

## **Erwin Park 2025 Course Setter's Notes**

### **Markers**

The controls will each be marked by two ribbons of contrasting colors, **pink** and **yellow**, to distinguish them from other ribbons in the park. The ribbons have the control number on them.

### **Terrain and Vegetation**

The terrain is a mix of open grassy hillsides and forested valleys.

The grasslands are mowed in places, un-mowed in others, but generally very runnable. Inside the loop road in the north end of the park, a prairie restoration area is un-mowed but still runnable. Beware of old, disused bike trails in the grassy areas that have become small gullies. They are covered with grass in places and may be deeper than they appear. In some areas, copses (clusters of trees) composed mostly of mature cedars are scattered in the grasslands, obstructing visibility and making navigation tricky.

The forested areas are isolated and vary in runnability. Visibility is mixed this time of year, as trees and foliage are at their peak. These forested valleys also include a high density of trails and include the most complicated terrain, with a lot of small reentrants and gullies along the larger streams. Be aware that poison ivy is rampant and very, very healthy.

### **Water Features and Weather**

There are four ponds in the park. Their water levels vary throughout the year. At the time of this writing, less than a week before the event, the water levels are slightly high. Some minor rise or fall could occur during the event. Similarly, most streams and seasonal water channels will be relatively damp. Depressions and pits are likely to be water-filled or marshy. If there has been recent rain, expect slick muddy conditions on the trails and in the unvegetated slopes in the forested areas.

## **Out-of-Bounds**

There is a residence in the middle of the park, surrounded by a white fence and some patches of forest. The area inside the fence and the adjacent woods are strictly out of bounds. A small cemetery on the northwest edge of the map is mostly out-of-bounds.

The park has very clear boundaries on three sides. If you cross a fence, you have probably gone out of bounds, except in the new southwest section. The north and boundary has an old overgrown fence and a well-maintained gravel road outside the park. The west side is bounded by agricultural lands with a good fence. The map stops at these boundaries. The road along the south edge of the park is being widened. The area under construction is marked as out-of-bounds on the map.

On the east side the boundary is not always obvious. The fence is ruined in places. In the southern part of the east boundary, a distinct ravine with a north-flowing stream is the main boundary. The construction area to the east of that is very obvious. Do not cross the orange fencing there. If you somehow wander in there, go back to the west. Farther north on the east side, the boundary is again near a stream flowing north. Some remnants of the fence may remain on either side of the stream. Along these stream areas the out of bounds markings on the map are cut back a bit so that features on the east side of the stream can aid navigation. Again, stay to the west side of the fences.

## **Map**

Special man-made items are represented by black O's or X's. A black 'O' can be a tall lamp post, bike repair station, prominent birdhouse on a post or large concrete ring. A black 'X' may be a large sign or kiosk, picnic table covered by a permanent roof, large piece of rusty debris, pile of old fence wire, large utility box, park bench, playground equipment, raised masonry fireplace, displaced wooden footbridge, guy cable anchor, small storage trailer or small monument.

The map is recently revised. The symbol used for the bike paths is the dashed line usually used for small footpaths. Footpaths, which are sometimes old disused bike paths, are shown with the non-standard "disappearing" trail symbol that most NTOA members are familiar with. These trails are mostly not disappearing

in this park, but they are not maintained like the bike paths and will not have bike traffic you will need to be watching out for. Sometimes they are intentionally obstructed by limbs and debris where they intersect bike paths.

Long rows of short stout wooden posts, used as vehicle barriers, exist along the paved roads near campsites and playgrounds. They are not mapped. Picnic tables, small signs and trail markers are not mapped.

Some of the features built as enhancements to the bike trails such as ramps, low walls, dirt mounds for jumps, and small bridges, are not mapped. Stockpiles of trail maintenance supplies are scattered throughout the park. These are, by their nature, temporary, and therefore not mapped.

There is a BMX biking “skills area” with jumps in the field opposite, and northwest of, the parking lot nearest the park entrance. This entire area is shown as “broken ground” and the details of individual knolls and trails within it are not mapped. If you enter the BMX area, use extra caution. Better yet, go around it.

The maps are made to be printed at 1:7500 scale. Control circles are 10 mm diameter, or 75 m diameter in map distance.

## **Hazards**

Bike traffic is a major hazard in this park. Don’t stop in the bike paths, especially on blind curves. The usual hazards of old barbed wire and green-briar vines exist in parts of the woods. Beware of slick, muddy slopes and potential collapsing gully banks after episodes of rain. Burrs are minimal in fields that were mowed in the fall. The un-mowed open areas may have a few burrs.

## Courses

Course	Controls	Distance	Climb
Yellow	16	4.2 km	~80m
Brown	15	4.4 km	~75m
Green	23	5.4 km	~100m

All clue descriptions are available to print separately from the maps. There is also a key to the international clues that you can download and print, if needed.

All courses start and finish near the Pecan Grove Pavilion.

*Lon Newsom, course setter*