STARK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION - Introduction to Orienteering – July 2020

Orienteering is a competitive international sport that combines racing with navigation. It is a timed race in which individual participants use a specially created, highly detailed map to select routes and navigate through diverse and often unfamiliar terrain and visit control points in sequence.

WAIT, Okay, now forget most of that and understand that Orienteering is whatever participants want it to be, keeping in mind that most local events have courses for Beginning to multiple levels of Advanced, each with a different set of skill requirements.

A **White or Beginning course** can be a leisurely walk on the trails of a lovely wooded setting for about a mile or so, with occasional stops when control points (flags) are discovered on the trail just where it showed on the map. Participants can include small children who accompany adults. The children usually enjoy helping spot the flags, and then being able to use either the punch or the electronic finger stick (loaned by the Club) to record finding the flag locations. All of those flags are located at a **feature** which is both visible on the map and in the real world, like a junction of 2 trails, or on a bridge.

For someone wanting a slightly tougher physical challenge, but at the same map-reading skill level, s/he can run that same **White course**.

A **Yellow or Advanced Beginning** course is similar in length, but with some of the flags located slightly off the trail, but still visible from the trail at a feature. That feature might be at a very close gully, or at a boulder. Participants can of course choose to walk or move at faster pace if desired.

An **Orange or Intermediate** course is a more challenging task, with a longer length, and the flag locations are further off the trail, but as with all courses, those flags are near features that can be identified on the map and in the real world. Walk or run…up to the participant.

Longer more Advanced courses come at the **Green, Brown, Red, and Blue** levels for those who begin to master map reading, and who desire the challenge of going miles on terrain that may also present additional challenges.

FOR MORE OVERALL EDUCATION INFORMATION, go to http://neooc.com/about-orienteering/

FOR MORE DETAILS ON COURSE LEVELS, go to http://neooc.com/course-levels/

FOR MORE DETAILS ON FEATURES & CONTROL DESCRIPTION, go to http://neooc.com/control-descriptions/

FOR MORE DETAILS ON MAPS, go to http://neooc.com/maps/