

North Gloucestershire Orienteering Club
AGM 9th November 2020
REPORTS

Tom Mills

Chairman's Report for NGOC AGM 2020

Now that I come to an end of my tenure as Chairman, I must start by saying how much I admire the commitment and dedication of the club committee.

The past 3 years have had some very real problems and at certain points seemingly impossible hurdles to overcome. Starting with the ban on parking on forest tracks we were looking at a very bleak future given our dependency on Forestry Commission land. We then had a ban on all night orienteering and in both cases, we were given no rational explanation. This was followed by Insurance and whether this would continue to preclude us from access. Even when the issue was clarified we were still expected to monitor all entries and identify if anyone had entered more than 3 events without being a member of BOF. Given that they could have only done one event with NGOC and 2 others elsewhere you might be forgiven for questioning the sanity of those who produced the rule. To add to the general overhead along came GDPR. Well apart from the ambiguity, confusion, and lack of differentiation between small volunteer clubs and large commercial organisations it seems we are responsible as individuals to delete all useful knowledge of our members and can only contact them if they agree to it. Unfortunately, many are not aware of this. Catch 22! One of the more ludicrous highlights was a directive to look out for an orienteer who had a criminal record. We had no description, no known whereabouts was given, and was apparently known to use 3 different names.

Without meandering through an exhaustive list, I should also mention by way of example, the stitch up concerning Lydney Park. We had an agreement in writing that they would give us access for a minimum fee. On this basis, which we made clear, we commissioned a professional mapper. Long after he started, they withdrew permission, and we were left with a hefty fee. This has been a real thorn in my side but with the coincident arrival of COVID all communication ceased.

I leave the role now pretty much as I started with the F.C. or Forestry England as they are now, putting up more barriers because they cannot be bothered to apply themselves to the minor action of agreeing that the orienteering COVID event rules are exactly in line with Government guidelines. It is not a problem for them however if dozens of mountain bikers want to congregate in a group on forestry land.

In the forthcoming year ahead, we will inevitably have a challenge in keeping our membership at the level of last year. If we cannot provide a means to deliver the sport they are paying for then there is no reason for them to stay. Hopefully with the efforts being made to map non Forestry England areas we will be able to offer something in the New Year. MapRun continues to attract competitors which is incredibly positive and a credit to Pat who has put in so much work. For many however there is no substitute for the pure sport of pre-planned organised forest orienteering using physical controls.

This year we see the standing down of 2 other committee members. After what seems as and probably is, endless years of service to the club Carol is vacating the role of Treasurer. Every one of us who has had the privilege to enjoy what this club has to offer can link that privilege to the incredible longevity of commitment by Carol.

Three cheers for Carol!

Also leaving the committee but keeping a supporting role to the Club Captain is Hils. If there was ever a sweeper it is Hils. Those tasks that just needed someone to pick up, set up and conclude were swept up. This 'without portfolio' role has proved to be hugely beneficial for the committee and club. Three cheers for Hils!

Carol Stewart

Treasures Report for NGOC AGM 2020

As last year, the accounts have not been examined at time of writing, so you are invited to approve the accounts subject to examination.

The Income and Expenditure page shows what happened during the year, with figures for the previous year down the left-hand side for comparison. The Balance Sheet shows how the year's results affect our overall financial position.

Bottom line: a surplus on the year of £1271, thanks to the three larger scale events we managed to hold - the Middle event last November as part of the Southern Champs weekend (postponed from March when the goshawks started nesting early), the NGOC50 weekend - amazingly a brilliant sunny, frosty weekend in a wet month - and the Compass Sport Cup heat in pouring rain until clearing up time, just before Covid lockdown. :

Income and Expenditure

General Income (everything except income from events)

Membership - down on last year, but late renewals may not have been happening once lockdown struck. We have had several keen new members recently. I see no need to raise our club membership fee (in fact we have already told BOF this).

Mapping - a small amount of printing for other clubs or individuals.

Very little relay activity this year. We paid for entries to the British Relays, which will be held over, and 6 people did pay their subsidised fee of £5. We know who you are! Despite the rain and being the organising club we also managed a good turnout for our Compass Sport Cup heat (fees included under 'events').

SI hire - kit loans to other clubs/organisations

Shop/café income is still roughly keeping pace with expenditure, but we won't be able to offer this service until the Covid restrictions ease up. I have some cans of soft drinks still in date if anyone would like them but have had to discard quite a few edibles.

In the absence of 'real' O, Alan Brown's O-games have seen a revival of interest - worldwide!

Routine Expenditure (all the things it takes to keep us going, apart from spending on events)

Committee expenditure - we continued to use Innsworth Community Hall at £25/night for meetings; other expenses are mostly print cartridges and mileage, plus refreshments. Having tried Zoom meetings we may make more use of this facility in future.

Subscriptions - The British Orienteering club subscription remains at £70 for the coming year. NGOC is also a member of the Woodland Trust.

Mapping - major expenditure on the new Symonds Yat map, and some expenses for Lydney Park before they withdrew permission. We hope this may change. Several small new areas and updates - thanks to all the club mappers and surveyors for their efforts. The waterproof paper used cost some £700.

Equipment - the major purchase this year was the protective matting (£1200) used at NGOC 50 but which we hope to hire out to other clubs. Printer costs (we pay quarterly fees based on the number of pages printed) are included under Equipment and came to some £900 this year. Rates went up slightly this year.

Club kit - the latest batch of club tops cost £1,113 but not that many have been sold yet. We also have stocks of club jackets and a few club vests.

Sundries - these include various donations to people who supply us with helpful services such as Open O-maps, Maprun and Purple Pen. We introduced a new award for 'Most Improved Junior', with Max Johansson the first worthy winner, but trophies or other prizes for this year will be held back until next year.

Our Routine Expenditure far exceeds our General Income, because we derive most of our income from events.

Events

This, our 50th anniversary, was a big year for us, and we were lucky that we could hold the planned major events before lockdown. This meant that despite losing our planned events until able to start up again with mapruns in August we still had a significant surplus on events overall. Although the 3 August mapruns are included in the total, the income and expenditure relates only to those in September last year, as the recent events are levy free, had no other expenses claimed, and we hadn't received the income via Fabian by the end of the FY. BOF are extending the levy holiday to all Virtual courses until the end of the year and SWOA will do the same. After that levy will apply where there is an entry fee and results are published.

BOF recently signed a new agreement with the Forestry Commission (the first since 2010) which would mean much higher charges for small events (£126 for 150 participants or fewer) and even longer lead times than currently for permissions. Discussions are ongoing and BOF have just said they will refund half the fee from August 2020-March 2021. At present both the Forestry Commission and the National Trust are limiting participation to 30 people maximum (and in any case not currently processing permissions), so until lockdown eases, we are fairly restricted in areas we can use. We expect to continue to look for alternative parking for Forest events, ideally with facilities such as toilets and power, as restrictions on track parking in the Forest don't look like easing substantially.

Balance sheet

The second page shows our overall financial position. Thanks to the year's surplus we have over £16,500 in cash assets, so are in good shape financially. The large sum for outstanding cheques may seem odd, given the lack of activity since March, but is mainly accounted for by reimbursements where I paid bills by transfer from my own account (we don't yet have club online banking) and would normally have repaid the sums from cash received - but with lockdown continuing and the move to pre-entry only we didn't receive any cash after March. As a sign of the times, I received no payments by cheque this year, just cash or transfers.

Club Membership and Event fees

I propose that we keep club membership at £4 seniors, free for juniors. 'Club-only' membership, at the same rates, will be available to full members of other clubs who wish to join NGOC as a second club.

We raised fees for League events, New Year's Day, and Chairman's Challenge from January 2020 - this also contributed to the event surplus - and I see no need to raise them again. However we now feel we should make a contribution more regularly to Open O-maps, Maprun etc. so I suggest raising fees from January 2021 for Western Night League, Mapruns and evening SI events to the same level as the League: Senior £7 EOD (if and when we can do this), £6 pre-entry, Junior £2, with no additional charge for parking. Training events Senior £5, Junior £2. SI hire £1 (£2 for SIAC), free for juniors; £1 surcharge for League and Western Night League for non-BOF seniors, assuming this can be incorporated in Fabian pre-entry.

Fees for larger events are decided on the basis of event budgets and comparable events elsewhere but we aim to keep these at a reasonable level, especially for juniors. We will continue to subsidise team events and coach fares if needed for the CS cup.

I will be happy to provide further detail or explanations at the AGM.

I am standing down this year, with Alan Pucill lined up to take over, but when the actual handover will be able to take place is unclear! I am willing to remain on the committee 'without portfolio', at least until the treasurer handover is complete.

Name: Simon Denman
Membership Secretary Report for NGOC AGM 2020

Previous membership figures 10/10/19:

Category	Current	Other
Senior	131	3
Junior	34	0
Total	165	3

Current membership figures 5/10/20:

Category	Current	Other
Senior	127	3
Junior	33	0
Total	160	3

Membership numbers have remained largely similar to last year although renewals happened prior to the start of the pandemic of course.

There were 30 members lapsed from 2019, 7 of which were juniors but we have been able to attract a similar number of new and returning members.

Shirley Robinson
Club Captains Report for NGOC AGM 2020

Despite Covid 19 being just around the corner we managed to host the Qualifying Round of the Compass Sport Cup and enter a reasonably good sized team at the same time. Our best efforts to get teams together for the JK and British Championship Relays were laid to rest though we did have a fair amount of interest for these events which will hopefully be replicated next time they are held. Where and when remains to be seen.

We entered a team for the Virtual Cotswold Way Relay and I think everyone enjoyed themselves though it wasn't quite the same as running a head to head race. The team finished around 17 minutes faster than in 2019 which is good given that they didn't have fellow competitors to spur them on a bit. I helped Gill Stott with training the teachers at Newent School. Who knows, one or two of those pupils might become stalwart team members in years to come. Only time will tell.

Equipment:

Needless to say, there has been very little activity equipment-wise since the middle of March. However, the SI units have recently been checked over and cleaned since their last rather grubby outing at Cranham. Three units have died, two report low battery levels, and one is behaving erratically. Otherwise all SI units are in good shape, and ready for the forthcoming WNL events and the British Night Championships, in February 2021.

We did spend a lot of money over last winter, primarily on new fibreglass stakes, and on tracking for use over wet ground. Of course, we haven't since had any need of the latter, but it will come in useful in the future, once we are able to start staging larger events.

Bob Teed is owed a word of thanks for a very swift and efficient job turning 90 electric fence posts into control stakes, and enduring a great deal of very fine glass fibre splintering in the process.

The club laser printers are approaching the end of their useful lives. There is more detail on this in Paul Taunton's Mapping Report, as he is the sole user of the main, older, and more expensive one. The smaller backup printer, which I use, is only 4 years old but no longer available or supported. It mainly prints black and white club material – registration slips, labels, event details and flyers – but also acts as an A4 backup to the main A3 printer. The colour print quality, on waterproof paper, is very variable, and generally not good, but Printerbase, who supplied it and with whom we have a supplies contract (for compatible, not OEM, toner), seem quite unable and unwilling to help. After a long break with almost no printing, the colour quality has improved somewhat, so the plan is to continue using it until the end of the current supply contract (February 2021), and then decide what to do about it. On the plus side, replacing the A4 printer is far less costly than replacing the A3, which although older still works well.

I did consider replacing the club tents early in the year, on the grounds that the current ones, and spares for them, are no longer available, but as they remained serviceable through to lockdown, I did not progress this. It's perhaps worth pointing out that for the British Night Champs, if current distancing constraints prevail, we will probably have to adopt a strategy of dispersed small scale facilities, to spread people out as best we can, and to achieve this it might be worth investing in new tentage even though the current set has a little life left in it. That would allow us better scope for under-cover dispersal of the main functions at BNOC2021 – Enquiries, dibber hire, starts, download etc.

The other main activity I set out to accomplish at the beginning of the year was rationalisation of the kit, and disposal of a lot of items no longer really needed. This didn't get very far, and hasn't been restarted. If anyone has a home, or knows of one, for a lot of old control stakes, let me know. They would make useful temporary fence posts for chicken runs, rabbit pens, or whatever. Otherwise they will sadly go to landfill.

To date we have had no need of PPE, and so have bought none, just using personal supplies of anti-bacterial handwash for our maprun events. We will, however, have to purchase appropriate supplies for BNOC2021.

Development:

By and large there hasn't been any!

That said, **Gill Stott** should be congratulated for working hard to keep interest in orienteering up in various schools across the forest, despite the constraints the latter, and school staff, have been under for much of the year. In particular, Lakers, in Coleford, and Newent Community School, have tried hard to create some opportunities for orienteering, and Katherine Lady Berkeley at Wotton likewise.

Much of my orienteering focus during the year has been on things we can do, and that very largely

means mapruns.

We have:

- Run successful winter and summer evening maprun series, attracting up to 40 runners, including many non-members giving maprun a try for the first time. We have now just kicked off our Autumn and winter night street series.
- Published a number of forest training courses, based on previous league courses; these have not been particularly well attended but have nevertheless allowed people to get out into the forest on more traditional O courses, albeit in most cases with plenty of vegetation!
- Published the Beat the Trail courses as start anywhere maprun courses, for those looking for longer, easier navigable runs
- Started creating a series of MTBO courses around the Forest of Dean, to provide variety and hopefully to attract riders as well as runners looking for a change.

We plan now to publish a series of informal training mapruns, forest rather than street based. These will be publicised as informal course available to run over a 3 day weekend period, with the objectives of:

- at least allowing people to run in the forest whilst the Forestry Commission not only refuses permission to organise any events, but won't even accept applications into their 3 month approval cycle.
- By limiting the event window, hopefully creating a little bit of competition, and encouraging people to meet up with their friends and add a bit of sociability to the run.

Clearly we have to be wary as to how we promote these, so as not to imply that these are formal events, so we will be relying on word of mouth, Facebook, and Tom Cochrane's weekly email, to spread the word and encourage involvement.

Out of Club role, but as a development exercise, since March I have acted as the UK (well, all except Scotland) focal point for new maprun users trying to get started with it. I have helped over 60 clubs, mainly orienteering ones but also runners and fell runners, to get started with maprun, and many of these have used our experience and maprun website to build their own facilities.

Greg Best

Fixtures Secretary Report for NGOC AGM 2020

As you are all aware, our fixture schedule has been decimated this year by the pandemic. From mid-March until the end of July, no events were allowed at all. Now events are permitted again but it is proving so difficult to get permission from landowners that you would barely have noticed!

The year did at least start off very well. Before the shutdown, we managed to squeeze in the traditional New Year's Day Score, the first night event to be allowed in the Forest of Dean for several years, 3 league events, the big birthday weekend of National events and finally just before the Coronavirus death knell sounded, the Compass Sport Cup heat at Cranham.

Fortunately, we have had Maprun events to fill some of the gaps since events were officially allowed to restart in August. The excellent summer series was well-supported and visited a number of new locations that provided lots of chance to run off-road. Mapruns will continue through the autumn and winter.

We are having to scratch our heads to come up with new ways of providing events for our members. We hope soon to put on some virtual events in the terrain of the Forest of Dean. This

will use Maprun technology and for each one you will have just a few days to run the course before each competition closes and the results are published. We also hope to put on some small sessions using proper flags and dibbers. These will be outside of the FoD and be limited to 30 people per session. The intention is that there will be multiple sessions held over one or two days with results consolidated at the end. The limit of 30 is what most big landowners are currently allowing. Keep an eye on the website for developments on all this.

There are some other positives to look forward to.... We will have a full series of night events this season. This will culminate in the British Night Championships on Cleeve Hill in February. We have been given permission by the owners of Newent Woods to map and hold events on their land. Happily, private landowners tend to be less concerned with rules, so it should be easier to get permission for events there. With all of the postponed events from this year, it does mean we have a whole host of oven-ready events (sic) once restrictions finally relax a bit.

Hilary Nicholls

**VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE MEMBER 'without portfolio' / VICE CAPTAIN
REPORT for NGOC AGM 2020**

Club 50th Year Anniversary Birthday Weekend 18/19 January 2020

'Cut my teeth' as Assistant Organiser to Pat MacLeod which included research into assembly and parking locations, liaison with chosen site management, organised volunteers, public notices, in-bound traffic route & course signs, Fabian set-up, army liaison, risk assessment, end of event check.

Other

- Set up Event Safety Workshop Jan20 (Gloucester Services South)
- Junior shadowing – no requirement
- Facebook event circulation including BOF permanent and virtual orienteering promotion Jul/Aug20.
- Organised club photo at Minchinhampton
- Attended Outdoor First Aid course
- Helped out at many events including CS Cup/Trophy heat at Cranham.

I will be standing down as committee member at the AGM.

Ashleigh Denman

Welfare Office Report for NGOC AGM 2020

Nothing to report.

Alan Brown

Legend Editors Report for NGOC AGM 2020

NGOC was one of six clubs given the Compass Sport award for 2019. For 2020 four editions – January, April, July (October, yet to be completed at time of writing this report) were issued plus a special 50th Anniversary edition in May that generated much interest and comment from more senior members. Legends can now be viewed on the NGOC website.

Paul Taunton

Mapping Officers Report for NGOC AGM 2020

1. Printing

It was “business as usual” until March this year, when the last thing I printed before the shutdown of events because of Coronavirus was the maps for our Compass Sport Cup round. Since then I have printed very little, just a couple of Mapruns.

Before lockdown I had printed maps for 15 NGOC events, three for SWOC and one for HOC (about half as many events as a usual year). The Xerox A3 printer that I have (Phaser 7100) was purchased by NGOC in 2014 and has now printed more than 40,000 pages, but is still working fine. The supply of printer toner is on a Pagepack contract with Printerbase, but it is shipped direct by Xerox, next day service. BML Print supply us with Pretex waterproof paper sourced from Germany and, as there could be some interruption to supply resulting from Brexit, I obtained a large stock of A3 and A4 paper. The stock is now more than enough for current Maprun needs, but it would be prudent to buy more A4 paper before the end of the year.

I have held the post of Mapping Officer for 12 years, since October 2008. The current plan is that I will hand over the Xerox 7100 to the new Mapping Officer designate, Ian Phillips, during October, before confirmation of his appointment (hopefully!) at the AGM.

The club owns a second printer, held by Pat Macleod, a Xerox Phaser 6100 (A4 maximum). This is usually used for printing maps for Mapruns and for general club printing such as entry slips and flyers. It is slightly newer than the 7100 but recently has been giving poor colour print quality. It has not been possible to resolve this completely. Purchase of a new printer has been considered, but a decision has been deferred until February when the toner supply, contract expires. The expected cost of a new A4 machine of similar specification is about £250, or an A3 machine £750.

2. Mapping

Although my title is mapping officer I have as usual been too busy printing to complete any significant mapping. I have converted the last few existing maps as far as possible to the ISOM2017 mapping standard and all events this year complied with the requirement to use this standard. Additionally, I made many minor corrections to maps as requested by event planners. Nick Nourse was engaged on a commercial basis to map/remap three areas:

- Remap of **Soudley Ponds**, first used for League Event 12, during December 2019.
- A northern extension to our Highmeadow map, up to the Forestry Commission parking area at **Symond's Yat**, completed, but yet to be used.
- Remap of **Lydney Park**, a private estate. This was commenced, but the landowner withdrew permission for access (NOT related to Coronavirus).

Thanks are due to several club members who have carried out a lot of mapping work on behalf of the club. They have produced new or updated maps for us to use, including:

- **Pat Macleod**, lots of Maprun maps, map updates and Lightning Tree Hill, completely redrawn, first used for the NGOC 50th Birthday event in January 2020;
- **Greg Best**, updates to Cleeve Hill map, extension of his earlier Cranham map into Barrow Wake, Cheltenham town maps & map of Cheltenham racecourse for future sprint, and looking at Newent Woods;
- **Tom Cochrane** completed Bredon School map, Selsley Common map in progress;
- **Neil Cameron** is mapping Bockeridge Common, a small area of common land next to junction 1 of the M50;
- **Steve Lee** is working on a Stroud update;
- **Clive Caffal** is mapping Ledbury;
- **Richard Cronin** has published several maprun maps of nearby areas in Herefordshire and Worcestershire;

- ***My apologies to anybody I have missed in the list above – please make your efforts known!***

Several of these maps are for landowners other than Forestry England, so hopefully we will have more flexibility in scheduling future events.

Kim Liggett **Secretary's Report**

At the end of last year a first aid training course was set up on 16th November at Highnam Community Centre together with 7 other NGOC members. The full day course was run by Martin from Borderlands First Aid. Certificates have been awarded for Outdoor First Aid Emergency Action and is valid for 3 years. Helped out at Mallards Pike event. Wrote an article about the first aid course for BOF and also for Legend.

Tom Cochrane **Communications Officer**

Weekly emails

Hopefully people are still finding these useful and informative: thanks to everyone who has sent in items. They were more sporadic during lockdown, with less to report on, but have returned more to normal with events starting back up.

MapRun series

MapRun events have become a year-round series, at least while not locked down. They've proved good at rebounding quickly after lockdown: even with new requirements like pre-entry, we've recorded some of our highest attendances. Thanks to this year's planners (and particularly to Pat for all the setup!)