

## On terrain, map and course

The thirteenth TAOK rogaine is held on one of the very best orienteering terrains in South Estonia. The terrain covers the edge of the Haanja Uplands, a part of the Võru-Hargla valley, Piusa river primeval valley and an area of heathy pine forests. You can observe a variety of landscapes and contour forms, forest types and water objects. Forests south from Tabina village, but also in Lindora and Piusa river valley are mainly heathy pine forests with interesting land forms, which are at times even too nice to be true. On the other hand, those who go to hunt for a high point score will discover also the other face of the terrain – the wilder and chlorophyll rich edge of Haanja Uplands – which makes it clear that the whole rogaine is not just a walk in the park.

Piusa river primeval valley is a landscape protection area. Please keep this in mind and while racing please respect the nature and leave no trash on the terrain. On the other hand, if you run too fast, you risk to miss several natural and cultural landmarks. By Piusa river there is the highest sandstone cliff from Devon era in Estonia – Härma wall – which is up to 43 meters high. For Estonian traditional believers (Mausk or Faith in land believers) a sacred place is Pääväpüürdmise (or Day Turning) hill, also near Piusa river.

Piusa river can be crossed using the foot bridges indicated on the map. However, the river is in many places rather shallow and can be easily crossed with wet feet. If you are lucky, you may find a fallen tree or a stony part of the river and cross it with dry feet. There is a footbridge near the event center, but be careful, as it is narrow and slippery if wet. It is likely that many teams will want to use this footbridge after the start or close to the finish time.

The local roads on the terrain are curvy. Be cautious when running alongside or crossing these roads as there may be some traffic. You may see some cars driving even on forest roads as local people go for mushrooms. Be extra careful when moving on high cliffs near Piusa river. The cliffs are over 30 meters high and provide a scary possibility of free fall.

The course setter has talked to the great majority of owners of local farmsteads, but we cannot guarantee that all dogs will be tied up and friendly.

Sown fields and fenced pasture areas are marked on the map as out-of-bounds (purple stripes). It is also strictly prohibited to enter the territory of farmsteads and private homes, marked on the map with olive green color. However, **if** the map indicates a road through an inhabited area, you can use these roads (in one place you may have to open the gate). The land owners have been friendly towards rogainers, but it is important to keep good relations.

As usual at TAOK rogaines, the map is at scale of 1:30000 with 5 m contour interval. It is a special rogaining map, which is more accurate than the base map, but not as detailed as an orienteering map. For drawing contours, laser scanning height data of the Estonian Land Board have been used. The highest point on the terrain is about 210 meters over the sea level, whereas the lowest point is below 60 meters over the sea level, so relative height difference on the whole terrain is over 150 meters. The highest slope is over 40 meters. Some clearings may be missing on the map, also some tracks of forest harvesters are not shown on the map. On the other hand, areas indicated on the map as semi-open areas, could be anything from a recent clearing with single seed-trees to old fields which are rapidly changing into a young forest. The boundaries of marshes are not always reliable. A hint – in the southern map of the map, there is a high probability that the depressions between hillocks are wet.

The map is aligned to magnetic north, i.e. the grid lines of magnetic north (indicated with green color) are parallel to the edge of the map.

There are 2 water stations on the terrain with cold water. The purity of the water in natural streams has not been tested.