

The Winchester Qualifier on map 185, home map for so many years to Chris Plummer and the map used for many Sunday morning 2 m DF events run by the Basingstoke ARC.

The day started with a rush as Phil tried to get to Stratford-upon-Avon, unfortunately the Warwick bypass was closed due to an accident and the town of Warwick closed for a bicycle race. Following a phone call I detoured him through Kenilworth then Beausale, Five Ways and Henley in Arden, all part of the area I used to drive round for work.

We arrived at the start a half or three quarters of an hour later than usual and started on our sandwiches, Doreen took my mind off the rushed journey by telling me about her forthcoming trip to Canada, it sounded a bit like a marathon, was it 9 hours in the aircraft Doreen.

Time to put the set on and start listening, I say hello to Graham and Dave who tells me Graham cannot hear either station, back to the car to check on the monitor, which I have forgotten to connect up, battery connected and not a dit or a dah from the stations, the monitor is more sensitive than my DF set. We gather round for two approximate bearings, both are given as over 20 Km away.

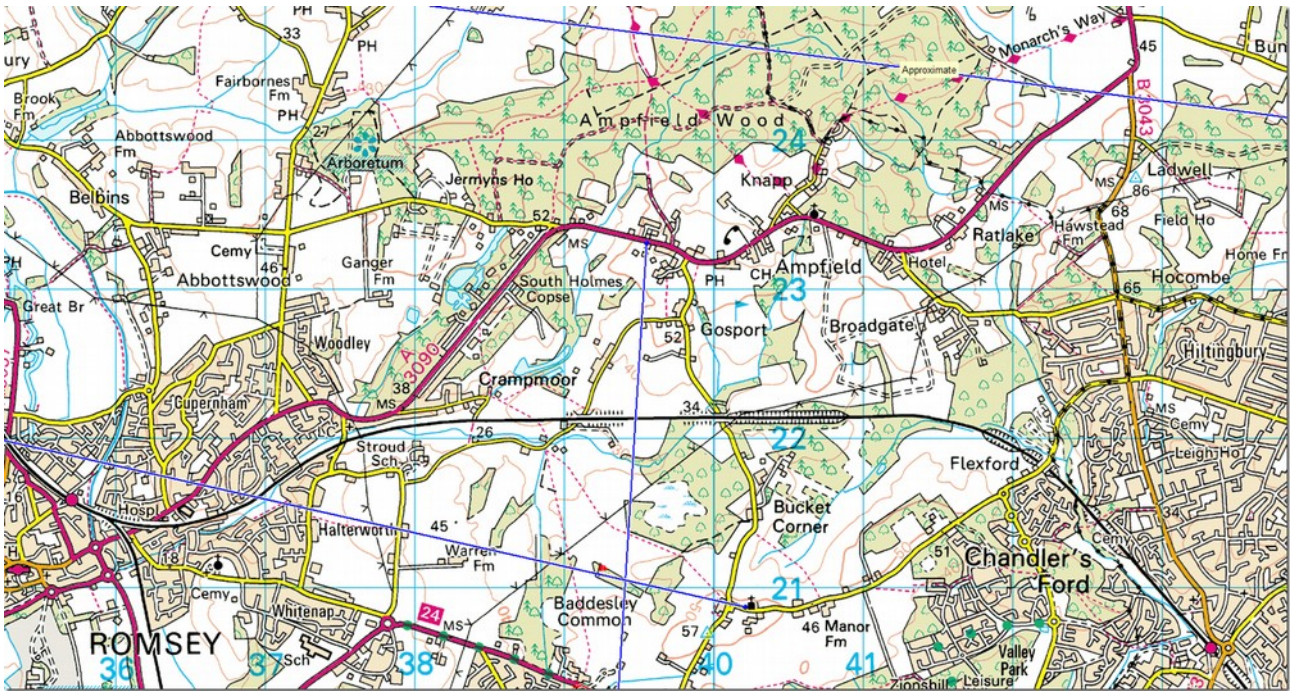
Phil plots the bearings on his computer and says that we should go for the Northern one first. It is a slow journey with lots of traffic but at 2 pm we are Abbotstone Down waiting for a signal, a strong signal comes up and I get a good bearing which goes through Micheldever Wood, it looks a big wood split by the M3 motorway. We head for the South of the wood but the 3rd transmission comes up before we get there, even stronger and it crosses on the motorway. I take a look in the parking area and there is Justin's car, but is it a decoy? We go round to a footpath off the A33 and go into the wood under the M3. A transmission comes up which says that the Tx is down the path and to the right, we carry on down the path through two path junctions and turn right as the Tx comes on, it is a very strong signal, I move away to get a sense but the Tx goes off, back to the strong signal area, start searching round the back of some bushes and there is Justin in full camouflage complete with a black gauze over his face.

Back to the car and we meet the Torbay Tigers with Matt operating the DF set, they tell me that they saw my car parked on the grass verge.



Phil navigates me towards the second approximate bearing, traffic is very heavy and slow on the dual carriageway, we come in to the South of a very large wood, the bearing goes South and so do we under the railway line and power line and stop to wait for a bearing, it is a very strong signal that gives a cross only half a Km away. Phil points out a footpath to the South of the wood with our cross in and we go to look for it. There is an old road in front of some bungalows and I park there, look across the road and there is Doreen's car. Along the footpath with wire fences both sides of it, is the bearing going to the right? I lean over the fence but the bearing is inconclusive, to the end of the fences and turn right, across another wire fence and there are Graham and Dave, Graham is very tired and says he has been there a long time, there is a lot of trampled ground which I jog round but not really enough cover so I head towards some trees passing Bill as I do so, I am very lucky and stumble on Kevin just inside the trees.





Graham, Dave and Bill find it shortly afterwards and we all head back to our cars. Then it is off to Justin's home for a real DF tea. We all admire Justin's large garden and his long wire down to the summer house. Emma has produced a fantastic tea and I have several helpings of the Chicken Curry.

Many thanks to Justin, Kevin and Emma for a super event, what date would be convenient for next year?

It is a long time since I last won a Qualifying event, July 2017, so many thanks to Phil, not only for his navigation but for the decision making during the afternoon, all of which were absolutely right