

The Legend

Number 159



**Newsletter of
North Gloucestershire Orienteering Club
September 2012**

www.ngoc.org.uk

NGOC Committee

Chairman

Pat MacLeod 01594 528128
chairman@ngoc.org.uk

Secretary

Caroline Craig 01242 528326
secretary@ngoc.org.uk

Treasurer

Carol Stewart 01242 514988
treasurer@ngoc.org.uk

Club Captain

Greg Best 01242 516053
captain@ngoc.org.uk

Membership Secretary

Simon Denman 01452 863833
membership@ngoc.org.uk

Equipment Officer

Pat MacLeod 01594 528128
equipment@ngoc.org.uk

Fixtures Secretary

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 Officer

Pat MacLeod 01594 528128
chairman@ngoc.org.uk

Additional Members

Gary Wakerley 01594 862690
gwak@o2.co.uk

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 Forestry Commission has hit on a novel way of controlling the numbers of wild boar in the Forest of Dean. (If anyone has a better caption please send it to legend@ngoc.org.uk for inclusion in the next Legend)
(Thanks to John Fallows for supplying the photograph)

Chairman's Chat

Well, what a busy Summer it has been! Once upon a time we seemed to stop orienteering for the Summer, blaming bracken, nettles, brambles and holidays, but this year we have ignored all of those excuses and spent many hours out in the woods, on the streets of Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, and Aberystwyth, and on the Welsh hills. By the time you read this we will have organised 11 summer events, spent 6 days at Croeso 2012, run a charity event for the Pied Piper Appeal, and be gearing up for another mini-league season. The Summer Series has been a success, with an average of 22 people for the Wednesday evening score events, and almost 40 for the Saturday informals, or significantly more if you count individuals rather than groups. Many of these people have been newcomers, and whilst only time will tell whether they become regulars, it is encouraging that we have been able to attract numbers of new faces. I was particularly gratified to hear several people say they had found us via the BBC Things To Do website. It is not the easiest system to populate with our events, but the effort appears to have paid a small dividend. I think we should develop a regular Summer programme as an extension to our fixture list, rather than coming up with something ad hoc each year, and the committee will be looking at this over the next few months.

As well as all this running around, we have held two informal training sessions for club members, one organised by John Fallows on 'controlling' NGOC local events, and the other by Paul Taunton on how to make your life easier as an NGOC local event planner. Following the former, we have resolved to try and assign an 'adviser' to each event organiser/planner for the coming season. The rationale for this is that as these are Level D events we are not required to have a controller, and designating one would mean that we would have to find far more BOF recognised controllers than we could. On the other hand all organiser/planners, however experienced, will benefit from having a second opinion on courses, a sounding board for ideas and risk assessments etc, and an extra pair of hands on the day. This role we have designated an 'Adviser' role. Chris James is my adviser for the Chairman's Challenge, and we will seek to assign someone for every event from now on. On top of these courses, we have created a new organiser's checklist for local events, and this is now available on the

Reference page of the club website. It is still at draft level, pending feedback from anyone who cares to offer it, and at 20 pages or so may be seen as somewhat burdensome for small local events. On the other hand it tries to cover everything an organiser has to think about and do, from kit lists to how to synchronise SI units and select locations for the fixture list, and it will hopefully be useful as an aide memoire if nothing else. Finally, on the subject of tools and support for organisers and planners, we have been looking at developing a database/archive of area and event information, for reference by event organisers, and this, too, we will inaugurate this season following the Chairman's Challenge. Look out for more information on this on the web in the near future. It has been a busy Summer all round!

Outside the forest, but very much relevant to it, the Government's Independent Panel on Forestry reported as expected in early July. The full report is available to read on the Defra website, but most of it is not particularly relevant to us as orienteers (though pertinent to us, of course, as citizens). The key messages for us are as were expected from the draft report; there is strong support for an ongoing Public Forest Estate, enshrined in statute under a renewable 10 year Charter, managed by a successor body to Forest Enterprise, and overseen by a group of Trustees who would be independent of Government. The report shied away, however, from recommending statutory access for organised activities such as ours, preferring this to be subject to local requirements, environment and circumstance. It remains to be seen whether the Government will pay any heed to the report!

On the mapping front it has been a stop/go couple of months. Bob Teed and I spent a day walking around Cirencester Park, at the invitation of the new Estate Manager, who is keen to promote new activities in the Park. It is a huge area, and has excellent event facilities, but sadly the woods are completely useless for our purposes. We walked 10 miles or so, covered by no means all the park, but found 85% bramble coverage, and almost no features at all either under the brambles or in the few open bits. We have said we will go back in the winter for another look at other areas, but I am not confident we will find anything usable. We still intend to map Woodchester Park, but plans there are on hold thanks to the Environment Agency's terms and conditions for the use of their LIDAR data. It seems that any financial transaction, by any organisation, even if it is no more than partial cost

recovery, is regarded by EA as a commercial transaction. They therefore class NGOC as a commercial outfit and want to charge us £120 per square km of data, rather than their non-commercial rate of about £40. This makes Woodchester unaffordable, and is in my mind a complete nonsense. Through the good offices of Erik Peckett I have referred this to BOF to see if they can get EA to change their minds, though I am not confident! This is all the more galling as the Ordnance Survey, on the other hand, seem to have relaxed their copyright rules significantly for some data, which I think means that we should have less OS copyright constraint on future maps. On this, too, I have asked BOF mapping group for clarification, as I believe BOF position is now out of date, though I may of course have missed recent BOF announcements.

Aside from all the official stuff, I had a great time at Croeso 2012 – regarded by some as the best multi-day event they have been to. We had excellent cheap accommodation in the University – a mixed gang of NGOCs and BOKs, and wonderful grub at £5.50 a time in the Uni campus pub a couple of minutes' walk from our flat. The moorland days were challenging, and the town race good fun, with only a small advantage gained by staying in the Uni for the week running up to the race around the campus. Above all, by some miracle the rain stopped for a week and the sun came out. Very well done to all the Croeso organisers, planners and helpers, amongst whom we numbered ourselves on day 4. Last time I forecast that would not match my Croeso 2008 performance, and I was right. Usually it was the long legs that were my undoing, and I added a few more items to my growing list of things to do better. It was a great event though, and the club will in due course receive some level of financial recompense for our support. In the meantime I am now psyching up for Moray 2013.

I hope to see you all at the Chairman's Challenge, and remember that the AGM is earlier this year than it has been in the past. It is not too late to put yourselves forward for the committee, and we would love to see some new faces, so do get in touch with me if you fancy joining us.

Pat MacLeod

World TrailO Championships 2012

(WTOC 2012)

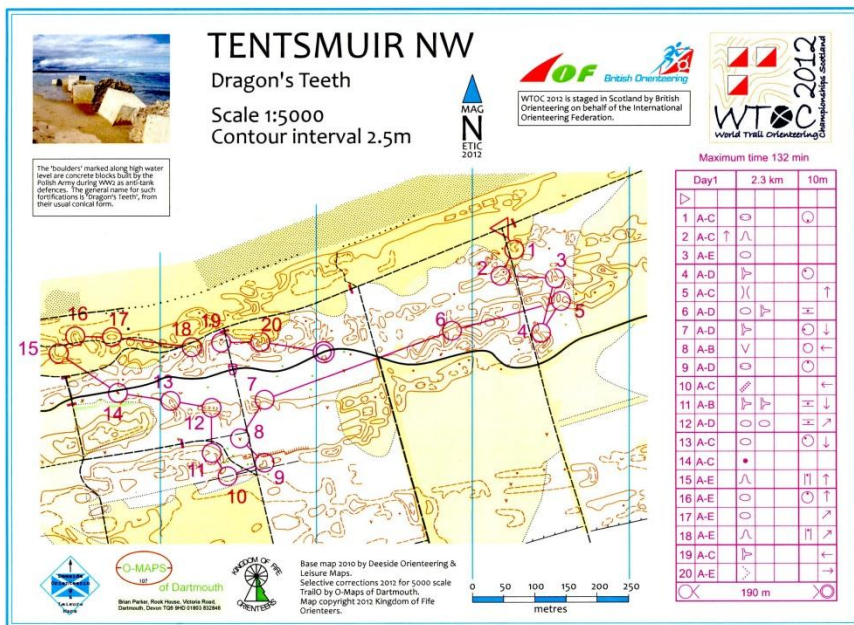
Being both a selector for the British TrailO team and the British Orienteering Director with responsibility for liaison with the TrailO Committee, I planned to attend WTOC 2012 to be held in Dundee from 7 to 9 June.

However, as there was a major shortage of volunteers, my wife Pat and I also offered to assist at the event. I was pleased when I informed Chris and Gill James of the event and they agreed to come too – so quite a large NGOC contingent was there helping.

Pat and I were allocated to the timed controls and after doing the timing at the JK under the advice of the IOF Event Advisor, Jari Turto, I was given the task of acting as timed control team leader.

In TrailO, the competitor sees from 1 to 6 flags and either one of them or none (the “Z(ero)” option” is correct. At a timed control, he has up to 60 seconds to make his choice (but there is no Z option) and the fastest time will act as a tie-break amongst competitors who have the same number of correct answers across all the different decisions (usually about 20 or more per day at a major competition). In a more recent variant of TrailO, called TempO, all the controls are timed and like non-timed TrailO controls, a Zero option (none of the flags is correct) is possible.

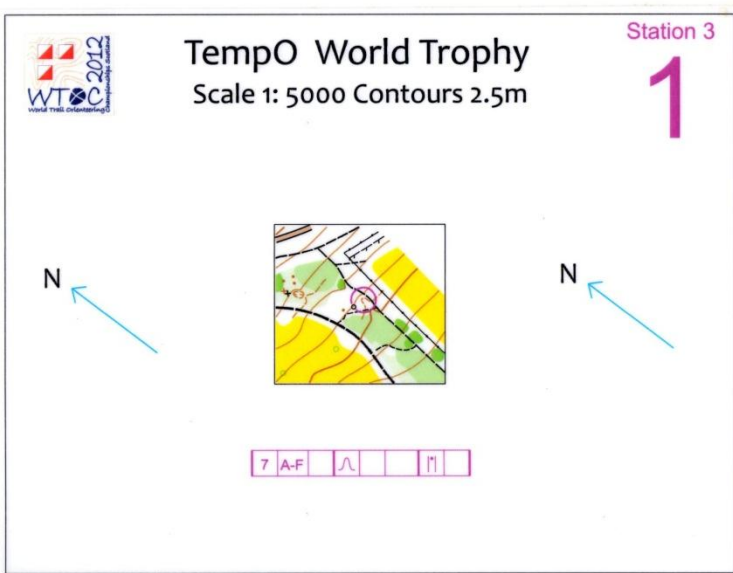
A separate TempO competition was to be held on 6 June, immediately before WTOC (it only becomes part of the World Championships in Finland in 2013) at Camperdown Park very close to Dundee. There were to be 8 control stations, each station having 3 problems, each problem with the same map segment (but a different control description and control circle), and all problems at a given station using the same 6 flags. The competitor is timed in aggregate over the 3 problems and moves on to each new problem in his own time after giving his answer by using the phonetic alphabet (Alpha, Bravo, etc), or by pointing to his choice of labels on a small table in front of him.



The map used for day 1 of the TrailO. Competitors have a maximum elapsed time of 132 minutes to answer all the controls and reach the finish. They must stick to the paths and not cross any purple bars across a track. The extra column in the control descriptions shows (where necessary) the direction you view the flags from, eg for No 5, you look northwards. The first column says how many flags you should see from the viewing point (which is marked in the terrain).

The timing process in TempO ideally requires 3 officials at each station: two timekeepers whose role is to block the competitor's view of the terrain and flags until his time starts and to time how long he takes to give his 3 answers (max 90 seconds); and a lead official who points out the flags to the competitor at the start, hands him the map segments, specifies when the timing is to start, and records his answers. Thus 24 officials are needed for 8 TempO stations.

The weather forecast for the TempO was very poor, and so it proved: rain, heavy at times, with a moderate to strong wind making it feel very cold for June (even in Scotland!)



Above: a sample map as used at the TempO competition

With the competition due to start at 10:00, we had arranged that some of the other 22 officials, all but 3 of whom had no prior experience, would meet the evening beforehand to allow us to brief them and let them practise their roles - most officials would not however be in Dundee until the following morning. In the event, some were unavailable even that morning as pressure on the whole volunteering team meant that they were pressed into carrying out other set-up duties or resolving last minute problems.

We did eventually get underway about 30 minutes late, with each timing team of three facing a very intense 3½ hours working in the cold and wet conditions, with the next competitor being called forward as soon as the previous one finished. It can't have been much fun for the competitors either, as the underfoot conditions were muddy and wheelchair users had to work very hard indeed (even when aided by helpers) up the few relatively minor gradients or the short rise at some control viewing positions.

The volunteers performed heroically, despite the weather and being without comfort breaks: the most welcome sight at some control

stations being the unexpected arrival of a volunteer carrying a tray of hot teas and coffees.

The TempO was followed by 3 days of TrailO in Tentsmuir forest (where a Scottish 6-days event was held in 2009) in very complicated dunes, some forested and some open. A model event was followed by two days of competition.

Chris James was the event commentator with Gill doing a range of jobs including working in the results team. Chris also acted as MC at the Opening and Closing ceremonies and, resplendent in his kilt, demonstrated dances with Gill at the closing banquet ceilidh.

Some examples of problems the timing team met were:

- viewing position chairs sinking into the muddy ground (two competitors unfortunately even fell over into the mud);
- a timing team not being able to find the timed control station they were manning;
- despite being short of volunteers, being asked at the very last minute (when trying to remain calm before performing the important timing duties) to carry out tasks that were running very late, such as erecting tents, or finding other volunteers to act as marshals to call forward the next competitor.

It was interesting to observe the different approaches used by competitors at the timed controls: it appeared that the best quickly glanced several times from map to terrain and back (presumably ensuring they could envision the ground as it related to the map), and then being able to answer very quickly the second (and third in TempO) problems from a single viewing position.

It was also very interesting to be involved in an event like this, but perhaps not as satisfying as might normally have been the case because of the very many small problems that arose, largely due, in my opinion, to three factors – insufficient volunteers being available, rather weak communication between the different teams (probably due to

each team being preoccupied resolving its own problems), and lack of experience amongst virtually all but a few key officials.

For the record, Britain's Ian Ditchfield managed a podium place (5th) over the 2 days, getting every control correct on day 2 – and many were very tricky indeed.

Neil Cameron

Orienteering, Jeeves?

"I say, Jeeves!"

"Yes, sir?"

It was a bright, sunny, spring morning and I should have been full of the joys of the aforesaid season but I wasn't. I had a problem, namely Honoria Glossop, and I was thoroughly pipped.

"Do you know anything about some new-fangled lark called orienteering?"

"Yes, sir, if you allude to the sport recently-arrived in this country whereby competitors attempt to navigate in sequence between control points marked on a unique orienteering map and decide the best route to complete the course in the quickest time. It . . ."

"Yes, yes, that must be it, Jeeves! I knew you would be able to put me in the proverbial picture. The trouble is that Honoria Glossop is expecting me to go down tomorrow to Totleigh Towers and be her partner in a dashed orienteering contest in the grounds. And I can't get out of it – she's laid down a three-line whip."

"How very unfortunate, sir."

"What does a chap need to do this orienteering, then?"

“The first requisite, as I understand it, is a good compass with which to orientate the map correctly. And then . . .

“Hold on, Jeeves, what the dickens do you mean by ‘orientate the map.’ ”

“It means, sir, ensuring that North on the map aligns with North on the ground so that features represented on the map may be easily compared with the actual features on the ground and vice-versa.”

“Yes, yes, of course, it’s obvious. I’m not an idiot, Jeeves.”

“No, of course not, sir. May I enquire, sir, who is organising the event? The requisites for an impromptu event, if I may say so, could differ from an event organised in accordance with the official rules.”

“Oh, yes, it’s all being done properly – no expense spared, don’t you know. They’ve called in some chap named Boffy to organise it for them. I think that’s the name; I did wonder if Miss Glossop meant Oofy Prosser but then I thought it couldn’t be him. Oofy can get lost between the entrance to the Drones Club and the members’ bar. Ha, ha, good old Oofy.”

“Quite so, sir. I think you will find that the young lady meant the event is being organised according to what is colloquially known as BOF rules - British Orienteering Federation.”

“Jeeves, the light is beginning to shine!”

“I am gratified to hear it, sir. Of course, a dibber will be needed as well as a compass.”

A dibber? At the mention of another complication, in the form of gardening, my brain started to reel so I thought I would send Jeeves out to buy a compass and dibber and put them on the dining room table so that he could give me some instruction in the afternoon when my brain had cleared a bit. So I asked Jeeves to go out to buy a compass and dibber and put them on the dining room table. So out he popped. When Jeeves returned he said “I’ve just bought a compass and dibber and put them on the dining room table.” “Right-ho, Jeeves” I said.

That afternoon I sat down with Jeeves and the compass and dibber at the dining room table to receive some instruction on the art of orienteering.

“I think, sir, we had better start with the map. I took the liberty of purchasing a sample map as orienteering maps vary considerably from both street maps and those produced by the Ordnance Survey.”

“Good Lord, Jeeves, I’m all at sea with maps, anyway. How am I going to learn all this bally rigmarole in time for tomorrow?”

“Orienteering maps, or to put it in the vernacular, O-maps, are quite simple, sir, with only the information needed by the competitor included. All extraneous information, such as place names are removed. And the symbols are clear and often bear similarities to the features they represent. For example, this V-shape is a pit.”

“Jeeves, this is going to be a disaster, I can feel it in my bones.”

“I am sure it will turn out all right in the end, sir, if one remembers that the other participants will also be novices, if I may be permitted to use the term; and that, going round the course in pairs is also beneficial in that the second half of the partnership may help out the first half when that first half is at a loss. Also, the gentleman planning the course will take into account the inexperience of the participants and make it relatively easy.”

“Dash it all, Jeeves, I wish I had your optimism.”

We stayed at the dining room table until ten o'clock that night learning blasted orienteering with only a short break while Jeeves prepared my supper.

The next day we got down to Totleigh Towers in good time for the start. Jeeves drove as, for some reason, I didn't feel up to it.

Upon arrival the first thing we saw was a tall gent with glasses and anorak (an anorak! I ask you!) standing behind a table messing about with all sorts of frightening-looking clipboards and officious-looking bits of paper weighted down with stones and some computery-looking kit.

“Good afternoon, sir.”

He looked far too bright-eyed and bushy-tailed to me so I returned his greeting with some caution.

“Good afternoon Mr. Jeeves.”

“Good afternoon Mr. Best.”

I pulled Jeeves aside. “I say, Jeeves, he seems to know you! Seems a rum sort of cove. Wearing an anorak, too.”

“Yes, sir, perhaps I should mention that I occasionally attend events organised by the local orienteering club, North Gloucestershire. Mr. Best, in spite of appearances, is one of the leading lights in the club and is a very creditable performer at orienteering. He recently led the NGOC team at the prestigious ‘Harvester’ event.

“Oh, I expect they won it then, did they?”

“Not exactly, sir.”

We turned back to the anorak chappie.

“Are we taking part today, sir?”

“Mr Wooster will be taking part but I will merely be an observer.”

“That will be one shilling then, please, sir.”

“I have to pay?!” I was aghast.

Jeeves was whispering in my ear “That is comparatively cheap, sir. I do understand that orienteering is proving quite popular amongst the lower orders on account of that very fact. And some of them are surprisingly skilful at the sport.”

“The entry fees pay for the printing of the maps. Here we are sir; normally competitors are only allowed to see the map after they have started but as everyone today is a beginner we are handing out the maps now so that competitors . . .”

I was just about to hand over my bob when a loud voice sounded in my ear, causing me to start and drop the blasted coin in the mud.

“Bertie! There you are.”

“Yes, here I am. What-ho Honoria.”

“Don’t what-ho me, Bertie. Why are you buying only one map? What about me? You really are the limit.”

“Well, yes, don’t you know. Er, another map, please.”

By this time the rest of the guests had assembled and the orienteering geezer gave out his spiel. After he had been droning for about five minutes I received a sharp elbow to the ribs which made me bend double. “Pay attention, Bertie, or we shall be completely lost. I want to win this.”

When I was able to stand upright I looked round but there was no sign of Jeeves. I had thought of another question to ask him but where was the fellow when you wanted him? Last time I remembered noticing him he was deep in conversation with the anorak man. Another stentorian voice sounded in my ear. It was Aunt Dahlia. “Now, Bertie, I’m relying on you. I have a five pound bet with your uncle. He said you would never win in a month of Sundays and you know how I can’t resist an outsider – so it’s £5 for me if you win. And you know what will happen if you let me down . . .”

Pairs began to start at short intervals and then it was our turn. I positively rushed, nay, flew to the start kite and dibbed the box, which gave a satisfying bleep. If we carried on like this we were bound to win. So what was the next step? I was trying to remember. “Study the map, Bertie. Other way up! No, not the blank side. At last. Now, I think we go along this path and the re-entrant will be on our left after about 200 yards.”

“Just what I was about to suggest, Honoria. By the way, what does one of these re-entrant thingies look like?”

We carried on along the path and, although we had been the last to start, I didn't feel we were quite alone. I got the distinctly prickly feeling one gets when one should be alone but isn't. We both stopped and looked around. There was no sign of a kite. It should have been obvious, being a bright red and white "Look at me" sort of thing.

"Ahem."

I jumped, not for the first time that day. There was Jeeves, looking immaculate with folded umbrella and inch-perfect bowler hat while I was already rather mud-bespattered. "I fancy that you will find the first control a hundred yards further on, sir. It is presently hidden from view by that large holly bush but it will become perfectly visible once you have passed the bush." And Jeeves was as good as his word. As we carried on round the course we passed other pairs, some of whom were looking very lost and dispirited. "We haven't even found number one yet," said Gussie Fink-Nottle. "Oh, it's back there" I said airily, pointing vaguely in the direction we had come. "Simple, really."

And on we went, with Jeeves miraculously and immaculately appearing just when we started to despair. Most of the time he didn't say a word but just pointed with his umbrella and respectfully touched the rim of his bowler. All of a sudden we were emerging from the woods and heading for a large banner marked "FINISH" and there was Mr. Best smiling broadly.

"Well done, sir; well done, Miss. Since you were last to start and first to finish you must be the winners. But if you would like to download here we will soon find out how much you won by. You seem to be a natural, sir – have you ever considered joining NGOC?"

"Well, don't you know, some of us do have a natural . . ."

"Mr. Wooster is an extremely busy gentleman and regrets that he is unable to spare the time. Isn't that so, Bertie?" Saved by Honoria.

We were soon motoring back to the good old smoke; I was to dine at the Drones and I had given Jeeves the evening off.

"Ah, Jeeves, how good it is to get away from London and out in the fresh air to take some healthy exercise. This orienteering lark takes some beating, what?"

"Just so, sir."

"And, er, Jeeves, thank you for helping out today. For once I'm in the good books of both Aunt Dahlia and Honoria Glossop. Things could have turned out very differently."

"I endeavour to give satisfaction, sir."

Croeso 2012

Way back in 2011 we agreed as a club to help BOK with Day 4 at Croeso 2012, and as the summer progressed (or rather, as the rain kept on coming and the summer stayed away) I began to wonder what we had let ourselves in for. Keeping in touch with Dave Urch, BOK Day 4 supremo and 'start guru' for all days, the picture seemed dire to say the least in the run up to the event. But then, by some miracle or other, the sun came out, and what a great time we had on the Welsh hills, and around the town and University of Aberystwyth. Together with seven other fellow loners, three from NGOC and four from BOK, we travelled up to Aberystwyth on the Friday before the Croeso week, having been asked by Dave Urch to spend Saturday looking over the parking options for Days 4 and 5, which even at that late stage seemed testing to say the least. We found our flat – eight bijou but clean and tidy en suite rooms in one of the Uni accommodation blocks, with a large kitchen at one end of the block, and went off to find supper. It was the landlord's birthday at the first pub we came to, but we gatecrashed



The Uni Crew: Dudley Budden, David Andrews, Steve Williams, Tony Noott, Laurence Gossage, Bob Teed, Pat MacLeod and Gary Wakerley.

their party in the dining room anyway, having irritated the frantically busy barmaid by not doing what we were told, and managed to get fed without upsetting the locals too much.

On Saturday morning Gary Wakerley and I delivered a mountain of map boxes to the nearby house of one of the organisers, and then we had a wander around the town, visiting the Camera Obscura by travelling up the funicular, but chickening out of trying to find our way back to the campus cross-country from there.....pity, as we'd have traversed the woods which formed the early part of the town run on Day 6, but we would probably have just got lost!

On Saturday evening we discovered the Brynamlwg campus pub, and what a find it was. Cheap but excellent food, fast and friendly service, good beer and a telly on which to watch Bradley and Mark wrap up the Tour de France, and the Olympic opening ceremony. So impressed were we that we booked a table for the rest of the week, and it was as well we did, as by the end of the week everyone had found it and one couldn't get a meal without pre-booking.

Sunday saw us below Cader Idris, after the longest drive of the week, but on a lovely sunny day. After a shortish walk to the start my first control was so simple I almost went past it. A couple of controls later I did go past mine, misreading 128 as 118, and went several hundred metres before realising I must have passed my control. After that things rather went downhill, literally and metaphorically. I had a long downhill leg on which I lost touch with where I was, and thrashed around for ages before Alan Starling pointed out to me that my control was 20m behind me. By this time I had passed within about 30m of it three times, so my GPS later told me. After that it was more a fumble than a run to the Finish, including another 'assist' from Chris James.

My best day was Day 2. Sadly I was also non-competitive on Day 2! I spent a day around Foel Goch back in May, at Croeso request, helping with ideas and options for the stiles, fields, gates and wall crossings etc around the assembly area and neighbouring fields, and as a result was designated Assistant Controller, despite my protestations that I had done nothing to deserve the title. I felt I couldn't run competitively with my name on the programme as a controller, and I don't think my best result was down in any way to having been to the assembly field and the start beforehand. Still, another great day out and not too many errors out on the moor, so I got home well satisfied with myself. In the evening I represented the club at a civic reception laid on by Croeso for the Mayor of Aberystwyth and the University dignitaries.



Bob and Gary wait to be told that they have put the tent in the wrong place!

On Day 3 Bob Teed and I had agreed to help SWOC with parking, so we had a very early start, which was actually very convenient as we were able to park at Assembly, and avoid the lengthy walks that most people had to endure from parking to Assembly and then to the Start. This convenience would come back to bite us at the end of the day. I was first away on my course, and started reasonably well, though was quite baffled by the absence on the ground of a prominent mapped bend in a track adjacent to control 3. There were three of us scratching our heads by the time we found the control. At number 7 I repeated my new found technique of going past controls without seeing them, or recognising that I should punch them, and then at about 13 wasted more time not reading the detail on the map properly. This was a middle distance day, and I only had about 2.6k, so I crammed in a lot of mistakes for such a short run. It was on this day that Dave Jones broke his collar bone, and I understand that there was a broken leg as well, so going was not the easiest. After my run Bob and I walked 2km or so to catch the bus to the remote parking site, and we then spent five unbroken hours directing traffic in and out of the parking area – Bob handling the entry/exit and me watching for and

warning of traffic coming over the blind crest beside it. We got quite sunburned that day, and were lucky to get a lift back to assembly with the last of the SWOC helpers. It would have been a long walk otherwise!

On the rest day the BOK gang and I went back to the Day 4 area to prepare the parking. The farmer had belatedly done a brilliant job to cut the thistles down and grade the access track, but we needed to work out where to put everyone such that we had a chance of reusing the area for Day 5. This task, with about six chiefs and no Indians, took much of the day, and although I was supposed to be team leader, it seemed easiest just to draw the plans as the other chiefs wrangled over the best options. On the day we found that everyone fitted in just fine, but we did have some fun with the steep access track, which cut up somewhat and caused some difficulty for inexperienced drivers, or those with people carriers, which all seemed to struggle. Bob Teed spent all morning half way up the hill stopping drivers to warn them of the challenges on the track, getting moaned at by the people at the bottom of the hill who wanted the queue to move faster, and by the people at the top when he let the flow up the hill increase to ease the problem at the bottom of the hill. He took it out on me when I joined him to speed the process, by moaning at me for taking too long to brief people!

After five hours of this, we all went for a run! I developed my new technique of passing controls to a further level of refinement by finding the next but one control first, and then going back to the one I should be at – OK I suppose on short legs, but not so clever on long ones. Teifi Pools was a lovely area, though, cooling when you dropped up to your waist in a bog, challenging when all crags and rock outcrops look the same to you, and wholly as new on Day 5 despite running round the same area you had been on the previous day.

We awaited Day 6 – the campus run - eagerly, having spent the week patrolling the campus looking for tags, and Friday evening spotting controls. We started a little way from the campus proper, up through a wood and into a University housing complex, before crossing the main road via a footbridge into the campus. Here I found that local knowledge helped a little, but also hindered; a glance at the map, recognition that I had seen that control and a dash to it, only to find that



Day 4/5 Assembly. Day 4 start was just below the ridge in the top right of the picture.

it was not quite the one I wanted.....mine was 20m away by a different tree! And amongst the buildings on the steep hillside, an alleyway you thought you had walked up turned into one ending at a tall wall that you clearly hadn't. I managed to get away with only one passing move – a pretty well hidden control no 2 in the woods – only two passes before finding it – and one uncrossable fence with me on one side and the control on the other, so all in all a satisfactory end to a great multi-day event. We had one minor bit of helping to do once starts had closed, collecting up all the club map boxes to bring home courtesy of Stephen and Shirley Robinson's van, and then headed home.

One of us estimated that overall cost for the week had been around £300 each, including accommodation, fuel, entry and food, so by any measure a most economic and enjoyable event. My overall result – about half way down (no, up) my class results. My only regret – that we don't have any areas in our patch that get anywhere close to meeting the orienteering challenge presented by the Welsh hills. I don't know where I am going to practise for Moray 2013.....I'll just have to go to Scotland more often!

Pat MacLeod

Harvester: NGOC defeated by the Forces of Darkness!

Fifty years syne, when Mr. Best cam' first into NGOC and was appointed Club Captain, he was still a young man – a callant, the folk said – fu' o' book-learnin' an' grand at the exposition, but, as was natural in sae young a man, wi' nae leevin' experience in orienteering. The younger members were greatly taken wi' his gifts an' his gab; but auld, concerned, serious members of the Committee were moved even to prayer for the young man, whom they took to be a self-deceiver, an' the club that was like to be sae ill-supplied.

Mr. Best had a feck o' books and maps wi' him – mair than had ever been seen before in NGOC. They were books o' orienteering, to be sure, but the Committee were of opinion there was little service for sae mony, when the hale o' BOF's Word would gang in the neuk o' a plaid. Then he wad sit half the day, an' half the night forbye, which was scant decent – writin', nae less, articles for The Legend, which was surely no' fitting for ane o' his years an' sma' experience.

Anyway, as Club Captain, it behoved him to get thegither a team for the Harvester an' other bit relays. For the Harvester Mr. Best recruited six members an' a' these folk went thegither to Bordon Heaths, arrivin' in the gloamin' whilk was an unco time an' place for BOF-fearin' orienteers. Havin' pitched their wee tents they a' resorted to the clachan alehouse for a wee drap brandy to fortify theirselves. The brandy took an unco time to be served, likewise their bit denner and so it wasna' long before Mr. Best was gettin' ready for the aff, donnin' his O-sark and lightin' his can'le.

Weel, at the chap o' twel the hooter sound'd an' a' the folk on the fust leg set aff and Mr. Best didn'a need to fash hi'self for the first three controls. But then he set aff for number fower and time gaed by - and Mr. Best was still stravaguin' ower a' the

countryside like a man possessed but na, nae sign o' number fower. At lang last Mr. Best found number fower and carried on roun' the rest o' the course.

But wi' on'y a few controls left, and them as wou'd be easy for a bairn to find, there cam' a slap o' wund, like a cat's fuff; oot gaed the can'le, the slaughs skreighed like folk and Mr. Best kenned that, live or die, this was the end o't. It was aye pit-mirk but, het as he was, he took a kind o' cauld grue in the marrow o' his banes. It's an awfu' thing to be your lane at nicht wi' siccan prodigies o' darkness; but Mr. Best was strong in British Orienteering. Sae doun he sat an' thocht o' a' that had come an' gane since he was in NGOC, an' the days when he was a bairn and ran daffin' on the braes at the JK. Whiles he heard a tyke yowlin' up the muir, as if somebody was deid; whiles he heard bogles claverin' in his lug, an' whiles he saw spunkies among the trees. At the hinder end he got a clearness in his mind, got up and went hap-step-an'-lowp an', wet shoon, ower the burn to the Finish and then, feeling fair forjeskit, took to his tent.

The second runner, Mr. Jones, also had a slow run but wi'out meeting any bogles and wi'out his can'le failin'. He handed over to Mr. Taunton, by which time the morn had cam but he still ran round like the de'il was at his oxter and, like Mr. Best, was deesqualified - for mispunchin'. Mr. Williams was next and had nae problem but so much time had gaed by that the three remaining NGOC runners all set aff thegither in the mini mass-start.

In the results four other teams beside NGOC were deesqualified, but it was a sair dispensation for the Club Captain; lang, lang he lay ravin' in his tent an' frae that hour to this he was the man ye ken the day.

Glossary

bogle – a ghost, spectre, phantom
brae – a hill, hillside
callant – a youth, boy
chap – to strike
clachan – a hamlet, village
claver – to talk nonsense
daff – to play, frolic
fash – to trouble, bother
forjeskit – fatigued, worn out
fuff – to puff, huff or rage
gloaming – twilight, dusk
grue – a shudder, shiver, cold feeling of horror or repulsion
neuk – a corner, recess
oxter – an armpit
plaid – a coarse woollen cloth
sark – a shirt
siccan – such
skreigh – to shriek, scream, screech, utter a high shrill cry
slaughs – very dangerous spirits known as the unforgiven dead
spunkie – a will o' the wisp
stravaguing – to wander aimlessly
syne – since

For any other words see: <http://www.scots-online.org/dictionary/>

(For Greg's account of the Harvester see the July edition of Legend)

(Apologies to Robert Louis Stevenson)

Caption Competition - answers



Former BOF councillor peers out from Madonna's wardrobe. (*John Fallows*)

"I wonder if I should I read them that William McGonagall poem next?" (*Alan Brown*)

Chris enjoying a strawberry lolly at WTOC, but not noticing it's dribbling down his arm. (*Neil Cameron*)

Chris calling at the WTOC dance, but apparently afraid he might not be heard. (*Neil Cameron*)

Having painted his arm red, Chris wonders if his beard would look good in red too. (*Neil Cameron*)

"Did you not see the 'wet paint' notice? Now it's all over your arm and your ice-cream!" (*Neil Cameron*)

"Would boat number 36 please come in - your time is up." (*Nick Barrable, CompassSport*)

"Come and buy these lovely strawberry ice creams." (*Mark Blackstone, BOK*)

2011—2012 minileague winners

Blue

Winner	Andy Monro, M40, HOC	5177 points
2 nd and top NGOC	Peter Ward, M40	5033
4 th and top lady	Caroline Craig, W21, NGOC	3681

Green

Winner	Dudley Budden, M65, BOK	4880
3 rd and top junior	Zac Hudd, M12, BOK	4302
4 th and top NGOC	Dave Hartley, M60	4233

Orange

Winner	Joe Hudd, M10, BOK	4611
2 nd and top NGOC	Ashleigh Denman, W45	4165
6 th and top junior	Calum Smillie, M14, NGOC	2858

Yellow

Winner	Rebecca Ward, W9, NGOC	4831
2 nd	Patrick Tate, M14	3868
3 rd and top non-NGOC	Kieran Baker, M14, HOC	3165

Prizes will be given out at the Chairman's Challenge or can be collected from Carol at subsequent events.

(Reproduced from the May 2012 edition of Devon Orienteer. Thank you to author Graham Dugdale and Editor Susan Hateley)

2011 GREAT GLEN WAY

In some cases, the journeys to and from a walk have provided memories at least as significant as those from the walk itself. In 2011 we decided that journeying to the north of Scotland to undertake the Great Glen Way offered opportunities to undertake two great Scottish rail journeys which should not be missed. Accordingly, far from acting as parentheses around a period of walking, the travel became entwined with the walking and we enjoyed a trip to Skye as a prelude to the main walk.

On Tuesday we set off bright and early from Rochdale station, eventually catching a Glasgow-bound connection from Wigan around 8.30. I shared most of this leg of the journey exchanging stories with a walker from Wolverhampton who had walked John O'Groats to Land's End a couple of years back, and who was travelling to Scotland to bag Munros. After negotiating our way to Glasgow Queen Street we settled down on the Mallaig train which was soon winding its way along the north bank of the Clyde, up Gareloch and then on to Loch Long before crossing over the pass to Loch Lomond. The hills were shrouded in cloud and intermittent showers further limited our enjoyment of the stunning scenery. At Ardlui, near the head of Loch Lomond, we waited for the up train to pass, before heading north on the single track line which was now broadly following the West Highland Way and the A82. At Crianlarich the train split with the first two coaches setting off for Lower Tyndrum and Oban shortly before our train headed for Upper Tyndrum, Bridge of Orchy and then swung east out onto the inhospitable wet moorlands of Rannoch Moor. The separate branch line to Oban wasn't originally part of the Glasgow-Fort William-Mallaig line at all; it had its own route from Glasgow via Callander, opened in 1880 and operated by the rival Caledonian Railway. This passed under the Glasgow-Fort William line just north of Crianlarich, and you can just make out the old track-bed today from the train to Fort William. The line from Glasgow via Callander was closed during the Beeching cuts in the 1960s, and trains between Glasgow and Oban diverted to

share the line to Crianlarich with the Fort William trains. Rannoch station, just before the summit level seemed less exposed than Corrour which marked the start of the long descent into the Spean Valley and Fort William.

After a brief break at Fort William, the train continued its journey northwards, passing through the suburbs of Banavie (where we crossed the Caledonian Canal at the foot of Neptune's Staircase) and Corpach before heading alongside Loch Eil and Dubh Lìghe. As we crossed the head of Loch Shiel, the train stopped briefly on the famed Glenfinnan viaduct, a concrete construction completed in 1901 and now featured on Scottish banknotes. After passing alongside the inland Loch Eilt, the final stage of the journey took us along the rugged coastline, through small villages including Arisaig, which has the most westerly railway station on Great Britain, before terminating in the early evening at a damp Mallaig station. Our digs at Seaview had an excellent view of the ferry terminal and the strip of water we planned to cross to reach Skye. Our evening excursion into Mallaig was limited to some games of pool and an excellent evening meal, due to the showery weather.

Monday dawned with blue skies and higher cloud levels and the crossing to Skye was calm and uneventful. We walked off the ferry and into Armadale, which seemed to be dominated by craft shops, potteries and galleries. Even within the first few minutes the signs of European investment were plain to see. The road east had a footpath for some miles and the signs told us that it was being upgraded in phases with European money. All the houses were freshly painted with new fencing and there were no signs of the poverty which had been evident on our earlier visits twenty plus years ago.

The weather was showery and it was during one of these showers that we took refuge in a rather plush country hotel to enjoy a midday coffee. Once the rain had ceased, walking was generally quite pleasant with the Cuillin Hills providing a dramatic back-drop to the north, whilst to the south, the hills of the Knoydart peninsula could be seen across the Sound of Sleat. A single track road headed south to Kylesha, where a remote ferry crossing could be made to what was once the mainland terminus of the Road to the Isles. Eventually we swung north away from the coast, to climb onto a moorland plateau. Here we were able to cross onto the metalled strip of the old single

track road, now devoid of traffic, and a reminder of how difficult it must have been to construct a road across the watery moor.

The descent into Broadford took us down to the main road across the island and then west, away from tomorrow's destination, the Skye road bridge, which had not been constructed when I was last in Skye.

The Dunollie Hotel, where we had booked accommodation at reduced rates, was a surprisingly large hotel with fine views across Broadford harbour, where a ferry was anchored that evening, and over to the isle of Pabay. We ascertained the train times from Kyle of Lochalsh and confirmed that a 9.00am departure would provide us with sufficient time to cover the 8 miles and make the connection. By morning the ferry was gone, but the bay was bathed in sunshine and was millpond-calm.

Despite setting off in glorious sunshine, within 20 minutes a sudden shower forced us to don our waterproofs, fortunately only for a brief spell. Brian had set off with a stomach upset and had to find a convenient bush with a plentiful supply of dock leaves. The walk to the Skye bridge was blighted by the heavy traffic and was not an experience to be willingly repeated, but the crossing itself offered many spectacular views. There are in fact two bridges as the road crosses to a small island, Eilean Ban, before linking to the mainland. The bridge from Skye to Eilean Ban is a high rainbow-like arch, allowing access to sea-going vessels which we witnessed as a coastguard vessel passed beneath us, whilst the bridge from Eilean Ban to the mainland is low, flat and unspectacular. The final stretch into Kyle of Lochalsh gave us plenty of opportunity to admire the Skye bridge and village port of Kyleakin, now largely bypassed by traffic arriving in Skye. We made our way through Kyle, picking up supplies on the way, before arriving at Kyle of Lochalsh station, where we changed our footwear and waited for our train to Inverness.

The rail journey followed the coast for many miles via the sea lochs of Loch Kishorn and Loch Carron before following the River Carron and the A890 northeastwards passing the inland lochs of Dughaill and Sgamhain. A little further on the watershed was crossed in the company of the A890, before the track dropped down to Loch Gowan and shortly afterwards entered the valley of the River Bran,

which was followed as far as Loch Luichart. By now we were entering the east coast strip of development and the desolate moorland and forestry was replaced with agriculture and more frequent signs of habitation. Nearing Inverness we crossed the Caledonian Canal close to where it ended at the Beaully Firth and finally we disembarked in Inverness, a pleasant thriving city which had the feel of a university town and has also benefitted from European investment. We made our way to Tourist Information, booked accommodation in Inverness then headed to a snooker hall. Our accommodation proved difficult to locate and we passed it two or three times before realising that it was a bed and breakfast. Here the landlady, dressed in punk fashion, was most welcoming and recommended a local pub for our evening meal.

Next day dawned bright and breezy and after returning to the centre of Inverness to purchase provisions, we crossed the River Ness and then headed south-west through parkland before crossing the Caledonian Canal and climbing out of Inverness through quiet suburbs. Our route took us west to an old derelict hospital, where the first serious climb of the route was encountered. After two days of flat road walking it was great to be working hard on the hills as we wended our way through broad-leaf forest. Once the way levelled out and began following the shoulder of the hillside, the rain arrived. Whilst this was unwelcome we were pleased to have completed the main climb in clear weather and also for the protection afforded by the forest. After two or three miles, as we emerged from the forest, the way was blocked by a large van and we were greeted by a female ranger who offered us tea and plied us with questions about our views on the Great Glen Way. The rain had stopped and we dried out as we chatted. From here the walk followed the Great Glen cycle way and was well surfaced and gently graded for a mile or more before it finally arrived at the minor road at Blackford. With open moorland on either side we crossed the valley, fortunate that the rain had abated. As we climbed away from the valley floor, the views to the north became more expansive and for the first time we could see the peaks to the northwest freshly covered in snow which had fallen overnight. After a short while the way followed a path down to Woodend Farm which offered camping facilities. After winding through the woods for a while signs offering tea, coffee and accommodation tempted us into following a path through reforested moorland to arrive at an eco-camp complete with Inuit dogs, yurts and an unkempt but polite host who brought us a massive pot of tea in a silver teapot. Here we exchanged pleasantries

with a Frenchman who was expecting to complete the walk into Inverness that afternoon.

A mile further on and we crossed a minor road and coincidentally began to retrace my path on Land's End to John o'Groats eight years previously. The path followed was a well-worn wide forest track over a switchback of hills, before turning off onto a steeper climb just before Achpopuli. I regretted that we were not taking the short cut I had taken years before as my blisters had begun to hurt and the extra two miles were surely going to cause problems later. After a short but stiff climb we reached the highest point on the Great Glen Way before dropping towards Loch Ness, which became visible whenever there was a gap in the trees. Losing over 1000 feet in height on rough forest tracks was no great pleasure, especially to my feet, but we finally emerged onto Urquhart Bay and followed the road along the valley of the River Enrick into Drumnadrochit, home to the "Nessie" industry. Our accommodation was in a converted church or kirk and was excellent. By the time we had showered and changed the rain had set in so we cadged a lift back into the centre of Drum, where we enjoyed an excellent meal at the pub/restaurant at the centre of the village, and indulged ourselves a little in sampling some of the myriad of whiskies on offer.

After breakfast we walked through the centre of Drumnadrochit before embarking on a steady climb out on tracks followed by a long stretch of quiet country roads. When this ended at a car park at Grottaig, there began a rough hillside track, which was arguably the hardest part of walk. Eventually this emerged onto a wide forest track down to Allt Saigh, followed by a big climb and detour up Glen Moriston. The way then descended into Invermoriston via a steep metalled road. By the time we had bought some supplies at the local shop it was 3.00 and the rain had set in. Even the two deer that had emerged from the forest onto the grassy clearing behind the shop were looking bedraggled. In deference to my feet, which were blistered, we decided to stop for the day and found a pleasant B&B a few yards along the road to Drumnadrochit. Later that evening a pair of very muddy cyclists arrived, complaining about the incessant rain which had followed them all the way from Fort William.

Next morning at breakfast, during a brief spell of sunshine, we watched a woodpecker feeding in the garden of our accommodation,

whilst highland cattle grazed in the field beyond. We had heard accounts of a detour adding two miles to the route so we were eager to leave before the weather inevitably took a downward spiral. As it turned out the detour that was in place took the way along the route described in our walking guide, because a more recent short cut had been blocked by trees felled during winter storms. In the event, with a little scrambling, we were able to negotiate the blocked short cut and after a short sharp climb emerge onto the main path higher up the hillside. Whilst we were lucky to be able to complete the climb before the rain arrived, we then experienced a heavy shower from which we took shelter in the woods before resuming our walk. The gradients were easier than the previous day but the weather generally poor and we arrived at Fort Augustus shortly before midday.

Regrettably, our time at Fort Augustus was marred by frequent showers and the need to complete 20 miles after the curtailment of the previous day's walking, so after a short refreshment break we left Fort Augustus unexplored. Once past the activity surrounding the flight of locks taking boats up from Loch Ness to the next canalised section, the wide empty towpath stretched away to the southwest with little shelter from the elements. On our right, behind a fringe of trees, the River Oich, fortified by numerous streams cascading down the mountainside, was making rapid progress to Loch Ness. Our progress was marked by the passing of an occasional bike or walker and Kytra lock, but mostly by the changes in the weather as squalls swept in from the southwest. When we arrived at Cullochy lock, which gave access to Loch Oich, we crossed the canal and made our way to the south side of the loch. Here the way passed alongside the route of the abandoned Fort Augustus-Spean Bridge railway. The canopy of trees afforded us more shelter from the rain, but puddles on the track slowed our progress as it was difficult to assess their depth and the firmness of the underlying terrain. Also there were stretches where tree roots came through the ground surface and needed extra care. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the frequent superb views across the loch, the vigorous streams and waterfalls running off the hillside and the examples of railway architecture made this an entertaining interlude, before we reached the environs of North Laggan and the end of the loch. Here there was a country park with a shop, but little else. We crossed the A82 Inverness road and proceeded along the cycle trail through a tree lined corridor with the canal visible occasionally on our right. Approaching Loch Lochy a line of boats lay at their moorings

with more activity around a particular boat, which, it transpired, was a floating restaurant-cum-pub. This seemed like too good an opportunity to miss and soon we were ensconced in warm dry surroundings with pints in front of us, whilst our feet slowly marinated in our wet footwear.

A couple, having completed day two of their walk from Fort William to Inverness, conversed with us for a while before setting off for their accommodation. It seemed that they had not walked together before and the differences in preferences for accommodation, walking speeds and eating were already causing rifts. Next we talked to a couple from Blyth who were taking a boat from the east coast to west via the canal with the intention of circumnavigating Great Britain. The conditions on board were fairly primitive so the pub-boat was a welcome change for them.

We prevailed upon the landlord to provide us with phone numbers for local accommodation and once we had booked somewhere to stay for the night we arranged to return later in the evening for a meal. The meal of pie and peas was a little expensive, but this was more than compensated for by the ambience of our surroundings. Once again we were seated with canal travellers, this time on a hire craft heading towards Fort William, who were enjoying a paella. It seemed likely that their plans would be thwarted by the high winds forecast for the following day, as it was not recommended to progress onto the open loch in high winds.

As we passed the pub-boat the following morning the wind was already gusting at gale force and there seemed little prospect of the flotilla of moored boats being allowed through the lock into the turbulent waters of Loch Lochy. The Great Glen Way headed through the forest on the northwest side of the loch. Underfoot the walking was easy, but heading directly into the wind ensured that it was quite a physical challenge. At one point a couple of bikes passed us heading towards Fort William. As soon as they started to climb, with the wind in their faces, they struggled and for a while it looked as if we would overtake them, until the climb ended and they were able to make better headway. After about eight miles, on the outskirts of Clunes, we dropped into the rangers' hut and were served tea and biscuits by the same girl we had met on the first day of our walk on the Great Glen Way. The hut offered a welcome break from the buffeting wind and turned out to be our final place of refreshment until Fort William. Whilst

we were there the weather worsened and the hut filled up with two or three groups heading to Inverness, although none of them had travelled far that morning. With a short lull in the rain, we resumed and after a brief road section, we headed into the trees again with the wind at an even more violent level. Sounds like gunshot would signal the moment when boughs and branches parted company from their host tree before crashing to the forest floor and I had to keep alert to the wind ripping my cap from my head and sending it 30 yards before I reacted. At one point we headed down close to the water where we half expected to see surfers riding the wind-blown waves to the shoreline. Later we found a fairy grotto of lights, gnomes and decorations hung from the trees, clearly designed as a tourist attraction, but by whom we asked?

Eventually we passed the pepper pot lighthouse at Gairloch and soon we were back on the towpath facing a six mile haul into the wind by the canal side. This length was completed more or less in solitary isolation as, with our hoods protecting us from the elements, the sound of the wind made conversation impossible without face-to-face contact. Truth to tell there was little to be said, just an ongoing battle to make progress into the teeth of the gale, avoid the worst of the puddles, keep our hoods from blowing off and negotiate the occasional tree which had fallen across the towpath. Arriving at Neptune's Staircase, Banavie should have been a joyous moment to be savoured, but whilst the views were still spectacular, the windswept environs were deserted and offered no shelter from the weather. We pressed on along the canal skirting the suburb of Caol, before turning off along the coast of Loch Linnhe, skipping a short stretch of the Great Glen Way which went to the sea lock and back. The suburbs of Fort William, through which we completed our walk, had taken the brunt of the storm and foliage, stripped from trees and hedges, was everywhere with the occasional tree lying across the pavement. Fort William station was crowded and, to our concern, we soon found that all trains had been cancelled that evening due to checks being required on all the lines. Furthermore it appeared that the main road to Inverness was blocked by fallen trees. After buying some food and drink we ordered a taxi to take us to a local street with numerous B&Bs, where we were soon fixed up with accommodation for the night. Our rucksacks, whilst soaked on the outside, had performed well and our clothes, protected by a double layer of bin-liners, were dry if a little cold. Unfortunately, as we were carrying minimum clothes for our walk, we were both down

to our last set of dry (relatively) clean clothes. Not wishing to risk getting these clothes wet, we decided to get a pizza delivered and ate it watching the rain falling on Fort William and Loch Linnhe from the warmth of our B&B.

The following morning the rain had ceased for our walk down to the station and the train services had been restored so we were soon heading back up the Great Glen, up the Spean valley and climbing onto Rannoch Moor on our way back to Glasgow and Wigan.

Overall the planning and execution of the walk had worked out well and although the weather had restricted the degree to which we had been able to enjoy our surroundings it had also left us with enduring memories of our visit. At least the high winds had kept the midges at bay for the closing days of our walk, but we had been denied the pleasure sitting outside during those long summer evenings enjoyed by the north of Scotland, whilst Fort William and Fort Augustus were left tantalisingly unexplored.

Graham Dugdale

Devon Orienteers

Don't Forget!

Chairman's Challenge

**Saturday 8 September,
Mallard's Pike**

Slough-O

Come, friendly bombs, and fall on Slough
It isn't fit for street-O now,
There isn't grass to plant a kite,
Swarm over, Death!

Come, bombs, and blow to smithereens
Those caterers' canteens,
Those cakes, drinks, crisps, pasta and beans
Hot coffee and lukewarm tea.

Mess up the mess they call an urban sprint
Entry fee of fifteen quid for a shortish stint
And another fiver
For parking cars,

And get that man with double chin
Who'll always cheat and always win,
Who washes his repulsive skin
In W21s' tears.

And smash his Emit card with digital display
And smash the SI dibber on his finger
And stop his boring orienteering joke
And make him yell.

But spare the keen young orienteers who calculate
The results for the stinking cad;
It's not their fault that they are mad,
They've run at Flaxley.

It's not their fault they do not know
Their street-O from cross-country-O
It's not their fault they often go
To The Delves.

And talk of maps and makes of dibber
At various bogus BOK events
And daren't look up and see the kites
But relocate instead.

At ergonomic, labour-saving registration
Their wives hand out control descriptions
Key in the details
And take the entry fees.

Come, friendly bombs, and fall on Slough
To get it ready for the plough,
The NGOC Gnomes are coming now,
To map it all afresh.

(with apologies to) J. Betjeman

The original Slough starts:-

Come, friendly bombs, and fall on Slough
It isn't fit for humans now,
There isn't grass to graze a cow,
Swarm over, Death!

Come, bombs, and blow to smithereens
Those air-conditioned, bright canteens, . . .

NGOC Summer Series

Last year the committee discussed what we might do over the summer to try and attract more people into the club, and we agreed on a programme of small Saturday morning events, aimed solely at newcomers, in and around Gloucester and Cheltenham. We used small urban areas such as Cox's Meadow, Gloucester Central Park, Pittville Park and so on. Despite all of the work that Greg Best put in to plan and publicise the programme, as well as that of a number of helpers, results were disappointing, and to my knowledge we have seen no additional members joining the club as a result of that programme. So this year, we decided on a different tack. We sought views on what kinds of events, venues and times by means of a web survey, and based on this came up with the programme now just finished.

The 2012 programme changed a number of things:

- ✧ It provided for experienced as well as novice orienteers
- ✧ It used better areas, with more scope to do more orienteering
- ✧ For the urban events, it replaced treasure hunt type courses with secure SI controls

The results of these changes are reflected in the summary attendance numbers below. The entries column reflects the number of discrete entries, whilst the runners' column shows actual people going round the course, many newcomers going in groups. The newcomers and returners columns reflect a rough and ready count of people not thought to have been to any previous event anyway (i.e. complete beginners), and those coming back having been to a previous event (which may not have been in this series – this is partly based on my recollection of people I have seen before!).

Summer series analysis

Date	Event	Type	Entries	Runners	New-comers	Returners
27/6	Hartpury	Wednesday evening score	20	20	0	0
30/6	Flaxley	Saturday informal	26	26	1	4
4/7	Park Campus	Wednesday evening score	19	19	3	
11/7	Parkend	Saturday informal	28	28		4
14/7	Tewkesbury	Wednesday evening score	22	22	1	2
4/8	Bixslade	Saturday informal	46	49	7	3
8/8	Pittville Park	Wednesday evening score	34	45	7	3
11/8	Painswick	Saturday informal	55	77	32	3
15/8	Cleeve Hill	Wednesday evening score	17	18		4
22/8	Crickley Hill	Wednesday evening score	37	40	8	11

Totals	304	344	59	34
---------------	-----	-----	----	----

Wednesday evening score	149	164	19	20
Saturday informal	155	180	40	14

Wednesday average	25
Saturday average	39

I do not have numbers for last year's series, but these numbers are significantly better than we achieved then, though of course most of the increase being experienced orienteers. The newcomer numbers are somewhat skewed by Carol Stewart's cousin's birthday party, but overall, the results are mildly encouraging, and in my view the presence and active involvement of numbers of experienced orienteers helps to create an atmosphere of challenge and enjoyment that enhances the experience for the newcomers.

Feedback from competitors, new and old, was overwhelmingly positive, some of the key points being ease of access to the events, decent areas, variety of challenge, and a chance to keep fit over the summer months. The one thing we did fail to do was to provide textual course descriptions for newcomers. The added numbers meant a healthy income from the series, whilst expenses have been kept low by trying to minimise travel and printing costs, so our 'development' budget for this year should be in a far healthier state than it was last year!

On the downside, such a busy programme does place quite a burden on relatively few organisers and helpers; Greg Best organised two events, as did I, and Chris and Gill James were generally found lending a hand at most events, most importantly being available to help newcomers get started. Despite this, I firmly believe we should develop a regular summer programme, and will be taking this up with the committee forthwith. The keys to ongoing success will be to keep the events local to Cheltenham/Gloucester, make sure the woodland events have good summer going, and above all make the event logistics and planning as simple as possible for both organiser/planners and competitors.

I would like to thank all of the organisers - Tom Mills, Greg Best, Paul Taunton, John Fallows, Gary Wakerley, Caroline Craig and Carol Stewart – for all their hard work. As I have said many times before these small informal events are an ideal opportunity for new organiser/planners to get started, and I hope that next year some new names will appear on the fixture list.

Pat MacLeod

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location	Signposted / Forest entry	Organiser
8 Sep Sat	Chairman's Challenge 1400 mass start	Mallards Pike	SO619121 SO623102	Pat MacLeod 01594 528128
22 Sep Sat	League 1	Standish	SO838085	Alan & Ellen Starling 01793 320054
13 Oct Sat	Informal	Nine Wells	SO593131	Joe Parkinson 01432 358939
3 Nov Sat	League 2	Trellech Common	SO500055	Peter Ward 01600 860597
10 Nov Sat	Informal	Hartpur College	SO797232	Greg Best 01242 516053
8 Dec Sat	League 3	Knockalls	SO560119	Kyla da Cunha 07771 573267
15 Dec Sat	Western Night League	Mallards Pike North	SO649126	Tom Mills 01452 760451
1 Jan 2013 Tue	New Year's Day Score 1100 mass start	Parkend	SO608078 SO591082	Gary Wakerley 07919 095436

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 £3 Junior £1
 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

Brashings

Fixtures Secretary

Dave Hartley will be stepping down as Fixtures Secretary at the AGM in October. Anybody who would like to take on the role please contact Dave fixtures@ngoc.org.uk or any member of the Committee.

New Members

Welcome to:

Karl Gwilliam, Abbeymead, Gloucester

Andrew, Anne and Taylor Christopher, Moreton-in-Marsh

Annual General Meeting

The 2012 AGM will be held at Oxstalls Campus on Monday 8 October. Free buffet. Note it in your diary now!

Forest Challenge

A cheque for £300 has been sent to the Woodland Trust from profits made on the sale of the game.

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 September 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.