

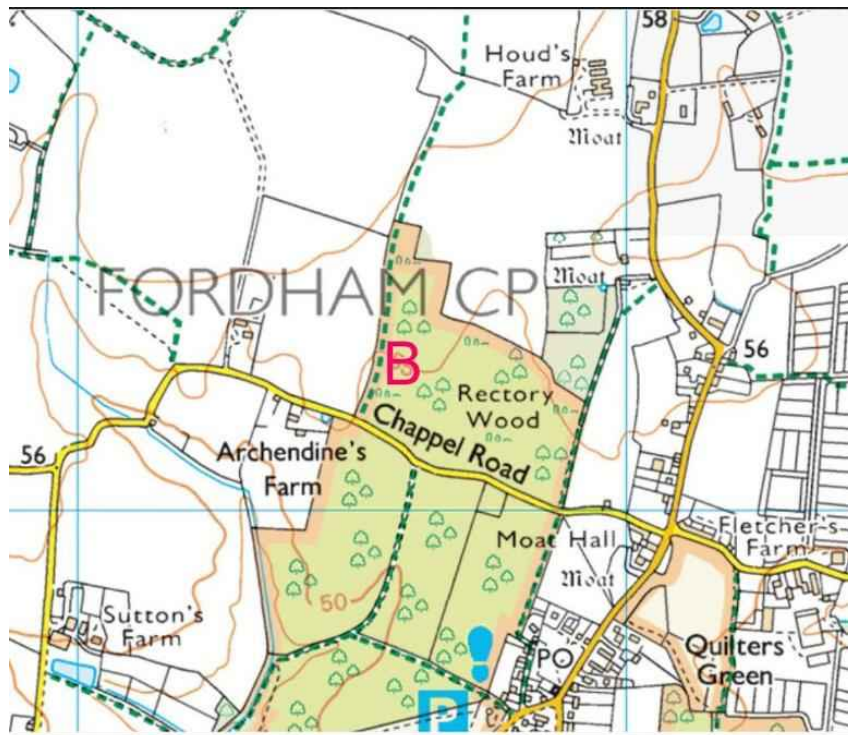
Tales from the Riverbank (Tx A)

(Report on the Essex Snowman / BTBDFA Q1)

We chose transmitter sites so that there would be a minimum of driving, a friendly pub, and places which gave some cover, as there was little to be found at this time of year. I had surveyed the Copford area along Hall Lane a couple of weeks before, and having already used Pits Wood a few years ago, decided that the area adjacent to the sewage works by the river would be a good spot, as it was boggy in places and still retained cover from fallen trees and dead brambles. Access could be straight through the wood or down the side of the field alongside and along the riverbank. A 40m aerial was strung up on the day before the event, pointing into the wood and roughly towards the start.



Philip had chosen a site on the disused railway near Earls Colne, but when he went to set up his aerial on Saturday, he found that the footpath was out of use, so he decided to use a well known area at Fordham, with good parking.



The weather forecast for the day predicted a grey morning with some sunshine and the potential for heavy showers in the afternoon. On my way to Tx A I found that the A12 was blocked north of Colchester, so I had a frustrating journey through Colchester to Copford, and only arrived on site at 12.30. The kit was hurriedly carted to my hide to be, and by now the heavens had opened. A rapid shelter was made with a pink yoga mat as the floor and a

garden furniture cover for the roof. Philip had a posh shelter with camo net and all mod cons :



I had my kit set up by 1250 and thankfully it tuned up quickly, and well enough to be confirmed that the signal could be heard by Richard at the start. Relief and a bit of a rest !

And off we go !!! Thankfully it had stopped raining at my site, and I think it had remained dry at the start.





“I’m not hanging about for an “approximate”

We hadn’t really thought about the order in which competitions would hunt down the stations, but I was expecting a number to come to me first (Tx A) as it was a bit closer to the start and on its way to Tx B. As with all good events, it went as unexpected and all competitors went to Tx B first, leaving me to wonder if they were experiencing bearing problems on me, with A and B both being roughly in the same direction from the start.

Philip messaged to say that Gary had been first in at B at 2.14, shortly followed by Colin and Rosie, then Geoffrey a while later. At about 2.45 I thought I heard another competitor approaching only to find that Gary had shot over from B to claim his second find before four competitors had found their first. It was then quite a while before “datum” could be heard closeby. Just once, then it went away. Then at about 3.20 Philip messaged to say that all competitors had been in at B, and he had closed down, was packing up and shortly off to “The Cricketers” PH. Lucky man ! After 3.45 there was a steady procession of competitors arriving at A, with Alan leading the charge from the cars parked on Hall Lane.



Of course being on a riverbank means that there is the potential for someone to find themselves on the wrong side :



Still, by 4.20, all competitors had found both stations (hooray !) with the bonus that there had been no more rain. At that point, mole did his spring clean up, and emerged from his hide uttering the words “Whurrs the pub ?”



All the friends shared a sumptuous feast for dinner and were glad that they had emerged from another DF winter into the spring of another DF year.



The winning competitor had to depart early in his fast car, leaving Alan to be presented with the runner-up prize, and to explain how easy the afternoon stroll had been.



Thank you to all competitors for supporting this event; to Phil for setting up Tx B and causing some havoc; and to all who are keeping DF going. Well done to Gary for winning and completing over an hour before the next one in. Results below.

Tim / Tx A / MOBGE/P

MID-ESSEX SNOWMAN DOUBLE 23 MAR 2025

	Position	Tx A	Tx B	Finish	Inter-Tx (min)
GP	1	14.47.36	14.14.00	14.47.36	35
AS	2	15.48.49	15.08.16	15.48.49	40
C&RM	3	15.48.56	14.26.18	15.48.56	82
PL	4	15.51.44	15.15.46	15.51.44	36
GF	5	15.51.58	14.40.35	15.51.58	71
RE	6	16.10.43	15.17.11	16.10.43	53
RS	7	16.17.44	15.18.30	16.17.44	59
Tx Operators		M0BGE/P	G0NXH/P		
Map	N Essex DF				
Location		Copford	Fordham		