

The Legend

Number 141



Newsletter of
North Gloucestershire Orienteering Club
September 2009

www.ngoc.org.uk



NGOC Committee

Chairman

Chris James 01989 720122
chairman@ngoc.org.uk

Secretary

Pat Cameron 01684 294791
secretary@ngoc.org.uk

Treasurer

Carol Stewart 01242 514988
treasurer@ngoc.org.uk

Club Captain

Greg Best 01242 516053
captain@ngoc.org.uk

Membership Secretary

Matthew King 01242 226195
membership@ngoc.org.uk

Equipment Officer

Pat MacLeod
equipment@ngoc.org.uk

Fixtures Secretary

Dave Hartley 01452 863805
fixtures@ngoc.org.uk

Mapping Officer

Paul Taunton 01594 529455
mapping@ngoc.org.uk

Club Welfare Officer

Gill James 01989 720122
welfare@ngoc.org.uk

Club Development Officers

Alan & Ellen Starling
01793 320054
alanandellen@googlemail.com

Additional Members

Roger Coe 01594 510444
randvcoe@btinternet.com

John Fallows 01684 290256
john@greyeye.co.uk

Legend Editors

Alan and Ann Brown
01242 580096
legend@ngoc.org.uk

Website

Eddie McLarnon
01242 673079
webmaster@ngoc.org.uk

Cover: The club banner in a very stiff breeze on a Welsh mountain top at the Harvester. *Photograph: Paul Taunton (who explains "image reversed so banner reads OK, but nobody will notice!")*

Chairman's Chat

My second year in office nears its end

The 2009/10 season is drawing near with the Chairman's Challenge kicking it off on Saturday 12th September at Blakeney. My sincere thanks to Pat Macleod for planning it on my behalf though Gill & I will be there to help on the day.

Our 2009 AGM is on Wednesday 21st October 2009 by which time I will have completed 2 years in the office of Chairman. For personal health reasons I wish to stand down from the position, as such, rather than take on a third year not feeling fit to give the position the energy and commitment that it deserves. I am happy to support my successor as and when necessary. Of course this will have to be on a personal basis as we do not have the position of Vice Chairman – perhaps we should?

Reflections on my two years

I was actually in Australia when I was elected but John Burrows agreed to hold the fort until I returned from New Zealand at the end of November 2007. Our final few days away included a lovely summer event inland from Christchurch, South Island. We were reminded of this when we met Trish Faulkner at the Scottish 6 Day last month.

My ambition was to encourage our Club to be more forward thinking. As a Director of the British Orienteering Federation I had firsthand knowledge of our sport across the UK. The Whole Sport Plan was in preparation with clubs signing up to Clubmark and increasing participation. As we all agree, our Club is excellent at staging a full programme of Saturday events with occasional involvement with Regional and National Events. However our weakness has been to pay less attention to developing new ideas and approaches in line with those that many other clubs are now achieving, such as School's Leagues and more innovative approaches to attracting newcomers and families.

Gradually there have been some changes of heart and new initiatives. For example: introducing Yellow courses into our mini-leagues; Mark Boyce getting the Gloucester Central Park mapped and the fantastic support from Matt Lloyd at the Oxstalls campus of the University of Gloucestershire. Let us hope that his ambitions to encourage the formation of a student orienteering club and to have orienteering as a main alternative sport within the Sports Education courses will both come off. Next to come are our Monthly Social Evenings at Oxstalls this autumn.

Short race orienteering

Gradually more diehards are realizing that this is a very viable alternative to our usual events that can be just as exciting and rewarding. It is perhaps very unfortunate that it gets called "Sprint Orienteering" as this can initially put off old codgers like me. We demonstrated this well with two of our July evenings at Oxstalls when members realized that you can run a series of short courses, mainly on grass, in an evening so getting your usual fix. Gill & I have both thoroughly enjoyed the opportunities offered at the 2008 and 2009 JK weekends. Why not give it a try?

The Scottish 6-Day Event - Tay 2009

It was great to see over 20 club members enjoying the week. The Club Tent was an excellent point to socialize in mainly good weather. Our thanks to Pat Macleod for getting it into some very advantageous spots by being early on each day.

See YOU at our new AUTUMN CLUB MEETINGS AT OXSTALLS.

Good orienteering.

Chris James - *Chairman NGOC*

OXSTALLS 15 July 2009



Photos taken by Wayne Hutchison www.3sixtymax.co.uk whose speciality is in 360° images for the internet. He also shoots life and sports photography.

Orienteering the Welsh borderland, substantially with NGOC, 1964-2009

(John Wickson and his minibus of pupils from the Royal Grammar School Worcester are a familiar sight at NGOC events. In this article, John looks back over a lifetime of navigating with map and compass.)

As I approach my retirement in 2010, and after a lifetime in schools, it seems like a good moment to reflect on forty-five years of orienteering mostly, but not exclusively, outside the classroom.

I was originally introduced to Navigation using a one inch: one mile map and an army 'prismatic' compass as a cadet at Monmouth School in 1964. I clearly remember the feeling of being lost in the woods below Speech House on a 'Field day' with seven others. We were told that if we got lost we should wait at whichever tarmac road we came out on. The compass was a complete mystery to all of us and the maps inadequately marked forestry roads. From then on I determined to adopt navigation as an important life skill for the future.

By 1973 I had found myself teaching Geography back at Monmouth and I was sent for a month of that summer holiday on a course to RMA Sandhurst, together with thirty other school teachers. The maps of the military training areas were almost as much a mystery as the area around Speech House had been a decade before. Luckily I was deliberately paired with a competent orienteer for the night event, which we won!

By the early 80's I was helping organise school courses with 14-18 year old cadets at Ellesmere College, a boarding school in North Shropshire. I also completed the Mountain Walking Leader Training Scheme (summer) and became a Mountain leader for

school expeditions each Easter Holiday, which would typically be spent navigating 'Munros' in North-West Scotland.

Back in Shropshire we had a map-maker in the Geography Department who created 'in-house' maps for an annual competition involving the whole school. Additionally I was taking teenagers to both national and regional school army cadet competitions.

In 1986 I was employed, where I'm currently finishing my career, at Royal Grammar School here in Worcester. I joined NGOC that year to enjoy weekend events close to my parents' home in the Forest of Dean, with Phil Cummins, from Pershore, a particularly memorable driving force in the club at that time.

Within a couple of years I decided it was time to give something back to the sport I was enjoying so much in Gloucestershire. To begin with I brought older teenagers to NGOC events and let them loose with some interesting results. My estimated return times to school were very approximate!

By 1990 I was introducing 10-11 year olds to orienteering in the classroom leading to an annual event, of my own making, around Midsummer Hill on the Malverns using a Harlequin map. Three permissions were required: Eastnor Estate, The National Trust and the Malvern Hills Conservators. A complete Year Six was split into small groups and a handful of colleagues helped guide them round the course.

The next development was courtesy of NGOC's Frances Alexander and John Burrows who were persuaded to set up an annual event on an NGOC Saturday each spring. This happened for about three consecutive years in the mid 1990's introducing about fifty each time to the Forest.

From about 1997 I and my wife decided to visit NGOC events up to eight times a year with a minibus load of ten or so Year Six

pupils. We would split into two halves after a couple of controls. I was teaching Geography to the whole of Year Six, so was in an excellent position to teach basic Silva compass, 'pacing' and map reading skills each September before our first outing.

Eventually I persuaded Bob Teed to come up to Worcester to produce a map of the school grounds. Consequently my September classroom introduction, to a year group of about eighty, will culminate this year in a class-time event around the school grounds. The ten who have selected the Saturday events will develop their skills on the Cotswolds, in the Forest or on the Malverns /Eastnor /Old Hills with the new Malvern and District Orienteers.

Having stalled Carol Stewart's attempts to draw me into the club's yearly planning organisation the time may now be fast approaching when I will be able to compete competitively on my own again for the first time in over twenty years. Equally I may be able to help the club, together with my wife Pippa, in some other small way. Thank you to the countless course planners who have helped provide worthwhile courses for literally hundreds of children over two decades.

Reviewing our attempts to sow a seed for the sport in the nation's youth we are hopefully inspiring them to become adults who enjoy healthy outdoor weekend activity, either walking or orienteering around the UK and further abroad. NGOC and the landscapes of the Welsh borderland have been our inspiration.

John Wickson

30th June 2009

Opposite page: John Wickson and pupils at Blakeney on 7 March 2009.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location	Map reference	Organiser
12 Sep Saturday	Chairman's Challenge Mass Start 1400 BBQ afterwards	Blakeney Hill	SO667067	Pat Macleod 01594 528128
26 Sep Saturday	League 1	Sheepscombe	SO914118	Dave Hartley 01452 863805
27 Sep	BOK Long "O"	Forest of Dean	SO603121	See BOK website
3 Oct Saturday	Informal	Nine Wells	SO594132	Laura Ruty 01584 875293
17 Oct Saturday	League 2	Standish	SO838087	Colin Parsons 01242 570216
7 Nov Saturday	Informal	Mallards Pike South	SO629092	Map Atak 01432 840515
21 Nov Saturday	League 3	Parkend	SO608079	Alan Richards 01249 713542
5 Dec Saturday	Western Night League 1	Painswick	SO870118	Dave Hartley 01452 863805
1 Jan 2010 Friday	New Year's Day Score Mass Start 1100	Mallards Pike North	SO651127	Alan Brown 01242 580096

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

League Events: Registration 1130-1230 Starts from 1200-1300
 Senior £4 Junior £1
 (Only £1 for the Yellow course - Seniors and Juniors)
 Competitors running the Blue, Green or Orange course and who are
 not members of any club: £5

Night Events Registration from 1800 – or when it's dark!
 Senior £4 Junior £1

Please see the NGOC website for updated information

NEW!

Monthly Club Meetings – September 2009 onwards

This is an invitation to join fellow orienteers at our new regular Club meetings. These will be held on the second Monday of each month through the autumn at the Oxstalls Campus of the University of Gloucestershire.

Monday 14th September 2009, 7.00 – 9.00 pm.

“Course Planning Using Purple Pen”

Paul Taunton will show us how to use this simple and effective programme to plan your courses onto the existing map and then transcribe them ready for printing. It is much easier than the old pins and string method!! If Bristol OK members can send Paul their maps ready for printing then surely we can too! This will save Paul lots of effort and help the Club to become more proficient.

There will be time afterwards to socialise and to meet other Club members and enjoy light refreshments too.

Provisional Programme (to be confirmed)

October 12th John Fallows. Using Sport Ident (SI)

November 9th – Organising an event

December 14th – Mini-league and Course Planning

Please see the NGOC website for updated information.

We look forward to seeing you at one or more of these NEW Club meetings – do tell any friends who might be interested in joining the Club.

Know your fellow members!



Above: Peter & Nikola Poole

Below: Tim Brett at The Harvester



Street “O” with a difference – Usk, 28 June 2009

Needing a good day out we decided to visit Usk for the 15th year of the “USK Gardens Open Days”. The signs from the edge of town to the car park were very clear and up to British Orienteering national event standard. At registration we paid our £6 each to discover that it was a score event with 28 controls. Start and finish were on the edge of the map, rather than in the middle as might be expected in a score event, but this did not seem to matter as it was not a mass start. Start times were from 1000 onwards and the course did not close until 1700.

The map was very clear with the controls well scattered about the town. In place of the usual red and white control kites there were A4-size yellow cards clearly visible from a distance. Each control was a garden; control descriptions were very precise, if a little wordy. Number 14 was *“See what can be hidden behind a shop. Explosion of yellow to brighten the dullest day. Quirky.”* (To get to the control competitors had to pass through a working hairdressers.) Number 9 was: *“Interesting large garden with lovely blue and white border. Acers and bonsai.”* No confusing pictorial symbols in use here!

Trail orienteers were catered for: there was wheelchair access to 18 of the controls. Neither were night orienteering enthusiasts forgotten – to get from controls 3 and 4 to control 10 the best route was along the “Usk Nature Trail”, an old railway track with a long, dark tunnel.

With the clear map and limited routes available competitors were unlikely to lose time by poor route choice. However, there were a number of cup & saucer symbols on the map (indicating teas and refreshments) as well as a number of unmarked public houses and similar establishments that delayed the weak-willed ones, sometimes taking them off course altogether. We succumbed three times, but it was a hot day.

As well as route choice there was transport choice as well; there was a free minibus to transport punters between half a dozen points in the town – punters could save time and energy by taking the bus but how long would they have to wait for the bus to turn up? This innovation was shunned by purists but I think it could have a place in at least end-of-season novelty events: I will put this to Club Captain & Transport Officer Greg Best at the next Committee Meeting.

Helped by the hot, sunny weather, this was a very enjoyable orienteering trip with a difference – and the event has raised over £120,000 for charity and good causes in the 15 years that it has been running. The only criticism was that there appeared to be no provision for checking which controls a competitor had visited – not a punch or dibber in sight. And no sign of results or RouteGadget on the website: www.uskopengardens.com

Read this if you think you're weird

(The Editor received this as an email from a friend of a friend)

'This is part of an obituary of a friend of mine who recently died at the age of 50ish. He was a special guy, who ran with me around Richmond Park in the old days, and was a scholar of ancient Greek. Don't let that put you off. Read on if you think we are weird.

'He became an acknowledged authority on the works of the Greek Poet Pindar, whose Odes were composed to commemorate victories in the Olympic and other Games of ancient Greece. When in 1993, the BBC was preparing a Radio 4 series entitled "Greek as a Treat" it was only natural that they should pick on Stephen to feature in the episode dealing with the Games. "Only the BBC," wrote the Sunday Times reviewer, "could make a series which includes a scholar-athlete running around Regent's Park with a saucepan on his head and clutching a dustbin lid to illustrate the difficulties of the Ancient Greeks' 400 metres armour racing event: the same man tells of how he sprinted naked in Crete to see if the original Olympians' practice of nude running was, er, hindered by male encumbrances".

'The latter had taken place on a secluded beach, but in 2004 his past came back to haunt him in the guise of a BBC2 crew filming a programme entitled "First Olympian". Here's BBC News Online: "Dr Instone, who bared all on Loughborough University campus despite the chill winds of winter, told BBC News Online: 'If you are trying to recreate aspects of the ancient Olympics, when it comes to running you have got to run naked. I lined up with quite a few semi-international sprinters. I'm 49 and they were about half my age. They all had Lycra on, while I had to run unencumbered. I just tried it to show you can run perfectly well naked. People these days say it's difficult from a practical point of view. At least I proved it could be done'. Dr Instone, a club runner himself, came last."...and sadly the episode ended up on the cutting room floor.

'BBC News Online continues: "Although the modern Olympics - at least in theory - are supposed to be more about the taking part than the winning, the opposite was true of the original games, which started in 776 BC. In fact, their ambition was as naked as their bodies. Dr Instone said: 'It wasn't like being British now, where coming second is considered quite good. Back then, it was considered a total disgrace. Some writings describe the loser having to go home by back alleyways to avoid other people. It was part of the Greek shame of defeat. Winners would bring back a great deal of reflected glory.'" Here's an extract from Stephen's translation of Pindar's Ode "Olympian One", published in 1996: "And the glory's seen afar in races at Olympia of Pelops: for this is

where speed of feet has a contest and hard-fought supremacy in strength. And he who is victor has a honey-sweet tranquillity throughout the rest of life".

'John Bryant, former international and editor in chief of The Telegraph says: "I remember him best from the endless laps he used to run in Richmond Park. I usually ran anti-clockwise, Steve clockwise - and sometimes we would see each other many times. He would approach with that shy, almost gawky style, his head to one side. We would pass with a nod of recognition, sometimes a wave - that acknowledged that we were doing the same thing, for the same reasons; sharing the same pleasures, and often the same pains. Occasionally, we would pause and chat. Sometimes, when injured, Stephen would be on a bike, and we would swap views about how effective (or useless) training on a bike was. Other times we would update each other on our latest injuries, sympathise over broken bones and broken dreams that runners know all too well. It seems trite to say that I shall miss him in the Park. But Stephen was a fixture there. We shared a mutual respect that only hard-core runners understand - it needed no explanation, no justification. When I got smashed up [John had a serious car crash which ended with numerous bits of metal inside him], and tried doing laps on sticks in the Park, he would always stop. His words of encouragement meant much to me then. And I knew I was getting back to normal when we would pass each other, running again, with just a nod. I shall miss those nods in the Park".'

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Change of details:

Emily Carpenter now Emily Mitchell:
emily.mitchell@doctors.org.uk

David Lee:
david@davidleecooper.plus.com

Alan Richards:
alanthecaver@gmail.com

Changed your email address, phone number or postal address? Don't forget to tell the Membership Secretary

Scottish 6 Day



Above: A new British record toilet queue? Photo: Paul Taunton

Below: Emerging from the woods. Photo: Roger Coe



Scottish 6 Day

Neil and I went to 3 of the pre-6 day training events – Tentsmuir, Pitmedden and The Hermitage. There was a set of controls out at each and recommended courses, and on certain days, coaches on hand to advise and do post-run debriefs.

I am afraid I didn't do very well on any of these days, having my usual problems finding controls! However, the Tentsmuir event must have helped me – I did quite well for me on Day 5 at Barry Budden, being well in the top half of my class. Even on Day 6, at Loch Ordie, something helped – my best run of all, 23rd out of 72. I was quite amazed to say the least. All in all I enjoyed the 6 days, even including Day 3 where I was drenched. I managed to complete every day and was not last on any day (my usual aim!!).

We also enjoyed the Sprint race at Scone Palace on the “rest” day although the first half of the course was much harder than the second, where it was mostly legs from individual tree to tree in the parkland (although mistakes were still possible if you were careless).

Neil quite enjoyed it, but unfortunately had a recurring calf injury so couldn't give it the 'full welly'. He is now off to the 'Presidents' Conference' in Hungary representing British Orienteering at meetings and he hopes to get some orienteering in, but this depends on his leg. One positive outcome, however, is that it lets me visit the grandchildren without having to ensure the freezer is full!

Pat Cameron

Brashings

Club caravan: volunteer with tow bar needed

The refurbished club caravan needs someone to tow it as the Equipment Officer's new car does not have a tow bar. Are there any volunteers? This will only be to large events, just a few times a year. Please contact any member of the Committee.

Cheap O.S. maps

Visit <http://www.dashforit.co.uk/store/> for 30% off O.S. 1:50,000 maps. Free first class delivery on all orders plus same day dispatch on all orders placed before 3pm. Other maps and guides available.

NGOC AGM

The date for the club's Annual General Meeting is Wednesday 21 October.

BBQ - 12 September

There will be a barbeque (and Janet Jones' cakes) following the Chairman's Challenge. Stay and put back all that weight you will have lost running round the Forest!

Club meetings

Don't forget the new club meetings to be held on the second Monday of each month at the Oxstalls Campus of the University of Gloucestershire. The first is on 14 September from 1900 to 2100 when Paul Taunton will teach us "Course Planning using Purple Pen". The full list of topics is on the page opposite "Forthcoming Events".

Orienteering slang

From Neil Cameron: As to slang, I offer "Dib" which when I first heard it, thought was the old cub acronym "DYB (Do Your Best)". It was puzzling to know how one could Do One's Best at a control! (Anywhere else perhaps, but **AT** the control?!). It's also odd that people talk (and still do) about "punching" a control, even though it was the control card that was punched.

Only £1 for Yellow courses at League events

Because the Yellow courses are short and will only be entered by newcomers/juniors, the entrance fee at League events will be £1.

Orienteering film on the web

A film featuring Irish elites running in Wicklow can be seen at:

<http://www.finnvangelderren.com/O-film/>

By Finn van Gelderen, David Healy and Ondrej Pijak, the film includes animated RouteGadget. Thanks to Punch, the newsletter of the Cornwall Orienteering Club, for drawing the film to my attention.

New Membership Secretary needed

Matthew King will have done four years in post by the time of the AGM this autumn and would like to hand over to a new face. Any volunteers, please? Contact Matthew on 01242 226195 to find out exactly what is involved.

Have your say!

Are there any matters that you would like the committee to consider? Contact the Club Secretary, Pat Cameron, or any member of the Committee. The next Committee meeting is on Monday 7 September 2009.

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.

Back page

David Lee punching the final control of the 3rd (final) leg for the NGOC "Lydney Lads" team at the BOK Adams Avery relay in Bath on Sunday 5th July. NGOC were 6th out of 18 teams. *Photograph: Paul Taunton*

