day and made the event a success for the organising team.

Fred Ashford - Organiser