

the

January 2017

LEGEND

the magazine of North Gloucestershire Orienteering Club

*The Long Way Round: Walking
Britain's Coastline*

*Heading South: Barcelona O-
weekend*

*Get Your Wheels On: MTBO at
Soudley*

*Lightning Tree Hill: Rebirth of a
Classic Area*

PLUS!

Club News

Chairman's Chat

Captain's Log

Knockalls Report

League Final Standings

Western Night League

Latest Results

...and more!



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HUGE thanks to this issue's contributors:

Alan Brown, Caroline Craig, Gregory Goonhilly, Stephen Robinson, Gill Stott and Paul Taunton.

Please send your articles, features and letters to legend@ngoc.org.uk.

cover photo

Scott Johnson (M40) in action on the Blue course at the Kidnalls league event on 19th November

Welcome to the first Legend of 2017!

It's that tragic time of year when we sit down to write our New Year's resolutions and realise that - as we didn't actually achieve any of the ones we wrote last year - we can just cross out "2016" for "2017" and spend another 12 months miserably failing to achieve our goals.

Why is this? And why does it seem to apply to sporting and fitness good intentions as much, if not more, than normal resolutions? Every year is going to be the year I get super-fit, lose that extra 10lbs and achieve the nirvana of running excellence. It shouldn't be too hard - after all, running is what I really enjoy doing, and reaching these goals should be something like fun. But yet again, I'm the same weight and the same speed (or lack of) as I was this time last year. My mantelpiece still has trophy-free gaps on it. Are the goals beyond achievement? Is the call of the leftover mince pies too strong?

One of the reasons orienteering is such a great sport is that it's intrinsically hard. Technically, it's difficult enough; but on top of that you have to be reasonably fit - even if you walk around the forest, it's hard work - and be able to hold it all together under the pressure of competition. We keep going out and trying for that elusive perfect run for the same reason that people do the lottery: it's theoretically almost impossible but would be life-changing if it ever actually happened. That permanent state of wanting something that's always just marginally out of reach but grasping for it anyway; knowing that one day our fingertips might, just might, be able to get a hold on it.

The same applies to New Year Resolutions - or, as they're written in my training log, "2017 Targets". They are not going to be easy to achieve. If they were, I'd have done them last year (or the year before, or the year before that). If they come to pass, I will be a very happy bunny indeed. There's also a more than fair chance that I won't achieve any of them. (Podium at the Scottish 6 Days, anyone?) Of 2016's targets, only two got hit; the remaining seven fell sadly by the wayside. And human nature dictates that 2017's will have to be just that bit harder, that bit less attainable - otherwise life would just be too easy, wouldn't it?

Yet here we are again, ready for another busy round of events before the New Year's Eve booze has even had time to settle. To get you keyed up and raring to attack those resolutions, this edition of Legend is packed full of news and articles to whet your (oversated) appetites. So, step away from the mince pies and start thinking about how you can possibly shed 10lbs and run a sub-20 minute 5k before the CSC Qualifiers in March. And don't forget the lottery ticket while you're at it.

Photo: Sash Habgood



The editor, no thinner or fitter than last year.

New Members

Welcome to new member Ginny Hudson. Ginny has already run in several events - see you in the forest again soon!

Gary staying on as Chair - volunteer sought!

In the absence of any other takers for the job, Gary has nobly agreed to continue as Chairman as an interim measure until another candidate can be found. Gary is extremely good at this job and it's a daunting prospect to try to follow on from him, but he will be on hand to help guide the new Chair. If you think you could spare the time to take this on, please email Gary at chairman@ngoc.org.uk.

2016 League - the best yet?!

A total of 461 runners completed 1,221 runs between them during

the 2016 NGOC League. There were 11 events, ranging from the urban environs of Gloucester to the open area of Cleeve and the tough, hilly woods of Kidnalls.. See the full analysis and top 10 standings on page XX. The 2017 league kicks off with Cranham & Cooper's Hill on 14th January.

NGOC 2017 Club Championships announced

An exciting new way to win prizes has been unveiled for 2017 - the Club Championships! This is a series of twelve events - one for each month - of which your top 7 scores will count. Most of the events will be larger local fixtures organised by other clubs so it's a great way to get out and get more orienteering

done. Read Richard's "Captain's Log" for more details of the first few events.

New Mailchimp emailing service

Many of you will have noticed a new format to the NGOC emails landing in your inbox. This is because we're now using a Mailchimp mailing list, which enables the club to send communications easily and without the sending restrictions of domestic email services.

If you haven't seen one of these yet, please check your Junk or Spam folder and add the club to your safe senders list - the emails will contain interesting and useful information about future club events!

caption competition!

Paul Taunton sent in this brilliant pic, taken at the HOC Dymock event. (Why he had five dibbers is a question as yet unanswered, and it might be better not to ask!) The Taunton clan have already come up with some excellent movie-inspired captions: **Edward Dibberhands** and **A Fistful of Dibbers!** Can you do better? Send your caption ideas to legend@ngoc.org.uk. Both "clean" and gutter-minded contributions are welcome, but be warned that only the clean ones will make it into the next issue ...!



We need YOUR articles, news and photos!

Been to any good events lately? Or perhaps you've done a walking trip, or a fell race, or have a great idea for a training session. Why not write it up for Legend?! It doesn't have to be Pulitzer-winning stuff; just a few paragraphs to share your experiences with your fellow club members. Likewise, if you've got any photos from NGOC events or from fixtures further afield, send them in! Just email legend@ngoc.org.uk. Next issue will be out at the beginning of January, so please send articles by 24th December.

letter(s) to the editor

Dear Editor,

Sorry to hear the old editor's gone. She used to give me carrots. Do you grow vegetables?

I've been around rather too long and have seen many Newsletters over the years, so thought I'd tell you where you've gone wrong.

Firstly, that girl on the front cover: Clearly 'on a mission'. This is a rather frightening image for a man of my age and makes me feel I've not emptied the dish washer or hung the washing out, and that I should feel guilty. I suspect that any children who saw it will have run away and hidden, thinking it was the school dinner lady after them. No, if you must have a woman on the front cover, the same lady smiling in a posh frock, or a young, smiling, tanned Scandinavian lass. It could even be an orienteer. I googled "Swedish 'O' girl" but there were no orienteering tops in evidence in any of the photos. No tops at all. Although I did notice that one of them looked very like the wife of one of our members, *(name deleted by ed)*. So you'll have to find your own photos.

I scroll down to your report on the AGM. It seems that there were a lot of old men there who couldn't agree on anything. The proposed 'Annual Dinner' – they've all got bus passes, get on the b****y bus!

As for Dickie Cronk's idea of a huge multi-race club champs – get a life! We have! One race, in a good area, BOF handicap applied. Job done.

Glad/Sad to see that the jovial Chairman is on his way out. Always loved his humour. Can we get him a bench or

something. And that Captain, he was always quietly very efficient. However, he and that blessed woman on the front cover both had 'slobbery dogs'. Should be a law against them really, although I did get one of them to lick my legs once. (The dog, not the owner)

I'm getting annoyed with all this damned purple text.

Member Profile – Got a bit worried that Hiliary's "Best Orienteering Experience" was "... the sight of Greg, Gary etc ..." until I saw the conclusion of the sentence, over the page. Clearly, Hiliary needs to get out more: My best experience was at the 'Scottish 6 days' when a shed load of Swedes piled out of a coach at a quite loch, stripped off completely, and went swimming. Shame I had the Memsahib with me at the time.

Interesting article about Danby underground. Went for a wander there as a result. All bar one section is sound. This small area showing much evidence of imminent collapse, with roof flattening and basal compression cracks. Suggest the old boys hold the AGM there next year.

I got quite excited when I got to the 'Wet and Wild' article. However, I've been led up the garden path too many times by women like yourself, so was not surprised to be disappointed again, when I read further. Shame on you.

This follows nicely on to the article about 'Swamp World'. I've no sympathy. Look, ladies pay a fortune to cover their faces in mud to improve their looks. Men pay even more to see them

wrestle in the stuff. Or maybe that was just me.

The article on the Mourne Mountain Marathon was a fascinating read but was spoilt by the picture of two old men at the prize giving. The one on the left is clearly under the influence of alcohol, and the other is wearing his dad's trousers and has clearly got a weak bladder. No 'old men' pictures in future, please.

I shall continue to keep a close eye on 'Legend' and point out areas for improvement. Remember these few marketing ploys related to Legend:

- No old men – mentioned, or in photographs
- Sex sells
- A 'caption' competition
- Avoid children and furry animals
- Free 'giveaways' always attract a repeat audience
- No purple text
- A 'For Sale' section for kit, pets, household junk,
- A 'Personals' section
- A 'Member Skills' section
- A competition

Also remember, that any press is good press. You can afford to insult, humiliate, ridicule. If you have incriminating photos then great. If not, Photoshop is your friend. Blackmail is an easy fundraiser for the club, as long as you keep the amounts affordable. Start with the Ex-Chairman. Lots of those old men must have tales to tell.

Yours

Gregory Goonhilly

If you think you can guess Mr. Goonhilly's true identity, feel free to email the editor for confirmation!

DON'T FORGET THE TAGS!

Article & photo: Paul Taunton



for some reason or another, were not used in the final courses.

Does this really matter? Yes!!

Whenever I'm in the forest planning an event I try to talk to anybody that I meet, to mention that there is an orienteering event coming up. The few people I meet are usually dog walkers, so I politely suggest that they would have a quieter, undisturbed time by choosing another block of forest for their walk on the date of the event. Most people are friendly, and a few ask what orienteering is all about, but on only one occasion have I received a strong negative response. I was in the area behind Parkend church (when controlling an event for BOK) and was surprised when somebody I spoke to complained bitterly about plastic tape tags being left on control sites. So, some people do notice tags!

Though it seems not all tags are ours – I have seen tags alongside forest paths that mark the place to turn off into the bushes to find dormouse boxes, so don't remove those.

On two occasions this year when Ros has been unable to run the Green course at a Saturday league event we have been to the area at a later date and taken Mapp (our dog) for a walk around the course. On both occasions we have noticed tags remaining on many control sites after the event. Hence this reminder! The evidence is included in this photograph.

Event planners should make sure that they brief their volunteer control collectors adequately, reminding them to look for the tags, telling them what colour tape has been used, and asking that they be collected. My advice to control collectors with no pockets in their O-kit is that they should stick the tapes down the back of their underpants to carry them safely! Finally, planners should remember to collect any tags that were placed during the planning process at any control sites that,

break a leg at Kidnalls ...



Photo: Ashleigh Denman

Ashleigh Denman has been putting her feet up over Christmas ... after the Kidnalls League event left her with a broken fibula and ligament damage. "It happened about 100m from the last control," Ashleigh says. "I was running and looking at the map, not looking at where I was going. At the edge of the track was a small earth bank. I didn't fall over but pulled up very quickly due to the pain and hopped/limped the rest of the way." Ashleigh managed to finish the course - "the quickest route to help happened to be past the last control and the finish. But I did stop to punch, and so complete the course!" Despite her bone-breaking injury, Ashleigh still finished 5th on her course.

She's been enjoying a restful Christmas, whilst Simon has been waiting on her hand and foot (pun intended). "He's been doing a grand job running around after me for weeks now. I'm sure he'll be glad when I can do more again." *Wishing you a speedy and successful recovery, Ashleigh - see you in the forest again soon!*

chairman's chat

Winding down to Christmas, I have all my NYD Score planned, time to have a review of the year.

Firstly, I look back and see it as a success, I know, I would say that I am the Chairman. The yearlong league, is holding steady, although we only managed 11 events, due to permissions. Our headline event, The Harvester was a success, great area, great officials and helpers. Training events were introduced and proved to be a great success.

So, to 2017, the committee without which, nothing would happen, see's our new members settling into their roles. Richard Cronin taking over from Greg Best, as Club Captain. Judith Austerberry as Legend editor (and all round "whirling dervish"), from Gill Stott and Richard Purkis as a general committee member. Simon Denman added Volunteer



Spot Gary in this pic from the archives!

Coordinator, albeit for a short tenure, to his Membership duties. Sadly, Ashleigh Denman, decided the only way to get off committee duties, was to break

her leg at Knockalls. Despite this, she came 5th on the day and finished a creditable 2nd in the overall standings. Get well soon Ash.

So, what's new, well our December meeting started talks of adding things to NGOC's repertoire, MTBO and duothons, were two things discussed. Pat has been working hard, as usual, with the Permanent Course, encompassing new technology, so people can use smartphones, to record their runs.

But whatever happens, it's the Club and its members that matters. So, let's make 2017 a bumper year.

Gary

string course - competitors wanted!

NGOC's string courses are renowned for their interesting routes, fabulous Mr Men controls and the superb assortment of stickers and sweets on offer. But at some events they see less than a dozen competitors. Sheila Miklausic, Caroline Craig and their helpers put in a lot of work to make the string courses so good and they really do deserve to see more competitors.

Please spread the word among friends and family with young children! The string course is a great (and low-cost!) adventure in the forest for little ones and parents/supervisors don't need to have any knowledge or experience of orienteering. It's also an excellent way of introducing youngsters to our wonderful sport.

The Miklausic family, having a great time on String at the Knockalls league event.



2017 heralds the beginning of a new competition year. The fixtures calendar on the website has now been updated to include relevant races through the winter.

North Gloucestershire "Mini" League

Club members locked out all of the top places for each category in 2016 – to a level not seen for many years. Please do continue to come and support these, and sit on the top spots for more years to come. The first races at 14th January (Cranham), 11th February (Mallards Pike) and 25th February (Highmeadow Woods)

Club Championships

New for 2017! This will reward the best orienteers in the club, with the hope of encouraging our support of, and links with, neighbouring clubs and build up some club spirit and comradery amongst our membership. The first races are 22nd January (Danby Lodge) and 5th February (Beechenhurst)

Galoppen

The South West Galoppen series still slots into the traditional Autumn-Spring season. We are on the periphery of the South West region and it's fair to say this doesn't have the same "pull" or attention from club runners as it once did. Five races into the season, Rebecca Ward is 3rd on Light Green, sister Jessica also 3rd (on Yellow), with dad Pete 5th on Brown, and another Peter (Watson) 6th on Green. The three closest Galoppen fixtures are still to take place this season, so there are still good opportunities to rise up the table – 15th January (Cannop Ponds), 22nd January (Danby Lodge) and 2nd April (Savernake Forest).

UK Orienteering League

This is a national British Orienteering initiative, to encourage attendance at the major races in the calendar. Unfortunately, this turns into a competition of who travels to the most, and the scoring system effectively applies more weighting onto the races with lowest attendance. There is a

club element to this competition – hence I wish to promote and have placed the most relevant dates into the calendar. The Midlands Championships weekend (Warwickshire) in March and Springtime in Shropshire in May will be the closest fixtures in this league.

CompassSport Cup Qualifier – 12th March

We are still to receive confirmation of our assigned heat – but it is looking likely that we will be against Bristol at Cwm Lickey – near Newport. Should Bristol win, the second placed team will also qualify for the final (in Devon on 22nd October). However – want us to enter our very best (and hence biggest) team possible and fight Bristol for the top spot. I will be sending invitation and co-ordinating the team by email in the next few weeks.



Richard on Pen Cerrig Calch, November 2016. Photo: Ben Arkell

NGOC podiums in Spain

by Caroline Craig (AKA Tom A for one weekend only!)



Caroline in action in the Middle distance

It's 10 years since I first ran in the annual Venice O event and got hooked on the challenge of figuring out the maze of tiny streets while on the run, dashing down tiny alleyways and startling unsuspecting tourists. After the great flood of 2012 (Venice's highest in 160 years) where the police shut down the start after complaints about orienteers creating tidal waves, the Venice race wouldn't happen at that scale again.

So NGOC's Venice-goers ventured elsewhere - to Rome in 2013 and this year to Barcelona. We flew out bright (not so much) and early on the Friday, checked in and went out exploring in the Montjuïc area, location of a

previous Barcelona city race. Very much a hillside park with steps aplenty, we thought we had it much easier this year with the city race being in the much flatter Old Town.

While stocking up on our hotel breakfast, we played Spot The Orienteers - not many older couples wear Ronhills to breakfast! As Saturday's event wasn't until the afternoon, we spent the morning marveling at the other-worldly Gaudi architecture - the huge unfinished cathedral Sagrada Familia from the outside and then a tour inside a renowned Gaudi house.

The event was a middle distance race at a university campus on the outskirts, with the event centre at the open air velodrome where Chris Boardman won Gold in the 1992 Olympics. I was traveling with Toms B and C, who both had early starts, so I walked to the start with them so that it was familiar. Once back at the event centre, I didn't have long to wait before seeing all 3 NGOCers

storm into the finish, in fairly quick succession. Asked how it was, the conclusions were "too many steps" and "beware- lots of people struggled to find the start triangle"!

Finally, it was my turn. Out of the start in an open area, I headed straight down the road in front of me, the way we were funnelled. After a while there was no sign of a start flag, whose triangle was marked just off a road like this. Confusingly, I worked out it was on a parallel road, and the opposite way to my #1, so it made no sense for me to run up and back down the steps to visit it. No wonder people were frustrated by it! The campus was on a fairly steep hillside with lots of landscaped areas and buildings of various interesting shapes, with plenty of passageways, steps and underpasses. I had 28 controls in 3.8km, so legs averaging 135m. Coupled with the care needed to pick out the right passageway/path on both the map and the ground, this meant

that after 10 controls I was concerned I'd not been getting as tired as I should. I vowed to take any opportunity I could to run harder. Five or six controls later and I was feeling pretty tired and wishing for the opposite! On emerging from the mandatory subway under the busy ring road, just like a dream, escalators materialised alongside the long flight of steps! "Ooh, am I allowed to run up them? They're not marked OOB."

But it definitely felt like cheating to me, to get motorised assistance, so of course I took the steps.

[Watching the video of the weekend on the club

website now reveals not everyone took the same view!]

My run had been pretty clean until then, so of course I made up for it on #18, thinking I was being clever but only at the last minute realising the steps I was heading for were actually a bridge above me. Even worse, when back on track I overshot the control. I like to think that after the manicured open areas it felt unnatural to jump a fence and clamber down an unstable wooded slope, but really I was just "out of the zone". Needing to make up time, I

dashed up the hill to the easy #19 and accelerated away down the hill. The photographer perched at #19 exclaimed as I didn't give him enough time to get me in shot, hence the rather unflattering photo of my behind in the official event photos.

Telling myself I was near the end, I tried to keep the pace up (which was helped by the event loaning everyone SI Air cards for a free trial of touch-free

"How did you do?" asked the Toms. "Err, I don't know what this means", I replied, pointing at my splits printout with
I Isia Bassett 28:23
2 Caroline Craig 32:47.
"I mean, this is Women Elite- I can't possibly be 2nd!"

But, believe it or not, by the end of the day I was 3rd out of 30 finishers, granted with a 4 minute gap between 1st and

2nd and then 4th to 7th all being within a minute of me. Suddenly, the panic set in - I'd come to the weekend expecting nothing, thinking I'd be really pleased to get top half and thrilled if I could get top ten, yet now I was in contention for a place on the podium. Me being me, I'd now be really disappointed in myself if (when!) I failed. With Sunday's race being twice as long and times just added together, there was even more pressure to do well.

On Sunday, the shortest way to the start involved crossing the route of Barcelona's answer to the Race For Life. I tried to blend in with the sea of thousands of pink t-shirts as I made my way





On the final run-in and racing for a podium!

across, a welcome distraction from my fear of failure. I'd done my research and knew that Isia, Saturday's winner, started 2 minutes after me so I'd have some idea of how I was doing based on when she passed me.

Trying to put the self-inflicted pressure to one side, I concentrated on keeping in close contact with the map, planning a short way ahead and keeping up the pace - thinking of the reward, not the disappointment.

Heading from #5 to #6, I was somewhat panicked to discover my following control was #10: "Argh, that's not 6 I'm heading for - it's 9!" Thankfully I'd gone less than 100m out of my way when I noticed so was very glad of planning ahead.

It wasn't quite as crowded as Venice so the map didn't show which areas were busiest, although the queue for the Picasso museum on a particularly narrow old street took some negotiating! Isia

caught me leaving #11 (out of 33) and was 30 seconds ahead by the timed out road crossing between #14 and #15. I then gradually dropped behind again as expected. We took marginally different routes to #18. On arriving at the crossroads of alleyways where I expected my control, there was a control but not with the number I expected. Panic! "What's gone wrong? I must be at the wrong junction, but I was sure it was right and now it all looks the same". I felt like such an idiot when I realised I'd read the wrong line of my descripti-

ons and of course it was my control after all! A minute lost for no reason and quite possibly the podium too, if it had still been in reach.

"Come on Caroline, not far to go- run faster!" According to the Winsplits graph, I did too! Rounding the corner into the final square and last control, I spotted the sting in the tail- the finish control was right at the top of a flight of steps! Unlike the man just in front, I got lucky and didn't fall up them during my final push.

I tried (and failed) not to think about downloading on the lengthy walk back to the event centre. On whipping my splits out of the printer, I was relieved and delighted to see that I was in 2nd

That all-important finish dib ...



again, especially knowing there was only one later starter likely to threaten me. The freezing shower brought me back to earth before a tense wait for the screen of final results, just to be sure I'd not missed something. But no, I was 3rd on Sunday and 2nd overall.

But that's not all - we had 2 (almost 3) podium places. In the Men Open class, Toms C and B finished 2nd and 5th/6th respectively in the two races, resulting in 2nd and 4th overall (out of 9 finishing both days without mispunching). Tom C was very modest about his podium finish, pointing out that it was "only Open" and "the good people do Elite". But if, like me, you can't call yourself elite, you just need to enter the next class down and if you make the podium, then you've justified entering Elite next time!

Andy Monro ran Men Vets, competing against top M35+s and came 12th out of 43 who finished both days without MPs. Also our neighbours from BOK created a Dyer Double on the third step of the Ultra Vets class. All these familiar faces made for an exciting prize-giving with lots of photo-taking. As the "Elite" podium stood with our fancy running top prizes (and an SI Air+ for the winners!), the announcer rather over-egged his event by saying "You're looking at the best runners in the world". ?!. Err, no - 1 woman and up to 3 men, but not me! But then, You've Got To Be In It To Win It!

Photo credits: Caroline Craig and COC Orientacio



Above: Caroline (second from left) on the Elite podium. Below: Tom Cochrane (on the left) takes second place in the Men's Open class.



walking the coast of Britain

Coastal Walk finally finished

By Alan Brown



Long-term Legend readers may remember some articles by Alan Brown when he started walking round the UK mainland in February 2008. Well, he finally finished in May 2016. But with a total distance of about 6,500 miles and with over 1,000 miles done in 2008 and 1,600 in 2009 why did it take so long?

Well, mileages really slipped from 2011 onwards as the “easy” bits of the walk, i.e. England and Wales, had been completed by then. Although Scotland has fantastic scenery the train journey to get there is long and, with fewer stations, longer stints have to be done. May to September is ruled out by the midges.

Also, enthusiasm had begun to wane and in 2015 there

was just one trip of 96 miles. So, in April 2016, Ann pushed the reluctant walker into the car in Cheltenham and, on the next day, pushed him out at Fort William. She then drove on to a smart hotel at Glenfinnan (where the Hogwart’s Express crosses the railway viaduct) and waited there for him to walk the ten miles along the A830. This set the pattern for the next

couple of weeks and made sure that the section from Fort William to Mallaig was completed. Ann enjoyed this holiday more than Alan, spending much time in cafes enjoying cappuccinos, chatting to other holidaymakers and locals, taking boat trips, visiting nature reserves, caves and shops.

A week after returning home Alan set off again, this time on the train by himself to walk the section from Kyle of Lochalsh to Mallaig. With hardly any roads Ann would not have been able to drop Alan off in the morning and pick him up again in the evening.

In early May the intrepid duo set off again for the final stage – from Kyle of Lochalsh north to Cape Wrath and then east along the “top” to Thurso.

After returning home Alan wrote an account of the whole walk. For a minimum £5 donation to the



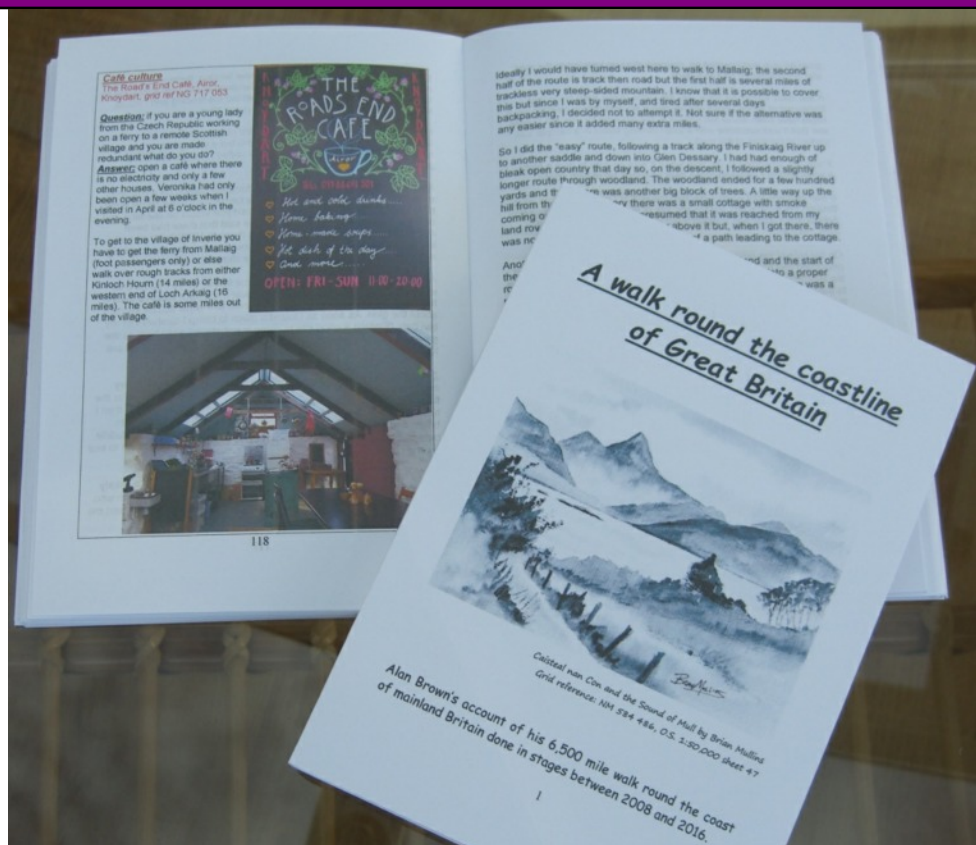
Orienteering Foundation, the charity established to support Orienteers and Orienteering, you will receive a PDF copy of the 250 page book. To order, visit:

<http://www.orienteeringfoundation.org.uk/walk-round-the-coastline-of-great-britain>

Some excerpts from the book:

The beginning

On Sunday mornings as a child living in central London my father always took me for a walk. We explored in every direction and this made me interested not only in walking but in looking about at interesting buildings and monuments. In those days we could even walk through Downing Street. But we only ever went so far, until a glance at his watch told my dad that it was time to turn for home and Sunday lunch. So I knew my London pretty well within the radius of a few miles of Green Park but beyond that there were miles of territory waiting to be explored. I was always reluctant to turn and



retrace my steps and wanted to carry on; continuing the walk is what you can do with backpacking.

...

Trying to complete the walk in one go did not seem a good idea:

- There was no chance that I would get permission from the household authorities;

- Walking 20 and more miles a day for a year would be too much mentally and physically;

...

Carmarthen – Tenby
3 days, 9 - 11 April 2008

O.S. maps 159,158
46 miles

Carmarthen – Llanstephan – Maenllwyd (John and Judith's converted barn) – St Clears – Laugharne – Pendine – Saundersfoot – Tenby

9 April:

My very cheap "advance" fare meant a very early train. From Carmarthen station I walked into town to see a friend, John, at his office; he marked his home on my map and said he expected me around six o'clock that evening. From Carmarthen I went along the B4312 (using side roads where possible to avoid traffic) to Llanstephan, a pretty

Frequently Asked Questions ...

What's a bivi bag? A water proof cover for a sleeping bag, which zips up over the face. It is quick to set up and takes less space (in the rucksack and on the ground) than a tent. Mine can be pegged down and has a single hoop to keep the fabric off my face.

Where do you camp? Cliff top, corner of a field, by a canal towpath, anywhere but a campsite.

That's a lot of money to spend on trains? I'm sure it's cheaper than staying in hotels. Also I needed to get a change of clothes (would it be fair on the postman to send my dirty socks home via the Royal Mail?) and to feed up for the next stage. With advance tickets some fares can be very cheap. And, being a train fan, I have travelled on many lines that were new to me. Getting a Senior Railcard halfway through the walk made a difference too.



village overlooked by a large castle.

Loch Arkaig , April 2016

Loch Arkaig not only has its own monster, a water horse, but also has hidden treasure sometimes known as the Jacobite gold, a large amount provided by Spain to finance the 1745 uprising.

27 April I had intended only two hours' sleep before I set off to walk through the night to the railway station at Banavie, at the Fort William end of the Caledonian Canal. But it was four hours later when I struggled out of the sleeping bag and began to pack up by touch. Scrambling back onto the road I started off and walked slowly, following the white lines painted on the road.

After half a mile I came to a sudden stop. A couple of

hundred yards in front there was a small green light waving about. A cyclist? It didn't seem to get any closer and I just couldn't work out what it might be. Aliens? Then it disappeared. Waiting a minute . . .

Essex, April 2011

21 April [2011] Today was the last day of this stage of the walk as I was due at relations in Sandy in Bedfordshire, to spend the weekend. I walked for miles down country lanes and through pretty villages until the route changed to embankments round Old Hall Marshes and into the village of Tollesbury, just in time for the pub to open. They didn't serve food but the barman

recommended a baker's down the road and I was welcome to eat any purchases in the pub. Of course, I walked past it as I was looking on the wrong side of the street and, anyway, it was hidden down some steps in a basement.

O.S. maps and tracks

Tracks boldly marked - - - - - look as if they should be wide and easy to follow on the ground but they are often non-existent; I have been caught out many times.

Then there were miles more embankments alongside the River Blackwater until I reached Maldon at dusk and set up my bivi under a bush near a large roundabout. The walk next day was completely inland to the station at Witham.

Photos: Alan Brown collection

Café culture

Ozone Café, Cape Wrath, the most north-westerly point on the British Mainland, grid ref NC 259 747 Sheet 9

In the lighthouse buildings built by the famous Stevenson family (including Robert Louis Stevenson of Kidnapped and Jekyll & Hyde fame). To get there you take the ferry from Keoldale and then a one hour 11 mile minibus trip (or several hours walk) along a road that hasn't been maintained since it was tarmacked in the 1950s. The Cape Wrath area is an MOD bombardment range, the only place in Europe where they can drop live 1,000lb bombs etc. Anyone planning a trip is advised to phone the MOD to see if the range is in use before setting out. The café claims to be open 365 days a year 24 hours a day – but the proprietor shut up shop while I was there to take his dogs for a walk.

orienteering foundation, parkrun



The Orienteering Foundation is an independent Charity established to support Orienteers and Orienteering.

At the discretion of the Trustees it makes grants to:

- ❖ enhance events
- ❖ encourage innovation
- ❖ alleviate hardship.

In the recent past it has made grants to support:

- National Schools teams to attend the World Schools' Championships
- The Ward Junior Home Internationals
- Junior Inter-regional competitions
- Junior regional squad training overseas and in the UK
- Participation at the European Trail-O Championships.

To sustain the present level of activity and to widen the scope of the Foundation's support requires money.

WILL YOU HELP US PLEASE?

For further information contact:

Viv Macdonald, Orienteering Foundation, c/o British Orienteering, Scholes Mill, Old Coach Road, Tansley, Derbyshire DE4 5FY admin@orienteeringfoundation.org.uk

The Foundation's web site www.orienteeringfoundation.org.uk has more detail on how to donate, activities, grants, Trustees, etc.

parkrun performances

Our runners are becoming increasingly prominent at local parkruns. Steve Harris (M35) has now completed an impressive 104 parkruns, and has a personal best of 18:48 on the Lydney course. Gerry Ashton (M60) has a tally of 96 runs - only 4 to go for the 100 Club!

Our junior orienteers are also well up in the parkrun results. On New Year's Eve, Rebecca Ward (W14) was the first female finisher at Pontypool - ahead of some pretty good local athletes - in a fantastic new PB of 22:32 for the 5k course. At Lydney, Reuben Lawson (M10) set an

impressive new best of 22:46 on 10th December, followed not far behind by younger brother Seth, finishing his first parkrun in a time of 29:04.

The Lydney course offers an excellent speed training session with its technical course along uneven forest tracks. Other local parkruns include Coleford, Wootton, Stonehouse, Newent and Gloucester

North. All runs are at 9am on Saturday mornings and are free to attend. You just need to pre-register at www.parkrun.org.uk before your first event, then you're set up for all parkruns across the country.



lightning tree hill revisited

By the editor

Rebirth of a classic area?

It's been many years since the club last used Lightning

Tree Hill, a large and varied area of forest just north of Cinderford. Back in 1987 the British Championships were held here - proving that the area has the potential for events and courses of the highest level. The big question is: can Lightning Tree Hill be used again? And is there enough decent forest to make it worth updating and/or re-mapping? At the AGM Tom Mills suggested that we should be taking a new look at some of our old areas, and Pat Macleod took on the job of making this happen.

David May (SLOW), who competed on the M40A course in the 1987 Championships, has kindly provided his map from the event (opposite). It shows that the area is dominated by the main hill (with the three masts on top) with three smaller subsidiary hills to the east of the area. On the western side of the map, near Nailbridge and Steam Mills, is a superbly detailed area of pits, depressions and knolls providing

great opportunity for high-density control placement and tricky micro-navigation legs. Overall, the area is very well-featured. It's worth noting that, whilst there are some quite substantial sections of green on the 1987 map, it was still feasible to plan a quality course with plenty of route-choice options on it.. The area was last used c.2000, and it was never mapped in OCAD. This was due to the destruction (for orienteering) of the lovely Western strip through clear felling, and general loss, through vegetation growth, of reasonable going in the central part of the map.

And so it was that a crew of NGOC's Military League stalwarts ventured out to decide whether or not it was worth resuscitating the area. Led by Pat; Bob Teed, Roger Coe, Tom Mills, Alan Richards and I were

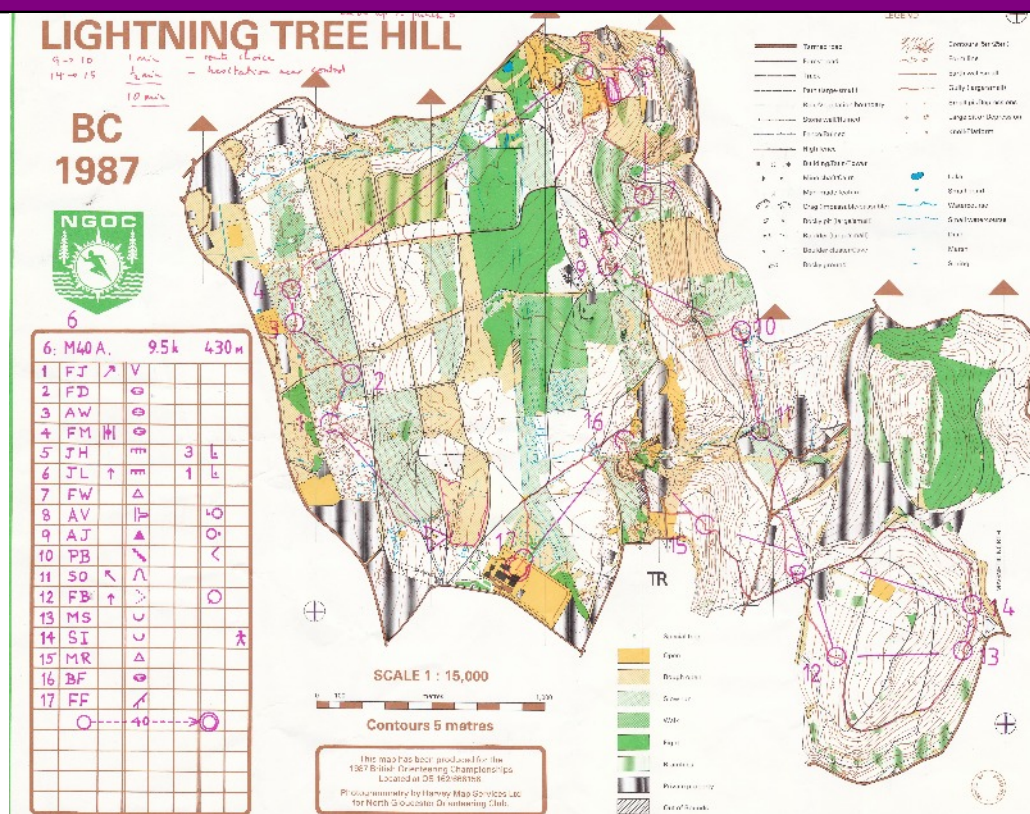
joined by David May early in December for a wander around the forest. Old maps were distributed amongst the team - along with blank contour maps on which we could note our findings - and the area was split up into sections, with each of us given a few forest blocks to examine. I took the northwestern



The area had some lovely sections of forest

section (covered by leg 5 on David's map) and was expecting a battle through unusable forest - after all, there had to be a good reason why the area had lain dormant for so long!

Yes, there were some pretty grotty sections, but quite a bit of the forest I ran through was very



make it harder to map the fine contour and point features.

The overall view was that it is worth updating the area, but it's not good enough to merit a full professional re-mapping. This means that the job will be done by club members, saving the considerable expense of outsourced surveying on an area which may have limited scope.

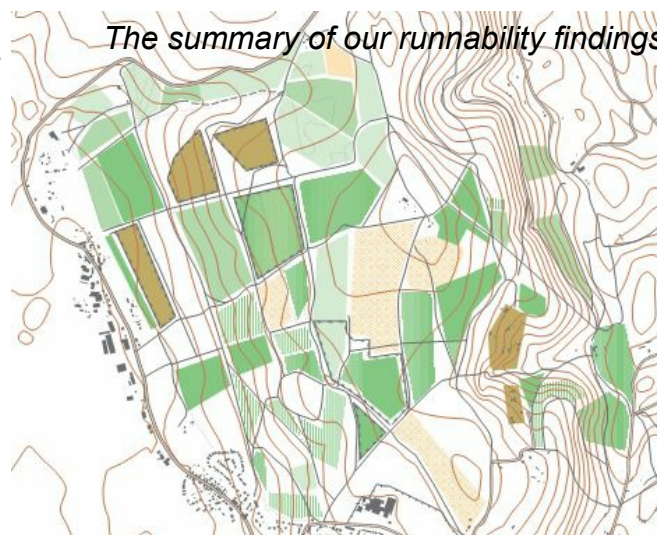
There are several areas currently being considered for revival. As well as the updating of Highmeadow/Headless Hill, Soudley is next up on the list for

pleasant indeed. The best bits I didn't photograph - I was too busy enjoying the running! Most of the light green areas were medium-slow run and still nice. Some of the white was fantastic. The dark green varied from tough but quite passable, to all-out fight.

"Looking at the overall picture," said Pat, "my view is that the Eastern side of the map is very

promising from a runnability point of view. But it's steep and not very feature rich. The Western side was once a brilliant area, and although it's now much poorer it does have some good bits. The central ridge is also mixed: one or two good bits, but it'll be a big challenge to map the 'rough open' area for good course planning."

Two significant factors in deciding whether or not to update the map are a large hole in the LIDAR data - straight down the middle of the area - and lack of an updatable OCAD base. These would mean that contour data would need to be extrapolated from another source and the cost of a professional survey from scratch would be very high. The LIDAR “hole” would also



revisiting to see if it's suitable to use again. Paul and Ros Taunton are working on this, and early evidence suggests that it will be another case of 'OK in bits'. Other areas to be looked at include Poor's Allotment, on Tidenham Chase, and the Dowards, across the Biblins Bridge from Highmeadow Woods. It's unlikely that any of these will turn out to be Championship-class venues, but it's still worth extending the range of areas we have available for League, Training and Night events - particularly given the increasing restrictions on existing areas.



A Planner's Perspective

By Gill Stott



After over a year of competing in MTBO events and planning one small event from around home, I was asked to plan and organise an event in the eastern area of the Forest of Dean.

Soudley Village Hall seemed like a good place to start people off from so all I had to do was plan where the controls were going to go and check them out. The problem was that MTBO events use OS 1:25,000 maps and some of the forest track mapping is out of date. This might have caused a few mapping headaches but I was saved from this by the good old Forestry Commission. Understandably they like to try and contain MTB riders to hard forest tracks (apart from Sallow Valets which they have claimed as theirs) and a colour coded map had been issued which details the tracks permissible to riders. So all I had to do was sketch these onto my OS map segment image and inform competitors that they strayed off the recommended tracks at their own peril.

It was Autumn as I rode round the Forest checking armchair planned control sites, a wonderful time to appreciate how diverse and special it all is. I'm accustomed to ferreting around the undergrowth, cursing the non-appearance of a depression I was expecting. No time then to piece together all the different mapped orienteering areas of NGOC and BOK. The Soudley based MTBO event covered maps Mallards East, Cannop, Moseley Green, Blakeney Hill and Soudley. Remember Soudley? Somehow I managed to dig out an old Soudley map from 1995 - over 20 years ago! Using this old O map in conjunction with the OS map was useful since it became easier to make sense of the forest track network. Going round on my bike I started to wonder if the area might be re-surveyed and brought back into use again. I think plans are afoot to do this so maybe in the near future. Yes the vegetation had changed – some fight looked more passable and areas of rough open were now forest. But the paths seemed pretty similar.

In MTBO we use SI units but with no flag and stake. The control sites themselves are quite

straightforward, for example track/path junctions – yellow standard. But once at this point you need to spot a bit of coloured tape which will reveal where the SI unit is, usually on/near the ground, out of view from passers by who like to move things around here. The problem is that what may seem an obvious site to place the SI unit to the planner, isn't always that clear to competitors. So we include a more detailed description in with the main feature. My control sites seemed to major significant trees nearby. Since the Forest is full of trees, I needed to be a bit more specific. Hence descriptions ran something like 'East - lone beech sapling' or 'west – old crab apple tree'. True, you did need to know your birches from your beeches and it was pushing my luck a bit, relying on leaves for identification in later November! But the control sites did use the most prominent feature there.

After a bit of event promotion and twisting of arms, a small but significant group of NGOC 'foot orienteers' (as bike people call them) arrived, bike

tyres pumped and ready to roll.

The format of the event was a 2 hour score event, there being 23 controls. My main worry was that some of the top end speed merchants like Ifor Powell would roar round collecting them all in well under 2 hours but fat chance of that! The permissible tracks contoured round rather than cut across the valleys, meaning that a considerable distance could be covered. Then it is all (apart from around Cannop) quite hilly. Very hilly – I clocked up some alarming climb totals just surveying the area.

NGOC, despite having few regular MTBO competitors, featured well in the results.

Caroline Craig won the W21 class and was had the highest female score. This was

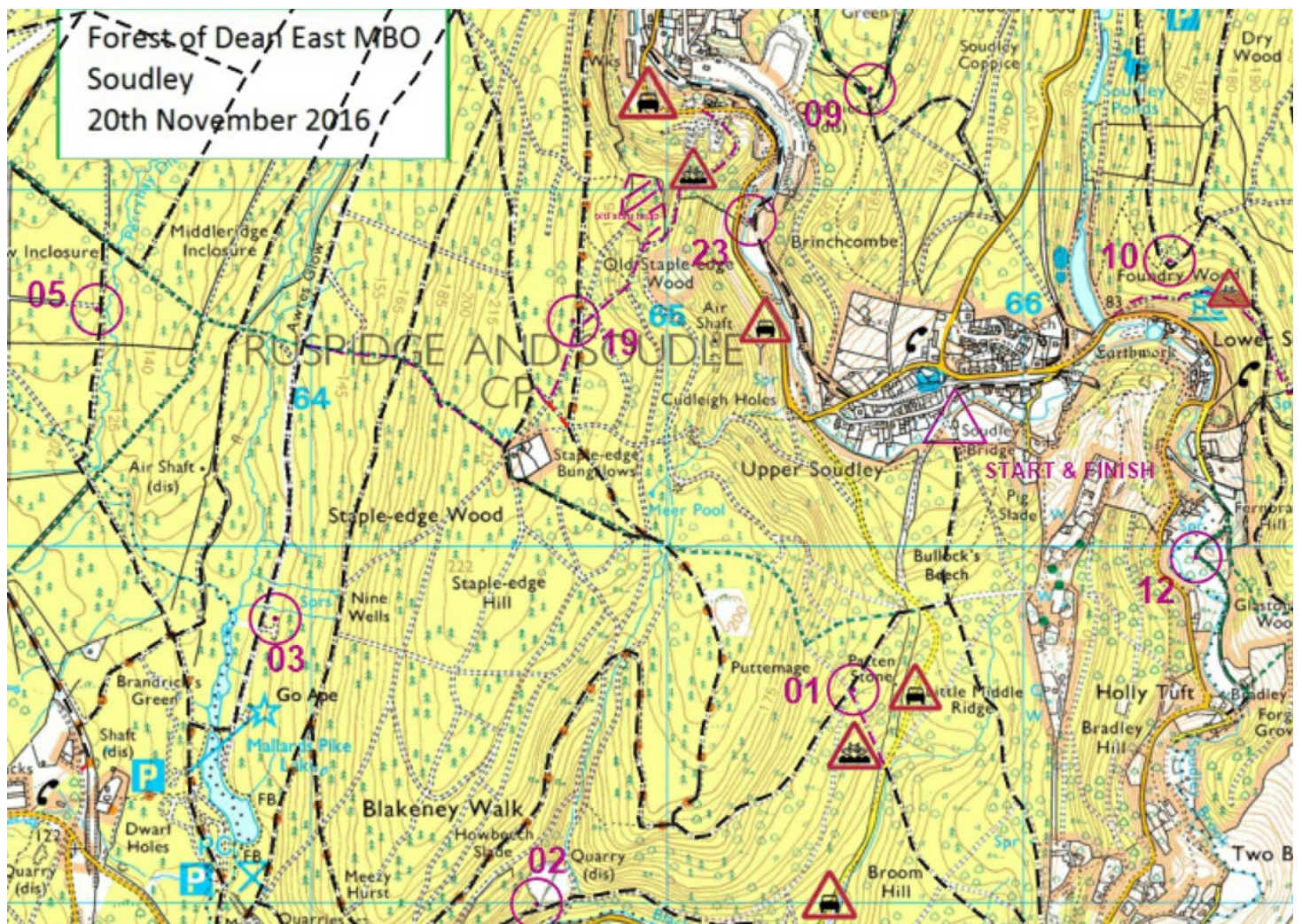
impressive as it was her first MTBO event and at first attempt, the look and feel of the event is quite different to foot orienteering. Vanessa Lawson won the W40 class (an old timer at these events) and Pat McLeod, on his second event, came in close behind. For some it was a day of lost dibbers. Son Tim lost his 'on a wild boar track' – maybe he misunderstood the objectives of the event! Another NGOC member thought he'd lost his dibber, but then found it in his pocket on his return. I should point out here that with thick cycle gloves on, dibbers can slip off fingers quite easily.

The thing I like about these events is that they can offer something to a wide range of people. For example, one orienteer arrived with his non-orienteeing partner and they

went round as a pair. Others love MTB but aren't as skilled at map work. Some can plan and execute an optimal route easily whilst others feel they should have done things differently. You have the choice of either roaring round at top speed for 2 -3 hours (shorter in winter) or pedalling round and enjoying the scenery. Feel like you might be tempted to have a go? Well the next event is on Sunday January 15th, starting from Pedal a Bike away. It would be possible to take part in the BOK Galoppen first, then move north up the road to the MTBO event – a sitting down sport!

Further details from

<http://www.bmbo.org.uk/calendar/>



my run - stephen robinson

Stephen shares his route around the Green course at the final league event of the season ...

The 11th League event of the North Gloucester Orienteering Club season was held at Knockalls Enclosure on Saturday 3 December and was organised and planned by Kim Liggett with Tom Mills as her mentor.

I had not run on this area for a few years so it was nice to be running here again after helping at last year's event. My last few runs had not been all that successful with basic errors losing a lot of time so it was nice to have a nice clean run today, just one control that took some time locating. Thanks to Gary for pointing me in the right direction at #12.

Green – 3.8km 165m

#1 -3 Fairly straight forward. Waiting at the start could see people punching at #1 so fast start for me then uphill all the way to #2 and 3. #3 was on the common and I could see lots of people milling about looking for the control, through the marsh, around the pond and straight into it.

#4 -5 Easy run to #4 through the gate and down the hill. #4 – 5 my first instinct was to run down to the track, round to the track junction below the control and then up to it. Started going downhill but soon decided that running in the forest was not that bad so decided to go straight, cross the track, follow the line of crags, slightly low on the control but no problems.

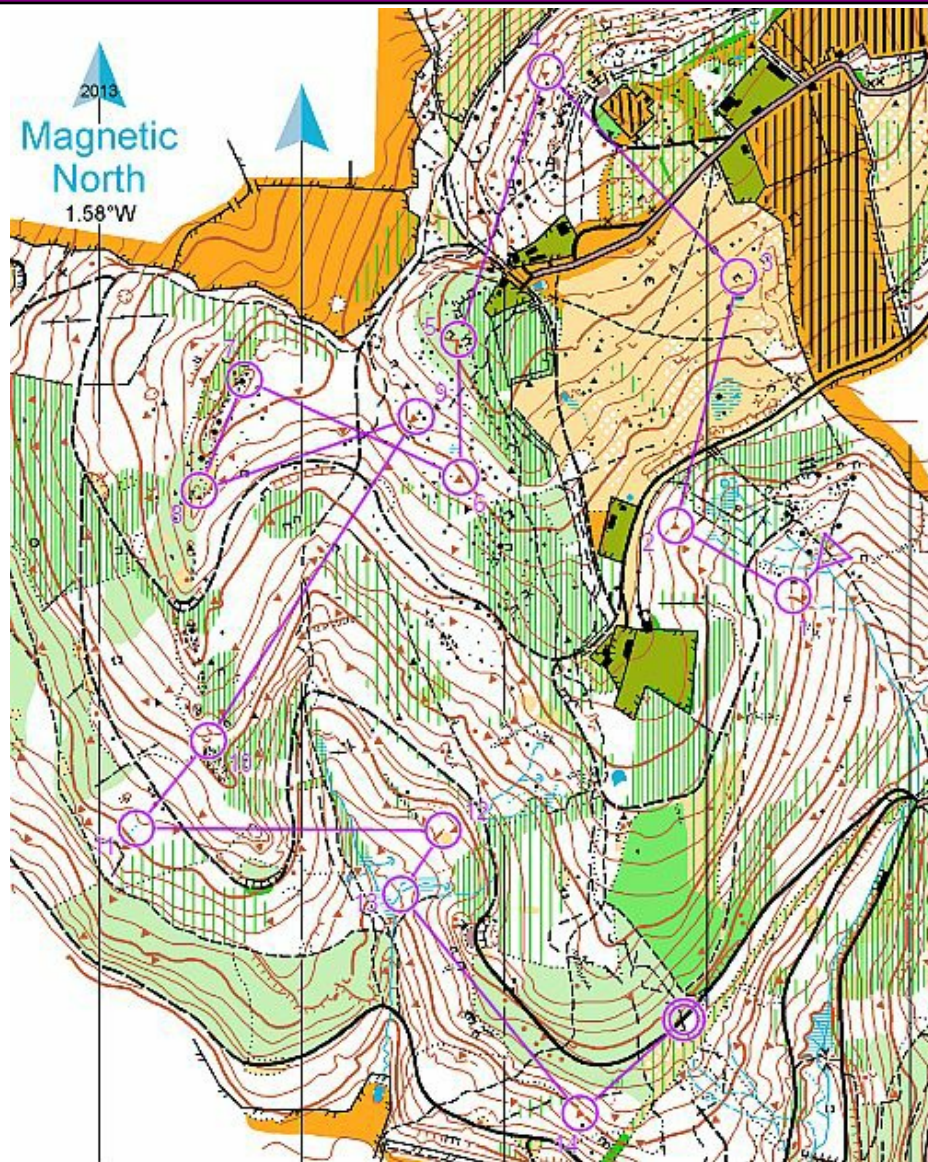
#6 – 9 How many people were going to go to #9 before going to #6? Both on platforms, check the

control number. I had no problems went straight from #5 to 6, dropped onto the path from #6 to 7 then uphill, followed the line of rocks from #7 – 8 and then contoured across back to #9. No problems with any of these.

#9 – 13 Drop onto the track from #9 and run along it until just before the bend above the control. Went in a bit early and got caught up in some bramble but no major issues, dropped off the first set of boulders aiming for the boulders to the south and the control appeared to my left. #10 – 11, straight and now for the decision, round or over? I decided to go up onto the track, cut through the woods to re-join the track the other side and then use the track all the way. I very

soon decided when I got to the track that the straight across route was going to be quicker for me so down the hill, scramble through the rubbish around the stream and up the hill towards #12. Ended up too far left, didn't see the line of rocks pointing at the control? See Gary Wakerley to my left who points out that we should be further right and pinpoints the line of rocks, bang straight into the control. #12 – 13 straight, could see #13 from #12. Looking back at leg #11 – 12 the best route would possibly have been to drop onto the track south of #11, take this to the re-entrant opposite 13 and the go past 13 up to #12.

#13 – Finish Drop onto the track south of control, down to



the main track and along until just beneath the control. Started going uphill and could see the top of the stake at #14. Decide to contour round to pick up the track running north/south, up onto the main track and into the finish.

It feels as if I have had a good run, wait for Gary to finish and watch blue runners coming

through the finish to go to their last control?

Download 2nd by 2 minutes, all lost at #12 - 10:06, best times 5:30ish, how did they do that so quick? Leading at control 11 with 5 fastest legs. Never mind, a good result after recent efforts.

Look out M60s in 2017!

Well done on an excellent run, Stephen - and thanks for sharing it with us!

Greg Best - and Daisy



The Ward Family



Pete Ward



Allan McCall



Jessica Ward



League Latest!



Caroline Craig at Kidnalls

It's a wrap for the 2016 League - and what an excellent series of events it has been!

The last two months of the year saw two challenging, hilly events at Kidnalls and Knockalls, although there were no surprises in the overall standings ... Caroline Craig has been running consistently well all year and was the clear winner on the Blue course. Simon Denman held his lead on Green, with John Miklausic taking the title on the Orange course. Last but not least, NGOC juniors shone on the Yellow with Reuben and Seth Lawson taking first and second spots, and Jessica Ward finishing in an excellent fourth place.

League 10, Kidnalls, 19th November

The 10th event of our league took us to an area which hasn't been used for some time - Kidnalls. It's not the largest of the club's areas but Shirley and Stephen Robinson planned some excellent courses which made the most of the best bits. Despite the mud and steep slopes, Mark Burley (M21, BOK) made short work of the Blue course, winning

in 52:06. Pete Ward (M45) was the best-placed NGOC runner on the course: joint third in 57:59. Scott Johnson, Patrick Wooddisse, Richard Purkis and Richard Cronin made sure that NGOC runners dominated the remainder of the top 10 places.



Scott Johnson at Kidnalls

Simon Denman (M50, NGOC) took the honours on the Green course in a time of 48:35, with John Fallows taking second place for the club. The Orange course was positively swamped with NGOC runners: Alan Brown (M60), returning from a break from orienteering, took first place

in 42:23 - closely followed by John Miklausic (M35) in 42:55. Newcomer Jack Hobby (M15) had a very good run to finish third in 49:24.

The young Lawson brothers battled it out on the Yellow course: Reuben (M10) lead the field home in 21:03 but Seth (M8) was hot on his heels in second place in 21:09. The ladies were well represented by the Murrin sisters. Rowan (W7) and Erin (W3; possibly assisted by Daddy!) finished third and fourth.

League 11, Knockalls, 3rd December

Kim Lidgett (mentored by Tom Mills) planned a great set of courses around Knockalls to finish off the 2016 league. As always, it was hilly and physically tough, but very enjoyable. On the Blue course, Pete Ward took first place in 46:23, followed by NGOC-offspring-but-now-NOC Joe Taunton (M21) in 47:19 and Richard Purkis (M21) was third home in 50:24.

On the Green course, Stephen Robinson (M55) and Dave Hartley (M60), both NGOC, had to settle for second and third

places behind David Palmer (M70) of BOK who won in a time of 49:58. Don't miss Stephen's excellent write-up of his run on page 20!

John Miklausic had a another good run on Orange: his time of 31:08 was over ten minutes clear of Bob Larcombe (M60, NGOC) in second place. The top places on Yellow were an all-ladies event; Rose Taylor (W10, HOC) took first place, followed by Rowan Murrin and Jessica Ward (W10).



Anders Johansson at Kidhalls



Greg Best at Kidhalls

The first League events of 2017 are ...

Saturday 14th January: League 1, Cranham and Cooper's Hill. Organiser & Planner: Andy Monro (01452 810852). Don't miss the chance to run on this superb area, and enjoy what are doubtless going to be excellent, challenging courses from Andy!

Saturday 11th February: League 2, Mallards Pike South. Organiser & Planner: Paul Taunton. Mallards is in great condition at the moment and this is always a lovely area to run on - lots of features and varied forest.

Saturday 25th February: League 3, Highmeadow. Organiser and planner: Alan Pucill. It seems like ages since we last had an event at Highmeadow! Another lovely area and at its best at this time of year. The usual range of courses will be on offer, plus the fantastic String course (also at Cranham and Mallards).

And don't forget the NGOC Galoppen at Danby on 22nd January - see the fixtures list for more details!

league standings; NYD score

Final 2016 League Standings:

Blue

1	Caroline Craig	NGOC	W21	7073
2	Pete Ward	NGOC	M45	6737
3	Scott Johnson	NGOC	M35	6618
4	Duncan Innes	SWOC	M50	5946
5	Nick Dennis	BOK	M55	5684
6	Richard Purkis	NGOC	M21	5567
7	Anders Johansson	NGOC	M40	5246
8	Christine Farr	SWOC	W40	5168
9	Chris McCartney	OD	M45	5111
10	Greg Best	NGOC	M50	5085

Green

1	Simon Denman	NGOC	M50	8514
2	Steven Harris	NGOC	M35	7315
3	Dave Hartley	NGOC	M60	6978
4	Peter Watson	NGOC	M16	6729
5	John Fallows	NGOC	M55	6669
6	Tom Birthwright	NGOC	M35	6612
7	Mike Farrington	HOC	M60	6531
8	Kevin Brooker	NGOC	M45	6396
9	Philip Bostock	NGOC	M50	6301
10	Paul Hobby	NGOC	M45	5972

Orange

1	John Miklausic	NGOC	M35	7450
2	Ashleigh Denman	NGOC	W45	7369
3	Carol Farrington	HOC	W55	6121
4	Jack Hobby	NGOC	M15	5922
5	Jess Miklausic	NGOC	W35	5624
6	John Wickson	NGOC	M65	5259
7	Sam Harris	NGOC	W35	5120
8	Paul Shutler	BOK	M55	4980
9	Rosie Watson	NGOC	W14	4970
10	Adrian Dawson	SARUM	M55	4958

Yellow

1	Reuben Lawson	NGOC	M10	7585
2	Seth Lawson	NGOC	M8	6070
3	Rose Taylor	HOC	W10	5245
4	Jessica Ward	NGOC	W10	3692
5	Rowan Murrin	IND	W7	2770
6	Ella May Rush	BOK	W10	2051
7	Erin Murrin	IND	W3	1778
8	Thomas Harris	NGOC	M4	1488
9	Maya Britton	BOK	W8	1166
10	Barthelemy Pige	NGOC	M6	1165

Congratulations to all the League prizewinners, and to everyone who took part!

New Year's Day Score, Nine Wells

Despite the very cold - and very wet! - weather, Gary Wakerley and his team of helpers put on a super New Year's Day Score event at Nine Wells.

The double-sided "odds and evens" format proved quite taxing for those who were practising their "Morning After" orienteering skills, with much head-scratching and map-turning in evidence around the course! It took considerable concentration to get round without missing any controls, despite the relatively generous time limit. It was also very nice to be back at Nine Wells after quite a considerable length of absence. Despite the area's compact size, Gary planned an interesting set of controls with quite a bit of route choice on the way round.

The clever minority who managed to work out the optimum route finished head and shoulders above their peers - proving what you can do with cunning

planning in a small area! Those whose restricted alcohol consumption the night before enabled them to get all controls in less than the one hour time limit benefited from a 10-point bonus for every minute under the hour.

Top 10 finishers were:

1	Joe Taunton	NOC	M21	450pts
2	Clive Hallett	BOK	M50	450pts
3	Peter Ward	NGOC	M45	440pts
4	Michael Hallett	BOK	M20	420pts
5	Caroline Craig	NGOC	W21	410pts
6	Paul Murrin	NGOC	M40	400pts
7	Cecilie Andersen	BOK	W20	400pts
8	Chris Green	BOK	M20	360pts
9	Tom Cochrane	NGOC	M21	360pts
10	Jim Bailey	BOK	M14	340pts

11th December: SN Trophy, Long Valley North

Only Christopher Harrison (M55) made the journey down the M4 to enjoy the lovely area of Long Valley North. He had a pretty good run there and finished 18th on the 6.8km/125m Blue course in an impressive 55:36.

11th December: NWO, Fyfield Down

The Piges and the Callards supported our near-neighbours NWO's event at Fyfield. Run of the day surely went to Christophe Pige (M45), winning the Blue course. Other results were:

Yellow; Barthelemy Pige (M6) 2nd

Orange: Gaye Callard (W80), 7th

Green: Lin Callard (M80) 20th

4th December: HOC, West Midlands Champs, Dymock

Despite the dire tales of acres of brambles, a few club members headed up to Dymock for the West Midlands Champs event. A beautiful sunny winter's day and easy access from the M50 helped to ease the pain of the vicious undergrowth and some good runs were had. On the whole courses had been well-planned to avoid the worst of the rampant vegetation, but in places thrashing through briars or slogging through long track legs was unavoidable. The Brown course visited some really rather lovely bits of forest in the northern part of the map, and on the whole anything without a double undergrowth screen wasn't too dreadful. NGOC's results were:

Brown, Judith Austerberry, 4th

Blue, Richard Purkis, 4th; Christophe Pige 19th;

Tom Cochrane 22nd; Allan McCall, 24th

Green, Ros Taunton 32nd

4th December: SOC, SCOA 4, Ashurst & Matley

Two intrepid members headed south to the classic New Forest terrain of Ashurst for the SCOA League event. It was the battle of the Mens Ultra-Vets on Short Green, with less than a minute separating David Lee (M80), 41st in 71:16 from John Coleman in 42nd with 72:04. Congratulations both!

27th November: Quantocks Galoppen, Ramscombe

Having spent the previous night in the less salubrious bits of Ramscombe, the Galoppen really made the most of this area and took runners into some glorious, fast-running beech forest. The height gain made the longer courses a tiring proposition: especially the Brown, which contained a monster 1.5km leg half way through the course.

However, the runnable forest and great setting made the pain worthwhile and finished off a very enjoyable weekend of orienteering. Top NGOC performers were:

Brown: Pete Ward, 6th

Blue: Matthew Lawson, 21st

Green: Peter Watson 11th, just a few seconds ahead of Suzanne Harding in 12th

Short Green: Bob Teed, 5th

Light Green: Rebecca Ward, 8th

Yellow: Jessica Ward, 2nd

26th November, Southern Night Championships, Ramscombe

Only four hardy (!) NGOC members turned out for the Southern Nights, an event which seems to attract fewer runners every despite having some very nice trophies on offer. Courses were centred on the forest immediately around Event HQ, which unfortunately didn't showcase the best of the area. The organisation by QO was excellent, though, and the courses were quite challenging in places! Congratulations to the editor (cough) for winning the W40 Southern Nights title, despite having an appalling run and coming 2nd out of 2 W40's. Luckily, the 1st placed runner wasn't from a Southern club. Still, I got to hang on to the nice trophy, and that's the main thing ...

M45: Allan McCall, 5th

M65: Paul Taunton, 6th

W40: Judith Austerberry, 2nd

W65: Ros Taunton, 2nd



20th November: TVOC Regional Event, Shotover Country Park

Green: Suzanne Harding, 6th

Blue: Ian Prowse, 21st

Brown: Christophe Pige, 44th

19th November: OUOC Oxford City Race

MV: Andy Monro, 5th

13th November: MWOC WOA League, Foel Goch

The beautiful terrain of Foel Goch hosted the final event in this year's Welsh League. Courses really made the most of this stunning open area, with very few "easy" options and physically demanding running through tussocks and across hilly open fellside. The planner had taken great care to ensure that all runners got to enjoy the spectacular views across the XX Estuary, although it was difficult to find enough spare energy to look up!

Brown, Judith Austerberry, 4th; Allan McCall, 8th

13th November: DEVON Galoppen, Fernworthy

Blue, Andy Creber, 5th

Green, Suzanne Harding, 8th

6th November: SOC November Classic & Southern Championships, Fritham & Islands Thorn

This classic - and very fast - New Forest terrain offered long courses and was a great venue for this staple of the winter calendar. Glorious sunshine and low temperatures made for ideal running conditions and some impressive mins/km times

were posted. NGOC members had a very successful trip with 5 Southern Champs podium places and a good run by Richard Purkis to finish third on M21S.

Southern Champion: Judith Austerberry W40

2nd places: Jessica Ward W10A

3rd places: Rebecca Ward W14A, Pete Ward M45, Bob Teed M75.

Richard Purkis 3rd on M21S

5th November, SARUM Salisbury City Urban

This year's road-running warm-up for the November Classic was held around the northern part of Salisbury. Whilst this meant missing out on the historical - and crowded - town centre, it did make for some interesting route-choice options around the residential areas. Sadly Richard Purkis had to retire on M21 - working his way back up to running longer courses after a long-term injury and anxious to keep something in reserve for the November Classic. Notable performances by club members were:

MUV: David Lee 42nd

MV: Allan McCall 40th

WV: Judith Austerberry, 2nd

Western Night League

The 2016/17 Western Night League (WNL) 2016/17 season is now in full

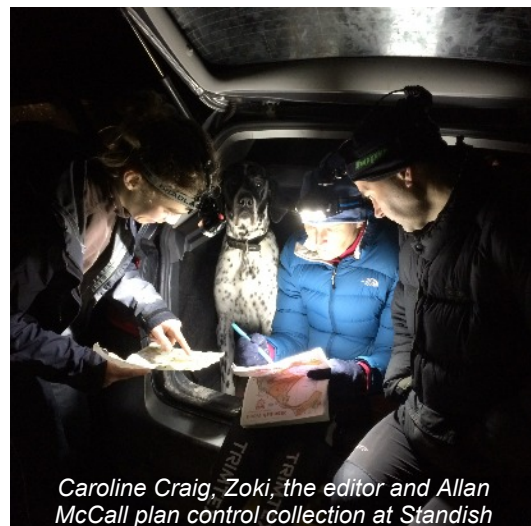
swing, with four of the total nine events completed. NGOC has hosted two of these: Standish Woods on 12th November (planned and organised by Sheila Miklausic) and Blakeney Hill on 10th December, planned and organised by Andy Creber.

Sheila's event at Standish was a great early-season run for the night owls, making the most of this area's mixture of beech forest and hilly open terrain. There were some tricky controls in the northern wooded section, made even harder by the misty conditions and resulting reduction in visibility. There was an excellent range of competitors - from the more mature runners to the very young - and an enjoyable evening was had by all.

Andy's Blakeney course was physically challenging, with steep slopes and slippery, muddy conditions. However, it was all made worthwhile by his super "Christmas Tree" control. Marked in the control descriptions as a "distinctive tree", all that

was apparent on the map was an empty circle ... Approaching the control it was hard to know what to expect until the glowing tree lights came into view! Andy also provided post-race chocolates and despite the wet weather it was a brilliant pre-Christmas event.

In the current league table, Judith Austerberry (W40) is in third place; mainly due to Caroline Craig (W21, 9th) and Richard Cronin (M21, 13th) only having run two out of the four events so far. Allan McCall (M45/M50) is 12th and Anders Johansson (M40) 19th.



Caroline Craig, Zoki, the editor and Allan McCall plan control collection at Standish

forthcoming events

January

7th: BOK Level C Event, Leigh Woods, Bristol
7th: SBOC Local Event, Hardings Down, Gower
7th: NWO Western Night League, West Woods, Marlborough
8th: NWO Four Colour, West Woods, Marlborough
12th: HOC Night Street League, Ledbury
14th: NGOC League 1, Cranham & Coopers Hill, Gloucester
14th: SWOC Local, Draethen, Caerphilly
15th: BOK Galoppen, Cannop Ponds, Forest of Dean
15th: HOC WMOA League, Postenplain, Bewdley
18th: SWOC Street Event, Whitchurch, Cardiff
19th: HOC Winter Evening Event, Hartlebury Common, Stourport
21st: BOK Saturday League, Dolebury Warren, Weston-super-Mare
21st: BOK Western Night League, Dolebury Warren
22nd: NGOC Galoppen, Danby Lodge, Forest of Dean
28th: NGOC Technique Training, Cleeve Hill, Cheltenham
28th: NWO Night Event, Shaw Forest Park, Swindon
29th: BKO Concorde Chase (Level B), Hawley and Hornley, Bracknell

February

2nd: HOC Winter Evening Event, Dudmaston, Bridgnorth

4th: SARUM 4-course Saturday, Stonedown Woods, Salisbury
4th: SBOC Local, Cefn Bryn West, Gower
4th: BOK Western Night League, New Beechenhurst East, Forest of Dean
5th: BOK Club & ASO, New Beechenhurst East, Forest of Dean
9th: HOC Night Street League, Bewdley
11th: NGOC League 2, Mallards Pike South, Forest of Dean
12th: WSX Galoppen, Holmsley Campsite, Christchurch (New Forest)
12th: SWOC Local, Mynydd Llangatwg, Crickhowell
15th: SWOC Street Event, Radyr, Cardiff
16th: HOC Winter Evening Event, Old Hills, Malvern
18th: NWO Four Colour, Copse Wood, Marlborough
18th: BOK Saturday League, Blaise Castle, Bristol
18th: NGOC Western Night League, Painswick, Stroud
19th: WIM Winter Warmer, Wilverley, Ringwood (New Forest)
19th: QO Forest League 5, Lydeard & Muchcare, Taunton
22nd: SBOC Local Night Event, Oxwich Burrows, Gower
23rd: HOC Night Street League, Birmingham City Centre
25th: NGOC League 3, Highmeadow, Coleford
26th: TVOC Regional, Nettlebed Woods, Wallingford

major fixtures for your diary

11th - 12th February: Twin Peaks (MDOC), Coniston, Lake District
25th February: British Night Championships (LOC), Great Tower, Lake District
26th February: Northern Championships (LOC), Bigland, Lake District
4th March: Welsh Championships (SBOC), Merthyr Mawr Warren, Bridgend
5th March: SARUM Saunter, Fonthill, Salisbury
12th March: CompassSport Cup Heat, Cwm Lickey (SWOC)
25th March: Warwickshire Orienteering Weekend Urban (OD), Rugby
26th March: Midlands Championships (OD), Bentley Wood, Atherstone

14th - 17th April: The JK, South-East - Brunel Uni/Ambersham/St Leonards & Holmbush/Pippingford Park)
6th May: British Long Championships (LOC), High Dam, Lake District
7th May: British Relay Championships (LOC), Summer House Knott, Lake District
27th - 29th May: Springtime in Shropshire (HOC), - Long Mynd/Caer Caradoc & Hope Bowdler/Brampton Bryan
10th - 11th June: BOK Blast, Bristol Harbourside
25th June: Harvester Relays (DRONGO), North West
30th July - 5th August: Scottish 6 Days, Braemar/Aboyne, Royal Deeside

NGOC's national ranking top 10 on 5th January were ...

1	Andrew Monro	1969	M	7829
2	Peter Ward	1970	M	7808
3	Richard Purkis	1993	M	7795
4	Joe Gidley	1988	M	7585
5	Caroline Craig	1984	F	7444
6	Andy Creber	1958	M	7303
7	Judith Austerberry	1974	F	7291
8	Scott Johnson	1978	M	7133
9	Lawrence Jones	1996	M	7125
10	Christophe Pige	1971	M	7117

It's been all change at the top of the leaderboard. Andy Monro takes over the top spot from Richard Purkis, and Pete Ward's excellent season so far is reflected in his rise to 2nd place. Caroline Craig still leads the ladies. Andy is ranked 102nd male orienteer in the UK, and Caroline is 35th female. New member Lawrence Jones returns from Down Under to leap into 9th place - congratulations to him!

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