

The Legend

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www.ngoc.org.uk

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Cover: NGOC Secretary Caroline Craig won the Women's 'A' race in the annual street event in Venice in November; here she holds aloft her trophy. An expert in delegation, Caroline has let a friend write an account of the event - his first ever orienteering event. I am sure we would get plenty of new members if we held events in Venice; also a good turnout of regulars - how about it Club Captain?

Chairman's Chat

You will, I am sure, read elsewhere in this Legend of our recent success in the CompassSport Cup, so I won't go into details, other than to say a very big thank you to Greg Best for organising such a strong team, and to everyone who turned out for the club and got us through to the finals in October. A great team performance.

I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year. Sadly the weather has limited our orienteering opportunities over the last few weeks, but you could, of course, have turned to the orienteering holidays pages of the latest CompassSport, and sat by the fire planning your fixture list for this year. I counted roughly 40 countries offering events of one sort or another over the coming year. The most novel were a night event in Hong Kong, start time midnight on New Year's Eve, and the North Atlantic O-fest taking in midnight orienteering in Greenland, sprint racing in the capital, Nuuk, and a follow-on programme in Iceland. Best opportunity to score a personal best timewise is probably the event in South Africa just outside the Kruger National Park, where there are, no doubt, more incentives to a turn of speed than the odd wild boar.

Economic reality for most of us means that we won't get to any of these exotic events, and even closer to home the issue of travel to events – both availability and cost – is an ever present concern. In talking to Gloucestershire University people (of which more elsewhere in this Legend) one common thread was the difficulty students have getting to 'away' events. I'm sure we could get smarter travelwise; you will have seen Tom Mills' notes in the last Legend about the weekly Army orienteering events, and it's worth pointing out that most of these happen in the southeast. We invariably fill a car, however, so a trip which would cost perhaps £35 alone generally costs us a quarter of that, and with entry fees at £3.50 including EMIT card hire, we get a cheap day out and great value for money from these events. We need to find ways to replicate this locally.

In my last Chairman's Chat I touched on three big challenges ahead of us – access fees, volunteering, and participation – and in each edition of Legend I will give a very brief update on where we are

with these. They affect us all, and need constantly to be in everybody's mind. On access fees, I am pleased to be able to report that Mike Hamilton (British Orienteering Chief Executive) has done a brilliant job renegotiating the Forestry Commission deal, and we are now faced with a much more manageable increase in fees for smaller events. Informals and mini-leagues will now cost us £50 each, still a big increase over past fees, but nowhere near the threatened £3 per head. Whilst we may knock 'Head Office' from time to time there is no doubt that in this case they have served us extremely well. I haven't managed to do anything on volunteering yet, but hope to have more to report for the next Legend. I have reported elsewhere in this edition on our participation/development plans, so won't go into that here, other than to say that these things take time if done properly, and so progress is perhaps slower than I'd like, but I think it is still progress!

Finally, out into the forest.....I've had a few wake up calls recently. I used to think I was reasonably competent at orienteering – slow but at least moderately accurate. Then I go to a rather featureless part of Llangynidr, and my first leg shapes up as shown below! Pretty much on track for two thirds the distance (from the blue flag towards the red blob), and then going round in circles for 20 minutes before realising (with the help of passing competitors!) I hadn't gone far enough. The problem was finding a guaranteed relocation point – I couldn't – and the lessons to be learnt - too many to count. My data recorder, which captured this disaster, is a super gadget, though, and a great aid for helping with post mortems; now I wouldn't be without it. If you are looking for a training aid, invest in one.



Pat MacLeod

Postscript: I still haven't learned the lessons.....did the same thing a few weeks later at an Army event. Anybody got any tips on how to improve?

Orienteering in Venice

"Come to Venice, you don't have to do the orienteering, and if you do then you don't have to run". With those words I was persuaded to spend a weekend in November in Venice, the floating city, famous for its canals, its history, its romance and, most importantly, for its tight twisty car-less streets, for the XXXI Meeting Orientamento Venezia.

This years event had 3731 competitors from 425 teams covering every category under the sun. The main event was held on the Sunday with a smaller Park-O event on the Saturday if you felt like warming up and getting to grips with a small part of the Venice map. I went with seven friends, one of whom - Caroline Craig - had been to the event before, and it was her reassuring words that had persuaded the rest of us to take part. I had never orienteered properly before, and so the idea of doing my first event around a foreign city was exciting, and to be honest, slightly scary. When Caroline showed us a map of Venice from a previous event it was even more scary, so many small passageways, and so many dead-ends where you hit a canal but no bridge; route finding would be tricky! To maintain my 'in at the deep end' attitude to my first event, I decided to forgo the Saturday event and do the tourist thing as I hadn't been to Venice before. Venice is a remarkable city and well worth visiting in its own right, and in November it seemed to be slightly less busy with tourists than it looks in all the films.

Soon Sunday dawned, and the main event was upon us. A light breakfast didn't really help calm the nerves, and then before I knew it we were heading to the sports centre to find out where the start would be. The eight of us had start times ranging across the morning, and I was to be setting off first, so it wasn't long before I was walking to the start. Luckily Caroline could talk me through how the starting system worked, with a series of gates staggered in the minutes before your start time to get you ticked off the list, have the control descriptions sellotaped to your wrist by a very efficient Italian lady, and then the start tent itself. It was all very well organised, and suddenly I found myself kneeling by a big pile of upside down maps and wondering what I had let myself in for.

The start time ticked over, and on the beep I picked up my map and ran across the first bridge that was just in front of the start

area and tried to get out of the way as soon as possible, to let all of the professionals behind me run past. This was it, this was my map, men's category MC, 17 controls, 5.5km, and 38 bridges *if* you go the most efficient route. 17 points seemed quite a lot for a C course but there was no time to think about that, the first point was all that mattered. It seemed like miles away so I quickly headed off in what I hoped was the right direction. I had planned on taking a gentle sightseeing approach to the event as I had been having ankle trouble before the event, but my competitive instinct got the better of me and I soon found myself jogging along the Venice Streets, looking for my first control. If I could find that one I would be happy as it was one of the longer legs of my route, and my first ever control, so if I could manage that then the rest couldn't be that hard, could they? Eventually I found myself in a large plaza, but hang on a minute, that was wrong, I should have taken a right hand turn just before that, so I retraced my steps and found the first control in a small courtyard. Success! One point down, only 16 more to go. The next few points were all fairly close and I found them without any trouble, getting into the swing of things looking for routes that had bridges over the canals, perfecting my sidestep around the tourists, and trying not to run into all of the other orienteers. By placing many of the points on lots of different courses it meant that often you would be around other runners, but most of them would be heading in different directions to you! My tactics of looking at the map while walking, then running the bits that I had just memorised from the map seemed to be working ok, though maybe not the fastest method it was getting me to the points without any more mistakes and I was having a great time dashing along the streets, through alleyways and over all the bridges. I had assumed Venice was flat, but I hadn't counted on the sheer number of bridges required, and took various methods of getting over them, from the multistep leap and run, to the gentle plod while gaining my bearings and trying not to scare tourists. On one bridge I even had to avoid another orienteer carrying a baby!

Control 6 was the next big one; the control was on the other side of the Grand Canal to where I was, and it was the first point where I couldn't just try following the line marked between the points on the map. Instead we had to plot a route via the world famous Rialto Bridge, where I got a bit stuck amongst the hordes of holiday makers, and then a brief run down the side of the Grand Canal hopping around gondoliers, before heading off into the warren again. Luckily I managed to get to this control in one go, unlike

some of my friends who with the map upside down managed to confuse points 6 and 9! I am told that my technique of always keeping my map “upright” is unusual, but it worked for me, and I could always tell which number was which! From that point on the points flowed by, even with the sneaky tactics of the route setters – setting lots of points at the end of twisty dead ends – this just gave me more time to read the map, though the professionals were charging past and I found myself taking a wide line around corners to avoid the pros cutting them tight. Once I was back across the Grand Canal (taking the less busy side of the Rialto Bridge this time) I felt like I was on the home straight, which was lucky as I was having to walk more and more to save my lungs from collapsing. The final few controls were common to most of the courses, so there was a real sense of a ‘big finish’, with the last checkpoint and finish on the waterfront making for a grandstand finish. A final jog for home, I realise that I am meant to dib at the end when I see someone else doing so and I'm finished. I was impressed to get a print-out of all my split times and a biscuit and a hot drink and it was all over! All I had to do now was wait at the finish and cheer all my friends home, which I duly did. Watching the finish told an amusing story of everyone's races, their faces showing happiness, grit, determination, amusement at going wrong and joy at finishing.

Post-race we had some great news, Caroline had come across the line with her split times suggesting she was in the lead! So we trooped to the sports hall and waited around at the prize giving to find out whether anyone had overtaken her since she crossed the line. I was slightly amused by all of the other orienteers getting changed around us, with seemingly little modesty in front of a whole arena's worth of other people, but was told that this is common in orienteering events! Finally the prize giving arrived and brilliantly Caroline had won! We all gave her a big cheer and it was a great end to a great event.

We stayed in Venice for the Sunday night and then came home on the Monday, so we managed to fit a good deal of sight seeing into the weekend, as well as the orienteering, and we all really enjoyed it. As a first event it was a great introduction to orienteering, even if it is not a typical event. I would encourage everyone to have a go; the feeling as you charge down Venice's back streets with your map is hard to beat.

Finally, in case you were wondering, I managed to finish 19th out of 104 finishers in my category, which I was very pleased with for a first go. I'll definitely be back next year, and I might even try the next category up, and I might even try a bit more running...



Venice 2010: Caroline's husband, Andy, sprinting for the finish

Orienteering board game – Swedish 1950s style

(**NOT** to be confused with the 2010 NGOC orienteering board game "*Forest Challenge!*" Any resemblance between the three characters on the front of the box and present-day members of NGOC is entirely coincidental.)

When I started thinking about devising an orienteering board game I looked on the web and all I could find was this:



The game board is basically an ordinary orienteering map with a grid overlaid and, as in "real" orienteering, competitors try to find their way round the controls and the first one to reach the finish is the winner. Players roll three dice at their turn – one is an ordinary 1/2/3/4/5/6 dice and the other two give the directions that the players can choose from. The direction dice both have three blank sides and the other three sides have directions N, S, NS and E, W, EW respectively. If you are running along a road or river or other distinct feature of the landscape you ignore the direction dice. If not, you have to combine and choose one direction from the direction dice (if both dice are blank you can run any way you like, not necessarily only in one direction).

<http://www.boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/15059/skogskarlarnas-orienteringspel>





Black half-square means "you lost your map - go back to last checkpoint", the little circles in the field means "newly planted crops – disqualified".

THE MARMALADE WALK

Back in February 2010 my sons Jeremy (M50) and Peter (M45, occasionally) decided that they quite fancied a backpacking walk in the summer from Abergavenny, where Jeremy lives, to Aberystwyth, where Peter's son Tom is at University.

I cannot remember being asked to accompany them but if I was I would have declined as I'm not up to carrying camping gear for more than a mile or so these days. They know this full well and would not have appreciated being put in the awkward situation of encouraging me in my delusions and then having to carry all my gear and probably me, for large parts of the way. However I was very jealous and decided that I wanted to be part of the project.

It helps to give a walk a reason, a point, be it walking from John o'Groats to Lands End or round the coast (eg Alan B's recent coastal walk) or just to the North Pole and back. Jeremy and Peter came up with walking to Aberystwyth to see Tom, when really it was just an excuse to walk and camp on attractive parts of Wales.

Knowing that Tom was fond of marmalade and that I had just completed making, though I say it myself, a superb batch of double-shredded Seville orange marmalade, my slightly desperate plan was to carry a jar from Wotton under Edge, where I live, to Abergavenny and hand it over to Jeremy and Peter for them to carry on to Aberystwyth. Jeremy and Peter seemed a little surprised at the suggestion and were heard to mutter something that sounded remarkably like "That's it, he's finally flipped completely" but didn't object too much at carrying the extra weight. For me carrying a haversack of more than a few kg is not feasible due to a shoulder problem that is only relieved by walking leaning to the left and a back problem only relieved by leaning to the right, so I decided to B&B.

Once the decision had been made dates were agreed and the really enjoyable business of sitting in a comfortable chair in front of a wood stove consulting OS 1:25,000 maps started. The total distance from Wotton to Abergavenny is about 55 miles so I split it up into four days of around 14-16 miles a day walking almost all the way on public footpaths. To avoid having to carry four 1:25,000 maps I managed, with much folding, creasing and cursing, to photocopy the whole route onto six A4 sheets.

The walk itself was very pleasant with generally good weather and probably at the best time of the year, May, when the flowers, particularly the bluebells are at their best. The only downside was the realisation how badly the wild bird population has deteriorated; two lapwings, almost no skylarks, yellow hammers or even house sparrows all of which were common only a few years ago. With the current attitudes to the land "A Silent Spring" cannot be far away.

The basic route was from Wotton to the north side of Thornbury, down to the Severn at Oldbury, south along the bank of the Severn and across the old Severn Bridge to Shirehampton, on to Usk and then along the River Usk to Abergavenny. The walk down the Severn was a little tedious partly because there were fewer birds than I had hoped to see but while crossing the Severn and Wye bridges I took the opportunity to drop two stones, one into the Severn the other into the Wye. One took four seconds the other five although I cannot now remember which was which. Maybe the tide had gone out in-between anyway. The idea was to try and calculate the height of the two bridges but every time I tried to divide one number by another I was unfortunately distracted by something or other.

As you are almost certainly an Orienteer you may be surprised that I found the map reading and the finding of public footpaths quite a challenge. This was partly because the map was often out of date, hedges missing, new farm buildings etc, partly because the footpath was often not where it should have been or was blocked. It is quite satisfying to successfully cross a large field of tall wet grass with no sign of a footpath and apparently impregnable hedges and find a Public

Footpath sign and an old stile hidden in the middle of a holly bush just where the map says it should be. Conversely following a footpath across a field indicated on the map and a signpost, only to find that the only way forward was to cross the A449, a dual carriageway of almost motorway standard, traffic density and speeds was very frustrating. I didn't try to cross and consequently had to make a detour of a mile or so.

Generally the only places that the footpaths were well maintained and signed was in the vicinity of towns where locals maintained them, or on estates so that the owners could control where people went. One estate that I crossed had five gates and stiles crammed into 100metres of footpath.

One of the memorable incidents of the walk was right at the end as I was approaching Abergavenny. I met up with a fellow walker, about my age, who was walking the Cambrian Way, in sections. We walked together until we got to the bridge that crosses the Usk on the outskirts of Abergavenny. Only one side of this bridge has any sort of pavement for pedestrians and we were on the other side of the road. It was 5.0pm on a Friday evening and there was continuous traffic in both directions, head to tail. We waited for about five minutes but there was no break, so we looked at one another, nodded and I walked out in front of the next car coming from the right holding up my map and he walked into the resulting gap in front of the next car coming from the left, holding up his walking stick. We crossed without difficulty and with great aplomb. Some of the drivers seemed a little surprised.

What happened when I passed on the jar of marmalade?

You'll have to wait for the next Legend.

Lín Callard

Answers to Caption Competition



"And I am pleased to add that in addition to the 13 colour courses, NGOC now offers a 10km string course." (*Richard Higgs*)

"Last one left standing!" (*Sandy Cowan, Kerno*)

"Chris was adamant the flood would arrive any minute." (*Nick Barrable, CompassSport*)

"Another value-for-money NGOC event - the Long String course used the whole 5km reel of string!" (*John Bennison, COBOC*)

"Pyjama party at the kindergarten" (*Greg Best*)

"I can see the first control from here." (*Peter Poole*)

"I can be Tableperson when I retire as Chairperson." (*Peter Poole*)

"Now hear this, this is your Chairman speaking . . ." (*Peter Poole*)

"Gill, how do I get down?" (*Peter Poole*)

"Hold on to the Mapp, he can lead us into the first control" (*Gill James*)

"They'll be wearing pink pyjamas when they come!" (*Gill James*)

"It's OK, he doesn't bite." (*Carol Stewart*)

"That dog's lifting its leg so I'm taking no chances!" (*Carol Stewart*)

NGOC win the Harvester at Sutton Park in 1986



Left to right on the podium: David Lee, Terry Rutty, Phil Green, Mike Wintersgill, Julian Lailey, Lin Callard (virtually hidden!), Richard Lloyd
(*Photograph: Carol Stewart*)

What people are saying about *Forest Challenge*!

I have enclosed a cheque for £9. The game is for my wife. It is unlikely that she will order one but if she does - ignore it.

Could you please send a copy of your board game. I have seen it advertised on the website for a while but keep forgetting to order one.

... look forward to receiving it in time to amuse the family at Christmas!

I have seen your game 'Forest Challenge' on Nopesport, and have decided that it is just the thing that my wife would like for Christmas. I hope she feels the same way when she receives it ...

Have just written a cheque and will send it today. I hope my husband doesn't have the same idea!

It is a great idea and will be just the thing for post-Christmas lunch fun!

Three ailing members tried out your game while others did the "proper" outdoor stuff before the AGM. We had such fun that we immediately had another game of it with the wet and muddy people ... We've already got plans to put one of our favourite areas onto the hexagons ... Feedback was generally - no, entirely - positive.

What a great idea - looks brilliant!

Not known at this address.

I hope you make lots of money to send to the flood victims in Pakistan.

Please send me three copies ... We played this game recently and loved it ... We are going to give a copy to our eldest son, who lives in Sweden, so watch out for more orders from there!

My daughter has requested Santa brings her this game but as usual Santa has left things to the last minute. Have you any left and if so is it possible to get one here by next week?

The family spent a great evening yesterday playing three games of Forest Challenge and all found it very enjoyable. Even my wife, who doesn't orienteer, made a surprisingly good job of deducing (guessing) the control symbols on the Control cards while I made the classic mistake whilst in the lead of leaving Control 4 in the direction of 6 rather than 5, much to the amusement of the others, and subsequently finishing last! I should also point out that 12 or so years ago I actually did plan the New Year score event at The Delves but don't remember getting much advantage from it! An extremely enjoyable game.

I saw the advert for your orienteering game. About a year ago I was asked to sift through the detritus left by the university orienteering club when it folded and came across a game that looked just like this. It cluttered up the house for a while then I flogged it on eBay for a few pounds. It sparks my curiosity whether it was you I sold it to, whether this was the genesis for your game or whether, perhaps, someone else has got the old one I unearthed. I hope it sells well - maybe if it is making you a mint you shouldn't tell me in case I rue the chance to have developed it myself! *(No it wasn't me - but if anybody knows anything about this game the Editor would be very interested!)*

To date 160 copies have been sold and sent to (amongst other places) Australia, Latvia, Berlin, Edinburgh and Surbiton.

The game is still available - pick up a copy at an NGOC event or send a cheque for £9-00 (payable to NGOC) to Alan Brown, 10 Brizen Lane, Cheltenham, GL53 0NG.

Alan Brown

NGOC and charities

Since January 2005, after the Asian tsunami, NGOC has donated the surplus from the NYD event to charity, supporting relief work for major catastrophes via Oxfam or the Disasters Emergency Committee, or other charities such as Practical Action, who specialise in low-tech, low-cost, sustainable solutions in developing countries, and LINC, the cancer charity with local connections. As you know, Alan Brown wanted part of the purchase price for his Forest Challenge! game to go to Pakistan flood relief. Sales so far have wildly exceeded expectations and have already generated a surplus of over £400, and together with this year's NYD surplus we will donate £575 to this cause. In total we will have donated £1450 since 2005 - thank you all very much! Any further profits from Forest Challenge! will now go to the Woodland Trust. If anybody wants to suggest any other charities they would like the club to donate to, please let me know.

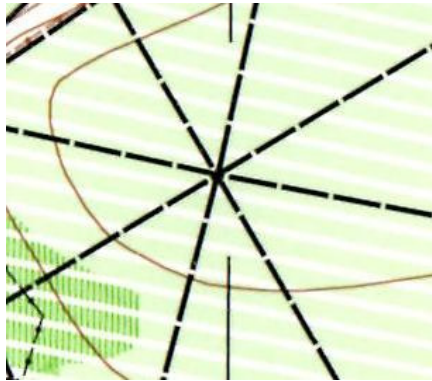
Carol Stewart

NGOC win the Harvester in 1988



Left to right are: Chris James, Mike Wintersgill, Phil Green, David Lee, Chris Poole, Jon Poole, Terry Ruttly. (Photograph: Carol Stewart)

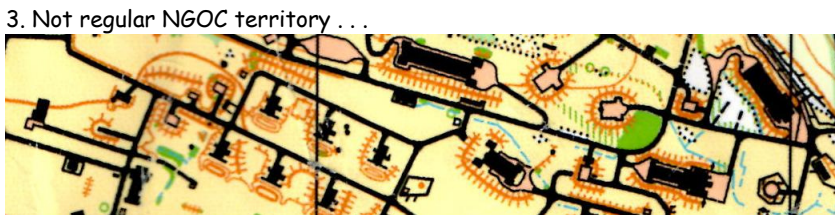
Identify the map competition



1. An easy one to start with . . .



2. Not far from the first one . . .



3. Not regular NGOC territory . . .

Answers in Brashings.

One Eyed Jacks

(In the last issue short-sighted Greg Best revealed that he wears just one contact lens when orienteering and uses the eye with the contact lens to see the terrain and the other eye to read the map. Greg does not like using spectacles as they steam up)

I sympathise with Greg's problems. I started with varifocals but found that the narrow bands for focussing on objects at different distances meant that I was constantly changing the inclination of my head to get a clear view and while I was looking for the control/feature, I wasn't focussed on where my feet were going - with an inevitable fall. I changed to bifocals for driving - upper section for seeing the road and lower section for the dashboard instruments at arm's length and also ideal for distance and feet when orienteering - but these are no good for reading the small detail on the map. So I bought the Silva thumb magnifier from UltraSport - an excellent buy.

Then at HOC's New Year's Day score event, I did a spectacular skid on ice, my expensive bifocals came off and I landed on top of them. So I bought a pair of magnifying half lens specs from UltraSport. I can now read the map with my thumb magnifier, see where I put my feet through the spectacles and see the middle distance above the spectacle lenses. I can't always spot a control banner at 100m or more but if it's visible at that distance it's probably not good planning.

I've never used contact lenses but I know that Eddie Harwood of MAROC successfully uses different ones in each eye - a possible solution for Greg. As for rain and misting up, I use a visor to keep the rain off and clean the lenses with an anti-mist spray which usually lasts for the duration of an event. This doesn't help when I'm controlling and out for a long time checking sites and tapes in continuous rain - I have to give up after two hours.

John Bennison, COBOC

NGOC Development

Mike Hamilton, Chief Executive of British Orienteering, when asked what his greatest challenge is, says 'participation'. Hardly surprising really, given British Orienteering's dependence on funding from UK Sport and Sport England, and the performance indicators they specify as conditions for the receipt of this funding. There are two of these – number of active people, and a general satisfaction survey – the latter presumably being a means of measuring retention as much as satisfaction. To these targets British Orienteering has added its own – increased student and community participation, engagement of children and young people, and a national excellence programme. We may think that these are no concern of ours, that the government target culture, and funding for British Orienteering, are of no concern to us in NGOC. But we have the same challenges; to remain a healthy and dynamic club we need more people to take part in more orienteering activities, and we need to make orienteering an enjoyable and 'must do' interest for our members. So, what is good for British Orienteering is also good for us, and vice versa.

As part of our Clubmark accreditation we drew up a seven point development plan, and these points, and our progress against them, is shown in the table below.

	Item	Status
1	NGOC is intent that children and vulnerable adults will find orienteering a safe environment in which to have fun, learn and develop	Business as usual
2	NGOC is intent to provide assistance for organisations or individuals organising groups participating in orienteering	Business as usual
3	NGOC is intent to make orienteering an activity that is inclusive to anyone who wishes to take part in whatever capacity	Business as usual
4	To make orienteering more accessible through improvements in communication and publicity	Updated website being designed. Other publicity to be based on development projects
5	NGOC to develop a structured coaching	Coaches in place. See

	programme	development projects
6	NGOC to adopt a more structured approach to Volunteer Management	Nothing specific in plan at the moment
7	NGOC to foster and develop links within the community to provide opportunity for participation in orienteering	Development project to foster further partnership with Gloucestershire University

Some of these points are the kind that you have to specify explicitly these days, even though any right minded person would tend to think, 'this is common sense, and natural behaviour - why would we not do that?' The boxes are ticked, and we just have to make sure we always adopt the attitudes and behaviour required – not a difficult thing to do, though I recognise that vigilance and conscious attention will always be needed. I have labelled these 'business as usual'. Others have a more practical dimension, and in the rest of this article I will summarise the state of our more practical plans, which I have described in the table as development projects.

As we have no development officer at present (a vacancy for which you are all encouraged to apply!), when I became Chairman I thought I should take on some level of responsibility for development. We have formed a development team comprising the coaches, Gillian James, our Welfare Officer, and myself. We have very few opportunities to get together, and so we held our first, and so far only, meeting by teleconference – a novel experience for some. We agreed that of the various strategies and options open to us to build participation in the club and in orienteering, there were three projects we should develop. The first would be a successor/follow on to Greg Best's successful summer series last year, aimed at providing regular weekend events in the Cheltenham and Gloucester area, to try and attract new members and feed them into the mini-league programme. The second would be based on Kyla da Cunha's ideas for bringing younger children into orienteering – a successor to Map Attak, based around the Ross area. The third, which I am looking after for the time being, would focus on Gloucestershire University, and would aim to complement the University's own drive to get students more actively engaged in recreational sport, whilst also providing an opportunity to develop the kind of Community Orienteering upon which British Orienteering is placing so much stock.

The first two of these projects are on the drawing board, and you can expect to see and hear more of these over the next few weeks. For the university plan, we are currently awaiting the outcome of the University's bid to Sport England for funding to support a full time Sports Coordinator, whose mission will be to engage with the students and with clubs such as ourselves to develop joint participation projects. We have had an initial meeting with the University's newly appointed Director of Sport, and both we as a club, and British Orienteering, have written in support of the University's bid, so hopefully we will see renewed levels of engagement with the University if they get their coordinator in the spring. We need to await the outcome of this bid before deciding what to do next.

As I mentioned in my Chairman's Chat, I would very much like to see faster progress, but these things need to be done properly if they are to have lasting impact, and we have a number of dependencies if we are to be successful – an improved website for better communication, and better contact with the University as examples – so it is likely to be the summer before we see any practical outcomes from these plans. In the meantime, if anyone has any other ideas on things we could be doing, please let me know. For example, whilst digging around for ideas on how to get more people into the forest, I had a look at the athletics clubs in our area. They all typically run at least two training sessions a week. If they can do that, why can't we? It's easy for them, you may say – same venue, same track and a small catchment area – but why can't we have a weekly programme of simple training events to cater for the current and hopefully growing membership? Deer Park Archers, a club of 200 members based near Birdlip, provide sessions of one sort or another every weekday evening other than Thursdays, and an extensive schools archery programme, with a coaching team of five people. The difference between them and us? Two of them are professionals, making a living from the sport. Now there's a thought for all of us retired folk out there. How about 'Orienteering'R'US' (with acknowledgement to a well known toy emporium) – providing regular aerobic fun and games in the forest for a very modest fee?

Pat MacLeod

Locum Development Officer

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location	Signposted	Organiser
1 Jan Saturday	NYD Score Mass start 1100	Mallards Pike South	SO652086	Neil Cameron 01684 294791
8 Jan Saturday	WNL 2	Kidnalls	SO634033	Joe Taunton 01594 529455
22 Jan Saturday	League 4	Cleeve Hill	SP024205	Greg Best 01242 516053
5 Feb Sat	Informal	Painswick	SO870118	Ellen Starling 01793 320054
19 Feb Saturday	League 5	Dymock Forest	SO673262	(MADO event)
5 Mar Sat	WNL 3	Minchinhampton	SO858013	Allan & Ellen Starling 01793 320054
19 Mar Sat	Informal	Parkend	SO605079	Gary Wakerley 01594 862690
19 Mar Sat	WNL 1 (rescheduled)	Parkend	SO605079	Dave Hartley 01452 863805
26 Mar Sat	League 6	Sallowvalllets	SO608116	Bob Teed 01291 625048
16 Apr Sat	League 7	Bixslade	SO608116	John Coleman 01594 528151
Fri 22 – Mon 25 Apr	JK Weekend			
1 May Sun	Galoppen	Danby Lodge	SO636075	Roger Coe 01594 510444
7 May Sat	League 8	Symonds Yat	SO572128	Jeremy & Lin Callard 01873 859452
4 Jun Sat	End of Season	Mallards Pike North	SO651127	Andy Stott 01291 689471

Enquiries to Organiser or Fixtures Secretary – Dave Hartley 01452 863805

For latest details check the NGOC website at www.ngoc.org.uk

NGOC Registration and start times

Informal Events: Start times 1230-1400.

Senior £2

Junior £1

Non-members £3

Yellow / light green / blue courses

League Events: Registration 1130-1230 Starts from 1200-1300

Senior £4

Junior £1

Competitors who are not members of any club £5

Yellow / orange / green / blue courses

Night Events

Registration from 1800 – or when it's dark!

See www.westernnightleague.org.uk

Malvern Mini-League

Date	Event	Location	Signposted	Organiser
2011				
6 Feb Sunday	Event 4	Hawkbatch, Wyre Forest	SO755784	Richard Dearden
19 Feb Saturday	Event 5	Dymock Woods	SO673262	Colin Palmer & David Jones
12 Mar Saturday	Event 6	Eastnor Park & Malvern South	SO737371	Susan Matthews
16 Apr Saturday	Event 7 (same event as NGOC League 7)	Bixslade	SO608116	John Coleman NGOC
25 Jun Saturday	Event 8 & Prizegiving	Worcester Beacon	SO767444	Tony Knight

Saturday events:

Yellow, Orange, Green and Blue courses. Best four results to count towards a competitor's cumulative score.

Registration 1130-1230 Starts from 1200-1300

Entry fee: Senior £4 Junior £1

Competitors who are not members of any club £5

Sunday events: Yellow, Orange, Light Green, Green, Blue and Brown courses.

Entry fee will be slightly higher. For more details see Harlequins Orienteering Club website.



CompassSport Trophy: a grand day out . . .

NGOC Qualify for Final of CompassSport Trophy

An excellent turnout and an impressive collective performance resulted in us winning our CompassSport Trophy qualifying match at Sutton Park on 16th January. This means NGOC will appear in the final of the competition for the first time in the club's history. Clearly, it is a fantastic achievement by those that took part and a great landmark for the club.

A vigorous recruitment drive eventually resulted in the impressively large team squad of 38 on the day, including several relatively new club members. Also present were the Jones family, over from Australia on a visit, but still club members. I was very pleased to receive their last-minute email asking if they could take part – great dedication! Twenty of us travelled on the coach, while the rest preferred to make their own way to Sutton Coldfield. The coach began its journey from the racecourse in Cheltenham, and picked up others along the way at Ross and then Gorsley before proceeding to Sutton Park.

Once arrived, the club tent was erected and the banner flown. With so many people in the team, changing space in the tent was at a premium. Fortunately, the wet and windy conditions of the previous week had finally abated, meaning we could spill out of the tent without getting wet.

Being drawn against just three other clubs, Wrekin, City of Birmingham and South Midlands, I did think we had a reasonable chance of winning. Now was the time to justify that optimism by putting in a good team performance. I carefully handed out all of the hired emit bricks to those without their own, and with my own start time approaching, I set off for the Start. Time to stay calm, stay focused! On arrival there, panic set in when I realised that I did not have my brikke – too much time spent organising others, and not enough organising myself. So, I ran fast as I could back to the tent, collected my emit, then puffed back to the Start, in no way calm or focused! My name had already been called, but luckily I was still in time to start – just.

Sutton Park is largely flat, runnable and fast. I made one major mistake (as usual), losing me about six minutes, otherwise not too bad. At the Finish, the scoreboard showed that we were currently just one point behind Wrekin - very close and tense. However, I knew that I had allocated late start times to many of our top runners, so remained cautiously optimistic. Over the next half an hour, as more runners came in, each of the frequent updates of the scoreboard showed NGOC first nose ahead, then gradually pull away. It really was quite exciting. In the end, we won by 43 points, quite a comfortable margin:

NGOC	1282 points
WRE	1239
SMOC	1205
COBOC	377

The way the competition is structured, only 13 people can score points for the team, and these have to be distributed across the range of classes. However, everybody else's performance is also important, as by doing well you push the opposition further down the results, meaning they score fewer points. To illustrate this, all nine of our Brown runners finished above one of SMOC's scorers. This means that even though only three Brown runners can score points for us, all nine were important in that they pushed down the points of that SMOC runner. Incidentally, we were particularly strong on Brown, filling the first five positions in that class!

The 13 who scored the points for us were:

Orange	Georgia Jones (100 points)
Light Green	Lawrence Jones (100)
Short Green Veterans	Ros Taunton (96)
Green Men	Pat Macleod (98)
Green Women	Gill Stott (98)
	Shirley Robinson (96)
Blue Men	Chris Harrison (100)
	Andy Stott (99)
Blue Women	Caroline Craig (100)

Brown

Heather Findlay (98)
Joe Taunton (100)
Patrick Woodisse (99)
Tom Mitchell (98)

Many thanks to all that took part and for the excellent club spirit in evidence on the day. Congratulations to all.

So, for the first time in the club's history, we have qualified for the final, which will be a very exciting occasion. This is to be held at Longshaw Estate in the Peak District, near Chesterfield on Sunday 16th October. Of course, the competition will be stiffer, so we need an even bigger turnout. The great contribution of the Jones family will be missed, as they are rather unlikely to be able to get over from Australia again just for the final! Please put this date in your diaries **NOW**.

Greg Best
Club Captain

Up-Coming Team Events

In addition to the Compass Sport Trophy Final on 16th October in the Peak District, there are some other team events coming up. Please let me know if you would like to be part of an NGOC team in any of these. We normally have teams for all levels of ambition. They are:

JK Relays on Easter Monday (25th April) in Northern Ireland
British Relays on 15th May, Tankersley, near Sheffield
Harvester Relay 16th – 17th July, Ecclesall Woods, Sheffield

The Harvester is an overnight relay for teams of five or seven, with night and day legs. This year, it will form part of a programme of four events over the Saturday and Sunday (the others being a middle-distance race, an ultrasprint and an urban race).

Greg Best

Brashings

NGOC team of helpers for Croeso 2012?

NGOC has traditionally helped out at Croeso 6-day events, and we have been asked again whether we could help at Croeso 2012, which is based on Aberystwyth, and will take place in the first week of August 2012. This time we have been asked to provide general manpower resources to help out as required. This is a great opportunity for club members to do their bit to support the club and orienteering generally, and these multi-day events are good fun, so make a note of the date in your diaries for next year, and be prepared to be approached later in the year to help the club and the organisers out. Whilst it is a bit early to ask for commitment, I would appreciate it if those of you who feel you could help could drop me a note - chairman@ngoc.org.uk - letting me know, so that I can get some idea how many helpers we might be able to offer. *Pat MacLeod*

Orienteering for a Christmas tree

Looking at all the trees lined up on the ground at our local farm shop my wife commented that it was a bit difficult to see which was the best size and height for our room. The chap taking the money said that we could go to the small plantation where they were growing and choose - and cut down ourselves - the one that suited us.

Map and compass were not needed as we were provided with verbal directions - and a saw. Navigation along the footpaths to the trees was to "yellow" standard but finding a tree acceptable to 'er indoors meant struggling through "dark green" for about 30 minutes, and the increasing sense of disorientation gave me the "headless chicken" feeling that I all too often experienced as a beginner.

There were two other differences to normal orienteering - you pay at the finish rather than at the start - and you dib the tree in an outside metal hole (in fact you push it all the way through). The dibbing has a second function - it compresses the tree inside some netting to make it "convenient" to lug home.

Saving even more money!

The hard copies of this Legend have been printed on the Editor's machine at home. Print quality is not *quite* so good as usual but I think it is acceptable - let me know what you think!

Identify the map competition - answers

1. Sheepscombe & Saltridge Hill
2. Cranham Woods
3. Caerwent

Please let the Editor know if you would like more map segments to identify.

Found

A pair of pink TOG24 Polartek gloves, in the pocket of one of the club's hi-vis jackets. Call or email Pat Macleod (01594 528128 or pat_macleod@btinternet.com) if they are yours.

New SWOA website

www.sworienteeringassociation.co.uk

The SWOA newsletter, SINS, is available on this site.

Have your say!

Are there any matters that you would like the Committee to consider? Contact the Club Secretary, Caroline Craig, or any member of the Committee. The next Committee meeting is on Monday 28 March at 1930.

Articles for Legend

We are always looking for articles on anything to do with orienteering; digital photos are especially welcome. Send your article/pictures to legend@ngoc.org.uk or Alan and Ann Brown, 10 Brizen Lane, Cheltenham, GL53 0NG. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition of Legend.

Disclaimer

Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the North Gloucestershire Orienteering Club.

On the way home from Sutton Park and not a can of lager in sight . . .

