A New Type of Course for Cross-Country Racing

From the Toronto "Ski Runner"

TYPICAL
CLOVER LEAF
18 K.M. RACE COURSE
SCALE · ONE MILE

THE above diagram represents an eighteen km. (11.2 miles) Championship race course laid out in a Clover Leaf design.

This design has a great many advantages over one using a wide loop or one with the start and finish far apart.

First it requires less trouble in laying it out, always a difficult task and often quite carelessly done.

The three loops A B and C should be about the same distance (about four miles each). The course markers, three in number, each take a separate loop at the same time.

While the bunting or other markers are being placed the chief setter determines the position of the posts No. 2 and No. 4 and marks them with red cardboard sign about twelve inches square labelled "Post No. 2—4 miles," and "Post No. 4—8 miles."
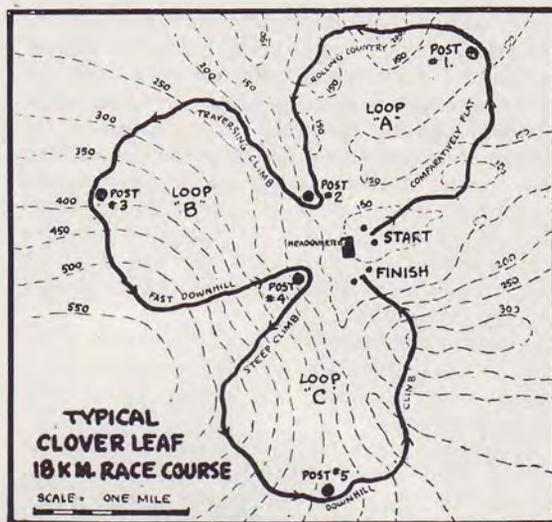
About two or three hours after the markers set out, the chief of the course starts over the marked trail to check over the markings. Any places not properly marked are attended to. When he comes to the farthest point in Loop "A" he marks it with another red square "Post No. 1—2 miles," and then continues on to No. 2. By this time the whole course should be marked.

Loop "B" and "C" are checked in a similar manner and if they are properly marked it should not take more than 2½ hours to cover the complete course.

About one hour before the Race three men or more should be sent out to break trail, starting at the beginning of each loop (A, B, and C), at the same time. The trail breaking should be finished in less than an hour.

This job is at times quite a difficult one, especially after a heavy fall of snow, and instead of one man bearing the brunt of the whole work it is split among three and takes less than one-third of the time.

The course being concentrated in three small loops can be roughly laid out and the position of each post determined beforehand. The posts Nos. 1, 3 and 5 knowing their approximate positions can take a short cut. Post No. 1 should start out half-an-hour before the start of the race. Posts Nos. 3 and 5 do not have to start until fifteen to thirty minutes later respectively.

After all competitors have passed Post No. 1 he may then follow the last man to Post No. 2. If all competitors have passed Post No. 2, Posts Nos. 1 and 2 may come in and report. Post No. 3 also follows the last man to Post No. 4 both then returning to report. Post No. 5 also follows the last man to the finish. Thus all reports from the Posts should be in not more than fifteen minutes after the last competitor has passed the finish line. Each outpost has only two miles to go and return, whereas in a course taking one wide loop the farthest outpost may be six miles away. In case of an accident to any competitor it would only be a matter of two miles or less before he would be found. This course should be easy for the competitor to judge his distance and time his pace. It would also make the race more interesting to the spectators if they could see the racers at two points beside the start and finish.

If the race is for varied classes it may be split up into sections, that is a Junior Race may be run over one loop only (4 miles) while a Class "C" Race may be run over loops "A" and "B" (8 miles) and a Class "B" Race over loops "A" and "C" also 8 miles (but more difficult).

It may be easily seen that this type of course has a number of advantages for competitors, officials and spectators. The work of preparation and the officials' duties is reduced to a minimum. The course may be described to visiting competitors more accurately than a course with one wide loop thus reducing a certain amount of advantage that local competitors have on their home grounds.