

The Legend

Number 148



Newsletter of North Gloucestershire
Orienteering Club November 2010

www.ngoc.org.uk

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Cover: *Retiring Chairman Chris James being presented with NGOC's ClubMark certificate by British Orienteering Development Officer Ed Nicholas at the AGM on 8 November. (Photograph: Gill James)*

Chairman's Chat

This is a rather lengthy chat, but I thought I should set out my stall here in the absence of any better market.....

My first task as your newly elected Chairman is to thank Chris James for all the hard work, diplomacy and tact that he brought to the role over the last 3 years. In the summer I reluctantly agreed, in the absence of any more suitable candidate, to be nominated as his successor; I don't really consider myself a 'chair' sort of person. I was dismayed then to read in the July Legend just how many things Chris has done for us over this time, and I am still wondering how I can keep up the standard, let alone improve on it. I urge you to have another look at the July Legend to remind yourselves just how much Chris has done to develop and promote NGOC.

That said, the work is far from over, and I shall do my best at least to maintain the momentum that Chris has built up. We have some big challenges ahead of us. Perhaps the most obvious is the threatened increase in Forestry Commission fees. The deal is not yet struck, and we have an opportunity to maintain our current level of payments to the Commission through to the end of 2011, but thereafter we face massive increases in charges. By way of illustration, Alan Richards' league event at the beginning of November – at 130 the best entry we have had at a league for several years – this year cost us £25. Under the new scheme, as currently proposed, it would have cost us £315, or about 80% of our takings after planner expenses. If the deal goes through as is (and there have been some encouraging signs recently that after 18 months of intransigence FC may be starting to think that they have gone too far), clearly this will have a huge effect on our income, and will necessitate a major rethink in fees, as well as how we use FC land. In the meantime, Dave Hartley and Roger Coe are working hard to fix our event schedule at least through to the end of 2011, and this brings me onto our next challenge – to get more members actively involved in planning and organising our local events.

We have a very successful and highly regarded programme of local events, and in my view our number one priority is to maintain and develop it. However, we need more people to step up and run these events. The principal reason that we have this year included MADO

events in our mini-league programme is that we have struggled to find enough organisers to fill the programme from within the club. It is often said that people would like to help, but are not confident to come forward as they don't really know what is involved. I can assure you that it's not difficult; for my first venture into organising I was persuaded by the then Chairman to organise a Badge event for about 500 people. It's mainly common sense, and anyone can do it. I urge all of those who feel that they would like to have a go at organising an event, but perhaps think that they don't know what is involved, to get in touch with Dave Hartley, or me. The current organisers are generally more than happy to have an assistant, and to pass on their knowledge and experience. From my side, I aim to start actively looking for assistants/apprentices, so expect some emails/phone calls/arm twisting when I can catch you at events. My objective is that in our 2011/2012 calendar we have an apprentice or assistant for every organiser and every event.

And that leads me onto our third challenge.....increasing participation in orienteering. I am most grateful to Alan and Ellen Starling for starting, and to Chris James for completing, the bureaucratic slog to achieve Clubmark status, so that we can now focus on exploiting rather than box ticking. We are also part of British Orienteering's participation programme, which means that we have a not inconsiderable fund available to us to develop our participation programmes. To date, however, and despite a huge effort by Chris, Greg Best, and others, I think it's fair to say that we haven't made a great deal of progress; we don't seem to be doing the right things. I propose to work with the club coaches, Celia Watkinson, our regional development officer, and Ed Nicholas, the British Orienteering Development Officer, to try to find new ways to encourage wider participation in orienteering. You can expect to see proposals, plans and requests for help, in Legend and on the web, over the next few months.

Lastly, there are a few things we need to be getting on with in the background, the most important being to refresh the website so that it better supports our other activities. We are looking at mapping new areas, and of course we constantly revise and update our current maps. We would love to see more club members involved in all of these activities, and again I urge you to get in touch if you have some time available and would like to do more to support the club.

In my next chat I'll get back to why I am in NGOC – not to organise, but to do some orienteering!

Pat MacLeod

Ageing Eyesight: A One-Eyed Solution

Since taking up orienteering some 30 years ago, I have had to cope with my short-sightedness.

For the first few years, I wore glasses when competing. The problem with specs is that as I sweat a lot, they tend to steam up and I can't see out. Or, it rains and I can't see out.

I then moved on to contact lenses, which solved these problems and worked well for many years. However, now that I am in the latter reaches of M45, I find that not only do I need help seeing clearly in the distance, I now need help reading the detail on the map, too. For normal life, I now have varifocal lenses in my specs, which work well and allow me to see in the distance and read at the same time. However, for orienteering, using contact lenses means the detail on the map is becoming fuzzier and fuzzier.

Not wanting to revert to steamed up specs, my latest solution is to wear a contact lens in just one eye, the left one! Thus, I use my left eye and the one contact lens to see the terrain. Meanwhile, I use my right eye with no lens to read the map. Although not perfect, this works reasonably well for me.

The biggest problem for me now is that the ground under my feet has become more blurred, so I seem to stumble and trip a lot more than before. The day I finally tumble from top to bottom down a steep craggy hillside, I may be looking for a new solution. Any other solutions to my problem would be gratefully received.

One Eyed Jacks

(aka Greg Best)

The Bigger Picture – Some Reflections

How do we escape from ourselves?

Orienteers are masters of creating complexity and making our sport appear to be very baffling to any potential newcomers. Yet what we do is really quite simple. We take a good map and navigate around a number of previously selected points or controls in a timed manner. What could be a simpler way of turning a ramble into an interesting challenge or simple exercise?

We are never helped very much by the media who appear very reluctant to publicise what we do or explain it in a simple way. They choose to emphasise, say, older ladies in pyjamas out in the woods rather than the top athlete who can not only win an Olympic medal but navigate round a course in a world class competition.

So let me take a look at some of the background to this issue

Details or the bigger picture. It would appear that many orienteers enjoy details and so the idea of having a map that shows every rabbit hole and an orienteering course that is just the right length and technical difficulty for each individual is important. There is a tendency to discuss how approaching a chosen given control site from one direction was totally unfair compared to another etc. etc. The problem that I see is that the consequences of this approach are often overlooked by the very same folk.

However it appears that a minority do look at the bigger picture, the picture in which one sees ever more complexity creeping in and a growing pressure on those few who will willingly organise and plan events and try to run our sport. We simply baffle the media with our antics and put them off taking much interest.

This phenomenon is not new; it has been there for 45 years in my experience. However if one does go back that far things were so much simpler. I remember in 1969 planning the British Senior Championships with a total of only 6 courses for ALL Classes in both men and women. They were for the Open, Intermediates and Veterans. This was the first major event in which any form of re-drawn map was used and that was limited to black, brown and blue colours only. Life was relatively simple and such an event was not particularly daunting to put on. It was not so difficult selling the whole concept to an unknowing general public.

Making life complex

By about 1974 we had introduced an age class system limited to 21, 35, 43, 56 and 70. Then in due course it became 21, 35 and our familiar 5 year groups up to 90. In a similar manner the colour coded system of courses arrived with NGOC limiting smaller events to a mere 3 colours. At higher levels of competition many more appeared and I can remember calling for a simplification to 10 colours.

So why have we allowed this to creep up to 13 or more? At Knockalls we even had 4 Green courses – Green, Short Green, Very Short Green and Light Green. There were also Short Blue and Short Brown. Do we honestly need such minor alternatives as well as so many age classes? Could we not stick to 10 colours and limit age groups to 10 year bands?

Now it is not that I am against any additional courses as can be shown when I helped to persuade the committee that we should introduce Yellow courses into our Mini Leagues in order to give beginners a course that they could cope with. This was making these events appealing to a wider audience.

It is no wonder that some club members who had a go at organising and planning last season's Mini League events declined to do so this season. Our hard working Fixtures

Secretary, Dave Hartley, has been making a plea at every committee meeting and event for more volunteers but to little avail. This has led to the Committee agreeing that finding volunteers and mentoring them must be the way forward.

Help and involvement needed

Until now the NGOC fixtures and indeed the MADDO fixtures have continued to appear each season so that we all have the availability of good smaller local events. It would be easy to assume that such a programme will merely continue. NO IT WILL NOT unless we all make a contribution in future. It is the time to be involved even if your contribution is quite small. If you don't then I am sorry to say that these fixtures will be less frequent and we will all lose out. At least in NGOC and MADDO we have kept our fixtures relatively simple.

Please support my successor, Pat Macleod and your committee, in keeping our fixtures going and finding ways to bring more folk into our marvellous activity.

Chris James

A Walking Orienteer's View of British Camp

Well, any course on the Malverns was going to be hilly and steep in places, so it was no surprise to see the dense contours on the map and there was no escaping the steep slopes even on the Orange course. I must point out that I am not competitive and the challenge for me is always just to finish a course without getting lost, "slow but sure" being my motto. In the past I have found that my walking times are better than some of the runners simply because I have time to plan my routes for later controls whilst I am walking. Unless there is virtually no

undergrowth, I look for paths to take me as near as possible to the controls, and if there is a choice of paths I look for the route that crosses the fewest contours and is likely to give me the earliest sighting of the control, i.e. the way of least resistance rather than the shortest route.



Waiting to start

The first control was at the highest point of British Camp, so I took the walk up the main path steadily, giving me plenty of time to take in the fabulous views on the way. It was a very clear day so there was no way I was going to miss the scenery. The next four controls were on open land making it easy to determine the best route from a distance so I had no need to keep looking at the map.

Between Controls 5 and 6 there were a lot of contours. On the map Control 6 appeared to be only a few yards from the open area, but the control itself was on the edge of “Forest slow run” vegetation. I guessed that if I continued on the higher open ground I would get to the vicinity very quickly but would probably have difficulty in finding the

control, and even if I could see it from afar, the approach might be limited to a very steep slope with heavy undergrowth. So I chose instead to head downhill in almost the opposite direction on a gentle grassy slope to a clearly marked path which had a bend just below Control 6. It was easy to see the control from the path and there was a choice of ways to climb up and down, back to the path en route for the next control.

The good news was that, from the map I could see that Control 7 was located just north of a bend in the path. The bad news was that the path was at the top of a crag and the control was at the crag foot, the crag being camouflaged by woodland. The control was not visible from the path and there was no way I could avoid the rough slope. I gingerly descended holding on to tree trunks to keep my balance, found the control, then took a different, but no easier, route back up to the same path. I would rather finish the course slowly than twist my ankle, so the extra time taken here was well worth it.

If I had continued down the slope after Control 7, the map showed a stream which I could have followed to a lower path. But I had had enough of rough sloped terrain so I chickened out and continued along the upper path, once again in the opposite direction to the next control, which curved gently downhill to meet the lower path. This was about four times the distance but I was happy to be on firm ground. After this, Controls 8 to 11 were easy to find from the paths which led one to the other, then a short lakeside stroll took me to the finish.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable course with spectacular views and a variety of terrain. I never aimed to come first, but I was quite satisfied with completing it in my own way.

Ann Brown



Introduction to parkrun – A free 5km run in the Forest of Dean every Saturday Morning

Fancy stretching your legs with a free 5km run in the Forest of Dean every Saturday when there is no Orienteering?

There are 50 parkrun events in the UK now and the Forest of Dean event started earlier this year.

Anyone can simply turn up on the day for the 9am start and run the 5km course around the forest near Five Acres, Coleford. It is totally free and everyone is electronically timed and the results are uploaded to the parkrun web site. However before you come, you need to register online and print off your unique barcode which holds your Runner ID Number. This is used for the electronic timing.

The 5km course is way marked and follows forest tracks in Coverham Enclosure which was used for an NGOC Informal last year. There are runners of all ages and all abilities with course times anywhere between 18 and 46 minutes. Speed is not important. There is free parking in the Lakers School / Royal Forest of Dean College / Leisure Centre car parks and after the run there is usually tea and coffee.

I am one of the volunteers, doing the timing, the barcode zapping and website uploads (the parkrun equivalent to SportIdent). It would be great to see some fellow Orienteers there when there are no local O

Events on. It may also be an idea opportunity to advertise some NGOC Informal Events too.

The event takes place every week, come rain or shine, although it is best to check what is happening at Christmas and New Year. Take a look at

<http://www.parkrun.org.uk/Forest-Of-Dean/Home.aspx>

and the registration page is at

<http://www.parkrun.org.uk/Register/RegisterUK.aspx>

Or drop us an email at forest-of-deanOffice@parkrun.com

Hope to see you there.

Roger Hardiman, NGOC

(Photograph: Carol Stewart)



Caption competition! Entries to legend@ngoc.org.uk

Your Captain Needs You! Compass Sport Cup Match

This season's Compass Sport Cup Round 1 will take place on Sunday 16th January 2011 at Longleat, so please put this in your diaries. We need as many members as possible to take part, and I am hoping to hire a coach to transport us there. 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 a competition where different clubs compete against each other. There are qualifying matches held in different parts of the country and I have chosen the one at Longleat. Points are scored by individuals depending on their performance on the day.

Courses available are:

- Brown (for Men of any age)
- Blue Women (Women of any age)
- Blue Men (M45 or older, M20 or younger)
- Green Women (W45+, W20-)
- Green Men (M60+)
- Short Green Veterans (M75+, W60+)
- Light Green Men (M18-)
- Light Green Women (W18-)
- Orange Men (M14-)
- Orange Women (W14-)
- White and Yellow (non-competitive)

The highest scoring individuals count towards the team score, but there are additional rules to ensure that these come from a wide spread of classes. Even if your performance does not score points for the team, you can still reduce the score of other teams by finishing above their team members.

NGOC have been placed in the Trophy competition again this year, which is for the smaller clubs. Last year, with 38 club members taking part, we came second, so it would be great to go one better this time. We will be in with a chance of doing this if we get a good turnout. The final will be later in the year if we were to win!

What is the plan?

As long as we get enough people wanting to travel by coach, we will start from Cheltenham and pick up members at a few convenient locations along the way (e.g. Gloucester, Lydney etc.) After the competition, we will return, dropping people off at the same locations. If not enough people want to travel to warrant a coach, we will go in cars instead.

How much?

The club will pay for the competition entry fees and will subsidise the coach travel. This means that the only cost will be between £5 and £8 per head to contribute to the coach travel. Juniors will travel for free. The more people that travel, the cheaper it will become, and the merrier the fun!

How to enrol?

To be able to book the coach, I need a good idea of numbers quite soon, so please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to take part. Everybody is welcome. I need your name, age class for 2011, BOF number, SI dibber number and preferred course. Unfortunately, only BOF members (either national or local) are eligible, which means any NGOC-only members would need to upgrade their memberships to take part.

I look forward to receiving your names ...

Greg Best

captain@ngoc.org.uk

01242 516053

Introducing our new Club Secretary - Caroline Craig

I grew up in Derbyshire, where I attended my first orienteering event at the age of 8 or 9. Having enjoyed it, my family joined DVO and went to events every now and again over the next few years. Thankfully my orienteering has improved since my little brother and I lost the string when I went round a string course with him! When I got involved with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in sixth form, I decided to do orienteering for the Physical Recreation element, so my dad and I started going to events more frequently and travelling further afield. By this point, I was hooked...

In 2003, I went to Warwick University to study Maths. The orienteering club there had been restarted a couple of years previously, which meant there was plenty of enthusiasm in the few members. I joined the committee as secretary in my second year, and then went on to be president for my final two years (jointly for the first). Over the four years I was there, the club frequently trained together and attended local events, along with a few weekend trips away each year. The first of these I went on was actually in the Forest of Dean for the Triple O Severn, though little did I know I'd be back! We competed at the inter-university BUSA competition each year, our best result being 5th place in 2006. We also had some very enjoyable trips abroad to multi-day events in Latvia and Lithuania. So if you see me at an event, I could well be in a University of Warwick O top!

I then spent a year at Nottingham University, where I trained with a small number of other orienteers, and three of us ran at BUSA (competing against my former Warwick!)

I moved to Cheltenham two years ago and, after taking a year off orienteering to plan a wedding, joined NGOC with my husband Andy, who's now also hooked on orienteering!

Caroline Craig

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location	Signposted	Organiser
6 Nov Saturday	League 3	Blakeney Hill	SO667067	Alan Richards 01249 713542
20 Nov Saturday	Informal	Nine Wells	SO594132	Ellen Starling 01793 320054
4 Dec Saturday	<i>Cancelled</i>	-	-	-
18 Dec Saturday	Western Night League (WNL) 1	Parkend	SO608078	Dave Hartley 01452 863805
2011				
1 Jan Saturday	NYD Score Mass start 1100	Mallards Pike South	SO652086	Neil Cameron 01684 294791
8 Jan Saturday	WNL 2	Kidnalls	SO634033	Joe Taunton 01594 529455
22 Jan Saturday	League 4	Cleeve Hill	SP024205	Greg Best 01242 516053
5 Feb Saturday	Informal	Painswick	SO870118	Ellen Starling 01793 320054
19 Feb Saturday	League 5	Dymock Forest	SO673262	(MADO event)

Enquiries to Organiser or Fixtures Secretary – Dave Hartley 01452 863805
For latest details check the NGOC website at www.ngoc.org.uk

NGOC Registration and start times

Informal Events: Start times 1230-1400.
Senior £2 Junior £1 Non-members £3
Yellow / light green / blue courses

League Events: Registration 1130-1230 Starts from 1200-1300
Senior £4 Junior £1
Competitors who are not members of any club £5
Yellow / orange / green / blue courses

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

Please note: The Painswick informal event will now be held on the 5th of February and *not the 19th.*

Malvern Mini-League

Date	Event	Location	Signposted	Organiser
14 Nov Sunday	Event 3	Postensplain, Wyre Forest	SO753779	Rollo Rumford
2011				
30 Jan Sunday	Event 4	Breakneck Bank, Wyre Forest	SO736739	John Embrey
19 Feb Saturday	Event 5	Dymock Woods	SO673262	Colin Palmer & David Jones
19 Mar Saturday	Event 6	Eastnor Park & Malvern	SO737371	
16 Apr Saturday	Event 7 (same event as NGOC League 7)	Bixslade	SO608116	John Coleman NGOC
25 Jun Saturday	Event 8 & Prizegiving	Worcester Beacon	SO767444	Tony Knight

Saturday events:

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

Registration 1130-1230 Starts from 1200-1300
Entry fee: Senior £4 Junior £1
Competitors who are not members of any club £5

Sunday events:

Yellow, Orange, Light Green, Green, Blue and Brown courses.
Entry fee will be slightly higher.

For more details see Harlequins Orienteering Club website:

<http://www.harlequins.org.uk/>



As well as the ClubMark certificate NGOC also has a new banner: British Orienteering Development Officer Ed Nicholas and outgoing NGOC Chairman Chris James at the AGM on 8 November.
(Photograph: Carol Stewart)

Brashings

"Forest Challenge!"

The ideal present for the orienteer in your life is now available - see the back page of this edition of Legend for details of the new board game.

Changes to fixtures list

Cancelled - Minileague at Standish on 4 December.

Change of date - the informal at Painswick will now be on Saturday 5 February 2011.

Army orienteering on Wednesdays

Tom Mills invites members to join the 5 who attend regularly on Wednesdays, with the aim of forming an 'NGOC Army' team (at present they are part of the 'BOK Army' team). Event costs are low, currently £2. Interested members should contact Tom (01452 760451) or Alan Richards (01249 713542).

The Royal Forest of Dean

NGOC holds many of its events in the Forest of Dean but how much do we know of its history and how it is managed? Find out at the website of the Verderers of the Forest of Dean:

<http://www.deanverderers.org.uk/home-page.html>

Long walk in progress

The Editor has finished his coastal walking for the year and is fully occupied producing copies of the "Forest Challenge!" board game but he plans to include further accounts of the walk in future Legends.

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 10 January 2011 at 1930.

Articles for Legend

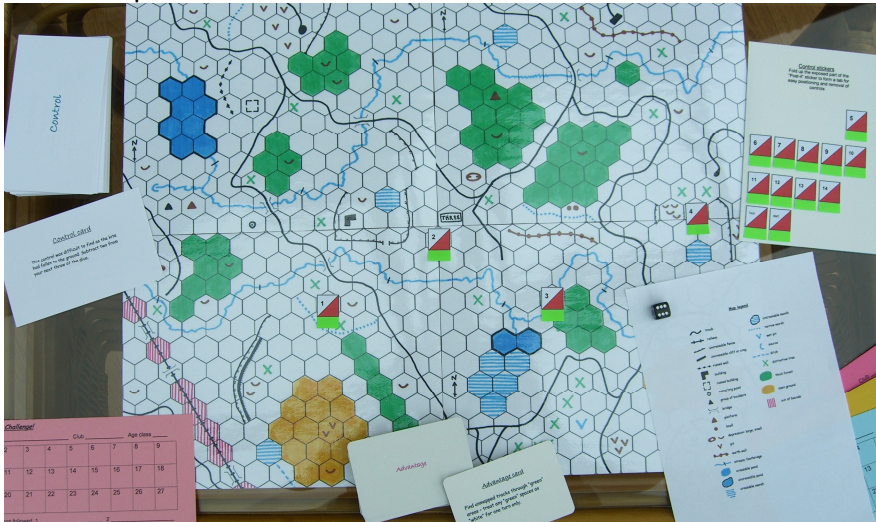
We are always looking for articles on anything to do with orienteering; digital photos are especially welcome. Send your article/pictures to legend@ngoc.org.uk or Alan and Ann Brown, 10 Brizen Lane, Cheltenham, GL53 0NG. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition of Legend.

Disclaimer

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

Forest Challenge!

"Forest Challenge!" is the exciting new board game for 2 - 6 players where even the most "average" orienteer can beat that fit M21 or W21 on a Blue, Brown or even Black course. Saturday evenings will never be the same again as you strive to relive the triumphs and disasters of those afternoons spent in the Forest.



- ✓ *The game includes everything you need as you "step over the line" - laminated map, kites, punch cards, "Control" cards, "Advantage" cards, instructions, dice, tokens etc.;*
- ✓ *Design a different course each time you play by using the moveable control stickers;*
- ✓ *The map sections can be fitted together in different combinations for more variety;*
- ✓ *Choose score or line orienteering;*
- ✓ *Add even more variety by drawing your favourite terrain on the blank map grids supplied.*

Available at NGOC events price £7-50 or by post (£9-00) from Alan Brown, 10 Brizen Lane, Cheltenham, GL53 ONG. Please make cheques payable to NGOC. At least half the purchase price will go to aid flood victims in Pakistan. **The ideal Christmas present.**