

On terrain and map

The fourteenth TAOK rogaine returns to its roots. About 40% of the terrain of this year's rogaine overlaps with the terrain of the first TAOK rogaine held in 2000. However, as the army of rogainers has meanwhile multiplied, there will be many who have not yet rogained on that terrain. For those who were present already in 2000, we shall remind a saying that it is not possible to step twice into the same river. Or is it? Some of the remaining parts of the terrain are also quite well known orienteering and skiing areas. In 1995 the first multi-day o-event 4EST was held around Jänedä. And just in August this year participants of the MTBO World Championships were pedaling in this area. But we are confident that even the rogainers with a long rogaining career will find some new corners on this terrain and the rogaine will offer some new perspectives on familiar terrains.

In short, the terrain is Kõrvemaa at its best. By the way, did you know that Kõrvemaa means "desert land" in translation? The Estonian word "kõrb" originally meant not desert, but a huge uninhabited forest, which may even be marshy. Only later the same word was used to describe isolated sandy areas in dry climate. Well, the climate in Estonia has been quite dry this year. Although you will see a lot of blue color on the map, it may not be so easy to get your feet wet, unless you step into a ditch or river. But there is a chance that you may get your feet sandy.

Two major roads run through the terrain and there may be quite some traffic, so look around when crossing those roads. There is also a railway running through the terrain and although the number of trains is not very high, there is a chance that you may have to wait for a train passing, so be patient.

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 Valgehobusemäe (White Horse Hill), which is 106 meters over the sea level. The relative height difference on the whole terrain is over 40 meters. The hills are not particularly high, but the fact that from the total number of 40 controls 18 of them have found their place on different types of hillocks is just another indication that the terrain is hilly.

Some clearings may be missing on the map, also some paths and 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 changing into a young forest. The boundaries of marshes are not always reliable.

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 serviced water stations on the terrain with cold water. In addition, there is a well near the State Forest nature center in Aegviidu, this is marked on the map with a light purple bucket. The well is self-service, there is no other equipment except the bucket.

From the course setter

The forest and its passability: From well passable pine forests to overgrown old clearings. Thickets can be found also on esker ridges. However, on the most part passability of the forest is from average to very good. 95% of the course is in the forest. In the north-east and south-east parts of the terrain there are forest cutting areas of different ages. Not all of them are shown on the map.

Tracks and rides: In some parts of the terrain, there is a dense network of path and tracks. The terrain has a regular forest ride system. However, some of these are not well visible and/or passable. As a rule, the rides still exist in some form or another.

Water level: Bogs and marshy forests are mainly dry. Some streams and ditches are also dry. Larger ditches and streams have some water. There are some rivers where the water is quite deep in some parts. It is recommended to cross those rivers using bridges.

Settlements: There are three larger settlements: Aegviidu, Nelijärve and Jäneda, all along the main road intercepting the terrain. For the rest of the terrain, there are some smaller dispersed villages, but the habitation is quite sparse. Some of the homesteads have permanent residents, but many are used as summer houses. However, it is quite possible that during the nice autumn week-end, the owners will be there along with their family and pets. Please respect their privacy and try to get friendly relationships with their dogs.

Sight-seeing: Regardless of your speed of movement, it is highly likely that you will observe some beautiful nature, including bogs, pine forests, nice lakes. You are also likely to see the signs and tramp the trails of the two newly introduced major hiking trails that traverse the whole Estonia: one from Oandu (the site of TAOK rogaine 2009) to Ikla near Latvian border and the other from Aegviidu to Ähijärve (the site of WRC2008). You will also see the signs of the President's course: a ski track from Aegviidu to Jäneda, named after the track used by the pre-war President Konstantin Päts, who also behind building a tourist home to Nelijärve village. Look around also in Jäneda, there is a nice red-brick manor.

Recommendation: Make brave decisions in route planning even though 8 hours may not equal to 140 points.

See you in Jäneda!