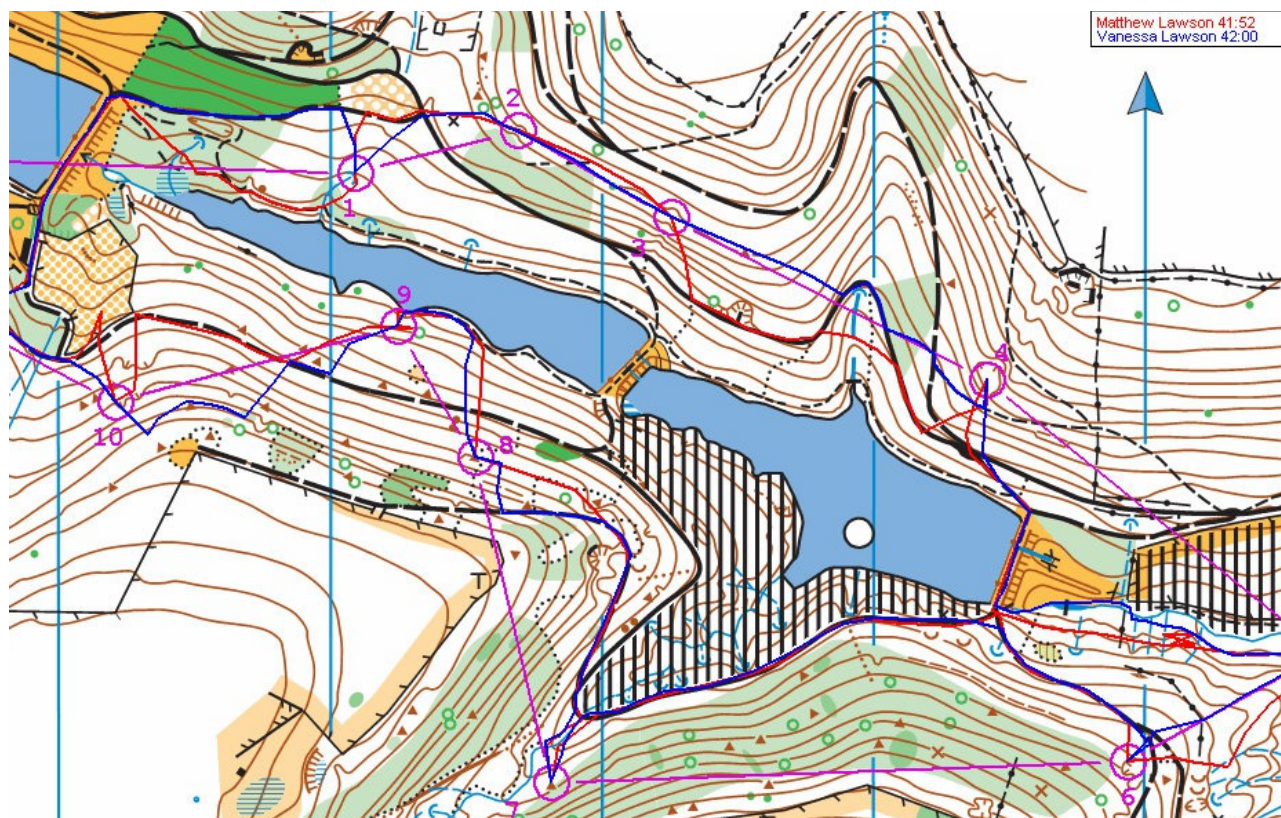


The Legend

Number 167



The Lawson Family battle it out on the new NGOC area, Woodchester Park



Newsletter of
North Gloucestershire Orienteering Club
January 2014
www.ngoc.org.uk

NGOC Committee

Chairman

Gary Wakerley 01594 862690
chairman@ngoc.org.uk

Secretary

Caroline Craig 01242 528326
secretary@ngoc.org.uk

Treasurer

Carol Stewart 01242 514988
treasurer@ngoc.org.uk

Club Captain

Greg Best 01242 516053
captain@ngoc.org.uk

Membership Secretary

Simon Denman 01452 863833
membership@ngoc.org.uk

Equipment Officer

Pat MacLeod 01594 528128
equipment@ngoc.org.uk

Fixtures Secretary

John Coleman 01594 582151
fixtures@ngoc.org.uk

Mapping Officer

Paul Taunton 01594 529455
mapping@ngoc.org.uk

Club Welfare Officer

Gill James 01989 720122
gilljames@dalcross.plus.com

Club Development Officer

Pat MacLeod 01594 528128
equipment@ngoc.org.uk

Additional Members

Roger Coe 01594 510444
randvcoe@btinternet.com

John Fallows 01684 290256
john@greyeye.co.uk

Legend Editor

Gill Stott 01291689471
apg.stott@btinternet.com
legend@ngoc.org.uk

Website

Eddie McLarnon
01242 673079
webmaster@ngoc.org.uk

Cover: Woodchester Park. League 3. 7th December 2013

Battle of the Lawsons: Routegadget image of Vanessa and Matthew's routes. Only 8 seconds between them (3rd and 4th). (Photograph: . . routegadget)

Chairman's Chat

.The Chairman's wheelbarrow

Well it was very nice to see the turnout for our new area at Woodchester (League 3, 7th December). Simon Denman stepped in at short notice to christen this new area, after Alan Richards decided to trip over Lucy, among other things. Due to parking restrictions, assembly was at Thistledown farm, with a walk down to the start, in the valley bottom. The chairman has only one thought for next time, can his wheelbarrow be parked at the bottom, so he can be pushed to the top of the hill afterwards. I am also happy to note .that Lucy has made a full recovery



Gary Wakerley

YOUR CAPTAIN NEEDS YOU!

Please enrol for the Compass Sport Cup qualification match This year's Compass Sport Cup qualification match is coming up soon, on Sunday 16th February. We have been "promoted" back to the Cup competition, which is the one for the country's larger clubs. This means that compared to last year, twice as many people's efforts will count directly to our final score. Hence, to maximise our chance of success, I need to put together **as big and strong a team as possible**, and which includes all age groups from 14 to 70 and beyond, in both sexes. Therefore, I would be delighted if you were able to take part and represent NGOC.

Unfortunately, our first choice of qualifying venue is over-subscribed, so instead we will travel further away to our second choice which is Ashurst and Matley Heath, near Lyndhurst in the New Forest. As this is quite far away, there will be a team coach starting from Gloucester. This promises to be a fun day out, and a chance to meet and socialise with fellow club members, so please make the effort to come along.

What is this?

The Compass Sport Cup is the national inter-club championship where different clubs compete against each other. There are qualifying matches held in different parts of the country, and then a final in the autumn. Points are scored by individuals depending on their performance on the day. The 25 people who perform best on the day contribute to the team's score, but there are rules to ensure that these come from a wide spread of age classes. Even if you are not among our top 25 on the day, your performance can still be valuable as by finishing ahead of people in other teams, you limit their scoring potential. Last year NGOC were in the Trophy competition, which is for the country's smaller clubs, and we were thrilled to manage to win our qualification match, and then came a very creditable third in the final. It will be much harder for us this year in the Cup competition, and we are up against 5 other clubs: SOC, SO, SN, BKO and TVOC.

The courses available are shown below. Note that short brown is a new course for this year, and that age classes associated with blue men and short green vets have changed.

Brown (for men of any age)
Short Brown (M40 or older, M20 or younger)
Blue Women (women any age)
Blue Men (M50+)
Green Women (W45+, W20-)
Green Men (M60+)
Short Green Veterans (M70+, W60+)
Light Green Men (M18-)
Light Green Women (W18-)
Orange Men (M14-)
Orange Women (W14-)
White and Yellow (non-competitive)



Although I do not know the area myself, I have read a description of it from an old event held there, and it sounds rather attractive. It stated: "A delightful area close to the "Capital of the New Forest", Lyndhurst. The combination of heathland with open forest leads to some exciting terrain. The nature of the area is that it will be fast, but a lapse in concentration will be punished!"

What is the plan?

There will be a team coach trip, which will depart in the morning (perhaps 8am) from the University campus at Oxstalls in Gloucester. We will also be able to pick some others up from point(s) along the way. The coach will travel along the A417/A419 to the M4, so somewhere near Swindon, or near the motorway might be convenient. I expect the coach to be back in Gloucester by about 5pm. Of courses, some people will choose to travel there independently.

How much?

The club will subsidise both the competition entry fees and the coach travel. For adults, the coach fare will be £10 and entry fee will be £5, while for juniors, both will be free.

How to enrol?

I will co-ordinate all of our entries, so please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to take part. The closing date for entries is the end of January, and I also need to know numbers to be able to book the coach trip. Everybody is welcome. I need your name, age class for 2014 and BOF number (if you know it). The event will use Emit punching, so if you have your own one I will need the number of it. All others will need a hired emit card.

I look forward to receiving your names soon...

Greg Best, club captain

captain@ngoc.org.uk

01242 516053

2014 EVENT PROGRAMME

The evolution of our event programme from a winter season two-format fixture list to an all year round multi-format programme continues in 2014. For as long as I can remember we have stuck fairly rigidly to the mini-league plus Informals programme which has served us well, and provided a sound financial base to support our activities. Over the past 3 years or so we also evolved a summer programme designed both to appeal to newcomers, and to give more experienced orienteers something to do in the formerly 'dead' months, orienteering-wise. For 2014 we have decided to continue the evolution not only for the Summer months, but for the fixture list as a whole.

First of all, the idea of an End of Season event in early June doesn't really fit in with an all year round programme, so our End of Season event will become a Summer Fun or novelty event to mark the end of the mini-league/Informals fixtures. In future the summer

programme can and probably will start before the old End of season date.

The second significant change concerns Informals. Recently Informals have become more like cut down mini-leagues than the training events they were supposed to be. We have not done much at Informals to support newcomers, and have lost sight of much of the training intent behind them. So for the 2014/15 Winter programme we propose to re-brand Informals as Training events, and to focus more clearly on providing specific training activities at these events. This is designed to tie in the coaching programme about which you can read more elsewhere in this Legend. You will note from the fixture list that Training events are co-located with Mini-leagues, though typically a fortnight before or after the mini-league. The idea is that the club coaches will develop a coaching/training programme, with specific sessions designed for each training event and appropriate exercises built into courses and activities planned for the event. We hope to reduce the overall effort involved in planning these events by reusing, as appropriate, the control sites, if not courses, of the 'associated' mini-league. Clearly this is all fairly experimental, but we will be working hard with planners and coaches to try and offer an effective training programme for both novices and experienced orienteers, whilst minimising its planning and logistical overheads.

The third change in the programme relates to the Summer series. We will keep the Summer Saturday events pretty much as they have been – a few courses in woodland terrain where possible, aimed at newcomers but offering a short technical course for those just looking for a run out. For the weekday evening events, however, we have decided to try a different tack. Until now we have used highly simplified street maps for one hour score events, but have seldom attracted more than 15-20 runners. There was general agreement during our discussions at the AGM that we should try moving towards more detailed ISSOM style urban maps, should offer line as well as, if not in place of, score courses, and should try to market the programme to runners and all those urban joggers we continually see plodding the streets of Cheltenham and Gloucester. To this end we have extended the summer evening series, but have focussed it in specific localities where we can reuse planning to some extent, and can target runners looking for something new to try but close to home.

Underlying all of this is a clear understanding that whatever we do with the programme, we have to try and minimise extra work, and the load on volunteer planner/organisers. Over the next couple of months we will develop more detailed plans, and will be seeking those planners. In the meantime, we would welcome any comments and ideas you may have for developing and implementing the programme. Please send them to me – pat_macleod@btinternet.com

Pat Macleod
Development Officer

JK2014

<http://www.thejk.org.uk/jk2014/>

JK2014 takes place in South Wales, on our doorstep. Bristol Orienteering Klub are responsible for Day 4 – the relay day – on Pwll Ddu. NGOC will be helping BOK. Our principal role will be parking – a particular challenge at Pwll Ddu, as parking will be dispersed over 4 separate areas, with traffic arriving from several directions, and most of it within a small time window.

We will need a team of about 20 parking marshals, some of whom may not be able to run in a relay team, and any NGOC volunteers not required for parking will be welcomed by Dave Urch, Day 4 Manager, to boost the numbers he needs for all the other roles he has to staff up. You will receive some form of financial concession – details still to be finalised – in return for helping, and the club will also benefit financially, as we did following Croeso 2012.

If you plan to be at JK2014, please consider whether you are able to help out on Day 4, and get in touch with me to offer your services. You can email me at pat_macleod@btinternet.com, or put your name down on the list published on the club website. I will also be checking JK entries periodically, and will come chasing if I don't hear from you.

The JK is the biggest and best annual orienteering event in the UK, and we all need to do our bit to make sure it remains so, and that we maintain our reputation in the South west and South Wales for delivering outstanding and memorable events.

Pat Macleod

ANN LEE

In 1977 Ann was looking for an activity in which all the family could be involved. She contacted BOF for information about local events and we went to our first one as a family on Cleeve. John Peniket was the organiser and the current Chairman of NGOC. The event used Dick Keighley's black and white map and we were hooked and joined the Club. Ann was a good orienteer and many will remember her gentle smile, her sense of fun and her commitment. The arrival of our black labrador, Winston, brought further pleasure to us all; he found controls well but had problems checking the codes

Ann went to a wide range of events including World Masters (Vets in those days) in Spain, USA and the Czech republic. Scottish 6 days were great and Ann enjoyed the atmosphere in the Club tent and at Social events. Always willing to be a member of a relay team, she was delighted when with Les Swindon and David, she won the British Championships Over 55 Mixed Relay at Brown Clee. Her long drawn out illness prevented her from attending events recently and it was a joy to see her at an NWO Relay in West Woods one lovely hot summer day surrounded by friends she had made over the years.

We had a lovely long walk in Savernake Forest just before she had to go into a Care Home; that was so appropriate for her love of the outdoors, walking and the natural world were the essence of her.

David Lee

The Original Mountain Marathon (OMM) What it is and why you might be interested.



The **Original Mountain Marathon (OMM)**, was known as the **Karrimor International Mountain Marathon** (or KIMM). It is a 2-day Mountain event, and is held in a different mountain region in the UK each year. It was first held in 1968 at Muker in the Pennines. Gerry Charnley, a skilled mountaineer and orienteer, designed the KIMM to test orienteering skills in extreme circumstances; the full-length KIMM course is a double-marathon length race. It has been held in NW England 13 times since 1968 and Wales (Nth and Brecon Beacons) 7 times. This year it was in the Brecon Beacons and so next year...well the venue is kept a secret until a week beforehand but this secret often escapes.

Each team of two must carry their gear, including equipment for an overnight camp – tent, food, stove and clothes. The OMM is held the last weekend in October so the night is long and dark but this means that participants are keen to get going in the morning for day 2. The maps are usually 1:40000 scale. Orienteers new to mountain marathons may find this increase in scale takes some time to acclimatise to as a longer route along a faster track can add on considerable extra length to your course. Some have called the KIMM the forerunner of modern adventure racing. Control sites are normally not too difficult compared to regular orienteering courses, for example stream junctions, hill tops but a mistake in a route can cost you plenty of time. The courses range from elite (80k) to D course (40k) or long to short score 13-9 hours) split over the 2 days.

I (editor) was helping this year. The event was held in the Brecon Beacons and many of the courses were planned by Andy Creber from BOK. I noticed that there was a large range of abilities and expectations in competitors. From chilly short wearing hard nuts to couples setting off with full cagoule, walking poles and extra food/warm clothing in their bigger back packs. In fact competitors are often surprised at how well they can do just by walking and planning routes well. This year, from our club Vanessa and Matthew Lawson, Steve Green, Dave Austin and David Jones competed. Only the very happy marriages survive if you go as a husband and wife team! I can recommend it though. There are other mountain marathons in warmer months, The Lakeland Saunders for example, or my favourite, the LAMM held in Scotland. Many pairs talk about the feeling of great achievement – to have survived a night out in the hills and navigated successfully through them.

Below is Steve Green's inspiring report of his experience this year. Congratulations on your prize Steve.

Gill Stott

OMM 2013 by Steve Green

Is there an official marking for 'tussocks – fight'? That's what should be plastered over most of the Black Mountain, but we were using the OMM-supplied maps at 1:40000, based on Harveys (but with some paths removed, just to make route planning harder) and there was no way of knowing whether our route of choice was going to be over deep marsh, runnable grass, or the dreaded tussocks, which hid the occasional knee-deep wet hole, causing regular face-plants and a weary clamber back to our feet. After five hours this had become a bit tiresome, and we were looking forward to the descent to the half-way finish and the end of the day.

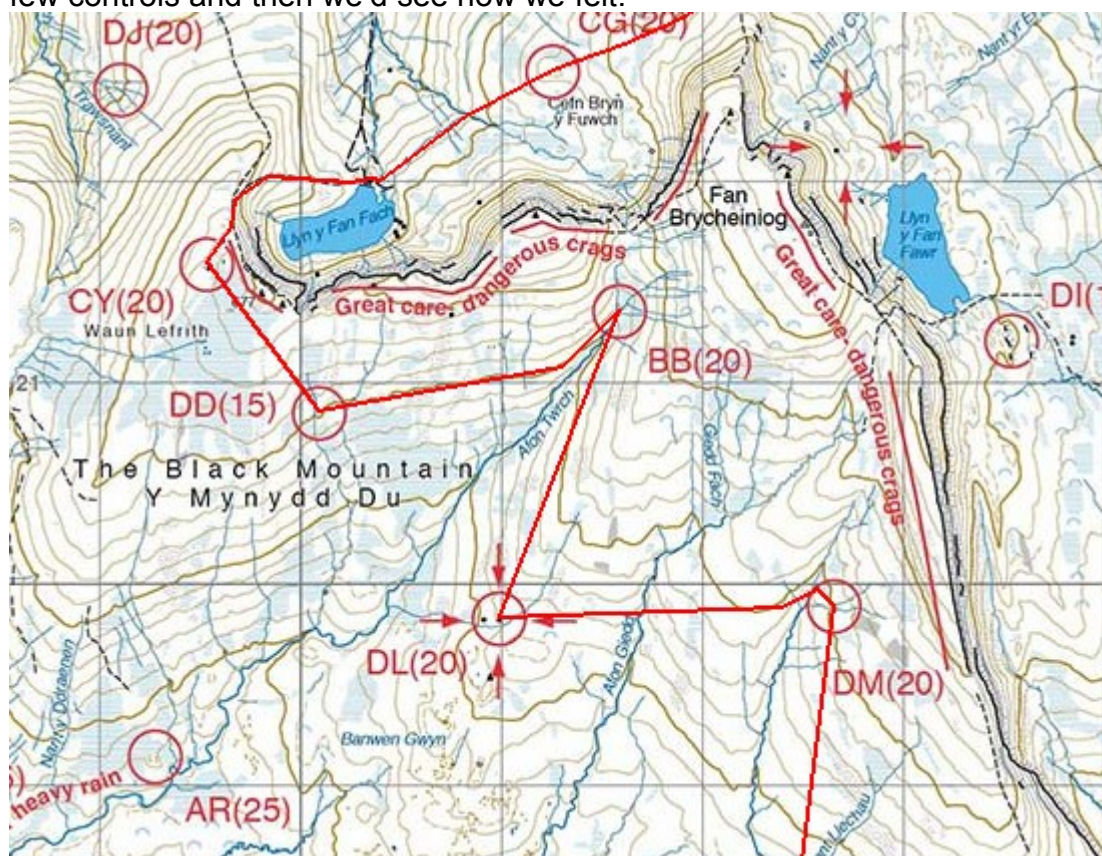
I hadn't managed to find a local partner to do this year's OMM with, so I had put a message up on their website forum and Steve from Rugby had replied. He sounded a bit too ideal – veteran of 16 mountain marathons, regular ironman triathlete, and with a sub-3 hour marathon time. The only question was how much of my gear he would be willing to carry. In the end foolish pride insisted we divide the weight evenly and the atrocious weather forecast meant we took my 2kg tent instead of his single-skin 600g coffin, so we had about 6.5kg each in our packs at the start.

By the end of the first day we had reduced the weight a bit, getting through the about one snack bar an hour; once we had set up camp in the middle of a farmer's field full of identical green tents we cooked up our packets of dehydrated spag bol as the night's rain set in. The presence of a pub 500m from the camp (but strictly off-limits) was a particular tease, as the rain poured down and the path between the portaloos became a quagmire deeper than the plastic bags I had wrapped my dry-sock-clad feet in before re-inserting them into my soaked trainers. We cooked early, chatted for a while, then Steve produced his hidden stash of syrup pudding – with instant custard, the perfect end to the day. We had finished the stage pretty confident that we'd made the second day's 'chasing start' of the top twenty pairs on each course, so before bed we checked the notice board to find out what time to get up – we were second! We were given an 07:12 start time, but at least this was the clock-change weekend, and we were in bed by eight thirty – ten hours' sleep in theory, but with lashing wind, rain and thunder it wasn't the best night ever. We had it better than some teams, who found their tents were pitched on temporary streamlines.

The first day had been really hard work, we'd ended up doing about 34km and over 1000m ascent and my legs had started cramping up really badly after the first few hours, as I wasn't used to having to lift my feet so high over tussocks – the cramps set in whenever we changed from uphill to downhill and several times I had to stop to try to stretch out and pummel my muscles. I had also slipped on a rock about half an hour in, badly bruising my shin and spraining two fingers on landing – I spent most of the day flexing my right hand, trying to keep the fingers mobile.

Fortunately it was cold enough that 'ice' wasn't a problem, even if 'rest' and 'elevate' weren't going to happen anytime soon! The only other mistake the first day had been at the penultimate control, where Steve had headed for an obvious track going up out of a stream gully; I was ten yards behind and assumed he had dibbed, and it was only after I called him back from going in the wrong direction and we had got into some confusion about the control code we were going to next that I realised he had run right past the control without seeing it. No harm done in the end, and we finished the first day two minutes under the six hour time limit.

We were nicely efficient in the morning, which was good as we hadn't realised there was a ten-minute walk to the second day's start. Half way there we stopped in a bus shelter to put waterproofs on as another band of rain swept in, but even so we got to the start early and chatted to marshals and other teams. It looked like a hard hike up out of the valley and so it proved, but that gave us the chance to plan our route as we walked. Bad weather courses had been declared ahead of incoming gales, so the normal five hours had been reduced to four – that meant we had to rein in our ambitions a bit, but Steve reckoned we could still visit one of the distant corners of the map and pick up some high-scoring controls. There didn't seem to be many options to vary the route on the way back to the finish, so we'd have to estimate what we could achieve pretty accurately to avoid penalties for coming in late or (maybe worse) coming in early with fewer points than if we'd chosen a different route. I wasn't sure about Steve's ambitions, but we agreed on the first few controls and then we'd see how we felt.



A section of our route on the second day

Once we had done the initial climb out of the valley we left the track at a bend and struck out on a bearing over some limestone landscape, hopefully towards a sinkhole somewhere over a low ridge. We could see two other pairs heading roughly the same way but we resisted the lure of the path one pair was using, instead following a faint sheep track which made the running slightly faster, then breaking off when it stopped going our way. We hit that control fairly easily, getting within 20m before noticing the massive sinkhole to our right. As ever, Steve went to dib at the control while I double-checked the direction to leave in. My regular orienteering was definitely paying off as I was hitting controls fairly accurately over long distances and making sure I had a plan for at least one control ahead. The tussocks and bogs made studying the map on the move a risky business though! We worked our way up towards the Black Mountain main ridge, in a fairly direct fashion given the reduced time available, and we could see why they had taken that step when we got up there – at one point I was running along leaning sideways at a sixty-degree angle,

and even after we dropped off the back of the ridge the gusts swirling down sprayed water 10m off the Llyn y Fan Fach reservoir as we ran past. One feature that hadn't been removed from the map was the aqueduct running to the reservoir, forming a great fast route towards the next control. It only reached part way though, then we had to break uphill – at this point my legs started to really feel reluctant and the difference in mine and Steve's stamina levels began to show and I had to call him to slow down.

We had a pretty straight line in to the finish from there, the only question was whether we would be able to divert slightly to pick up a control on a hilltop. As we ran closer I thought it might be possible, or at least gain us more points than we would lose by coming in slightly over time, so I took a line around a valley rather than down and up again, expecting Steve to suggest we go for it. He didn't and as we continued round the valley and discussed it I agreed that we probably had enough on our plate just getting through the forest to the finish. In the end we came in four minutes under time – the extra 600m and 75m ascent would have taken us over the limit, but the control was worth 15 points so we would have come out slightly up.

The run in from the last control to the finish was about 3km of forest track and muddy trail, then finally we crested a rise and there it was – a rather anti-climactic banner and a small tent for kit checks. We posed next to the banner for photos (£7.50 for me looking vacant and bedraggled? Maybe not...) and then trudged off for another km to the event centre. This was more like it – steady supplies of soup and tea plus a meal voucher for burgers or curry and some picnic tables to crash at. And in the corner was a range of laptops displaying the current results – we were first! We didn't know when the team ahead of us at the half way point had started, but after we ate we checked again – still first. We had another soup – still first. And a tea – yep. Had they got lost, injured? Time for a cake – first. And maybe browse the OMM gear to decide what to spend our winnings on – first. And another tea – first. And then I check again and we're second – we're thoroughly beaten as well, by 45 points – somehow this has turned from being a massive achievement into a major disappointment!

We get over it and when the prizegiving gets round to our event (most of the attention is on the Long Score and the Elite courses) I ask the winners what happened – 'we decided to get changed at the car first and download later' 'you b*****s!'. Oh well, I haven't ever stood on a podium before, even if it is in a cow barn, so second place still feels great. Then it's all over and we gingerly climb down and hobble to the car, where there's a queue to be pulled out of the field by a pair of tractor drivers working overtime...



Myself (L) and Gaz on the 2012 OMM (photo taken by a marshal). There was no sun this year!

The 5 Key Skills of Orienteering

by Diana Todd, Western and Hills Orienteering Club, Sydney Australia (with permission)

When you can use these five techniques skilfully, you will be able to find any control on any orienteering map in the world. On some legs you may use only one technique, but for most legs you will need to combine several, or maybe all five, techniques.

Before we get to the 5 key skills, here's an insight into using compass bearings: Accuracy deteriorates as distance increases. Our compasses aren't surveyors' tools - any bearing you measure on the map will likely be off by one or two degrees. As you follow the bearing, you are likely to unconsciously veer off another degree or two. Sometimes these errors will offset each other and you'll end up exactly on target. But at other times they will compound each other. Over a 100 m leg, a 10o error will put you nearly 15 m off course. But over a longer distance, the same error would put you much more off course. So use your compass wisely as you apply the 5 Key Skills: use it to orient your map, and use it to aim yourself in a general direction, but when you use it to try to pick a precise line to a specific point, keep the distance as short as possible.

The 5 Key Skills

1. Pick out a **CATCHING FEATURE** that will let you know if you've gone too far. When planning your route, look on the map a short distance beyond the control you are heading for, and pick out a big, distinct feature that you can't fail to recognize. If you arrive at this catching feature, you will know you have overshot the control, and can turn around and go back. It will "catch" you and keep you from wandering too far past your control.

2. Follow a **HANDRAIL**. Even if it were pitch dark, you would be able to easily negotiate a winding staircase if you just put your hand on the handrail and followed where it led. Handrails in orienteering are features that you can follow just as easily. Paths and roads are the most obvious, but you can follow fences, streams, ditches, the edges of fields, and other long, narrow features just as easily. Following a "handrail" takes much less concentration than following a compass bearing. Also, since the handrail is illustrated on the map and a compass bearing isn't, following the handrail makes it much easier to keep track of exactly where you are.
3. When following a compass bearing to get to a distinct point near or on a handrail, try **AIMING OFF**. If you pick a compass bearing that aims directly at the precise point you are heading for, if you err even slightly you won't know if the feature you want will be on your left or your right as you approach it. By deliberately aiming to one side of the feature, you can confidently predict which side it will appear on. This technique works best when the feature is on or very near a handrail - for example a boulder near a stream. If you aim right at the boulder, but don't see it when you hit the stream, you won't know whether to go upstream or downstream to look for it. However, if you deliberately aim a little upstream of the boulder, if you don't see it when you hit the stream you will know to turn downstream to look for it.
4. If the control isn't on or near a handrail or other large, distinct, easily identifiable feature, choose an **ATTACK POINT** that you are confident that you can identify and take a compass bearing from there. Some controls, especially on advanced courses, are placed in the middle of large areas of featureless terrain, with no paths, streams, reentrants, or other distinct feature to help you keep track of where you are. An example would be a depression in the middle of a plantation forest, or a boulder on a smooth, even hillside. You have no choice but to follow a compass bearing to find it. But remember that when following a compass bearing, 1) the bearing is only good if you really are where you think you are when you start following the bearing, and 2) your accuracy in following the bearing decreases as the distance you travel increases. So pick the closest feature that you are sure you can find, and go in from there. Note: using an attack point is also useful in less challenging situations, where you don't have to use a compass. In many cases you may be able to use some other directional scheme, like "straight downhill from the path intersection" or "up the left reentrant from the reentrant junction" or "clockwise around the marshy area from where the stream comes in".
5. Use **COLLECTING FEATURES** to keep track of where you are. The most successful orienteers know exactly where they are at all times. They do this by constantly identifying features as they pass them, and locating them on the map (or "collecting" the features). Here are two types of situations where using collecting features is particularly helpful: 1) The "I'll just head west until I hit the path and then turn right" situation. This can be a good strategy, but if the path has grown indistinct, or is covered with leaves, or is hidden under a fallen tree, you could walk right over it without noticing. Or you might inadvertently veer southwest instead of west, and hit a different path. By identifying the terrain and features as you go ("There should be a reentrant coming up on my right, and then there'll be a marshy area off to my left"), you will know when you are coming close to the path, or when you are starting to drift off your line. 2) The "I have no choice but to follow a compass bearing a long way" situation. Break the long leg up into several shorter sections between identifiable features, even if it means following a zig-zag course. It often is faster to go a slightly longer, zig-zag distance, following several different compass bearings short distances from one distinct feature to another with great accuracy,

rather than to go the shorter straight route on a single bearing with your accuracy deteriorating the closer you get to the control.

Editor's Note

Would you like to see more technique help in Legend? If so let me know, by email or at events...apg.stott@btinternet.com
...or what else would you like to see in your copy of Legend?

ODDS AND SODS

Caddihoe Chase 2013

Despite treading on extremely thin ice my first contribution to this august magazine under its new Editor is to complain about a piece in the last Legend about the Caddihoe Chase contributed by Gill.

Quite rightly Gill referred to me as flying around the M75 course on Day1 but then completely spoiled this vision by saying I did so to “snatch” (my italics) the South West M75 title. Then, obviously delighting in the word, in relation to me at any rate, said I “snatched” the Caddihoe Chase trophy on Day 2.

My1982 Collins Dictionary gives many definitions and examples of use of the word snatch, the most relevant being “to gain, win, or rescue, esp. narrowly: they snatched victory in the closing seconds”. Is to win Day 1 by a clear 3 minutes snatching? Of course not. For a course length of 3.7 km this is a long time, long enough to stop and haveno, no of course I didn't. Day was less successful, third, but more importantly first overall, so won the M75 Caddihoe Chase, nearly 5 mins clear of the next runner. This is definitely not snatching.

Far be it for me to suggest to the editor how my victory should have been reported but expanding on Gill's initial approach something like: “Lin Callard flew around on both days making light of the extremely arduous and technically challenging courses, spiking each control with the minimum of fuss and loss of time, leaving all his competitors panting hopelessly in his wake” would have done.

The reality was somewhat different as I did, as always, make mistakes but everyone else made bigger ones. Sometimes this happens when the number of runners is small, in this case 13. Unlucky for some but not for me.

Mini-League

The penultimate event of the 2012/13 league season was held at Hartpury College and was my first introduction to Urban mapping symbols. The first part of the Green course was over fields and in a small woodland during which I managed to go from 5 to 7 and had to retrace my steps over a significant distance which was entirely my fault. I should have gone home then.

Once into the buildings things went from bad to worse as I had no idea what a lot of the map symbols meant, particularly those for walls and fences. The upshot of this was I became thoroughly discombobulated and decided to head on a compass bearing in what I

hoped was roughly the right direction. The first hurdle was a fence and as I had read somewhere climbing fences was OK over I went into a small paddock, empty save for a rather tall hut in one corner.

I was about halfway across when out from the hut came two almost full grown Ostriches giving me the eye from a great height.

If you have never been close to an Ostrich suffice to say they are tall, up to 2.75 m (9 ft) and have a mixed reputation as to temper. Did you know they can only kick forwards, not backwards? No neither did I, not that it would have made any difference to the outcome had they decided that was what I deserved. Apparently one of the outcomes of a good kicking is disemboweling

Swallowing hard I bid them “good morning” continuing to chat to the Ostriches in a friendly fashion as I crossed the paddock but got no reply, just steely looks. As I had reached the point-of-no-return I carried on over the next fence, getting over it rather quicker than the previous one. I did eventually relocate and finished 21st out of 31.

Lin Callard

Bertie's Bixslade Blues

You know what Fate is like. You are thinking that it's done the square thing by you for once and there you are, just jogging along contentedly, when Fate creeps up behind you and bashes you round the head with a wet sandbag. Orienteering is just the same: after my fabulous success coming 85th out of 116 on the Isle of Dogs I went to Bixslade feeling in mid-season form. But when I came back . . . Well, let me tell you how I got on. It was a plain vanilla Saturday morning in autumn and Jeeves was to accompany me to NGOC League 2.

“Pardon me asking, sir, but are you proposing to appear in public in that footwear?”

“Jeeves, you know very well these are my favourite boots; I concede that they are past their prime but they are ideal for muddy car parks before the O-shoes are donned.”

“Well, sir, . . .”

“Jeeves, you must check this habit of saying ‘Well, sir’ in that soupy voice whenever I have a fruity idea. It is not the correct feudal spirit.”

“Very good, sir. I was merely going to draw your attention to the late Lord Byron, who . . .”

“Shove Lord Byron, Jeeves, back on the bookshelf.

“Very good, sir.”

“Expunge Lord Byron from your mind. Ponder instead on Picasso.”

“Sir?”

“My Blue Period starts today. It was Picasso who had a Blue Period, wasn't it? No more Green or Orange courses for me; henceforth all Wooster courses will start with B: that is Blue - and Brown or Black when available.”

“Well, sir. . . .”

“Jeeves! I have just told you about starting sentences with ‘Well’.”

“Sorry, sir, I said it inadvertently. However, I doubt that you are sufficiently experienced for such a bold step.”

“Jeeves, I'm afraid you are talking pure mashed potato: look how well I did in London a few weeks ago. Anyway, my mind is made up: we Woosters are known for our boldness and decisiveness. Now, if your compass is set and your dibber is cleared let us tally-ho for the Forest.”

I was feeling that I had won my point about the boots and the Blue course as I brought the two-seater to a stop along a forest track. But Fate was not going to let me have things all my own way: the first thing I experienced on stepping out of the car was a squishing sound and one of my legs trying to slide away from me.

“Jeeves, I seem to have trodden in something unpleasant.”

“Most unfortunate, sir. May I suggest that you walk along the grass verge on the way to Registration in an attempt to remove the offending substance.”

But my boots were still in a disagreeable state when I returned from Registration so I chucked them under the car, donned my O-shoes and set off for the Start. I made sure that I was properly warmed up as I wanted a fast start to go with a fast mid-course and fast finish. I was feeling in good form and was determined to be more adventurous; no more cautiously moving from path junction to path junction for Bertram.

As soon as I picked up the map I saw that the first part of the route to Control 1 was along a path so I ran like mad until I left the track on a compass bearing to the depression. I tried to slow down and make my way more carefully via some earthworks clearly marked on the map. The earthworks might have been clear on the map but they weren't clear on the ground, at least not to the Wooster eyeballs. I proceeded warily, feeling that I must have gone past the control. Looking back I saw some cove do a disappearing act, apparently into the ground, and reappear looking mightily pleased with himself; he rushed off, leaving ne'er a wrack behind. Quick as a flash I rushed over and there was number 1.

One of Jeeves's gags is “more haste less speed” and this course proved him right several times over. 4 was very near to 5 and I ran fast on a compass bearing but there was no sign of the control. I returned to 4 and tried again, a bit more slowly. On the way I was overtaken by a speed merchant who ran a bit further than I had done previously. He ran into some undergrowth and emerged to run off in the direction of 5. The razor-sharp Wooster brain told me that I hadn't gone far enough at the first attempt.

The biggest disaster of the day was from 5 to 6. It now seems as clear as day where I went wrong but, of course, it didn't at the time. My plan was to cross a track at right angles, meet a second track at right angles and turn right to run along it. What I did was to think that the first track was the second one, if you catch my drift. As a result I ran off the map and spent a long time trying to find out where I was on the map. Not surprisingly, as I wasn't on the map, this didn't work. I now know how the Doctor feels when he pops back into the Tardis for a refreshing cuppa and, on emerging, finds himself on a different planet. Neither a compass nor a sonic screwdriver is any bally use when you convince yourself that you're somewhere that you're not. After a long time I decided to go back to the previous control, if possible, and start again. Why was this so easy when I had no idea where I had got to? Back at 5 I started again and found 6 easily. What's 21 minutes 26 seconds between friends? Several times during this humbling episode the famous words of the immortal Bard “I'm never going orienteering again” hovered on my lips but I resisted the temptation to utter them.

A bit further round the course and I found myself at the top of a hill looking down at the control. This would, no doubt, have been easy on some areas but the fifty yards were wall-to-wall brambles, brashings and broken rocks. Another five minutes down the drain. To cap it all I ran past the very last control, a path junction. Just who put the bally thing behind that bush?

Standing at the back of the two-seater I looked at the sad state of my much-cherished boots and the equally sad times on my printout and lit a despondent gasper. Jeeves had finished his course a long time ago and had shimmered off to collect controls. I did not fancy sitting in the car by myself getting cold and feeling more miserable in the failing light of a dull November afternoon. So I pushed a piece of chocolate into the

Wooster face and toddled off to Registration to see if any help were needed.

"I say, any controls need collecting?"

"Er, no thanks, we're OK" said half a dozen voices all at once.

"We'll need some help with the tent" said one who had noted my obvious sorrow at such unanimous rejection.

"I'm a dab hand at taking down tents" I said and for me it was the work of a moment to start pulling out tent pegs. About half the pegs were out when the tent decided to implode, if that is the word I want. I was thinking how convenient this was as all I needed to do next was roll it up when I noticed that it had not fallen flat: there was a noticeable bulge in the middle. Moreover the bulge was moving and making noises. I may be mistaken but I thought I heard the word "Tchah!" several times.

All the helpers watched, spellbound, as the bulge slowly migrated towards one edge of the tent. Eventually the edge lifted and a red face looked out. The face registered horror, dismay and a general suggestion of stunned dissatisfaction with the scheme of things. To my further discomfort it gradually dawned on me that the face was that of the new Chairman, to whom I had been introduced only a couple of hours previously. His eyes roamed hither and thither and came to rest on me or, rather, the tent pegs in my hand.

"You!"

"Oh, er, hello again. Thought I'd lend a hand, don't you know," and I waved a conciliatory tent peg. "You!" is a difficult thing to respond to and my response was not of the best. However, when in a difficult spot, one has to compromise.

The Chairman had ceased to glare at me and was now disengaging himself from the wreck of the tent. He staggered towards a nearby camping stool, collapsed onto it and sat with his head in his hands, groaning softly. Carol rushed up.

"Have a cup of tea, Gary."

"I need something stronger than that."

Nevertheless he took the tea in one hand and sipped it emotionally, the other hand still holding his head. By this time the others had resumed their work and Jeeves had materialised beside me with an armful of controls. I knew for a fact that Jeeves had been eating a lot of fish lately and his eyes were gleaming with intelligence; in an instant he had summed up the situation and, like the Fifth Cavalry (or is it the Marines?), came to the rescue.

"Bearing in mind this evening's engagement, sir, is it time for us to consider departing?"

"But, Jeeves, I don't have an, er, ah yes. Golly, is that the time? We'd better go."

I dropped the tent pegs and we biffed off, sharpish. During this exchange the Chairman had recovered sufficiently to get to his feet and was lifting the edge of the tent and peering underneath. He was muttering to himself and I caught a few words: "New club laptop . . . wet . . . mud . . . probably ruined . . . £500."

On the way home I turned to Jeeves. "What a day, Jeeves! Talk about 'into each life some rain must fall.' More like a bally monsoon."

"My sentiments entirely, sir."

"I expect to be about last on the Blue. And that dashed unfortunate business with the tent and the Chairman; what's that phrase? Something to do with fox's paws."

"I think the expression you are groping for is faux pas, sir."

"That's it. Well, thank you for coming to my rescue. Um, those boots, Jeeves, they are getting a bit old and hardly worth your while cleaning that mess off. You have my permission to chuck them."

"Thank you, sir, I have already done so. There was a convenient litter bin at the car park near the entrance to the forest."

Caption competition 1 - answers



The auditions for "Strictly" were not progressing well! (Paul Taunton)

Did you have to tread on my corn when we're surrounded by the stuff? (John Bennison)

"You know that Strictly has completed its grip on the nation when even NGOC are doing it." (Greg Best)

Caption competition 2 - answers



If what those two daft humans are doing on the previous page is called orienteering you can count me out. (Alan Brown)

“Next one to come round my re-entrant, and I’ll ‘ave yer leg off” (Gill Stott)

“I’ve just eaten Gary. Who’s next?” (Andy Stott)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location	Signposted / Forest Entry	Organiser
18/01/14	Danby Lodge League 4	Danby Lodge/Mosel ey Green Map	Streetmap link	Gill Stott 01291689471 Car Sharing
01/02/14	Informal	Flaxley	SO675159 GL17 0EA	Joe Parkinson 01432 358939 Car Sharing
08/02/14 18.00- 19.00	Western Night League	Cleeve Hill	SO989275 GL52 3PP	Dave Hartley 01452 863805
Sun 23 Feb 2014 10.00- 14.00	Galoppen	Knockalls	SO537124	The Jameses 01989 720122 Car Sharing
Sat 8 Mar 2014 Starts 12.00- 13.00	League 5	Cranham	SO913122 GL4 8HG	Greg Best 01242 516053 Car Sharing
Sat 19 Apr 2014 JK Weekend – the next entry deadline is 16 th February 2014 before the price goes up again...				

Enquiries to Organiser or Fixtures Secretary – John Coleman 01594 582151
fixtures@ngoc.org.uk

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

NGOC Registration and start times

Informal Events: Yellow / light green / blue courses

League Events: Yellow / orange / green / blue courses

Night Events Registration from 1800 – or when it's dark!
See www.westernnightleague.org.uk

Brashings

Reminder about increased entrance fees

We have reluctantly decided to increase our mini-league fees for 2014. These fees have not changed for a few years, and, as we expected, the increase in British Orienteering levies means that we now need to implement a small increase.

From 1 January 2014, Mini-league entry fees have increased from £4 to £5 for Seniors (£6 for non-BOF members), and from £1 to £2 for Juniors.

Entry fees for Informals, Training, Western Night League and other occasional events such as the Chairman's Challenge remain at £4 for Seniors and £1 for Juniors.

Membership fees for 2014 have remained at 2013 rates - £4 for Seniors and free for Juniors.

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 . February 10th 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 Gill Stott apg.stott@btinternet.com
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.