



## **The Purple Thistle 2010** **Balmacara, Kyle of Lochalsh, Scotland** **Final Details**

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### **Welcome!**

It is with great pleasure we welcome you back to another instalment of the Purple Thistle, and again you can expect a warm west coast welcome. This year we've got another brand new area and we're delighted that over 200 of you are making the journey from across the UK, Europe and the World to join us for some barebones orienteering at Balmacara!

The barebones concept is all about taking the fuss out of event organisation as much as possible, while still providing an event of the highest quality, with a great atmosphere and enjoyment for all - including the organisers! So what's left for you is all that matters for quality orienteering (maps, courses, controls and electronic punching) and a bunch of likeminded people out to enjoy a weekend away from it all in a beautiful part of the country.

In light of this, the barebones concept stipulates that there can be no complaining throughout the weekend, but hopefully there will be nothing to complain about so this won't be a problem! However, please remember that this event has been put on by a bare minimum of people, a busy planning & organising team who are based across the UK, along with a handful of dedicated people without whom this event wouldn't occur.

We would like to doff our caps all those who lend a hand in staging the event, especially to the following people who have made the event possible:

- Lochalsh Woodland Park, Iain Turnbull from National Trust for Scotland, Forestry Commission Scotland.
- Robin Strain for the preparation of SI kit and Interlopers for the loan of equipment
- All those we've managed to coerce into helping
- A special thanks in particular must go to Tim and Adrienne Sowood, whose 'backyard' we're enjoying this weekend, and who have been extremely generous in their assistance in helping us stage the event, we hope they enjoy a proper race on the area!

Results will be on the website as soon as possible after the event, although we're staying in the area for a while afterwards so it'll depend on internet access! There

should also be a report, photos, route analysis and discussion appearing on [Nopesport.com](http://Nopesport.com) as soon after the event as possible. We hope you enjoy your weekend on the west coast and have a delightful couple of days orienteering.

## General Information:

**Organising Club:** Team Nopesport

**Planners/Organisers/Controllers:** Andrew Brown/Duncan Grassie

**Areas:** Balmacara East (Day 1) and Balmacara West (Day 2)

**Punching:** SportIdent

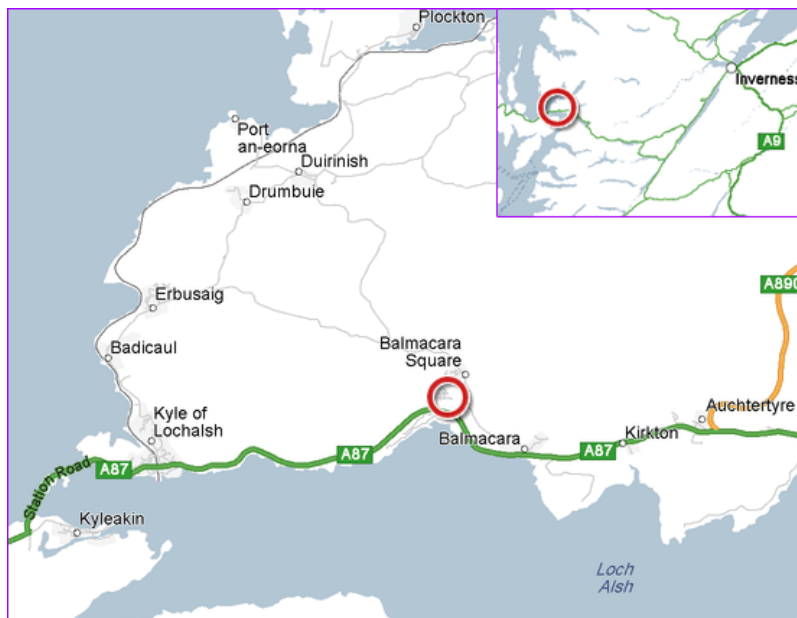
**Queries:** We will be on the area from 12 August, so unable to respond to queries - phone 07917 821602 if urgent.

**Please note: Competitors take part at their own risk!**

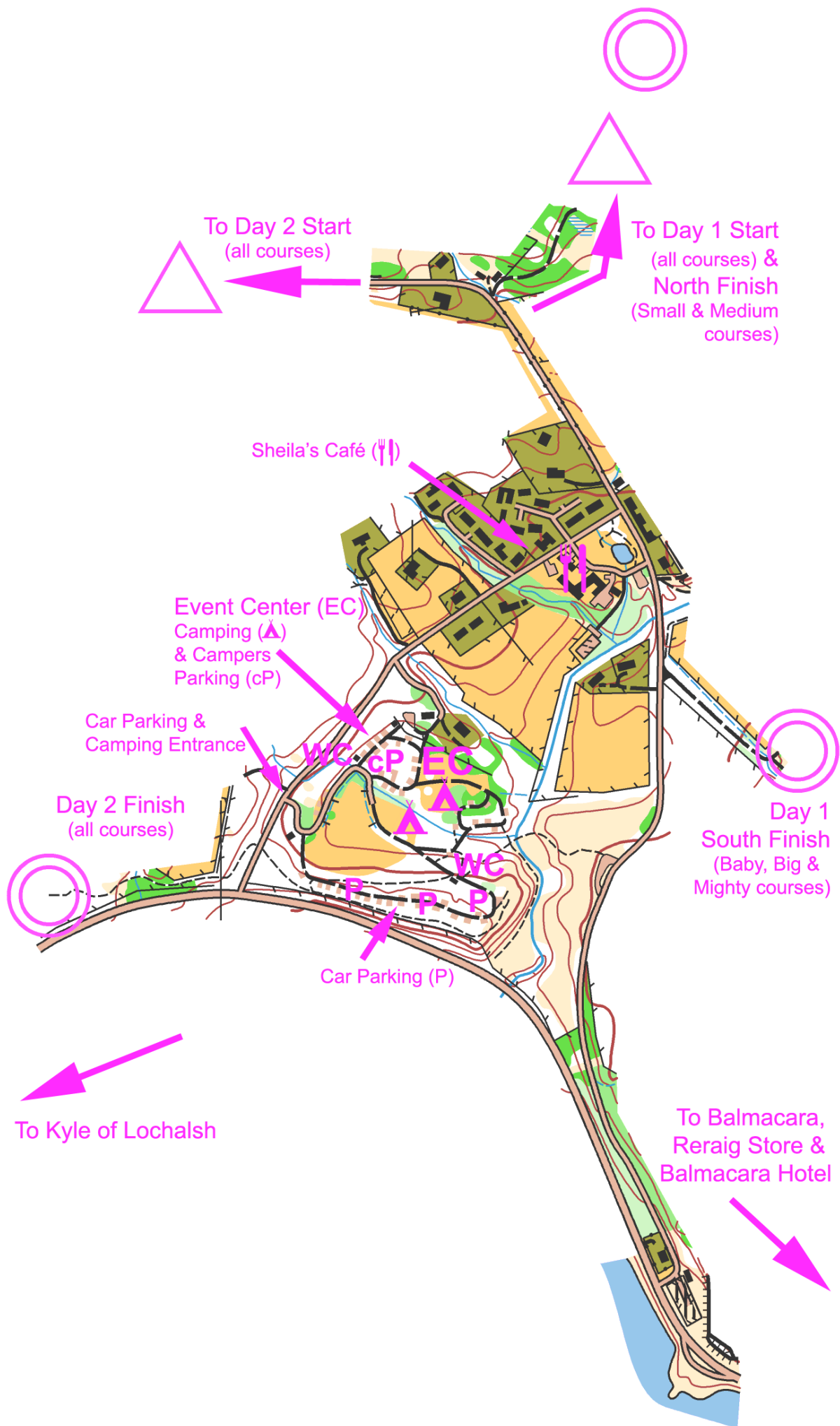
## Event Centre & Camping

The event centre and camping will be at Lochalsh Woodland Park in Balmacara, 4 miles east of Kyle of Lochalsh.

## Directions:



- From Fort William take the A82 to Invergarry and turn left onto the A87 for Kyle of Lochalsh.
- From Inverness take the A82 to Invermoriston and turn right onto the A887 for Kyle, then onto the A87.
- Pass through Balmacara/Reraig Village and past the first turning to the right (signposted Plockton/Duirinish) and continue on and take the second right (signposted Balmacara Square).  
Turn right again after a hundred metres into Lochalsh Woodland Park.
- **Event Center: Registration/Download/etc for both days is as indicated on the map below**



**Parking:**

- **If you have booked a camping spot**  
follow the road left after the entrance and park as indicated on the above map.
- **Everyone else**  
should take the first turning to the right after the entrance and park as indicated on the above map.

**Camping:**

- Camp in the areas indicated on the map above.
- Those arriving on Friday, we'll have the site open from 18:00.
- No fires please, use BBQs only on hard-standing and take care using camping stoves.
- We take no responsibility for you or your belongings on the campsite - look out for one another!

**Toilets:**

- As indicated on the map above - please use both sets.

**Showers:**

- Those looking for showers should make use of the public showers available at main carpark in the center of Kyle of Lochalsh
- Alternatively take a trip to the swimming pool in Kyle (open for swimming until 16:00 both Saturday and Sunday).

**Food:**

- Sheila's cafe in the square (see map above) will be open both days, 11-5 on Saturday, and from 12-3 (perhaps longer) on Sunday. They've opened especially for us on Sunday, so please support them!
- Reraig stores will be open on both Saturday and Sunday for groceries, it is about 1 mile away.
- Balmacara Hotel does bar meals from 17:30.

## Day 1: Balmacara

**Directions:** See general directions to the Event and Car parking

### Registration & Download:

- This will be located at Event Center.
- Hired SI cards and Baby Thistle maps will be available to pick up here.
- After your race you must return to registration to download - **this is essential!**

### Toilets:

- Toilets are available at the campsite only. There are no toilets en-route to the start/finish.

### Start Procedure:

***We would encourage people to arrive as early as possible to ensure there are no queues for the start later in the day.***

- **Signout at registration** and follow tapes north through Balmacara square, see earlier map.
- The route follows a minor road, please take care and keep to the side.
- **Distance:** 1.1km, 50m climb
  
- **We don't do start times - it is a punching start.**
- The start will be open from **10.30-13.30, Courses Close at 16.00.**
- The start will be unmanned and as it is a **punching start**, please leave a sensible gap between you and others on your course, it is no challenge following others!

### Map & Course Details:

Course	Distance	Controls	Scale/Size	Finish
<b>Baby Thistle</b>	2.9km	9	1:10,000 (A4)	South
<b>Small Thistle</b>	4.3km	10	1:10,000 (A4)	North
<b>Medium Thistle</b>	6.1km	13	1:10,000 (A4)	North
<b>Big Thistle</b>	8.8km	17	1:10,000 (A3)	South
<b>Mighty Thistle</b>	11.7km	21	1:10,000 (A3)	South

- Map produced by Deeside Orienteering & Leisure Maps in 2008, minor updates in 2010.
- All maps will be printed on waterproof paper.
- Descriptions will be printed on the maps only, there will not be separate descriptions available.

### Finish - Courses Close at 15.30:

- It is an unmanned finish, please punch to finish and return to event assembly and download following the tapes. Take care crossing road.
- **North finish:** The north finish is 500m beyond the start, so 1.6km from Assembly.
- **South Finish:** The south finish is 800m from assembly.

**Important: You must return to assembly to sign back in and to download, even if you have retired etc. If you do not do this we will assume you are still out on the area!**

### **Terrain & Planners comments:**

- The East side of Balmacara predominantly offers open moorland with short heather and grass, with some birch forest. There is some bracken although this is rarely above knee height except where the undergrowth symbol is used in a couple of places. The early parts of all courses, except Baby, enjoy the best of the terrain with stunning views in all directions.

There is a fence running north to south across this part of the course which should be fairly easy to cross anywhere for most competitors. Crossing points have been supplied at two points where the competitors on the Small and Medium are likely to cross.

When planning the courses I wanted the shorter courses to experience the best bits of the area without having to 'drag' them on longer legs towards the finish. As a result, there are two different finishes - Small and Medium finish just north of the start and the Baby, Big and Mighty Thistle finish further south. The final section of the Big and Mighty Thistle courses offers a contrast to the rest of the area, with a trip through a forested area and into the open area above Balmacara village.

Enjoy your runs!  
Duncan

### **Results:**

- Results will be posted at download and copies will be brought along to prize-giving. They will also be available online after the weekend along with routegadget on the Purple Thistle website.

### **Saturday Evening Sprint Race**

We'll have an entertaining extra race in Balmacara on Saturday late afternoon/early evening for those with any energy remaining, details available on the day.

### **Social & Prizegiving**

On Saturday evening, once we've moved some controls around for Sunday's race, come and join us for a well earned pint at the Balmacara Hotel, we'll try and get the prizegiving done around 19:30.

## Day 2: Balmacara

**Directions:** See general directions to the Event and Car parking

### Registration & Download:

- This will be located at Event Center.
- Hired SI cards and Baby Thistle maps will be available to pick up here.
- After your race you must return to registration to download - **this is essential!**

### Toilets:

- Toilets are available at the campsite only. There are no toilets en-route to the start/finish.

### Start Procedure:

***We would encourage people to arrive as early as possible to ensure there are no queues for the start later in the day.***

- **Signout at registration** - Baby Thistle competitors should collect maps here.
- Follow tapes north through Balmacara square, see earlier map.
- The route follows a minor road, please take care and keep to the side.
- **Distance:** 2.5km, 135m climb
- **We don't do start times - it is a punching start.**
- The start will be open from **10:00-12:30, Courses Close at 15.00.**
- The start/finish will be unmanned and as it is a **punching start**, please leave a sensible gap between you and others on your course, it is no challenge following others!

### Map & Course Details:

Course	Distance	Controls	Scale / Size
<b>Baby Thistle</b>	2.4km	10	1:10,000 (A4)
<b>Small Thistle</b>	3.8km	12	1:10,000 (A4)
<b>Medium Thistle</b>	6.1km	15	1:10,000 (A4)
<b>Big Thistle</b>	9.1km	23	1:10,000 (A3)
<b>Mighty Thistle</b>	10.9km	28	1:10,000 (A3)

- Map produced by Deeside Orienteering & Leisure Maps in 2008, minor updates in 2010.
- All maps will be printed on waterproof paper.
- Descriptions will be printed on the maps only, there will not be separate descriptions available.

### Finish - Courses close at 15:00:

- The finish is unmanned, and 500m to the west of the event assembly. Punch to finish and return to assembly following the tapes. Take care crossing road.

**Important: You must report to download at the assembly to sign back in and download, even if you have retired etc. If you do not do this we will assume**

**you are still out in the area.**

**Terrain & Planners comments:**

- The west side of Balmacara again offers open moorland of mixed heather and grass, with some plantation and natural birch forest towards the end of the courses. Competitors should encounter very little bracken, and none that should impede their progress significantly.

Courses should offer a bit of a contrast to Day 1, with less opportunity for long legs but some more intricate orienteering in places thanks to an array of rock and contour detail.

The two longer courses will cross a minor road twice, please take care when doing so. There are a number of fences on the area which can be easily crossed in most places, but crossing points have been provided and marked on the map where required.

Enjoy your time on the area!  
Brooner

**Results & Prizegiving:**

- Results will be posted at download and copies will be brought along to prizegiving.
- Prizegiving will take place at around 15:30
- Results will also be available online after the weekend along with routegadget on the Purple Thistle website.

**We hope you enjoy the event.**



**NOPESPORT**