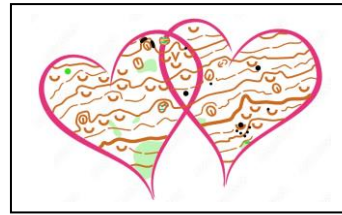


## Two Hearts

By Bryan Teahan



### Her Story (Love at the 15<sup>th</sup> Control)

The heroine of this story is a beautiful, stunning looking brunette just waiting for the right man to come along and sweep her off her feet. Our story starts when she decided to try out Orienteering for the first time. She found the map sport fun and it challenged both her mind and body.

After a few events, she caught sight of her hero, an athletic-looking fellow with muscles rippling in all places - she just had to get to know him better.

However, this love story has one snag in it. Our hero only had eyes for maps; he dreamed forests in his sleep; ate gullies for breakfast and lusted only for rounded hills.

Try as she might, our heroine just couldn't get him to notice her. She attended every Orienteering event on the calendar - all to no avail - it was as if she was on another planet. It became an obsession with her - she dreamed nightly of getting lost in the bush with him.

After becoming a skilful navigator after running in so many events, she decided she would waylay him at the next event. She planned her move carefully.

First, she noticed the start time that he put down. She put her own start time just after his. At the master maps she peeked at the A course controls and picked a control she could get to. She rushed to the control and then waited behind some trees, all the time her heart beating expectantly.

After a short wait, the love of her life came into sight. Quickly she moved out and into his path and said demurely, "Could you please help me, I'm totally lost."

Now an opportunity like this doesn't come often to too many men but our hero must have been a bit thick because quick as a flash he said to the girl, "You're here", pointing at their current location on her map and before she could stop him, he was gone.

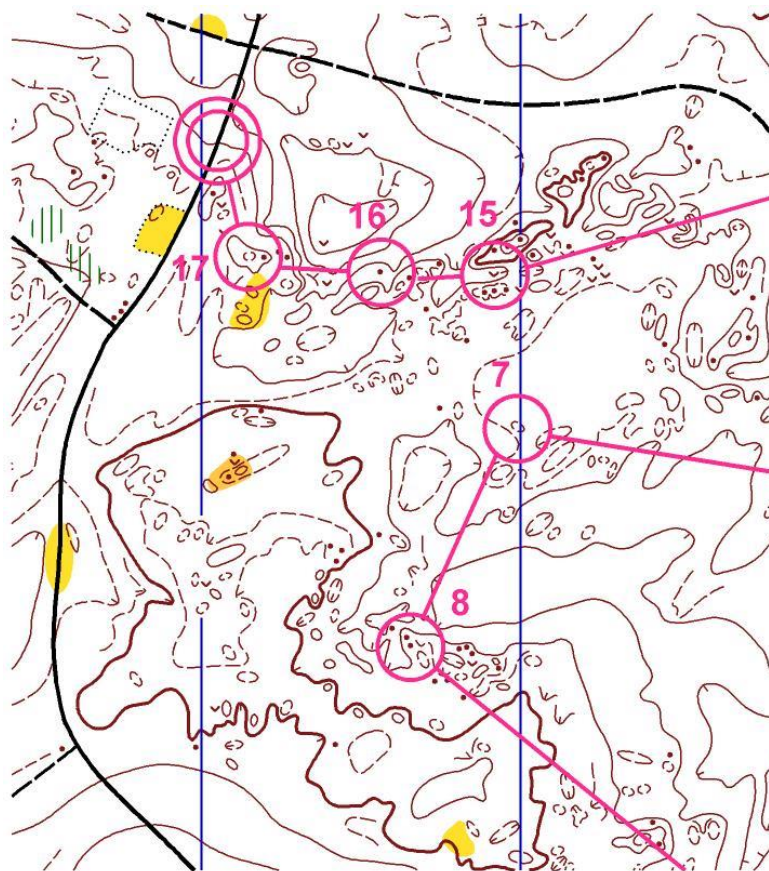
Now most people would have given it up right there and then as a lost cause but not this lass. She was so gone on this fellow that she schemed and schemed to make him notice her and hit upon a truly brilliant plan one day.

Once again, her plan was to find out when he started but this time she would start before him not after him. She was using the strategy that if all he would notice was Orienteering, then she would really make him notice her. And so, she trained night and day waiting for an event which had the right type of A course - one with several twists and turns. She became very fit and even more lovely and beautiful if that could be possible.

Several events passed by where there were unsuitable A courses – unimaginative courses that were just one big circle. But at last, at one event, she was in luck - a good course planner had set a difficult course - it had many changes of direction.

After starting well before him, she carefully drew his course - a course of 17 controls. She took special care on the 7th and 15th controls - two controls near each other because of a loop. She started and after checking a few controls she raced to control 7 and lay in wait for him. As soon as he came into sight, she leapt up and punched the control and raced away. Running as fast as she could she raced to where number 8 was - she had already found out where it was beforehand. She just managed to clip it before him. She let him run away and she fell down gasping.

Now most people would think that this would make him really sit up and notice her. But she was taking no chances this time. Quickly she gathered her wits and raced to the 15th control knowing he would get there later. She braced herself for a tremendous effort. After a period of time, he came into sight looking shocked at seeing the same girl still ahead of him after he had run like the wind to keep ahead of her.



She punched number 15 very hard, a few moments before him. She knew the exact way to numbers 16 and 17 and to the finish because like the 7th to 8th leg she had already reconnoitred it beforehand. She was off like a hare - she would beat him to the finish! She heard him yell something behind her and she was elated - at last he had noticed her! Now she concentrated all her mind and effort into keeping in front of him. He was running very fast and catching quickly. But true love can conquer anything, and she placed her mind and body in overdrive and crossed the finish line a second ahead of her love.



She fell in a heap just waiting for him to talk to her - he had to as she had beaten him over three controls! However, he seemed quite cross and even started complaining to an organiser. After he talked for a few moments, he even walked away. She was devastated. What could have happened?

The organiser came to her and told her the bad news: "I wouldn't go too near that bloke in the near future - he says you got to a control just before him and you accidentally got the clipper hooked in your clipcard and then rushed off with it. He said you wouldn't even stop when he yelled at you, and try as he might he couldn't even catch you to take the clipper back. He says he even missed clipping the final two controls - the first time that he hasn't finished a course."

And there the dreaded clip was - imbedded in her clipcard on the fifteenth punch box. And as fate would have it, the clipper's impression looked very much like a broken heart.

## His Story

He had been going through a rather messy break-up with his girlfriend and he had just been chucked out of her house after a final confrontation with her just before he came to the Orienteering event.

They had been going together for some time but over the last few months they would get into constant arguments over his smelly socks and shoes; the caked mud and sand in the washing machine and dryer; why he left the toilet seat up; why he didn't do anything around the house; why she would never see him on the weekends and when they went on a holiday it had to be to some place in the middle of nowhere with his friends.

Orienteering was a dirty word.

He was in a life called Orienteering and Orienteering was his life.

While all men have vices where some smoke, some drink too much, others sit in front of the box being lazy and vegetating, he only had one vice and it was Orienteering. He loved it with a passion and a fervour.

After 10 straight weekends when he was out Orienteering, she had finally given him an ultimatum. It was either Orienteering or her. After arguing and shouting for half an hour about why this event was more important than spending time with her, he gave his final argument.

"I live for reentrants, knolls and depressions, and running in the wilderness through a wide-open forest.

You must accept me for what I am. I don't want to change. I've got an Orienteering heart."

"Fine", she told him in no uncertain terms, "You can take your Orienteering and shove it. I don't ever want to see you again!"

"Fine", he said, "You won't!" and he slammed the door and left to go Orienteering where he promptly got outrun by our heroine.

He had never felt lower - his current strike rate with members of the opposite sex was zero, for the first time he hadn't completed a course, he had nowhere to live, and his heart was broken.

He was having a bad day.

He just wished he could someday meet the perfect woman where both of them could sing together: "We've got an Orienteering heart..."

## Their Story

He walked away at the finish as he always had the policy whenever he was angry that he would calm down first and if he was still upset much later then he would go and talk about it. This would infuriate his ex-girlfriend no end as she loathed his apparent icy calm even in the face of a tirade.

After a few days thinking about his life, he thought to himself, "Hey, life goes on, we were incompatible. She loved shopping; I loved the outdoors; she loved dogs, I loved cats; she came from Venus, I came from Mars. It was not to be. Oh well, at least there's an event next weekend."

At the next event, he spotted our heroine looking sad and lonely. He just had to go up and talk to her about the 15th control from the week before. Within moments they were laughing together, and it was like a breath of fresh air that he could talk naturally as they had so much in common.

He admitted that many times he had been beaten by a slower runner where quite often the cunning tortoise would beat the hare and he didn't really like getting beaten by anyone, as he was so competitive. That's what made this sport addictive – as in golf it was impossible to be perfect.

She admitted she didn't really compete fairly and that she had just wanted to impress him.

They were off to a great start as they were being truthful and open to each other.

Their Orienteering hearts were beating fast together as one as they anticipated a life of getting lost and finding themselves together.