

This was the 2nd Junior National Training Camp in Colorado Springs. It was coached by Erin Schirm, the national junior team coach and Becky Carlyle, the North Eastern Junior Regional Coach. The 1st camp of this year put on by Erin was back in early January in Petaluma, California, which I missed due to being sick. There were a total of 8 orienteering training exercises over 4 days. Overall this was a really great camp. We stayed at the Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center, which had great facilities and we were able to meet some athletes. Colorado Springs was a great location; there were various maps and some really nice forests, as well as cool sites to see. The camp was mostly about cementing and practicing fundamentals. I did learn about strategies for relocation and got to practice distance estimation and rough compass, among other important skills. I'd definitely recommend for juniors or adults to go to the remaining national training camps of this year, which will be in Boston and New York.

The other juniors in attendance were Michael Laraia, who will compete at JWOC for the second time this summer, and Thomas Laraia, his younger brother. Tori Borish, running the sprint relay at WOC this year, also came for most of the trainings.

On Friday, after getting picked up from the airport we drove to Fox Run. There the first exercise was one where you just ran on paths to get to the controls. The second one was about distance estimation, bearings, and handrails. The map was empty except for small sections halfway in between controls and just past the area with controls. The legs were also labeled with how many meters long they were. I think I only found the first control in this section. I kept missing the controls by a pretty good deal and was really unsure of the distance estimation. Once I reached one of the handrails I would get back to the area where the control was without actually finding it, which made getting to the next control even harder. My compass developed a bubble quickly and the needle kept changing direction. Decided to skip the rest of the controls and just headed back to the start. I used a different compass to do the 2 controls I'd skipped backwards, and it took two tries, but I found them.

After training we checked into the training center and had dinner. We had a meeting talking about what we were doing the next day and Erin showed us some injury prevention exercises.

Saturday we started the day at the Olympic Training Center's sports center. We did some warm up exercises and a strength circuit. After breakfast we drove up to Lake George for training. The exercise was a combination of different skills. The first part was short controls, working on precise map reading. The second part worked precise compass, taking bearings to the control as only the area around the control circle was mapped. The third part was purely contours, and the fourth part was corridors. It ended with some more rough compass controls.

The first part of the exercise went well. Both controls on the bearing section I was off by a good deal, but used the area that was mapped to locate the controls. I felt like I was looking up and heading to a feature for most of the time, but sometimes you had to go around something, and I was unsure of how much farther until I reached the control circle. Had a bubble in my compass as I was leaving the last bearing control, and I think what I thought wasn't actually north probably was. Headed off in the wrong direction but Michael caught up and showed me where we were. The majority of the contour controls I found

easily, except for one where I wasn't sure which spur it was on. It was good to solely focus on contours. For the corridor controls the map and terrain didn't match up so I was really unsure that I was sticking in the corridor but I ended up at the controls. Been out for a while by that time so Erin and Becky were waiting for me out on the course. I got one more of the corridor controls and then just ran back, skipping the last couple bearing controls.

After lunch and some rest we drove to Blue Mountain. The focus of that training was route choice with the CAR technique and relocation with the SOFA technique. The first half of the course was a normal course focusing on choosing routes with good attackpoints. For the second half we ran after one of the coaches without maps and then got our maps back and relocated. Started off relocating pretty slowly but after some time I got better at locating features, getting up high to see more and going back to a major feature. Thomas saw a bear cub on his course and I saw a couple elk.

Next we were going to do what would've been a neat maze race but we were pretty tired so we all just picked up one control. Mine was just north up a hill so it was really simple. When everyone got back we headed back to the training center. After dinner we talked about the day's training and repeated the exercises from the night before.

First training of Sunday was at the Lazy M Ranch. It was a long course with some pretty long legs, and a focus on approaching the control correctly by looking at descriptions. The first 2 controls were shorter, and I was doing pretty well on the way to 1 but hesitated for a while close to the circle, should've had a better attackpoint. To 2 I looked for the control in an area that was vaguely similar but clearly not near where the control was. Once I'd realized that mistake I found 2 fine. The next 2 controls went a lot better, as I made sure to have a good approach on the control, and the running on those felt good.. After 4 I took a rough bearing towards the trail, but I ended up a little off it and spent some time standing and looking at my map in a network of trails. Finally I just started moving a direction and saw something I'd seen earlier. From that feature I knew the area I was in and I took trails almost all the way to the last control. I'd planned a different route but it worked out just as well.

Ate and then did a control pick exercise with a lot of controls. We were supposed to keep a consistent pace so I just walked the entire thing. Also, there was a focus of being able to expect what the control circle would look like before getting there. The terrain had a lot of cliffs and rocks. Made one mistake where I left the control without reorienting my map, and another one where I was actually fairly sure I knew where I was but since there were a lot of similar rocks I decided to relocate. Went to a marshy area to relocate and went to the control again. I had actually been where I thought I had been. Other than that I hit all the controls well. It was a good exercise since normally since I'm running I don't have a chance to pay attention to as many features, and walking I could pay attention to much more features, which I do need to do sometimes.

Finished with a forked race at Round Mountain. Start was at the top of the hill with some nice views. Screwed up pretty early on control 3 where I was at an earlier cliff and took me a while to make a decision whether to bail and try again or keep looking. Rest of the course went a similar way; I wasn't too good at initially hitting the right cliff and realizing where the right place to go was.

Monday morning we started with strength and conditioning again. Did more with weights than Saturday. I haven't done strength workouts since quitting gymnastics and I've never used the weight bar with weights, so that was new. Started with deadlifts with the bar and one of the employees saw me struggling, walked me through it and gave me some tips. Explored the building a little bit after we finished and saw some cool equipment.

After breakfast and checking out we went to Manitou Springs for the incline. Started of jogging slowly but switched to walking pretty fast. I did most of the incline with Becky, and for the steeper part, we would do it in sets and then take a break. Made it up in 40 minutes. Awesome view from the top. Ran back down on the Barr Trail.

It was the day before my 15th birthday so after the incline we stopped at a donut shop and had donuts. The last exercise was back at Fox Run, it was just some short loops and streamer pickup. Then we rushed back to the airport.