SOCK - Autumn 2014

The Magazine of Southampton Orienteering Club

November Classic

TRIMTEX

Editorial — Pete Davis

Huge apologies for the long delay in getting this edition of SOCK to you! A few things conspired to make it a difficult for me to put the time aside. But we're there now.

If you read CompassSport you'll know that there is a debate currently raging on the use and definition of event levels – with a particular focus on the need, or not, for both Level B and C events. Each year, as a club, we put on a number of Level C's and a Level B – the November Classic. For SOC it's fair to say that the two levels work really well for us. Our Level C's are reasonably simple to organise and require in the region of twenty people involved in helping. The competitor turnout will be 200 or so.

In contrast the November Classic attracts upward of 900 runners, takes months of planning and needs about 70 club members to roll up their sleeves and help on the day. We need this differentiation between Bs and Cs. Without it how would the UK orienteering community know what to expect, what to commit to in terms of travel time? And there is a strong argument that Level Cs provide a necessary stepping stone for planners, organisers and controllers.

We need new people coming forward to plan and organise our events at all levels. For those of you yet to try, have a read of Robert Finch's article on page 22. He did his first events as organiser and planner this year – and that during what was a very busy year for him. And then we have Di and Terry willing to organise an event safety course. Just a few hours of your time and you'll be certified! Have a look at their article on page 24 for more information.

And so to this edition of SOCK. A bumper edition that reflects the busy and varied summer experiences of fellow club members. Thanks to everyone who contributed and, as always, a special thanks to Jenny Dickin and the juniors who have provided some brilliant stuff for us to read and enjoy.

Chairman's Report — Nick Bosbury

We all like going to events as orienteering is a sport we wish to participate in. However events are not put on by a benevolent Fairy but by ordinary members who volunteer their services.

The putting on of orienteering events require not only help on the day but members to organise and plan events. Also there are positions on and off the committee which are needed to maintain the running of the club and ultimately the delivery of fixtures.

We are currently short of two vital position one of which needs to be filled ASAP.

Please don't stop reading now as you may be able to help.

Membership and Fixtures Secretary's

Membership Secretary is a post which must be filled quickly. The renewals of membership are due, we need to maintain our data base, and welcome any new members.

Fixtures Secretary is not so urgent as I am currently filling the post and am happy to continue until the AGM. But we will need to fill the position then.

If you are interested in either of these posts to find out more please speak to myself or any other committee member.

Planners, Organisers

Next year we are planning to put on six forest events, the November Classic, nine Summer Series events and 2 Wessex Night League events.

If these events are to go ahead we need Organisers and Planners. Last year a number of members cut their teeth organising and planning for the first time. I don't think any were scarred for life by the experience and if you want to have go step forward. The club will always provide assistance and mentoring, it's not as daunting as it may at first seems.

November Classic

Thank you to the 66 helpers and especially Mary Nixon (Organiser), Kieran Devine (Planner), and Peter Brett (Controller).

Although entries were down we still had an entry of over 800. Maybe memories of 2012 were still there. However despite a very wet start the weather was reasonably kind and there were plenty of positive comments.

Now on to future Classics:

Next year BADO are to host an Urban in Basingstoke on the Saturday and the Classi will be at Dennys Lodge.

2016 is to be run with SARUM revisiting Salisbury for an Urban event on Saturday.

And 2017 is the 50th running of the Classic. The event will be an UKOL league event and the Southern Championships. The Urban Saturday event will be in Southampton with Colin Hicks resurrecting his excellent city map.

2015 Events

We will soon be publishing a fixture list for next year. The programme is intended to give regular orienteering of various standards. There will be 17 events during the year so please support them as you have done so in the past. A good turnout makes it so worthwhile to those putting the events on.

Other Activities

For the rest of the year and through 2015 Kevin Brasher will be setting out a programme of monthly Club activities including Street events, coaching etc. Please support these events if you can.

If people are interested we will support various courses for event planning and organising.

Mapping is a field you may be interested in, if so speak to Simon Bevan or any committee member.

Remember the Club and its Events are only as good as its members!

Best Wishes

Nick

The November Classic — Pete Davis

The 47th November Classic attracted nearly 800 competitors to the popular Kings Garn Gutter area near Fritham in the New Forest. Fingers were firmly crossed in the lead up to the event – it was in this area that the event two years ago was cancelled due to torrential rain and surge water in the river that runs through the Gutter. There was a rumour that Julian had been sent out of the country to reduce the risk of a repeat cancellation!

The wind and rain blew itself out over the Saturday night – no fun for the overnight campers – and the day was reasonably dry.

After months of hard work by the event officials the Classic was heralded as another success for the club. With almost seventy Club members helping, it really was a team effort.

Meteorologically it was a very strange day; I'm fairly sure that I spotted a full moon whilst I was taking photos near the finish. I must catch up with Colin Holcombe as I've heard he's a bit of an expert in this field.

Out on the courses Club members had some fun and a few notable results:

Winner W50 – Jane Morgan

2nd W21 – Tamsin Moran

2nd M35 – David Currie

2nd Short Brown – Christine Currie

2nd Black – Tim Morgan

3rd Brown – Andrew Nash

The November Classic - a helpers tale! Kevin Bracher

The Friday before the November Classic was a glorious day, blue skies, sunshine and no wind.

I took the opportunity to visit as many of Kieran's control sites as I could in the afternoon and was rewarded with a sighting of a fallow deer buck in all his glory: head held high with a full set of antlers that deserved the harem of does that trotted off ahead of him. This is one of the perks of being part of the 'Forest Team' for an event, the chance to visit the area when all is quiet and enjoy our beautiful countryside.

Saturday morning and the Classic forest team are at work early: heading out to set the controls for the event and to cross check controls put out by other members of the team. Again it is a pleasant day and it is a joy to be out in the forest, wet feet or not.

With control hanging over for the day I drove over to the assembly area where Simon and Nick already had the large marquee taking shape. As more helpers joined us we soon had the frame up and the 'canvas' stretched over. Then a gust of wind almost blew the lot away. Some hard wrestling just about kept the marquee in place while we hammered in the large stakes and managed to set the strops over the roof and tie them down.

With the marquee up I left the rest of the team to secure the walls and at three o' clock drove home for a quick shower, change of clothes and a snack, before collecting my camping gear and heading back to Ocknell for a 'night out'. I arrived back at the site just after Nick at six O'clock and we began to install our tent, beds and sleeping bags not under the stars but inside the marquee. We were all set up for the night and everything was quiet so we took the opportunity to go and have a meal at the 'Sir Walter Tyrrell'.

On the way back into Ocknell Camp Site for a brief second a large fallow deer buck is frozen in the car headlights before it trotted off into the woods. Shortly after returning to the marquee the wind suddenly picked up and heavy rain started to drum on the tent. We quickly realised that we need to add some more straps and pegs to hold down the corners of the marquee. The next hour and a half seemed to fly by as we fought to secure the legs of the tent as a series of squalls brought gusts of strong wind and rain through at regular intervals. There was a lot of creaking as the tent was buffeted by the wind but it was holding up so we decided to try and get some sleep.

Sleep however was intermittent as the pattern of heavy gusts of wind and rain continued throughout the night. You become aware of the background noise of the creaking tent and so any changes to this noise soon filter through sleep and wake you up. We became aware of a new noise in the early hours, a heavy slapping sound where pegs had been ripped out of the ground and the end of the tent was flapping alarmingly. So a rear guard action of trying to re-peg the flapping 'canvas' interrupted our sleep on a couple of occasions and then we would lie there listening to the sounds of the tent waiting for any flapping noises to start again.

At first light we packed up the camping gear and just had time to have breakfast and a cup of tea before Nick headed out to unlock the camp site gate ready for the traders who were arriving early to set up. Soon the early team of helpers started to arrive and I headed out for my run out to check all the controls in the Castle Mallwood part of the map to make sure all was OK. It was a wet start to my run round but all was OK on my patch so I headed back to help finish off setting up. There were some vulnerable controls to put out on the Sunday morning and the Finish also needed taping. By 09:30 everything had been checked and set up so we were good to GO, just as the first competitors were making their way to the start.

I stayed around the finish for most of the event. Kieran also spent most of the time there and it was good when the first finishers started to trickle in and all was well. A lot of smiling faces at the finish and some appreciative comments, the sun even came out for a while so all was good on the day. I even had time to visit the Assembly area to soak up some of the atmosphere and enjoy a snack from Tom's Burger Van. The Helpers food vouchers were much appreciated by those I talked to. Thank you Nick!

As the courses closed at 14:45 I was not looking forward to putting back on the wet socks and shoes ready to gather controls but as soon as I got going the task in hand took over and my feet soon warmed the socks and shoes up.

By the time I returned to the assembly area everything was packed away and I was just in time to join the remaining helpers for a quick pint in the Royal Oak. That, bar the shouting, was the November Classic over for another year.

Ten Numerical Facts About The 2014 November Classic — Kieran Devine

Number of courses = 13 + String course

Number of actual classes = 39

Number of competitors = 771 (including String course)

Number of clubs represented = 58

Number of competitors dsq or dnf = 24

Number of competitors entered but did not start = 58

Number of controls = 76

Total number of control visits by competitors = 12960

Approximate total race distance for all competitors = 5400 Kms

Number of Number of SOC volunteer helpers = 66

There is a well known saying in the travel industry " take nothing but photographs and memories, leave nothing but footprints". Going around the forest collecting in controls after everyone had gone home it was very clear that that is exactly what everyone competing had done. Well done everybody!

Kieran (Planner)

Dorset Coast Path Relay Record Attempt — Andy Nash

On 28th June a team of SOC runners headed south to take part in a Dorset Coast Path Relay record attempt. Co-ordinated by David Currie, this escapade also included me, Kevin Bracher, Christine Currie, Ian and Tamsin Moran, Jane and Tim Morgan, Olwen Rowlands and Marcus White.

The relay had been held annually since the early 90s and involved orienteering clubs racing against each other along the coast path from the Devon border to the Poole Ferry. However, recent years had seen dwindling numbers and this time there was insufficient interest to have a viable race. So it was decided that this would be the last relay, and everyone would pool together into one big team to try and beat the record time of just under 7 hours 25 minutes, set by KERNO (aka Cornwall Orienteering Club) in 2004.

To facilitate the record attempt we were given a detailed timetable, which allocated SOC two stretches. The first of these started near Dorchester at the Hardy Monument (built in memory of Vice Admiral Thomas Hardy, not his literary namesake). But as we were getting ready we received bad news: someone had run off course on one of the early legs and we were now 20 minutes behind schedule! However, this bad start was unexpectedly reversed when someone suddenly came charging down the hill and handed over the baton 3 minutes ahead of schedule. Apparently the South West Junior Squad (SWJS) had performed particularly well running up to the monument, but they can't possibly have gained 23 minutes so it appeared that the initial bad news was an exaggeration.

Anyway, SOC's performance near Dorchester went very well and despite the showery forecast we were blessed by fine weather and excellent views over the rolling Dorset countryside and the Isle of Portland. With time to kill Kevin and I decided to head to Lulworth Cove to help the team climbing the large hill on the other side. The tactic was to have lots of people running very short uphill stretches, to keep the baton moving as quickly as possible and ensure that the person who received it at the top of the hill was

completely fresh. This approach seemed very effective, especially with about a dozen of us taking on a 400ft ascent!

Next stop was St Aldhelm's Head, a stunning location south-west of Swanage. A few of us got involved in another hill sprint there then handed over to Tamsin and Tim who were running the 5 mile "King of the Coast" leg to Durlston Head. By this stage I could see that we were well off record pace: there were 13 miles of hilly coast path to go but only just over 50 minutes left. An impossible task. But at the same time several people were saying we were only 3 minutes behind schedule and the challenge was still on. So what was the truth? It was only later that I noticed that the target times for certain points on the route appeared to have been placed in the wrong boxes on the schedule, causing confusion and false optimism. In fact we were about an hour off pace!

But the missed record didn't dampen our spirits as we gathered at Studland for the last 3 miles along the beach to the ferry terminal. This leg was a head-to-head race rather than a true relay and SOC had 6 entrants: me, Christine, Kevin, Marcus, Olwen and Ian. Running on sand is hard work but it was a good challenge and involved a route choice where, if preferred, you could leave the more solid moist sand to take a shorter route across the soft sand above the high tide line. I'm not sure which option was best: I stayed on the moist sand while Ian took the soft sand route and pulled away from me, but he was running faster by that stage anyway and went on to be the first SOC finisher, in 5th place overall.

So, catching our breath back at the ferry terminal, the challenge was complete. No record, but that didn't matter. It had been a very enjoyable day and the suspense over the possibility of breaking the record had motivated everyone to put in a really good team effort. Just a shame that this was the last year.

OMM LITE: 6 - 7th SEPTEMBER 2014 Norman Wilson

Friday 5th September saw Julia and me heading north up the M6, with what seemed to be the world and his brother, on our way to the OMM (Original Mountain Marathon) LITE with its base at Hall Farm, Orton a few miles north east of J38 and north of the Howgills. This was to be the inaugural event of the LITE (the 2013 event was cancelled!) and was set up as a training event and a more gentle introduction to the classic OMM event always held on the last weekend of October. The event was held together with the OMM Lite bike event and the Polaris 2 day mountain bike orienteering race.

There were some fundamental differences to the race format and organisation than other 2 day mountain marathon events – OMM, SLMM, etc - that we had competed in! The first, and most obvious, was that the start and finish on both Saturday and Sunday were at the same place; no need to carry a tent and cooking equipment although the requirement to carry the usual safety gear and waterproofs was still necessary. The second difference was the map! It was an A3 size OS map with all the controls already marked up! This was a surprise to me since I had expected an orienteering map as per the OMM and Saunders Lakeland MM. On reflection the event was more 'geared' to the bikers who could wander far and wide on roads, bridleways and tracks. Additionally having an OS map probably didn't help any 'first-timers' to the world of mountain marathons and orienteering! Having said that the event was well organised and friendly.

There were only two courses to choose from; Julia and I had decided to do the short score event – 5 hours on day 1 and 4 hours on day 2 (the long score was 7 hours and 5 hours respectively). The scale of map, 1:50,000 took a bit of getting used to when you are used to 1:10,000 having run for some time and not got very far on the map! The terrain was not particularly mountainous like the Lakes or the Howgills more like the Derbyshire Dales but in the heat of the day after 3 or 4 hours 'on the road' any hill can become a mountain and a struggle. The opportunity to orienteer to a control was limited with usually the route choice being along linear features such as roads or tracks together with the need to avoid clambering over lots of stone walls and fences.

All the controls were marked on the map with some being activated for day 1 only and others for day 2 only whilst others were active on both days. A list of those that were active on each day was given to teams at the start of each day after which maps were marked up and off we went.

Here's a bit of controversy for you! The event used SI which I still feel was easier to use and carry even though I've been using EMIT for years!!! Anyway we plotted our route on day 1 taking in some of the higher counting controls which, surprisingly, were nearer than some of the lesser scoring ones but I suppose the planner had something in mind setting them out as they were? As often is the case the organisers had a kick in the tail at the end of the day. This time the finish was not at the bottom of the track where we had started but at the top some 250m away up a not too steep incline but any incline after 5 hours of running/walking/limping was just 15 seconds too far. 5 hrs and 15 seconds for the first day meant we lost 1 point! We had accrued 199 points, were lying in 20th out 38 teams and 5th mixed team.

The facilities as you would expect were a bit basic with buckets of water to wash in and cool the sweating brow although alcohol and music was available should you wish to partake.

Day 2 started the same as day 1, although low mist shrouded the campsite and start although we were promised sunshine further down the valley. Maps marked up, route choice made off we went into the gloom but soon, as promised, the sun appeared and we were in for another hot one. 3 hours and 52 minutes we returned with the run up the track to the finish made that little bit easier by the crowds of supporters and well wishers (that last bit was poetic licence there was the organiser and a couple of other guys at the finish up the hill in the distance shouting at us!). We managed to run the last 150m up the hill tempted on by the odour of the chicken curry wafting down to meet us.

Our overall results for the weekend found us in 18th position out of 39 with a total of 379 points and 4th mixed team, not bad when I reckon that I had more years than most of the combined ages of the other teams. However of the 3 mixed teams that beat Julia and myself there were none (as far as we could see) that would have been in the mixed vet category (if only there had been a mixed vet category!) so in my 'world' we were worthy and justifiable class winners!!!!! That's my story anyway.

JSOCK edited by Jenny Dickin

JWOC and WUOC Tamsin Moran

JWOC 2014
Borovets | Bulgaria

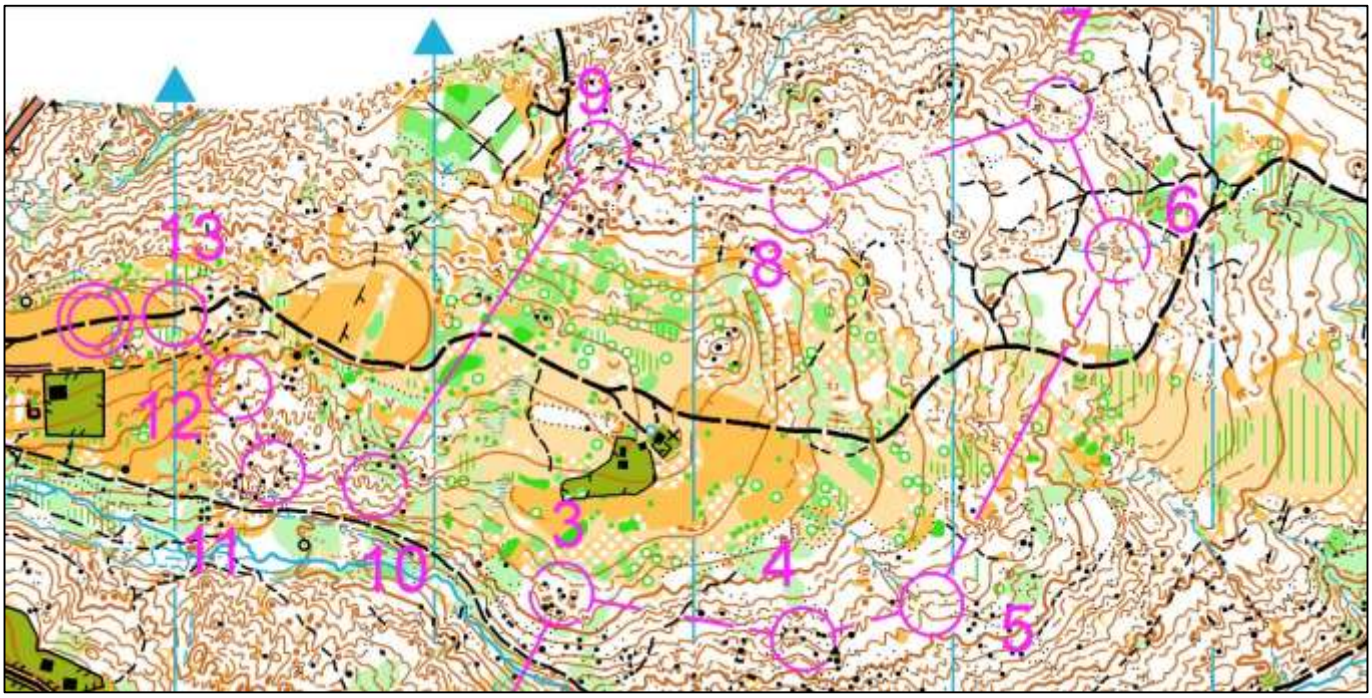
Junior World Orienteering Championships
Borovets | Bulgaria

This year's Junior World Orienteering Championships was held in the ski resort of Borovets, Bulgaria. As a team we travelled out on the Thursday before and spent a few days visiting training and model areas before the competition began. The 4 areas were all very different to one another so it was clear that different approaches would be required for each race.

The week began with the sprint race around the nearby city of Samokov. The course was more or less as we expected and wasn't too technically challenging. I lost 5 seconds hesitating on one control but otherwise my run was pretty good and I was happy to finish 81 positions higher than last year in 36th.

The following day was the long distance where we started at the top of a mountain and ran down through a green and rocky forest. Unfortunately I was an early starter so had no tracks to follow through the dense vegetation. I found the course very long and tough and I made some big mistakes which cost me a good result. The winning time for the long was 15 minutes longer than predicted. Fortunately the long race was followed by a rest day.

Next up was the middle distance on an area very unlike anything we have in the UK. At JWOC the middle distance is the only discipline which has a qualification race with 3 heats; the first 20 get into the A final, the next 20 into the B and everyone else in the C. I made it my aim to have as clean a run as possible since it would be very hard to correct a mistake. I managed to stick to my plan and comfortably got into the A final. The final was then held on the neighbouring area. I made a mistake on the first control but then managed to run well for the rest of the course and was happy to finish 27th.



The relay was the last race of the week and was held in the forest surrounding Borovets. I ran 3rd leg for the second team. After great runs from Katie and Rhona on the first 2 legs I went off in 8th with Finland and France. I ran as hard as I could and made one small mistake but otherwise had a good run and we finished 10th (8th nation), beating the first team. Unfortunately I had some longer gaffling and ended up running the majority of the course alone. The final few controls on the last leg involved running straight up the ski slope in front of all the spectators; a brutal end to the week.

A few weeks later were the World University Championships in the Czech Republic, based in Olomouc. For this competition each of the team was selected for 2 individual disciplines plus relays.

We arrived too late to attend the transport provided model events but Charlotte Watson and I managed to hitch a lift with Martin Hubmann and a few members of the Swiss team to the middle model. The middle model was open fast forest which was relatively flat but with plenty of ditches; similar to many areas in the south of England.

I had a few days before my first race during which the mixed sprint relay and long distance races were taking place. Some of us not running went to watch the sprint relay which was great fun to watch; the British team started the week well finishing 7th. The day before the sprint, the 4 of us not running the long went into the centre of Olomouc and went for a run around the WOC 2008 sprint course.

My first race was the sprint around Olomouc Zoo and the neighbouring residential area. The course was very short (only 2km), but the 115 metres of climb made up for it. My run was pretty good with an exception of the long route choice leg on which I lost 30 seconds, due to not noticing an alternative crossing point on the map. At WUOC any university student can take part so long as they are under the age of 28, so it was a great experience to run against some of the world's best orienteers, many of who had been to WOC earlier in the summer.

The middle distance was held the following day and after the model I was really looking forward to it. It was quite unlike the model however, since three quarters of the controls were in dark green vegetation. I lost a bit of time on a few controls as my direction in the green wasn't good, but I made the most of the white runnable forest to run on a bearing as fast as possible.

The relay was held on the same area as the middle race and therefore I knew what to expect from the terrain and how I needed to adjust my speed and technique depending on the vegetation. I was very happy to be running 1st leg for the second team since I haven't had the opportunity to run 1st leg in a big relay before. My run was good and I went slowly on the first couple of controls in the green and then sped up for the rest of the course. I was rather worried that I was going to be left behind when everyone sprinted out of the start at such speed but fortunately the pace slowed down a little when we entered the forest.

I thoroughly enjoyed the competition which was far more laid back than JWOC. It was also great to meet up with friends from overseas and meet even more people!

If only they'd voted yes: JIRC's 2014 Jenny Dickin

This year's Junior Inter-Regional Championships were hosted by the North West Junior Squad and held in the Lake District. The South Central Junior Squad took a team of 16 including Tim Morgan and myself.

The Individual competition was held on Graythwaite Estate, a demanding area both physically and navigationally that proved difficult across all classes and resulted in a huge range in times (so much so that the winner of M18 managed a lead of over two minutes despite having stopped to help a fellow orienteer who had dislocated their shoulder). Personally, I had a very disappointing run – messing up on several controls and failing to relocate effectively. However we did get some good results from the rest of the squad, with Fiona Bunn (TVOC) taking 2nd on W16, Thomas Howell (SN) 8th on M14 and Dane Blomquist (BAOC) 7th on M18 with Tim Morgan (SOC) just 15 seconds behind in 8th. For the individual day the girls took 6th place with the boys taking 7th putting SCOA in 6th place overnight.

We then headed to Ulverston High School where we were greeted with much needed showers, food and rest before heading out early the next morning for the relays.

The relays were held on the sand dunes at Roanhead, not usually my favourite terrain, with a "spectator dune" that gave a clear view over a large proportion of the area that was great for watching how the races were going. In the girls relays, Fiona Bunn and Bethany Kippin (Both TVOC) led out our first team with incredible runs that meant their final leg runner, Katie Blackford (BADO) set off in first place. Sadly, she couldn't quite hold onto the lead and they finished in 9th. The other girls team managed a respectable 18th place with great runs from Hazel and Bella Williams (Both SN) despite it being their first sand dune experience.

In the boys relay, a strong start from David Bunn on M16 (despite being just a first year M14) followed by great runs from Thomas Howell and Dane Blomquist put them less than a minute outside of a podium position: an impressive, if frustrating, feat. The second team of Jonathan

Gurd (SN), Frank Townley (SN) and Tim Morgan finished in 23rd despite Tim having an incredible run and winning his leg by over 10 minutes.

For the AdHoc relay we had one fully SCOA team of Abi Bateman, Christopher Gurd and Alex Bett (All SN) who managed to take first place. Due to my individual result I was put in a mixed squad team with East Anglia. I really enjoyed the course, area and how clearly the dunes were mapped giving me possibly my best run on sand dunes to date. I was really happy with both my navigation and running and finished in 2nd, ahead of our first AdHoc team. Of course, I couldn't possibly have such a good run without something going wrong… going over my ankle at the penultimate control, I hobble-jogged the rest of the course only to later find I'd sprained it. My team mate also had a great run and after 2 legs we were in the lead, making it very frustrating that we had no 3rd leg runner.

For the relays, both the Boys and Girls took 5th place, giving SCOA 5th place. Over both days the boys took 7th place with the girls in 5th. Overall SCOA finished in 5th place, our best result for a number of years. Scotland, again, dominated both days taking a top 3 position in every single age class and both relays. Despite some fierce competition from NWOA and YHOA, Scotland also took the overall trophy. However, when they can beat the whole of England in the JHI's, it may have been slightly embarrassing if they lost to just a fraction of us – maybe it's time they introduced some regions of their own?

Overall, I really enjoyed the weekend, the areas (mostly) and the chance to compete against some of the top junior orienteers in the country and would definitely recommend the competition to anyone who gets the opportunity to go in the future.

Jukola 2014 — Tamsin Moran

This June I was fortunate to have the opportunity to run the Jukola relay which took place in Kuopio, Finland. For those who are unaware, Jukola is the biggest orienteering relay in the world (it can also be the biggest event in the world depending on the size of Oringen), and takes place annually in Finland. I ran as part of a very welcoming BOK team in both the Venla (women's) and Jukola (men's) relay, since a member of the men's team had dropped out.

After a long journey I finally arrived in the town of Joensuu, not far from the Russian border. Shortly after arriving we went to the local Kalevan Rasti evening event which was a nice reminder of Scandinavian terrain – it wasn't too technical but reasonably tough underfoot and the visibility was very good. After the orienteering we went for a BBQ at Hanne Kinnunen's parent's house which was great. After eating we travelled back to Hanne's summer house where we were staying and went in the sauna and then lots of jumping in the lake. It was amazing to be outside at 1.30 in the morning, in warm temperatures and it was still daylight!

The next day we travelled across to Kuopio and trained on a couple of the model areas, which were typical Scandinavian terrain although much tougher than areas I have been to in Sweden. We arrived at the event in the evening after pushing the car into the field and set off to find our army tent. Unfortunately the combination of our tent being in the lowest spot on the field and the rain that had fallen in the preceding days meant that we were practically camping in

a marsh. I had heard that "the weather is always good at Jukola" so had only bought a thin plastic mat to put under my thermarest; I was very grateful when there was a spare bit of groundsheet lying around.

Venla took place on the Saturday afternoon starting at 2pm. I was running 2nd leg and was excited to take part in my first big Scandinavian relay. 1232 teams were taking part, each with 4 runners. The first leg runners lined up and from somewhere in the depth of the forest what sounded like a canon went off. It was an amazing sight watching the first leg runners charge off into the forest. BOK started with a very good start position (137), due to a great team performance last year. Helen Hanstock was our first leg runner and came back in a big group of people after having a good run. I set off, and made use of the long run out to the start flag (about 800m) to try and plan as much of the course as possible. I had a reasonable run, except for a slight wobble on number 4, and managed to catch 176 places. Even by the 2nd leg the forest had very much tracked up and it was important not to get carried away and stray off line. The run in and changeover was very different to any UK relay. After punching the last control we then ran across a spectator bridge (especially built for event) and then to pick up our next leg runners map before handing over. Our 3rd and 4th leg runners (Hanne Kinnunen and Alice Bedwell) also had good runs and we finished in a very respectable position of 236th. Venla was won by OK Pan Aarhus (who also won Tiomila this year and Venla last year). The whole event was televised on Finnish TV including GPS tracking, and there were regularly helicopters flying overhead and a number of big screens around the arenas made it easy to follow the action in the forest.

After Venla there was a chance to relax, meet up with friends and have dinner before the start of the men's relay. If you haven't already, it is definitely worth watching the video of the start (which you can find on the event website or here: http://vimeo.com/98326112). The race started at 11pm so runners were wearing head torches but it wasn't properly dark (it never got properly dark). As the runners ran out of the start, a hornet jet plane flew over making the scene even more impressive. I headed to bed soon after the start as I was to be running leg 5 in the early hours of the morning.

I set off on leg 5 shortly after the leaders had gone out on leg 7. I made it my aim to try and be back before the winners came in but I just missed this. Unfortunately my Jukola run was far less successful than Venla the previous day. I made quite a big mistake near the beginning (on the same slope where I had almost lost it during Venla) and a few smaller ones later on in the course due to getting dragged off course by tracks, particularly in the dark green vegetation. It was still a great experience however and I managed to overtake 33 people. It seems a few members of the team made mistakes which unfortunately resulted in our 7th (and final) leg runner (Adam Potter) going off in the mass start. Adam however had a great run and pulled us up over 80 places into a more respectable position.

BOK were a very fun team to be part of and overall the event was one of the best orienteering experiences I have ever had! This was my first big Scandinavian relay and I would definitely like to do more in the future. Jukola should definitely be on every orienteers "to do" list!

Stockholm 2014 — Tim Morgan

This year I was lucky enough to be selected for the Stockholm tour which is run by JROS and organised by Nick Barrable. Twenty of us 'athletes' as well as a number of coaches were based in the OK Ravinen club hut which is located about ten minutes from the centre of Stockholm at a place called Hellasgården. The aim of this camp is, essentially, to learn how to orienteer in terrain which is both technically challenging and beautifully runnable. Unlike most training

weeks, this tour relies on public transport to access all areas, which shows both the efficiency of Swedish transport and the abundance of high quality forests close to the city.

(To ensure I don't bore you I'm not going to write a day-by-day account of the tour, but instead try and keep it relatively short.)

As soon as we arrived on the Tuesday we headed out into the forest to familiarise ourselves with the terrain. The forests in Stockholm are incredible: there is a wealth of contour detail, although mostly flat, and the terrain is motorway quick. This means it is vital to have a good plan, direction and picture for each leg. If you know what you're looking for you can run fast.

The second day was brutal. We ran three sessions; forest in the morning, a 3k time trial in the afternoon and a sprint race in the evening. The latter two were also the first two stages of the prestigious Tour of Stockholm, something which us guys had come up with for an extra competitive edge! It incorporated all the races which were lined up, and as in the slightly lesser known Tour de France cycling event there were multiple categories. There was the standard General Classification for the overall standings, the King of the Mountains for the winner of the hilliest leg in each race, and the Points standings for best run-ins. The scoring mechanism was the centre of much debate; we wanted to keep it as close as possible to maintain interest, but was it to be a percentage based system which required calculations, or a simple rankings score which would be quick and easy? In the end Jon Marsden, one of the coaches, decided for us: percentage.

My Tour got off to a poor start in the 3k time trial, so I was keen to do better in the sprint race. The area itself was an interesting mixture of bare rock on a hill, parkland and residential areas. This was a club championship, but unlike in Britain there were triple figures rather than double. My race wasn't great, however there were some encouraging aspects, and I wasn't the only one to have issues. Standout performance was from Alex Carcas who had a storming run to beat some rather big names! Having won the 3k time trial, Alex was opening up a considerable gap in the GC.

On Thursday morning we headed into the wilderness to run some exercises which were used by one of the gymnasiums. (The gymnasiums are secondary schools with an emphasis on orienteering). In general I was orienteering well and thoroughly enjoying it in the process. We returned for some lovely lunch cooked by Carol, and 'rested'. 'Resting' on tour usually involved a combination of swimming, having a sauna, playing football or listening to Sasha's retro tunes.

There was a reason to rest: Thursday is one of the club's training nights. Those of us who had attended last year were fully aware that the evening was going to involve a substantial amount of pain. We were treated to Ravinen's 'Full-Value' session which consisted of 3x3mins followed by 10mins of hills and then a 10min tempo to finish. It was actually highly enjoyable, and of course you know that what you put in you get out, so the worse you felt the more beneficial it was.

Friday was a rest day: we only did one physical session. The training was a pairs format where one of the pair would have a map. The person with the map would memorise the next leg whilst following the other, who had done the same on the previous leg. If you didn't have a crystal clear picture of the big features on the leg, you weren't going to find the control.

In the afternoon we headed to Gronalund, a theme park in the centre of Stockholm, for adrenaline training. Gronalund has a great view: when at the top of the rides you can see most of the city; although a few of the group were more concerned with getting down to the ground! Add a Swedish rock band into the mix and you have an atmospheric, adrenaline filled way to rest up for the weekend's races.

On Saturday we had a long race which was host to the third stage of Tour de Stockholm. The terrain was slightly less technical than we had experienced in the previous days. There was less contour detail and a few more paths. This suited us Brits well. I felt like I had a point to prove,

so was fired up for a hard race. Most of my race was stable enough but I neglected my compass on one control and lost a huge chunk of time. Despite this I was encouraged as I could see that on the whole my orienteering was alright. As well as this, a strong run in meant I had picked up some valuable points for the Tour.

The next day was a middle distance event from the same arena but on a different part of the map. On the walk to the arena from the station we were passed by two world champions, Thierry Gueorgiou and Annika Billstam. Like the previous day my performance was undone by two poorly executed controls. Luckily though on one of these controls the potential damage was limited. I was standing around slightly confused, when I heard a beast storming through the terrain behind me. I turned around and saw Thierry, assumed he was going to the same control and followed him straight to it. Before I could say thanks he was off, and I continued my race.

On this training camp, every day you are in incredible terrain. But on Monday we went to a forest which is perfect: Paradiset. I would recommend you all try and get there at some point! In the morning we ran some exercises. On one of them I was shadowed by Ruslan, a Ukrainian elite who was living in the clubhut and helping on the tour. I orienteered well, and Ruslan agreed. When you're orienteering well in this terrain it's probably one of the best feelings there is! If only I could do that in a race!

The next day begun with sprint training around one of Stockholm's universities followed by the club's technical training in the evening. The focus was on relay simulation so it was a mass start forked course.

On Wednesday we held a Luffarligan event from the clubhut which we had organised and planned. Luffurligan is much like the Wednesday army league in Britain; an event primarily for the retired contingent. True to the spirit of the event, I had a few senior moments in the forest. I think we were all impressed to witness a 93 year old complete his course in a respectable time, he seemed to be somewhat of a Luffarligan legend. That evening we competed in a school's league event. Unlike a school's league at home, this had a big race atmosphere. There was even commentary which was actually used to commentate on the race, unlike at a certain British event in the midlands recently. I was eager for a strong performance, and despite losing many seconds early on in the course I managed to take the win, mainly thanks to others losing even more time. This was a boost to my Tour hopes.

You may be able to guess what we did on the next two days; a lot of training! One of the sessions was a mixed sprint relay. I'm a massive fan of this new format so if you get the opportunity, do one!

And so we came to the final weekend of the tour. In Sweden they hold races on terrain which is next door to the following year's national championships, and these were what we competed in. Saturday was a middle distance race, and despite feeling the effects of the tour, I put in a good performance and came 4th overall which meant I won a decent Trimtex cycling top.

Sunday was a long distance; by this stage we were both mentally and physically fatigued, but keen to enjoy the last hour and a half or so of supreme orienteering before heading back to the UK. After the first five controls I was going well and loving it, but then a mistake on 6 ruined my focus. Suddenly my legs decided to forget that they are supposed to be able to transport me from one place to another at speed, and the race turned into survival. Of course I was still gutted when I finished and realised that the tour was over, and it was time to say goodbye to the forests of Stockholm.

The Stockholm tour really is the best couple of weeks possible for a young orienteer. The lifestyle of training, racing and sauna-ing is unbeatable and of course there are loads of things which I haven't included in this slightly too long report. I would like to thank all the coaches, Carol for her cooking and of course Nick for organising the tour! As well as this, I'm very grateful for the support from SCOA and SOC for their help in meeting the cost of the tour.

But before I finish, I'd like to discuss some of the differences which are so clear between Swedish orienteering and British orienteering. The standout difference is the club culture. OK Ravinen is massive, and the membership is concentrated in a small area. They have a clubhut. They have a forest outside their clubhut. This means they can run three quality training sessions each week and expect turnouts of around 100. In an ideal world this is what should be happening in Britain but it seems impossible! Secondly, their events have a different atmosphere to those in Britain. The events we went to were no larger than a British level B, yet they all had commentary, showers, prizes and elite classes. I'm not saying this is better than British events, just different and enjoyable to experience.

Climbing Mont Blanc — Tim Morgan

Having been eager to climb this mountain for a few years, Mum and I decided to give it a go this summer. Mum made the trip to Morocco in February to climb Mt Toubkal, which at 4,167m is considered an ideal warm up peak before Mont Blanc. We did numerous long runs in the build-up, including three half marathons, but I was well aware that the south of England is slightly flatter than the Alps.

Nevertheless when we arrived in Chamonix I was incredibly excited. I think Mum was more aware of the luck needed with the weather and was conscious of the fact that many people required more than one attempt before reaching the summit. The rain which greeted us in Chamonix didn't offer much encouragement.

We met the other people in our group, as well as our guide Kevin, and the next day headed through the tunnel and into Italy. As Mont Blanc is quite high (4810m), it is vital to ensure you acclimatise in the week before the climb. Many people choose to climb in Chamonix to achieve this, but we were heading to the Aosta Valley instead. Gran Paradiso is the highest mountain completely in Italy at 4,061m high. Although substantially lower than Mont Blanc our guide assured us that staying at altitude for two nights as well as going for the peak would be sufficient acclimatisation. And Gran Paradiso is another mountain to climb, so why not?

The weather was completely different through the tunnel, and as we set off from the car park the sun was beaming. The day's task was to hike up through the forest, past the tree line and to the Rifugio Chabod. Kevin kept the pace nice and easy, stopping for lunch after an hour or so in the forest to admire the view. This part of the Alps hasn't been developed for skiing which means the landscape remains more natural, although the mining was evident on the opposite side of the valley.

We reached the refuge in good time, and were able to take in the surroundings for the rest of the afternoon. Although Gran Paradiso was in the cloud, the mountains still had plenty to offer. That pile of rubble you can see in the background is actually a massive moraine which has been deposited by the glacier that has now receded. I could quite happily spend my whole life sitting in the mountains and just looking, particularly in the evening when the light is awesome. The atmosphere at these refuges is one of excitement; talking to fellow climbers who have the same aims and share that amazement of the mountains.

Early the next morning we set off for the summit. The excitement had turned to nervous energy, but the sight of headlamps on the glacier above showed the path ahead. Once we reached the foot of the glacier, crampon point, it was light and the clouds were rising. The group roped up and started snaking our way around crevasses. We settled into a rhythm and after a few hours we reached the

shoulder of the mountain before the summit ridge. Being more exposed up here the temperature dropped considerably so we didn't hang about.

The summit ridge itself makes Striding Edge look as wide as an ocean. It was very crowded on here, and there wasn't much room to manoeuvre. It very much felt that someone could fall off quite easily, and they would fall a long way. A bit of scrambling was required, crampons still attached, before we could reach the Madonna at the top.

The two pictures on the right are taken at the same place, about the same time. The weather changes quickly!

We had our turn on the summit, before performing some adrenaline filled abseiling to descend a different way. We had left our ice axes slightly below, and when we returned one of the group found that his was missing. As we left we passed an Italian schoolboy who happened to have it. The ice axe retrieved, we continued our descent.

We stopped for a brief refuel and relayering on the shoulder before splitting off from our ascent path. This was because we were going to go down to a different refuge for the night, the Rifugio Vittorio Emanuele II - 2,732 m. Having spent the latter part of the ascent looking forward to the pain free descent, but I was quickly reminded that going down requires just as much effort. I had a headache at this stage as well so was particularly eager to get down.

Once we did, it's fair to say we had earned a bowl of pasta and hot chocolate. Even up in the mountains, Italians still know how to cook. The rest of the afternoon was spent sleeping and admiring the view.

In the evening we were treated to a special guest appearance from a fox. I took hundreds of photos of the little guy, so here's one.

We were allowed a lie in the following morning, which meant breakfast at 7 before heading down the mountain and back to the car. Although still tired, we were pleased with our efforts and looking forward to Mont Blanc. During the day on Gran Paradiso we had been allowed a few glimpses of the mountain and it looked huge. The previous year we had been up the trekking peak Mt Buet and I remembered feeling impressed by the imposing image of Mont Blanc then.

Back in Chamonix I had seen some photos on twitter of a group of Scandinavian elite orienteers who had clearly just run up Mont Blanc. That isn't a typo, they had run up. This has been done before, in fact the record is held by Kilian Jornet who climbed the mountain, starting and finishing in Chamonix, in just under five hours which is mind-blowing. I recommend following Kilian online, he has an alright life!

We were still unsure as to whether the mountain was safe enough, however, after the previous week's conditions leaving a lot of fresh snow high up. This meant that the avalanche risk was

high, and it was so high that it meant one side of the mountain was essentially shut. Luckily we were intending on using the Gouter route which has less of an avalanche risk so we were given the all clear. This route does however include the infamous Grand Couloir, which claimed the life of a German the day before we set out.

Like on Gran Paradiso we were going to spend two nights on the mountain. The first was at the Tette Rouse refuge. To get here we took a cable car from Les Houches, then the Mont-Blanc tramway before a couple of hours of hiking up a rocky path. On the way we passed a man with two rucksacks, which seemed odd. Our guide asked why, and the reply wasn't the most uplifting. He had just returned from high up the mountain, where his girlfriend had to be airlifted to hospital as result of Altitude Sickness. I was still weary of my headache on Gran Paradiso so this played on my mind a little. Nevertheless we arrived at the hut in good spirits and had another hot chocolate.

You may be able to guess what we did for the rest of the afternoon: we admired the view! That wall of rock and ice behind us is what we faced early the next morning. You may be able to see the Grand Couloir (also below), and the old and new Gouter huts at the top.

The other of the side of the hut was the Aiguille de Bionnassay, which is shown behind Mum. Just above her head are two massive seracs, and a few months later there was a large avalanche there, possibly involving a chunk from those ice cliffs. In fact all afternoon you could hear the rumblings of avalanches somewhere in the mountains. We ate loads and discussed the plan for the next day, the summit attempt.

In the hut was some information about the work by scientists on the mountain. This ranged from collecting climate related data, to the draining of a sub-glacial lake so that it doesn't flood St Gervais. As well as being interesting, it was also good stuff to put in my Personal Statement! (I've applied for various Earth Sciences / Physical Geography courses).

As well as the hut itself, there is also a small bivouac site outside where those who haven't booked a bed can camp for the night.

I didn't get much sleep, but considering we had to leave at 1.30am that wasn't too much of an issue. There was a tangible amount of nervous energy at breakfast but it was quite exiting none the less. It's important to leave this early for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is safest to cross the Grand Couloir as early as possible. This gully is frequented by rock fall, and if you get hit you'll either die instantly or fall to your death. By crossing when it's cold, the rocks are frozen in. There are many different approaches to cross the couloir. You could tie in to the overhead rope for security, or you could just get a move on and cross it. Our guide chose the

latter. The route up to the Gouter hut involves a couple of hours of non-stop scrambling up the rock, with only the light of your head torch. This was the most stressful part of the climb. Personally I found it quite enjoyable, but Mum was feeling a bit more flustered. Whenever you looked up you saw an endless stream of lights, and whenever you looked down you were reminded that falling wouldn't end up well.

Once we reached the old Gouter hut there was a sense of relief. We made our way to the new hut and stopped for refreshments. Up here the mountains open up for a better view, and the sun was starting to rise. It was a good place to see a sunrise! Once we left the Gouter refuge we began the next few hours' route up another crevasse ridden glacier. Most of these cracks in the ice were bottomless but you don't really feel too bothered by them.

The route contours round the Dome du Gouter. As you round the corner you are hit by the massive looming summit, which had been hidden from view for days. It's quite a feeling when you turn the corner and it's just there. For some reason Mont Blanc just seems to look bigger and bigger the closer and higher you get.

You could see many people on their way up, and also a few early birds on the way down. By this stage we were over 4000m and I was starting to notice the altitude, although I kept that to myself. We continued to the Vallot hut, a small emergency shelter, where we ate and drank. We had been on the go for around four hours now, and the summit looked incredibly close. The last push seemed the steepest part yet. It also involved walking along some very thin ridges, which were single file unless you wanted to slide down to Chamonix, or Italy, depending on which way you went. I didn't mind these thin ridges at all, although I couldn't understand how we would pass people coming the other way. But that was an issue for later.

Whilst we had been in Chamonix Mum had explained how many people keep thinking the next bump is the summit only to get there and see another one ahead. I couldn't understand how, surely you could see the top. However now I too was being deceived by the mountain. By this stage my energy was low, I had a headache, my chest felt really tight and I felt sick. So I was looking forward to reaching the top! Mum didn't seem to be feeling the altitude much, but I could tell that the drops were making an impression.

But sure enough we pushed on and made it to the summit at about 8.30. The weather was perfect, there wasn't a single cloud to be seen and it wasn't particularly cold. You could see most of the Alps. The Matterhorn was in the distance, as was the Monta Rosa Massif. In the foreground, a long way below was Chamonix and Mont Buet looked like a southern hill as well. As I'm sure you can imagine, the view was pretty good! Mum took a lot of photos, but I wasn't

feeling great. I had hoped to stay at the summit for a decent length of time, but at the time I was eager to descend.

We made our way down, and before we knew it we were at the Gouter refuge once more. It was still only 10.30 but it felt like the evening! This refuge is one of the most modern in the Alps. It is extremely efficient and is an outrageously impressive engineering achievement. There are a few books documenting the building process, I recommend you read them! For most of the day I slept, took photos or enjoyed the sun. One of my favourite things about being in the mountains is sitting at a refuge in the evening taking in the environment. This time it was no different and had the added feeling of achievement.

We descended down to Chamonix the next morning, successfully crossing the Grand Couloir, although a small rock came flying in front of me. As with most achievement there is always a sense of disappointment afterwards that it is over. I can't begin to imagine what this feeling is like for an Olympian.

My orienteering year — Rob Finch

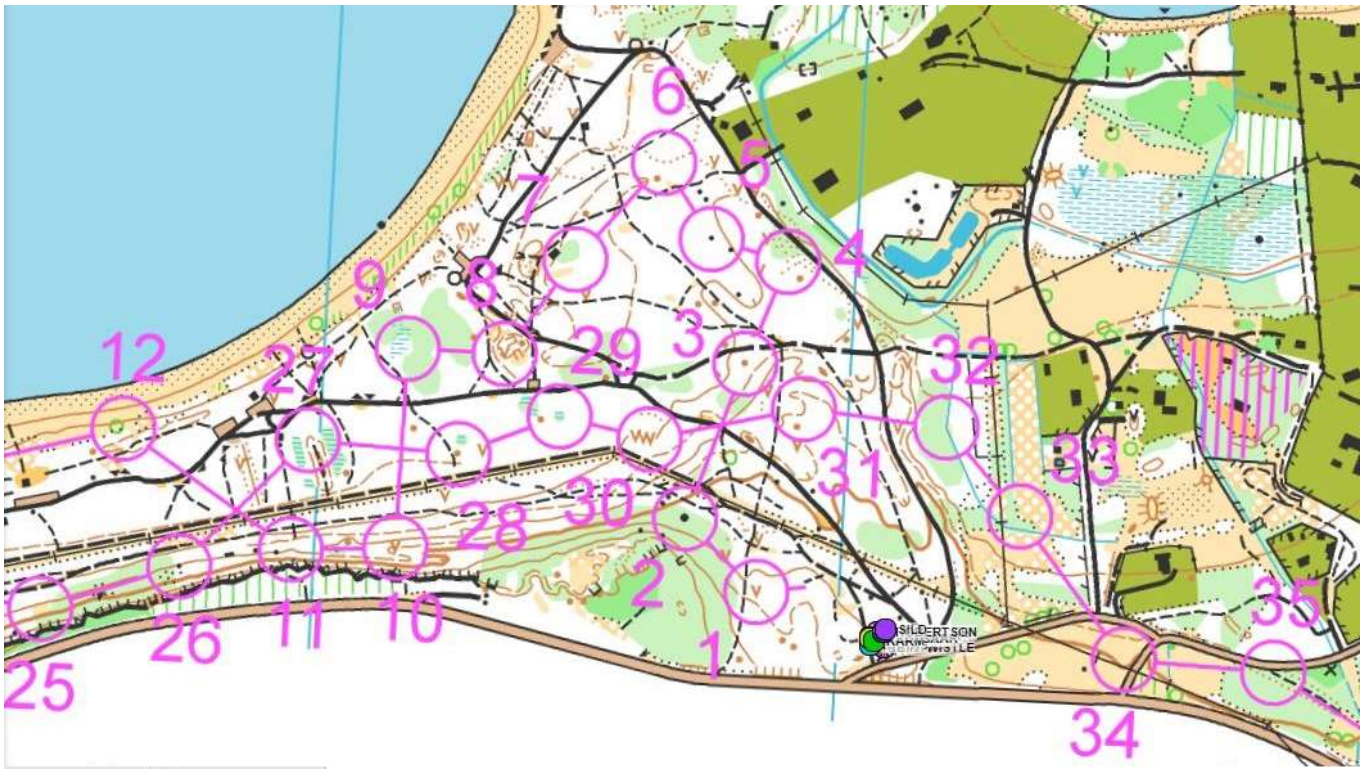
This is my first time writing in SOCK and for those who do not know me, my name is Rob and I am a relatively new but keen member of SOC. I have only been orienteering for a couple of years but I absolutely love it. You would be forgiven, if you have seen me at an orienteering event or in the results list, for thinking that I have been orienteering my whole life. Unlike most other orienteers my age, I am not from an orienteering family. My Mum does not run and whilst my Dad is able to read a map, he recently made two 30 minute mistakes on an Orange course. Nor did I go to university with a strong orienteering pedigree, though I did take up orienteering whilst studying at university. I may not look it but I still consider myself a newcomer to the sport. This is an article about my orienteering year, going from a very out of fitness runner who likes maps to actually calling myself an orienteer.

I have done more orienteering training and events in 2014 than the previous 2 years combined. So far this year, I have done 30 orienteering events/races and 6 coaching sessions. I am keen to improve but I realised I could not expect to coach myself or just learn from mistakes made at events. In May, I signed myself up for an orienteering skills course with the British Army OC and it was an experience. I was the only civilian on the course but still managed to hold my own and I gained a lot from it. They were all shocked and amazed that I had actually used my holiday allowance and paid to attend the training camp. The other guys were far fitter

and faster than I was but they suffered from a macho tendency to act like headless chickens. They would stop dead, read the map, run really fast in a random direction, get confused, stop, map read and then run off again.

The two coaches, Colin Dickson and Dave Rollins, gave me brilliant but opposing advice during that week which sums up the challenge of orienteering very well. Colin, who sounded like Yoda, emphasised the importance of the mind, mental preparation and getting into the orienteering zone. "To succeed, focus on the mind, you must." Dave, meanwhile, simply told me that to be faster I needed to improve my fitness!

This year, I also took part in my first international orienteering events at the Tallinn Orienteering Week (thank you Tamsin and ShUOC for inviting me). It was great to compete in and visit areas I never thought I would see, a sprint in the Estonian Open Air Museum, an urban race in downtown Tallinn and some forested sand dunes. Orienteering in Estonia provided me with my first sprint race and also my first prize winnings – some socks! I can thoroughly recommend visiting Estonia (especially the creepy abandoned Soviet era prison) and orienteering abroad in general. There are differences with the terrain and the organisation abroad, but once you pick the map up – you know you are just going orienteering. The final event of the week was a long distance race with a contour only section and a mind blowing 100 controls for the top men. I had a mere 60 controls, almost twice the maximum I had run previously. Keeping running and focused for that long was a challenge but a fun one.



Somehow earlier this year, I got asked or volunteered to be involved with organising and planning two of the Summer Series events. I had not planned or organised any orienteering events before but fortunately received good instruction and advice and was supported by a number of SOC members. I planned the Shawford Down event and organised the Hursley Park event. Understanding the effort that goes on behind the scenes has made me appreciate orienteering more (especially the really good events) and as a bonus my orienteering has improved since planning and setting the courses on Shawford Down. Orienteering is an individual sport but helping at events has been a great way to get involved, be part of a team and meet other people.

More recently, I have had three very different weekends of orienteering. First, a weekend in September with two sprint races around the campus of Bath University followed by an Urban

race around Bath city centre. One small mistake and regret was not taking the opportunity to run straight across the hallowed turf of Bath Rugby's Recreation Ground, even if it was a slower route choice! Next was my first chasing start at the Caddihoe Chase in the Forest of Dean. On the second day, I momentarily forgot the rules as I let people ran past me before realising it was not too late to make a difference to my final finishing position. And finally closer to home, I ran two lovely races in the New Forest with the highlight being SOC's level D event at Hasley Hill.

Orienteering low point, getting beaten by my younger but bigger brother at a Maze-O in Bath.

Looking forward to the year ahead, I am hoping to continue orienteering and training in the Forest as regularly as I can. As I write this, the November Classic weekend is coming up and I am hoping to improve on last year's result and also assist with the Start team. There will hopefully be more orienteering firsts next year too: my first JK in April, my first relay race, my first British Champs and my first World Orienteering Championships in Scotland (spectating not competing)! I am looking forward to exploring some more great places with a map in my hand.

Event Safety Training — Di & Terry Smith

We are thinking of putting on an Event Safety Workshop in the near future.

Attendance at such a workshop is a requirement for all event Organisers and Controllers at level C, B & A and is recommended also for Planners. This therefore is most appropriate if you are a member of British Orienteering, have organised a level D, would like to know more or are interested in progressing to organising or controlling a Level C event. Planners are also welcome to attend. You receive a certificate of attendance and it will be added to your 'qualifications' file. There is no charge for this training and we will aim to keep it local to minimise travel.

The workshop takes about 3 hours and aims to provide event volunteers with an overview of safety and welfare issues that may arise as a result of staging an orienteering event. It covers BO procedures and policies and practical measures that event volunteers can employ to reduce the risks to an acceptable level and what to do in the event of an accident or incident occurring. It is delivered informally though discussion, presentation and practical exercises and everyone receives a set of notes to take away.

Terry and I have been approved to deliver this workshop, so we are taking this opportunity to establish who might be interested and when would be a good time to deliver one or more.

So if this is of interest, please get in touch with Di or Terry and let us know your preference of weekday/weekend, day time or evening. The more precise you can be, the easier it will be to decide on a suitable date or dates and venues to set up. We would like a minimum group of five.

Tel 02380 845787, email Di@ntrees.co.uk or terrysmith@compuserve.com

SCOA Level 2 Coach Training Course — Dave Rogers

SCOA is intending to organise a Level 2 (L2) coach training course in the Spring (there is one already organised for this Winter and its full already). It is likely to be held in the TVOC area. Even though it is a Level 2 course it is open to experienced orienteers even if they do not have

a current Level 1 qualification. Anyone interested should contact Dave Rogers, SCOA Coaching Officer, daverogers1958@gmail.com, to express their interest and find out more details.

Some background on the course:

British Orienteering is encouraging new coaches who are relatively experienced orienteers, to enter the orienteering coaching system at L2.

This is most appropriate for coaches in our clubs so that they have the skills / knowledge to be able to coach anyone from beginners to more experienced orienteers (compared with the Level 1 which really only deals with coaching beginners).

The L2 is also ideal for orienteers (time)and their clubs (costs)as the coach is only doing 1 qualification, although there is more work involved but much of this can be done in their own time. Ideally, people who are interested in becoming a L2 coach will have had some experience (perhaps helping beginners to get started at a club's introductory events) or may have done the L1 or one of the other British Orienteering courses such as the Teacher/Leader course, the Young Leader Course or the Teaching Orienteering course.

The way the L2 training was originally set up was a 2 day course (full days 9 - 5), some written tasks (discussions over the 2 days and a resource pack help people to do the short answer tasks) and an on-course evaluation of the participant's coaching (day 3). After this each coach has to plan and deliver six coaching sessions to a group which show progression over at least four of the six. This group could be any type from a school group (ideal if the coach has a nearby, friendly school which is mapped), a group of work colleagues or a club or local squad group. There are three further short written tasks to demonstrate knowledge of nutrition, drug awareness and welfare and a final observed assessment of coaching to a group of orienteers at TD4+.

You will see from the Orienteering Focus (page 15, Summer 2014) article that Hilary Palmer has recently piloted L2 coach training with a 'mentoring' element - these have been one day for all the practical activity and an assessment day 4 - 5 weeks later but with the participants doing all the written tasks themselves with access to the tutor by email/phone for any queries. It is planned that the ‘mentored’ approach will be the approach taken for the SCOA L2 course.

Army events on Wednesdays — Di Smith

If you can take time out on a Wednesday, then you may be interested in the regular Army training events that generally take place in the Andover – Aldershot-Petersfield area. They are staged for military personnel but are also open to civilians and mostly use army training areas of heathland, downland and woodland, many of which are excellent quality. During the winter there is usually an offering of Brown, Blue, Green and Long Orange courses for £5 plus £1.50 Emit hire if you don’t have your own. Starts are usually from 11am to 2pm or thereabouts. Tom’s burger wagon and Ultrasport attend most events.

While I was working full-time, I had some leave to use up and arranged to take off every Wednesday for 2 months. Breaking up the week with some outdoor physical exercise, and good company, was really refreshing. So if you get the chance, and fancy something different, give it a try. You can find the list of events on the BAOC website http://www.baoc.info/events – look for MLS (Military League South) events.

Maybe I’ll see you there.

Editor’s note – the events are also listed in your weekly popSOCK.

Orienteering on the Level – 36 hours in Holland!! — Philip Cooper

It was at the Lakes 5 Days that a flyer appeared for a weekend’s orienteering in Holland. After the 400m climb to the start on day 4 the prospect of Dutch orienteering had its appeal!!

A quick visit to Kayak threw up early morning flights to Amsterdam from Southampton, Birmingham and Southend all landing in a 30 minute slot, and surprise, surprise three more flights back late on Sunday all close together as well. Now that Team Cooper is scattered around the country meticulous planning is essential!!

At first we thought train and bike in the Dutch style might by the way forward, but the prospect of a rainy weekend in late October made the offer of Helen's Hertz points very attractive.

So on Saturday 25th October we rendez-voused in Schiphol Airport at just after 9. Our start was a little traumatic – EasyJet had put Rachel's cabin bag in the hold as she boarded in Southend and some light fingered baggage handler had helped himself to her wallet!! Moral: if EasyJet take your bags, make sure you take your goodies. Some hasty calls to cancel cards and we were off in our dodgem car - actually a Citroen C1!!

A hour along the motorways and we were headed South down the by roads to Lunteren. The orienteering was on the heathland areas North of Arnhem, the open parts of which were the drop zone for Operation 'Market Garden' in 1944.

Our abilities in Dutch were severely tested – the final approach road looked to be closed, but we understood not a word, so as there was nothing in the way we kept going!! We wound down the window at the car park entrance, to be greeted in rapid Dutch!! But no worries everybody speaks better English than you!!

Day 1's Event Centre was in the Dutch equivalent of an English Country pub. Top local offerings were Pea soup and Apple slice.

A longish 1.5km walk to the start with storm clouds gathering. Views of the forest suggested it would be a bit like Shearwater (nr Longleat) minus the hills!!

The contour interval was just 2m! It was a middle distance race, so lots of short legs. There were lots of paths full of twists and turns, rough brashings in many blocks, and areas of thicker forest. Most disconcerting were the open areas. We were expecting nothing more than knee high in these areas, but if the surrounding trees were 20m high an open area could include trees at head height!! Apart from that the mapping was pretty good.

We finished just as the heavens opened. All finishers got a packet of local waffles – delicious!! We managed a 1 (Helen W35), 4 (Philip M65) and 6 (Rachel W21).

The wonders of the internet had found us a B&B about 10km away and a stone's throw from the Day 2 Event Centre. A little quirky – hay was provided if you had brought your horse – and we had a room in the farmhouse together with a Pippowagen!!

With an hour or so to spare early on Sunday we visited Oosterbroek and the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery – most everything was closed on a Sunday morning in this very conformist area. Day 2 was in an

impressive park which was home to a community supporting adults with learning and other difficulties. They ran the café that was the competition centre.

The final details had promised us 'flat and varied forest with some high hills and hillocks- covered with medium to high bilberry bushes'.Well high is relative, but some were certainly steep and there was lots of contour detail, and despite the bilberries the going was fast.

It was certainly more fun than Day 1 and a long distance event to extend the fun!!

Our thoughts of mounting the podium were severely dashed – the locals seemed to know how to run extra fast in this stuff. However we got close over the two days – 4 (Helen W35), 7 (Philip M65), 7 (Rachel W21).

There was free entry to the first Dutch Trail O. Excellent intro for those for whom it was entirely new, with a couple of testing controls for the more experienced.

We headed off to the local National Park – the biggest in Holland. Euro 8 to get in but for that you got a free bike with 'back pedal' braking!! We were glad we had brought our helmets – inexperienced sudden braking on our part and excessive speed by the more competent locals were a potent combination. Just over two hours later we arrived back in the gathering gloom – certainly the park would make a splendid O map.

Then it was back up the motorways to Schiphol.

Mark up your diaries up for next year – October 23 – 25, when there will be an equally splendid weekend a little to the North of this year's epic, kicking off with a Friday night sprint race.

Event Calendar

An extract from the British Orienteering Fixtures List showing Level A UK wide, Level B from our adjoining regions, all events from SCOA and events from our adjoining clubs. Check the British Orienteering website for updates.

Date	Event (click for details)	Level	Club	Region	Venue/Map	Nearest Town	GridRef
Sat 22/11/14	Dorset Schools and Informal plus Wessex Night League	Level D	WIM	SWOA	Golden Cap estate	Bridport	SY412934
Sat 22/11/14	SO SOG A6 Slindon Woods, Fontwell	Level D	SO	SEOA	Slindon Woods	Chichester & Arundel	SU957085
Sun 23/11/14	CHIG Regional SE League	Level B	CHIG	SEOA	Epping NW	Loughton	TL452018
Sat 29/11/14	SO SOG A7 Abbots Wood, Polegate	Level D	SO	SEOA	Abbots Woods, Polegate	Polegate (north of Eastbourne)	TQ555072
Sat 29/11/14	SN Farnborough Urban Event - SEUOL	Level C	SN	SCOA	Farnborough	Farnborough	
Sun 30/11/14	OK Nuts Trophy	Level C	SLOW	SEOA	Wisley Common	Wisley	TQ066584
Mon 01/12/14	Club Night & Night League	Level D	WSX	SWOA	Broadstone Recreation Ground	Poole	007958
Sat 06/12/14	SN - Saturday Series 3	Level D	SN	SEOA	Frith Hill	Frimley	SU891586
Sun 07/12/14	SO level C (middle) Broadstone warren, Wych Cross	Level C	SO	SEOA	Broadstone Warren	Wych Cross, near Forest Row	TQ431323

Date	Event (click for details)	Level	Club	Region	Venue/Map	Nearest Town	GridRef
Sun 07/12/14	SCOA League Colour Coded	Level C	SOC	SCOA	Fritham Plain and Bentley Inclosures	Lyndhurst	SU243131
Sun 14/12/14	CompassSport Cup Final	Level A	SN	SCOA	Long Valley North	Aldershot	
Sat 20/12/14	SO Brighton City Race	Level C	SO	SEOA	Brighton	Brighton	
Sun 21/12/14	TVOC Regional Event and SCOA League	Level C	TVOC	SCOA	Shotover Country Park	Oxford	SP557045
Fri 26/12/14	WIM Canter	Level D	WIM	SWOA	Ringwood North Forest	Ringwood	SU121088
Sat 27/12/14	SO "Elizabeth Brown Memorial" Xmas Score	Level D	SO	SEOA	Rewell Wood	Slindon, Arundel	
Thu 01/01/15	New Years Day Score event	Level D	SARUM	SWOA	Everleigh	Tidworth	
Sat 03/01/15	SO SOG A8 Chailey Common	Level D	SO	SEOA	Chailey Common N	Haywards Heath & Newick	
Mon 05/01/15	Club Night and Night League	Level D	WSX	SWOA	Poole Town Centre Urban	Poole	009907
Thu 08/01/15	SO SONIC 4/KNC	Level D	SO	SEOA	tbc	tbc	
Sat 10/01/15	SN - Saturday Series 4	Level D	SN	SEOA	Bagshot Heath	Bagshot	SU900615
Sun 11/01/15	WIM Galoppen	Level C	WIM	SWOA	Moors Valley Country Park	Ringwood	SU107062
Sat 17/01/15	SO SOG A9 Lancing Ring, Lancing	Level D	SO	SEOA	Lancing Ring	Lancing, between Worthing & Shoreham	
Sun 18/01/15	DFOK South East League	Level B	DFOK	SEOA	Chelwood Vachery	Forest Row	TQ424314
Sun 18/01/15	Level C SCOA League Busketts Lawn	Level D	SOC	SCOA	Busketts Lawn	Lyndhurst	SU331100
Sun 25/01/15	BKO Concorde Chase	Level B	BKO	SCOA	Cold Ash	Newbury	SU520737
Wed 28/01/15	Military League South	Level D	BAOC	SCOA	Bordon Heath	Bordon Heath	
Thu 29/01/15	WSX Night League	Level D	SOC	SCOA	Fleming Park	Southampton	
Sat 31/01/15	SO SOG A10 Blacklands Farm, Sharpthorne	Level D	SO	SEOA	Blacklands, Sharpthorne	Sharpthorne, SW of East Grinstead	
Sun 01/02/15	Ace of Herts SE League Event	Level B	HH	SEOA	Egypt Woods & Burnham Beeches	Beaconsfield	SU955871
Mon 02/02/15	WIM/WSX Monthly Evening event	Level D	WIM	SWOA	Bournemouth University and Slades Farm	Bournemouth	
Tue 03/02/15	SO SONIC 5	Level D	SO	SEOA	tbc	tbc	
Sat 07/02/15	Southern Champs Weekend Short Event (UKOL)	Level B	MV	SEOA	The Nower	Dorking	
Sat 07/02/15	Dorset Schools, Wessex Night league & limited Colour coded event	Level D	SARUM	SWOA	Vernditch Woods	Salisbury	
Sat 07/02/15	SN - Saturday Series 5	Level D	SN	SEOA	Velmead - Long Valley North	tbc	
Sun 08/02/15	Southern Championships & Interland (UKOL)	Level A	MV	SEOA	White Downs, Netley Heath & Sheepleas	Dorking	
Wed 11/02/15	Military League South Team Harris Championships	Level D	BAOC	SCOA	Area TBC	Area TBC	
Sat 14/02/15	SO SOG S1	Level D	SO	SEOA	Tulleys Farm	Crawley	
Sat 14/02/15	Informal and Night League	Level D	WSX	SWOA	Holton Lee	Poole	962913
Sun 15/02/15	Midlands Championships	Level A	WCH	WMOA	Cannock Chase	Cannock	

Date	Event (click for details)	Level	Club	Region	Venue/Map	Nearest Town	GridRef
Sun 15/02/15	WIM Winter Warmer	Level C	WIM	SWOA	Hale Purlieu, New Forest	Fordingbridge	SU190185
Sat 21/02/15	SO SOG S2	Level D	SO	SEOA	Cissbury Ring	Worthing	
Sat 21/02/15	Dorset Schools + Wessex Night League TBC	Level D	SARUM	SWOA	Vernditch Woods	Salisbury	
Sun 22/02/15	TVOC Chiltern Challenge Regional Event Level B	Level B	TVOC	SCOA	Penn and Common Wood	High Wycombe	
Sat 28/02/15	British Night Championships (UKOL)	Level A	AIRE	YHOA	Middleton Park	Leeds	SE301299
Sat 28/02/15	SO SOG S3	Level D	SO	SEOA	Abbots Wood N	Eastbourne	
Sat 28/02/15	SN - Saturday Series 6	Level D	SN	SEOA	Windmill Hill	tbc	
Sat 28/02/15	SN - Saturday Series 7	Level D	SN	SEOA	Eagle House School	tbc	
Mon 02/03/15	Club Night and Night League	Level D	WSX	SWOA	Brownsea Island	Poole	032876
Thu 05/03/15	SO SONIC 6/KNC	Level D	SO	SEOA	tbc	tbc	
Sat 07/03/15	SO SOG S4	Level D	SO	SEOA	Parham Woods	Storrington	
Sat 07/03/15	Oxford City Race	Level C	OUOC	SCOA	Oxford City Centre	Oxford	SP513071
Sat 07/03/15	WSX Night League	Level D	SOC	SCOA	Lyndhurst	Lyndhurst	
Sun 08/03/15	Sarum Saunter	Level B	SARUM	SWOA	Sidbury Hill TBC	Salisbury	
Sat 14/03/15	SO SOG S5	Level D	SO	SEOA	Cowdray Forest	Crawley	
Sun 15/03/15	CompassSport Cup Heat	Level B	SOC	SCOA		South Central	
Sat 21/03/15	SO SOG S6	Level D	SO	SEOA	Slindon Woods	Fontwell	
Sun 22/03/15	South East League and Long Championships	Level B	SAX	SEOA	Ightham	Borough Green	TQ582557
Sun 22/03/15	WSX Galoppen	Level C	WSX	SWOA		tba	
Sun 22/03/15	OD Level B Event Bentley Wood	Level B	OD	WMOA	Bentley Wood	Atherstone	
Wed 25/03/15	MLS Team Relay Championships	Level D	BAOC	SCOA	Bramley	Bramley	
Sat 28/03/15	SO SOG S7	Level D	SO	SEOA	Broadstone Warren	tbc	
Sat 28/03/15	Dorset Schools and Informal	Level D	WIM	SWOA	StoneBarrow Hill, Charmouth	Charmouth, Dorset	SY383933
Sun 29/03/15	BADO SCOA League Event	Level C	BADO	SCOA	Butterwood	Hook	SU715523
Fri 03/04/15	JK Weekend Sprint (UKOL)	Level A		NWOA	Lancaster University	Lancaster	
Sat 04/04/15	JK Weekend Individual 1 (UKOL)	Level A		NWOA	Ulpha Park & Barrow Fell	Ulverston	
Sun 05/04/15	JK Weekend Individual 2 (UKOL)	Level A		NWOA	Bigland	Ulverston	
Mon 06/04/15	JK Weekend Relays	Level A		NWOA	Graythwaite	Windermere	

Relocate – the view from the forest floor

Want to contribute to Relocate? Send your thoughts, however irreverent, to relocate@southampton-orienteers.org.uk or slip a piece of paper under my pint at a Thursday social.

Was there a UK Orienteering League this year? If so does anyone know where the results are? Surely they aren't buried in Sherwood Forest?

One Sunday in a Hampshire Wood

One Sunday in a Hampshire wood
I tried my first Brown course
Three hours through the driving rain
High wind, thick mud and gorse

I found the first control okay
But then things went awry
The second leg I took too low
The third I went too high

But 4 to 9 were good again
I felt I'd got the knack
Till the ground gave way beneath me
On a squelchy forest track

I fished myself out of the dirt
And started off again
I reached 11 without fault
Then saw that I'd missed 10!

But number 12's where things got fun
My left shoe's sole split off
I had to tread quite carefully
And sometimes had to hop

I hopped along one more control
But then disaster struck
I knocked my e-card from my hand
And lost it in the muck

So I retired, both cold and vexed
And longing for a bath
But I might just win the Pits Trophy
Which would be quite a laugh!