

Sierra Classic 2015 – Day-2 & Day-3 Classic Championships

Course Setters' Notes

Little Truckee Summit

Saturday & Sunday, September 19–20, 2015

“Bay Area steep”, “poison oak”, “fight”—those terms regularly show up in most discussions of Bay Area Orienteering Club terrain. Not at Little Truckee Summit! In contrast, terms such as “open”, “boulders”, and “runnable forest” are more likely going to be in your mind while running on the Little Truckee Summit map. As Flounder so profoundly said in the movie *Animal House*, “This is going to be great!” So here we go ...

Saturday Courses

Here are the final details of the Saturday courses:

Course	Length	Climb	Controls
White	1.9 km	70 m	12
Yellow	2.0 km	75 m	10
Orange	4.3 km	130 m	13
Brown X	4.3 km	105 m	12
Brown Y	3.1 km	65 m	10
Green X	6.2 km	120 m	12
Green Y	5.4 km	120 m	11
Red	8.0 km	195 m	18
Blue	10.0 km	260 m	25

The Start for all the courses is 750 m from the parking area, with less than 5 m climb (10–15 minutes walk)—head generally north on Cottonwood Road, the dirt road across Highway 89 from the parking area—**be very careful crossing the highway**. Please stay on Cottonwood Road to the Start, as both sides are private property for most of the way to the Start. Warming up should be done only along the road, and please watch for vehicles.

There will *not* be toilets at the Start.

All the courses will share the first control, which is about 100 m up Cottonwood Road from the start triangle. The **emergency bearing is south** to Highway 89 or Henness Pass Road, then turn right and head for the parking lot. The Finish is 200 m from the parking area.

Specific Course Comments for Saturday

White and *Yellow* runners will be navigating along an old road that is a bit indistinct in some areas. In general, the sides of this road are built up with dirt banks, so it is easier to tell you are on the road. Near the end of the *White* course the trail goes down some fairly indistinct rides; these will be flagged with pink flagging, and these flagged legs are noted on the control description sheet. *Yellow* runners will have some route choices and a couple of controls may be a bit more difficult than usual, but in areas of potential confusion the main road will always be visible. *Yellow* runners will go through knee-high bushes, so will want to wear gaiters or long pants.

Advanced and *Orange* courses will go past a residential area; please stay out of private property. Advanced courses are strenuous, and although there is not much climb by Bay Area standards, the altitude will make it feel harder.

Sunday Courses

Here are the final details of the Sunday courses:

Course	Length	Climb	Controls
White	2.0 km	15 m	10
Yellow	2.8 km	40 m	11
Orange	4.5 km	130 m	11
Brown X	4.2 km	75 m	12
Brown Y	3.0 km	55 m	10
Green X	5.8 km	135 m	12
Green Y	5.6 km	150 m	12
Red	8.7 km	225 m	16
Blue	10.0 km	325 m	17

The Start for all the courses is 1500 m from the parking area, with less than 5 m climb (20–30 minutes walk)—go past Saturday’s Start on Cottonwood Road (the same dirt road you followed Saturday), and continue until you see the Start on the right. You can warm up anywhere along the road up until the road bends right (north), 150 m past the Start. The Finish is actually 40 m in elevation below the Start area, and climbing from the Finish back up to Cottonwood Road is one of the few times you’ll think “Bay Area steep”—but, hey, that’s why the climb on Sunday’s courses is as low as it is!

There will *not* be toilets at the Start.

After your Sunday finish, follow the streamers along the south side of the clearing above the Finish back uphill to Cottonwood Road. The area north of this clearing is out-of-bounds. Once back to the road (whew!), retrace it back to the parking area. The **emergency bearing is west** to Cottonwood Road, and then head south, or west to Highway 89, and then head south (uphill) to the parking area.

Specific Course Comments for Sunday

White and *Yellow* runners have a shared first control that is separate from the first control for all the other courses—don’t just “follow the crowd” uphill out of the Start. The *White* and *Yellow* courses are flagged with bright orange streamer from the first control to the continuation of Cottonwood Road that leads from the parking area to the Start—once on this dirt road, watch for vehicles and dirt bikes. Some of the trails most appropriate for navigation later on both the *White* and *Yellow* courses have become less distinct than shown on the map, and one ride is flagged late on the *Yellow* course. Flags also lead off trail from two controls late on the *Yellow* course—you are not obligated to follow them, but it’s recommended. Flagged legs are noted on the control description sheet.

All the *Orange* and above courses share the same first control approximately 100 m uphill from the start—there are two E-punch units there, so keep the elbowing to a minimum! All the courses cross the continuation of Cottonwood Road that leads from the parking area to the Start at least once—watch for vehicles and dirt bikes. While many trails and rides are shown on the map, you’ll likely find “going straight” is the preferable route choice—something rarely said about BAOE courses. And note, as described in the Hazards section, the presence of a four-wheel-drive vehicle trail in the northern area of the map. All the *Orange* and above courses, except *Brown*, will cross this trail at least once, so keep an eye (and ear!) out for four-wheelers.

General Map Comments

Map scale: The map scale for all the courses will be 1:10000; the contour interval will be 5 meters.

Trails: Most trails on the map have become less distinct than when initially mapped—there is not a lot of human activity in the area, so most trails and roads have become more overgrown and/or have logs across them. Some of the mapped rides are quite indistinct, especially where they occur in a higher density in already very open forests or clearings. Rides are old logging trails, some of which appear to be little more than linear clearings. The key to determining which clearing is a ride is that there are berms (transverse piles of dirt) across the rides that look like

they were dug up by bulldozers—and they were! This is important because the white forest is very open and visibility can be over 100 m, and sometimes the space between trees along a sight line can resemble a ride.

Vegetation: The white forest is very open and runnable, with widely spaced trees, with relatively little slash (for the Tahoe area), and high visibility. The “rough open with scattered trees” is also very open and runnable with widely spaced trees. The difference between the two is sometimes minimal, especially at the edges where the two blend together. Scattered vegetation, sometimes knee deep, has developed in many rough-open areas, while there is normally little to no ground cover in the white forest areas. Areas mapped as light green either have young trees close together or denser/taller undergrowth; these areas are still fairly runnable. Vertical green hatching lines generally indicate different densities of manzanita bushes: widely spaced lines indicate bushes spaced far enough apart to get through at a slow run, while closely spaced lines will most likely be quite a fight to get through. Dark green areas are typically small and easily avoided; small dark green areas are usually individual manzanita bushes. Mapped vegetation boundaries are occasionally distinct, but are sometimes not very distinct at all; an effort was made to update them in the areas around controls. Distinctive trees may be lone trees in a clearing (some fairly small) or very large trees of a different species in an area of scattered trees. When used as controls, they are very distinctive.

Rock features: Like most maps in the Tahoe area, almost all the rock features are mapped well in areas with few rocks, and only the biggest or most distinctive are mapped in areas with many rocks. Usually “small boulders” are less than 2 m tall, but few boulders less than 1 m tall are mapped. Irregular black features are large rock spires, which may be broken up and resemble a rock pile. Most cliffs are mapped as such, but some rocks on hillsides that resemble cliffs may be mapped as individual boulders or boulder clusters, especially when smaller than 2 m. Some cliffs mapped as passable might not be easily climbed by most people, so it is a good idea to go around them in general. Stony ground is typically well mapped and distinctive.

Water features: These are likely to be dry, but most have a bed and back, and/or a rocky stream bed.

Hazards

Wildlife: Black bears (although they look brown) are in the area, but they will likely run away from you faster than you will be able to run from them. Unlike in the urban areas around Lake Tahoe, these bears are scared of humans, but it’s still best to give them space. Chipmunks and ground squirrels are everywhere, and sometimes let you get close before they run off and startle you.

Altitude: Less oxygen makes it harder to climb the hills and run fast. Pace yourself, especially if you are not in peak condition. You will also be closer to the sun, so you can get sunburned easily—wear sunscreen!

Drought: There will be ample water on all the courses, but if you need extra please carry some. You will be sweating, but won’t necessarily notice it because of the low humidity, so you may lose significant amounts of sodium. You may want to carry some kind of sports drink to counteract this.

Rocks: Watch your footing and don’t climb anything you feel uncomfortable about.

Vegetation: There is no poison oak and few plants with thorns, but gaiters are recommended anyway because there are lots of sticks and low bushes. Be careful when crossing logs, as the ends of their broken branches act as spears: your Sunday course setter has a six-stitch scar on his leg that verifies this.

Humans: Cottonwood Road that you follow to the Start both days may look tame, but is an active county road—stay to its side and be careful when crossing it. There is also a signed four-wheel-drive vehicle trail on the northern portion of the map that gets some use. You’ll likely hear any vehicles before you see them—be prepared to step off the trail and give a wide clearance!