

Harry Moss 2020 Course Setter Notes

Welcome to Halloween at Harry Moss! It's been three years since we visited ole Harry, and I'm sure he's ready for a few visitors! So, come on by.

The Courses

There will be four courses as follows:

Course	Length (km)	Controls
Yellow	3.0	11
Orange	4.8	20
Brown	4.1	16
Green	5.2	19

Each control will be marked by two streamers--one in the traditional orienteering orange and beside it a streamer in fluorescent green. For each control, on the streamers are written "NTOA" along with the meet dates, the control number. Runners may see other colored streamers on the course and can ignore them.

The start and finish point is a wooden octagon located approximately 100m west of Arborside alongside a tree. The octagon has the appearance of a raised flower bed--it is approximately 15 feet in diameter but only about 8 inches tall. It will be marked with control streamers.

The Maps

The map will be at a scale of 1:7500 with a 3 meter contour interval. It has been updated in the last two weeks to more accurately depict the trails and vegetation as they are.

Some home printers use ink that will smudge when gotten wet. So runners should consider putting their maps in plastic bags to prevent smudging due to sweat or possible rain.

Terrain

Most of the park is in the White Rock Creek floodplain and is therefore flat. There is some gently sloping high ground in the northeast part of the park. The only steep slopes that should be encountered on the courses are a few water-carved gullies. As of this date, the week prior to the event, the seasonal watercourses and seasonal marshes are dry. The dry watercourses and ditches often look like dirt trails. If there has been significant rain in days prior to or during the days the event is open, then many of these low spots may be full of water or very muddy.

Some of the open areas, mostly along White Rock Creek Trail, are mowed often and look like a lawn. Other areas of the park are only mowed once a year and can have grass and other vegetation ranging from ankle to waist high (runnable), waist high to head high (walkable), and areas over head high (difficult to walk).

Hazards

The woods contain some typical hazards for this region including poison ivy, greenbriar thorns, and rusty barbed wire fences. The banks of White Rock Creek are high and steep in most places. All orienteers are encouraged to wear long pants and/or gaiters for leg protection. There is much poison ivy along the trails and in off-trail areas and may have climbed up into the vegetation where it can be chest high.

There are vines growing low across trails and in areas off trails that can be trip hazards. Another trip hazard in the mowed areas are short stalks protruding above the ground a few inches and can cause one to trip and then be a hazard if one falls on one of these stalks.

Trails have been cleared of the 2018 flood damage and the 2019 windstorm damage, but loose dead limbs and branches on the ground in off-trails areas can make for difficult walking and poor footing in places.

Horses

There is a horse barn adjacent to the park and a horse training area in the park. These are marked out of bounds. You may also see horses along the trails. Please get off the trails and allow the horses to pass safely without spooking them. Horses can be surprisingly quiet and can surprise you when they get near if you don't see them first.

Cyclists

White Rock Creek Trail is used by cyclists who often ride fast and can easily come upon you unexpectedly. To be safe, travel alongside the paved path rather than on the path, especially if in a group. If you pause to read your map, DO NOT stand in the bikepath. Don't wander across the bikepath without looking for bicycle traffic. Please note that cyclists can also ride the trails in the wooded area in the eastern part of the park. The Brown, Orange, and Green courses will go through an area of complex mountain bike trails built and maintained by DORBA (Dallas Off Road Bicycle Association). Be respectful of any riders you see. Again, please don't block the trails, and be alert for bike riders.

Dog Walkers

Harry Moss Park is used frequently by many dog walkers, so runners should expect to see them on the trails.

Athletic Fields

The Orange, Brown, and Green courses will go near some soccer fields and baseball fields. Please do not run through any fields where games are underway.

Roads and Bridges

This is a city park, so there are roads around and through the park, but you should NOT cross any major roads while orienteering. Walnut Hill is the largest road through the park and is elevated above the floodplain, so you can run the courses by going under the Walnut Hill bridges. The ground under these bridges is bare of vegetation and should be runnable unless there is a heavy rain during the week before the event.

To get to the DORBA portion of their courses runners on the Orange, Brown, and Green courses will need to cross White Rock Creek using the bridge on Greenville Avenue. Stay on the east sidewalk of the bridge, and do not cross the traffic lanes. Be vigilant of road traffic, run single file, and be very careful if traffic is present.

Runners on these same courses when in the DORBA section will need to cross Walnut Hill by crossing under Walnut Hill on the DORBA trail or under the bridge.

Special Features

Special man-made features (represented by an X or O) on the map and clue sheets can mean signs, benches, picnic tables, poles, posts, mountain bike ramps, guy wires, shopping carts and traffic barrels suspended in trees, or large vertical concrete pipes protruding above the ground a few feet sometimes with manholes on top. Runners can also expect to encounter other special features in a few areas where NTOA possibly never has traversed before. These can be considered as NTOA firsts, never-seen-before orienteering Special Features.

Hope everyone has a fun run and enjoys Halloween at Harry's Place!

Wayne Chaffin, Course Setter