

My Lagganlia experience was great for learning fast and easy ways to get me around a course so much quicker than I used to. Before, I would use a handrail and tick off features as I went along. However when I thought I was in the place I wanted to be, I would take a bearing off of the handrail – to my control (even though I wouldn't know exactly where I was along my handrail) and run into the woods with nothing to go on. Now I know that I need to know how many paces along this line feature I need to take before I turn left, for example, or I wouldn't use the line feature at all and think of a different plan that is safer and also quicker.

I came into Lagganlia, thinking that I only needed to work on a couple of things but when we were into the week, I knew I needed to improve a lot of things. Each day I worked on different techniques, perfected them, and moved onto the next. Sometimes it was because I was doubting myself on where I was, making the best plan and concentrating so I wouldn't get distracted on what I was supposed to be doing. We had a day on concentrating - two people were out filming and following some people around and they also designed it so all of us would meet in the middle and some might follow each other even though we were on different courses.



When we went to North Granish, we used something called a sketch map. We had to draw parts of the map that we thought would be useful to get to certain controls. We then got there and we had to run on just those sketches. I realised half way round that I hadn't put enough detail on and found myself at number 4 when I was supposed to be at number 7. When I was drawing out the map, I was drawing the things that would be obvious on the ground and I would use them to get to my control. I should have thought of my plan in advance and drawn all of the things needed to get me there. This was another learning experience.

In some of the places we trained there were very complex contours that you would never come across in East Anglia and my coach even said that some of these places were the most complex in the British Isles. I found these places very helpful as I can now make route choices that use the hills or depressions instead of going round them and cutting onto a path. I can now visualise the shape of the hills if I don't know where I am, so I would look at the shapes on the ground, pick three features that I can see (e.g open land to my left, a



fence running north to my right and a large re-entrant in front of me) and then look on the map for those three features so I then know where I am.



Not all of our time was spent orienteering. There were less serious times when we were all together, either, in a fun briefing, swinging across a pond on monkey bars, having a swimming race or just socializing and making lots of new friends (that were my rivals in past orienteering events).

They also set us fun orienteering relays, one of these being the peg race where the idea was to come back with as many pegs as possible. This was great fun and I also learnt a lot from it. When you were on the course, you could ask coaches if they had any pegs. I however, didn't ask any coaches for pegs and I only got three pegs off of the controls. I forgot to ask the coaches every time I ran past one because I was concentrating on my map and where I



was going. This also tested if people were going to follow each other, no one did (I think). I know there would be no point as you would not learn anything from this race.



Peg Race



Maze

Nearing the end of the tour, we worked on control flow. This was one of my weak points at the time which was surprising as I had won 2 out of the 3 mazes up against all the other athletes, and you need to be quick on control flow. I was trying to use this technique on one of the courses that was set. The further into the course I got, the slicker my control flow was and I knew where I was going long before I was at the control. At our briefing after this course, Jacob was saying, "If the controls are just straight on to each other, you can sometimes remember 4 or 5 controls ahead, so you don't have to waste time looking at your map."

I made so many friends (including the coaches) and I am already keeping in contact with many of them. I learnt so much and I thank everyone that helped me get to this stage and all the staff at Lagganlia that have improved my orienteering skills so much.

