

MAP EVALUATION PROGRAM. FOOT-O

Introduction

The Map Evaluation Program is active since a few years.

At the beginning, a lot of breaches in the application of the specifications were found.

The situation has improved, the Map Commission (MC) is watching over the application of the rules in the main IOF events. Still some problems exist.

General consideration on the Map Specifications

In some Federation a procedure exists to approve the map before it is available for a competition.

Of course the person who checks the map will control the field work, the drawing and the application of the specifications to both. Later, the printing of the map will also be checked.

Now, what the controlling official **will not check** it is for which event the map will be used.

Whether it will be for a Junior, or for a Senior, or for a Master IOF event, or for any national event with competitors of any age, including children, the map must be the same. Same consideration for experienced or less experienced competitors: they will have the same map.

There are no specifications to differentiate a map for different classes of competitors. Only, for some classes (Junior and Master) and some event (Middle and Relay) the enlargement to the scale to 1:10000 is allowed. However, the field work will be exactly the same, at the scale 1:15000. The 1:10000 scale is a simple enlargement of the map at the scale 1:15000. For the Sprint, no enlargement is allowed from the original scale, 1:4000 or 1:5000.

This means that the map **must be readable to anybody**, once the proper scale and enlargement has been chosen.

Some bad habits

What we have found during our evaluation project is that, while the field work is often very good, on the opposite the printing is often poor and drawing is often poor. A bad printing and a bad drawing can spoil the result of an overall good work. It is a pity, because the cost of the work done before drawing and printing is by far the most costly.

In this speech we want to put our attention on a bad drawing. When do we consider a drawing to be poor? Exactly when the readability is poor or the drawing contains redundant information. In fact, sometime readability may be good, but still the map may be loaded with useless information.

There are two main types of bad habits:

- lack of generalization,
- excessive use of details.

Lack of generalization is addressed by a special project within the MC. Of course it results in an excessive use of details, but often we observe an excessive use of details even when the map is reasonably generalized.

It seems that many mappers do not like empty spaces in the map, so they try to put something in.

What they really hate are football fields: it's hard to put in contours or form lines!

I want to concentrate my talk on form lines. Occasionally I will show some lack of generalization.

Misuse of form lines

There are two typical misuses of form lines:

- the use of more than one form line between two contours: this is against the specifications,
- the use of form lines which add no/insignificant information to the runner.

Moreover, often the mapper relies on the automatic placement of fill and voids by the computer softer, and voids may be in the wrong place!

We found one or all in almost **all** top IOF international events.

The misuse of the lines gives rise to two problems.

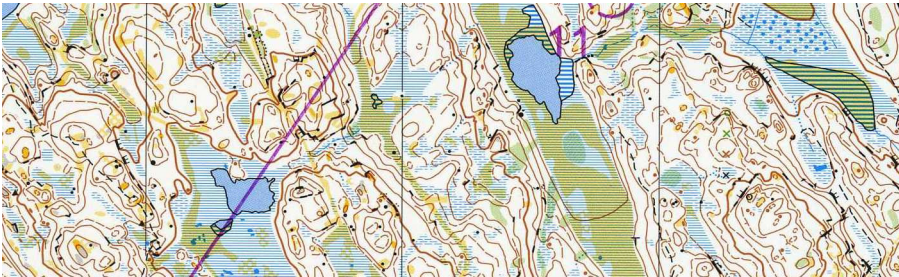
- the first is the alteration of the perception of the amount of climbing,

- the second is that, rather than making the description of the ground more precise, it makes it more confused, and, in most instances, the map becomes poorly readable.

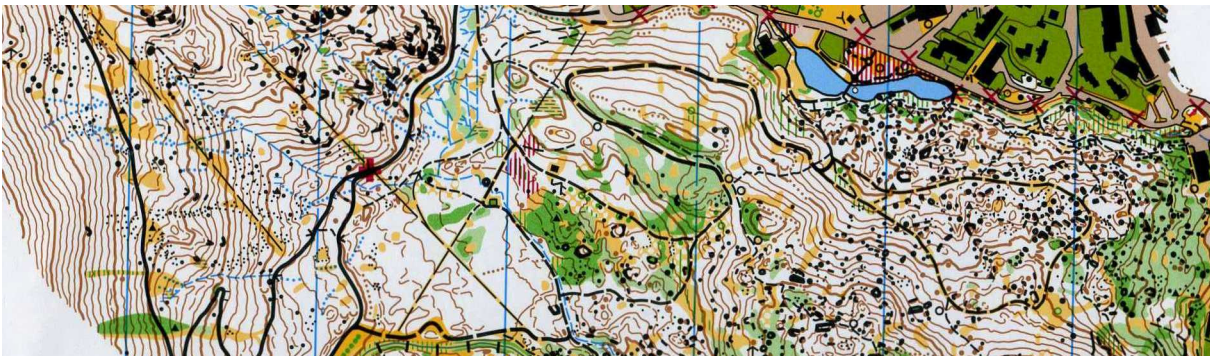
Use of more than one form line

There are many examples. I take some from the last two Junior Championships.

JWOC 2008

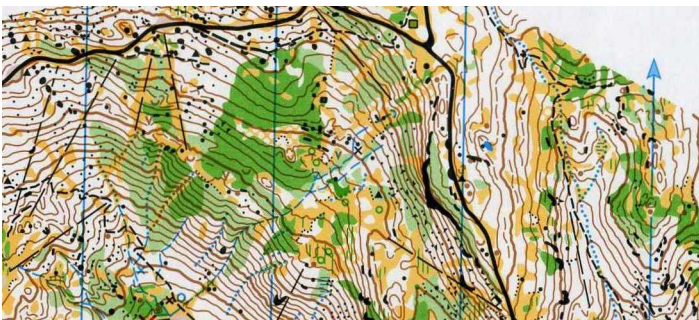
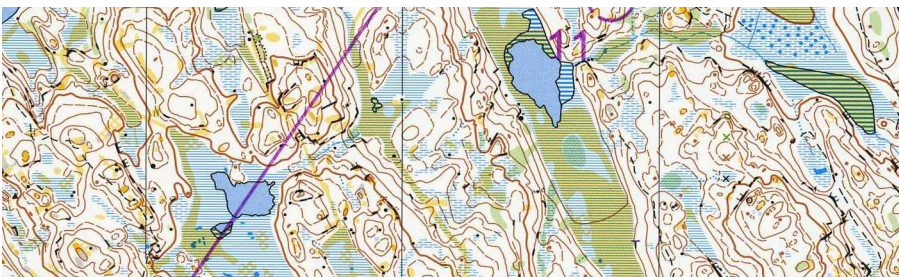


JWOC 2009

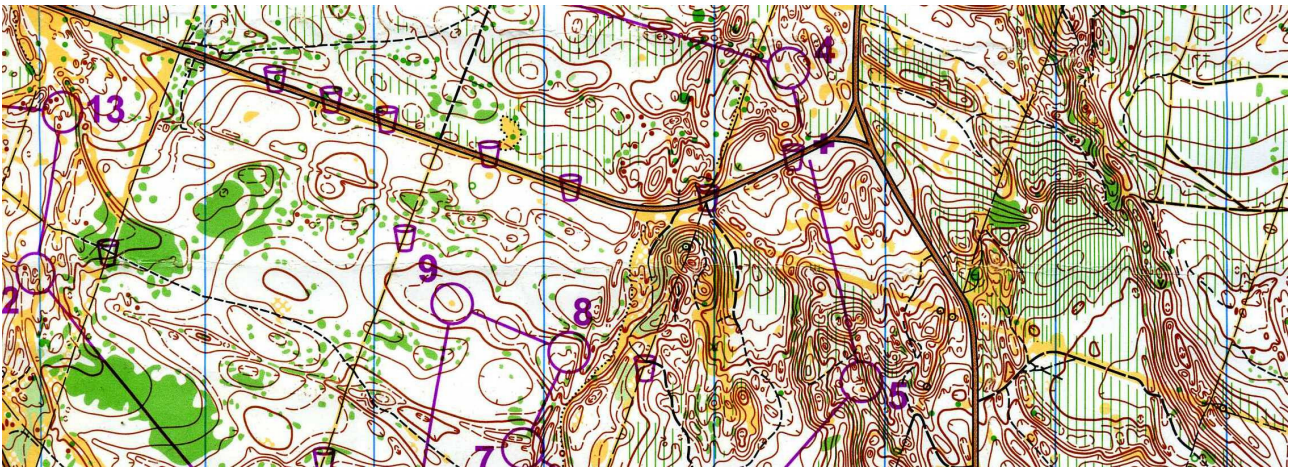


Useless form lines

Here again there are lot of examples. Let us take some from the above maps.



Here an example from a map WMOC 2008



Some additional considerations

The JWOC 2008 example shows that at the origin of the misuse there is probably a bad choice of the equidistance: with 2.5 rather than 5 m. the situation would probably improve.

On the opposite, the original mistake of the WMOC 2008 was the choice of 2.5 rather than 5 m. equidistance. Even so, the mapper introduced a lot of form lines, most of them totally useless, making the map very difficult to read. A real pity since the field work and the printing was excellent!

In general, when the form line has approximately the same course as the adjacent contours, it will not add any new information but just confuse the drawing. Also, when it is used just to show an anticipation of the slope, the precise location of a saddle and the like, it is of no use as well since the runner will understand it anyway from the field. The form lines should be used only if it adds new information: a re-entrant which cannot be understood from the contours, a hill top or a depression within two contours.