

Berkshire Orienteers

Newsletter

January 2016





Rich Golding



Peter Wilson

SN Trophy Event - Ash Ranges.

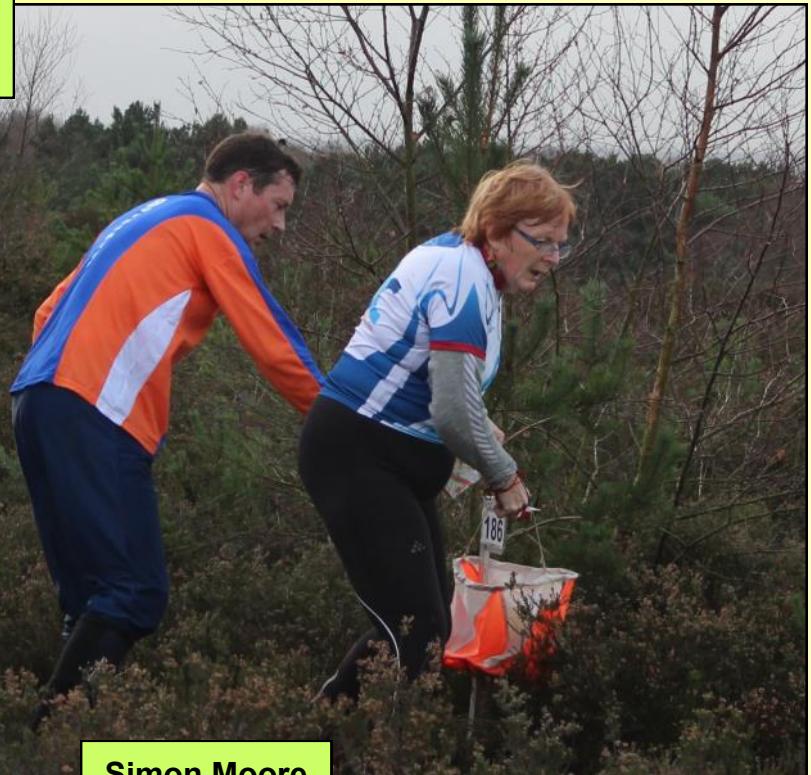
20 December 2015

A few shots of some BKO members getting out the weekend before Christmas.

(Photography: Mark Howells)



Lynne Moore



Simon Moore

Editorial

As most of you will know, I have been helping organise a survey of orienteers in our region (the South Central) to gather some views of future regional events and how these might be improved. The survey has closed and the regional SCOA Committee will be analysing the results at its next meeting. My thanks to those who completed it.

However there is one result which I want to share with you now as it relates to the 'Know your sport' section on pages 10-11 of this Newsletter which is focussed on relays. The survey asked for an indication of interest in various regional championships - Long, Middle, Score, Sprint, Relays and Inter-club. The one gaining least support was relays. Perhaps this is not surprising - two years ago SARUM organised a regional relay event and attendance from across the region was very disappointing. The event was not repeated in 2015!

Our sport is a very individual one with many members just enjoying the chance to get out at the weekend to some pleasant countryside. Whilst it is competitive, this can often be seen as being against the planner rather than other orienteers. However a relay does add an extra dimension and a different form of enjoyment. Our club Captain, Martin Wilson, will soon be inviting you to participate in some forthcoming relay events - why not give it a try?

David Jukes



Cover Picture: The picture shows **Ken Ricketts** on the Blue course at our Bucklebury event in December. He is most commonly seen with his dog Muttley. Muttley was just out of the picture so he is shown here - this time at the SN Ash Ranges event in December (Photo: Mark Howells)



NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of Berkshire Orienteers will take place on
Friday 12th February at 7.00pm
at Downshire Golf Complex, Easthampstead Park,
Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 3DH

All club members are invited to attend this important annual event.

Agenda:

- Chairman's Report
- Treasurer's Report / Membership Fees
- Election of Club Officials
- Awards
- AOB

*Please note
that you can
attend either
or both of the
AGM and
Annual Dinner*

ANNUAL CLUB DINNER

The AGM will be followed by the Annual Club Dinner. This will commence at approximately 8.30. Menu options and cost will be circulated by e-mail shortly and will be published on the web site.

Club Notes

Keeping you informed about the club and its members

2015 Southern Night Championships - Holmbury Hill

This event links the 3 regions in the south of the UK - the South East (SEOA), the South West (SWOA) and our own South Central (SCOA). The 2015 event was staged by London Orienteering Klubb (LOK) on the evening of the 21st November. Only 9 BKO members attended the event but one, **Denise Harper**, came away with third position in the W65 class. **Fiona Clough** just missed out from a podium position with a fourth place in W50 - only a few minutes behind the top 3 competitors.

Urban Leagues 2015 - the Results

As reported in previous issues of the Newsletter, there are two main urban leagues that BKO members can participate in - the national BML Urban League and the Southern England Orienteering Urban League (SEOUL). Both leagues completed their 2015 series with the event staged by Southdown Orienteers in Brighton on the 19th December. The event is unusual in two ways: it is a 'night' event taking place in the early evening and there is a mass start for competitors. In the Brighton race itself, **Martin Wilson** came first in the Men Ultra Vet class with **Denise Harper** winning the Women Ultra Vet class.

So what did this mean for the overall results in the Leagues? In the SEOUL, in a tightly fought class, **Martin Wilson** came out top in MUV (*) with his Brighton result just keeping him ahead of rival Christopher Branford. The club also had 3 third placed competitors: **Mark Saunders** running as an M35 in the Men Open class held off a strong challenge from an M21, **Fiona Clough** in Women Vet and **Denise Harper** whose win at Brighton pulled her up from 4th in Women Ultra Vet. The national league has events spread around the country and only the very dedicated are likely to get to sufficient events to be in with a chance. Our top placed result was **Martin Wilson's** 6th position in MUV class.

The table on the right lists the 19 events included in the 2016 SEOUL League. The first event has already happened - TVOC's event at RAF Halton. Other close events are in bold.

UK Orienteering League 2015

This is another national league but is based on a wide range of top national events offering a range of competition formats and terrain types. Each age class (from M/W16 upwards) has a competition as well as there being overall winners and also a club competition. Scoring is based on the winner in each age class getting 50 points and then dropping by 1 point for each position below this (i.e. 2nd = 49 pts). There were 19 events included in the League with a competitor's best 10 to score - making a maximum score of 500. In fact two competitors achieved the maximum - one a W75 and another an M16. Best BKO result was **Martin Wilson** who was 38th overall but managed a very good 3rd position in the M65 class. Next best was **Fiona Clough** who came in 251st overall with a 15th position in W50.

In the club competition, BKO came in 46th out of the 108 listed results - Bristol OK were the overall winners. It must also be admitted though that some clubs had sufficient competitors to have both an 'A' team result and a 'B' team result - not BKO though. The club's 2015 performance was however an

SEOUL Events 2016		
03-Jan	TVOC	RAF Halton
19-Mar	QO	Bridgwater
10-Apr	SLOW	Kingston
17-Apr	SARUM	Warminster
07-May	WAOC / Drongo	Cambridge Science City
28-May	DEVON	Plymouth
04-Jun	WSX	Poole
25-Jun	SMOC	Milton Keynes
02-Jul	WIM	Fordingbridge
16-Jul	SN	Woking
28-Aug	MV	Leatherhead
29-Aug	TVOC	Wantage and Grove
04-Sep	BOK	Wells
18-Sep	GO	Guildford
25-Sep	NWO	Royal Wootton Bassett
05-Nov	SARUM	Salisbury
19-Nov	OUOC	Oxford
20-Nov	NOR	Norwich
17-Dec	SO	Brighton

(*): Note that this was incorrectly reported in the e-mail BKO Update in December as only being a 3rd place. My apologies to Martin.

improvement as in 2014 we had recorded a 56th position. For the record, the following made up the BKO ‘team’: **Martin Wilson** (M65), **Andrea Strakova** (W21), **Richard Rae** (M65), **Simon Moore** (M55), **Alexander Moore** (M21), **Lisa Methven** (W45), **John Methven** (M45), **Derick Mercer** (M50), **David Jukes** (M60), **Annika Hermik** (W40), **Ian Cooper** (M70), **Fiona Clough** (W50), **Peter Bennett** (M75), and **Gill Bennett** (W70).

Club Championships

This was staged in association with the TVOC event at Bradenham in early December.

Junior Championships

As most juniors do not have ranking points, juniors had to compete on nominated courses for each age class (or run-up and attempt a higher class). Winners are the following:

- M/W12 or below: Yellow: **Lowri Thomas** (W12)
- M/W14: Orange: **Thomas Inness** (M12)
- M/W16: Light Green: No eligible entries

Senior Championships

Our Senior Championship is based on a ‘handicap’ system using competitor’s average event ranking score (or their best score if they have less than 6 ranking events) as shown on the BOF website on the Saturday before the event – this is the ‘Base Score’. At least 3 events have to be showing for a person to be included. The Championship results then compare a person’s performance on the day (as indicated by the ranking score at the event) with their base score. The best overall results are shown in the table:

Club Championships - Top Senior Results			Ranking Score	Count	Base Score	Event Score	Performance Score
Anne-Marie Hillier	Veteran	F	4322	6	720	817	113.42
Katy Stubbs	Veteran	F	4876	6	813	903	111.12
Denise Harper	Super Vet	F	5250	6	875	936	106.97
Peter Wilson	Veteran	M	6433	6	1072	1122	104.65
Catherine Springett	Veteran	F	4991	6	832	862	103.63
Doug Greenwood	Senior	M	6302	6	1050	1086	103.40
Stefan Stasiuk	Veteran	M	6690	6	1115	1122	100.63
Peter Bennett	Super Vet	M	6010	6	1002	1005	100.33
Rich Golding	Senior	M	3770	4	985	986	100.10
Eddie Whittle	Senior	M	6282	6	1047	1048	100.10

Champions are therefore:

- Senior: **Doug Greenwood**
- Veteran: **Anne-Marie Hillier**
- Super Veteran: **Denise Harper**
- Overall Senior Club Champion: **Anne-Marie Hillier**

Congratulations to all our ‘Champions’. Prizes will be awarded at the AGM in February.

British Schools Championships

Although I know that they were hoping to repeat the first place they achieved in 2014, congratulations to **St Andrews School** on their second place in the British Schools Championships ‘Middle - Preparatory’ class. The event was staged at Sandringham, Norfolk, on the 15th November.

Committee News

The Committee met in mid-November and the following are some of the items discussed:

- **Fixtures:** **Fiona Clough** had attended a regional fixtures meeting and items of note included:
 - It is likely that the 2017 CompassSport cup first round will be at Cold Ash and subsequently it is planned to be used for the Sunday event at JK2019.
 - TVOC have offered to stage the British Night Championships in 2020.

- Likely venues for forthcoming Concorde Chase events are: Barossa (2016), Bucklebury (2017) and Star Posts (2018).
- **Coaching:** **Mark Foxwell** is intending to organise some training nights probably on the first Tuesday each month starting in January. He is also investigating a possible coaching trip for a weekend - probably sometime after the JK at Easter. Watch our for e-mails!
- **Permanent Courses:** Bracknell Forest Council are establishing a new permanent course based on South Hill Park. The club will be involved in an official opening (probably on the 15th March) and this may be extended into a longer series of introductory events. Discussion on this will continue at the next meeting.
- **Results Equipment:** There was further discussion on ensuring our entry and results processing was maintained and capable of efficient use. It was agreed that we needed to be capable of handling an event with up to 400 competitors (i.e. a typical Level C / SCOA League event).



Two presentations

- *Left* - At our Bucklebury event in November, the awards for the 2014-15 SCOA League took place and here we see **Peter Wilson** receiving his memento for winning the 'Green' category from Di Smith the Chairman of the regional association (SCOA).
- *Right* - Also at Bucklebury, **Darrell Cruickshank** receives a birthday gift from **Fiona Clough** in recognition of his 90th birthday in late October.

Membership Memo

Ian Hudson - Membership Secretary

There was a flurry of new members in the closing weeks of 2015 so a very warm welcome to:

- **Tony Litynski** in Bracknell.
- **Trevor Etherington** and his daughter Louise also in Bracknell.
- The **Waite Family** from Thatcham.
- The **Cook Family** from Maidenhead.
- **Catherine Weeks** also from Maidenhead.
- **Janet Weeks** again from Maidenhead. I have no idea if Catherine and Janet are related.

In addition a very warm welcome back, after a years absence, to:

- **Sue & John Hatton** from Windsor.

A reminder from me, to those who have not done so already, to renew for 2016 and keep me employed updating our records! I hope 2016 brings the results you desire.

National Ranking List - BKO Positions

The BKO Newsletter for last January gave details of the top 15 male and female club members showing on the national ranking list on the 1st January 2015. It's time to update the list and see who have become our top performers for 1st January 2016.

Last January your Editor suggested that **Mark Saunders** was the 'one to watch' and so it has proved. Mark was down in 25th position 12 months ago but has shot to the top of the male list. Mark performs best at urban events and his top six results are all over urban terrain. We also have a new top female with **Andrea Strakova** jumping to the top of the table. Andrea is currently based in Cambridge undertaking veterinary research work. Five of her top six events were at the Scottish 6 Days event last summer. Her parents have also appeared in our listing this year having been absent last year - father **Dan** has made 7th male and mother **Lenka** has made 5th female. Another orienteering family with some good performances is the Moores - **Simon Moore** appears as 6th male, **Lynne** as 7th female and their son **Alexander** is 9th male (although this is a drop from his first place last year). Finally, it can be noted that last year's top female was Debra Robinson who for 2015 switched her membership to Southern Navigators. Her current point score is 6365 which would have put her in third position this year.

	National position	Name	Year of Birth	Total points
1	476	Mark Saunders	1978	7294
2	571	Ian Cooper	1943	7206
3	692	Martin Wilson	1947	7087
4	723	David Jukes	1952	7066
5	731	John Methven	1970	7057
6	775	Simon Moore	1960	7020
7	820	Dan Straka	1966	6990
8	866	Derick Mercer	1964	6957
9	1032	Alexander Moore	1992	6848
10	1115	Simon Turton	1965	6785
11	1208	Stefan Stasiuk	1951	6719
12	1316	Neil Frankum	1969	6637
13	1361	Andrew Graham	1955	6601
14	1423	John Briggs	1958	6551
15	1455	Rob Smart	1973	6531

	National position	Name	Year of Birth	Total points
1	1289	Andrea Strakova	1991	6650
2	1564	Fiona Clough	1962	6468
3	1762	Annika Hermik	1971	6321
4	2103	Lisa Methven	1969	6048
5	2138	Lenka Straka	1967	6019
6	2357	Gill Godbold	1954	5814
7	2606	Lynne Moore	1964	5572
8	2737	Toni Whittle	1970	5394
9	2759	Sue Parker	1960	5362
10	2783	Denise Harper	1950	5332
11	2912	Katy Stubbs	1956	5134
12	2926	Catherine Springett	1957	5109
13	3100	Sally Collins	1951	4813
14	3229	Anne-Marie Hillier	1952	4570
15	3282	Jane Courtier	1954	4445

Your 2015-2016 Committee

Chairman:	** Vacant **
Secretary:	Derick Mercer
Fixtures Secretary:	Fiona Clough
Treasurer:	Peter Entwistle
Development Officer:	Ken Ricketts
Membership Secretary:	Ian Hudson

secretary@bko.org.uk

fixtures@bko.org.uk

treasurer@bko.org.uk

membership@bko.org.uk

4 Committee Members and one co-option :

Andy Parry, David Jukes (newsletter@bko.org.uk), Brian Sewell, Mark Foxwell and Andrew Graham

Regional News - the South Central Orienteering Association (SCOA)

[The following is a selection of items from a 'SCOA Bulletin' prepared by Alun Jones of TVOC following the December meeting of the SCOA Committee. See: <http://www.scoa-orienteering.org.uk/bulletin/2015/12> for the full Bulletin]



JK 2019

As mentioned in previous BKO Newsletters, SCOA is hosting the 2019 JK. Areas are supposed to be identified and key officials appointed three years in advance, i.e. by April 2016.

The current proposal is that the events be held in the following locations (but note that landowner permission has yet to be obtained):

- Sprint Rutherford Appleton Laboratories, Harwell
- Middle Bradenham Woods
- Long Cold Ash
- Relay *Yet to be determined*

Work continues to find a suitable location for the Relay. In many respects, Bradenham would work well as a Relay venue – not least because, for those with long journeys home, Bradenham would be more convenient than locations further south in our area. So alternative venues suitable for a Middle race will be considered but a key requirement is suitable parking for some 1000 cars. Meanwhile the following key officials also need to be appointed:

- Overall Coordinator of the weekend
- Day Organisers
- Day Planners
- Treasurer

This is a super opportunity for anyone wanting to officiate at the highest level of event in the UK. However, as a minimum, organisers and planners will need to have held similar roles for at least two level B events in the past ten years. Please contact chairman@scoa-orienteering.org.uk to express your interest.

Event safety workshops

A substantial number of SCOA members have attended these workshops since they started to be rolled out some four years ago. Up until now, attendance has only been advisory for event officials (Organisers, Planners and Controllers). However completion of a workshop **will become mandatory for event officials from 1st January 2017**.

So if you are, or are thinking about becoming an event official and have not yet attended an event safety workshop, please do make sure you attend one in 2016. Please pass your name to Katy Stubbs (technical@scoa-orienteering.org.uk) who will sort out a suitable course for you.

O-Safe

British Orienteering has published an O-safe document, setting out a framework to meet

To view a copy of the revised O-Safe document, see:
https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/british_orienteering

a commitment to good practice and the safeguarding and welfare of children and at-risk adults within orienteering and orienteering related activities. Clubs and their members are encouraged to read the document, and to consider what actions they should take to fulfil British Orienteering's expectations in this area.



Berkshire Orienteers is on Facebook !



Event Summary

This listing shows a selection of forthcoming events — most of the local events and some of the more important ones from further afield. For a full listing, look at the British Orienteering web site.

[Note: UKOL = UK Orienteering League event for 2016 (for more details, see news item on pages 4-5)]

Date	Name	Level	Club	Venue	Town
Sat 16 Jan	BKO/BADO Winter Saturday Series	Level D	BKO/ BADO	Snelsmore Common	Newbury
Sun 17 Jan	SOC - SCOA League	Level C	SOC	Busketts Lawn	Southampton
Sat 23 Jan	BADO - SCOA League	Level C	BADO	Blackwood	Micheldever
Sun 31 Jan	BKO Concorde Chase	Level B	BKO	Barossa	Camberley
Sun 7 Feb	Mole Valley - SEL Event	Level B	MV	White Downs & Netley Heath	Dorking
Sun 14 Feb	Wessex Galoppen	Level C	WSX	Bisterne Close	Burley
Sun 14 Feb	TVOC - SCOA League	Level C	TVOC	Christmas Common	Watlington
Sat 20 Feb	BKO Winter Saturday Series	Level D	BKO	Swinley West	Bracknell
Sat 20 Feb	TVOC Saturday Series	Level D	TVOC	Waddesdon Manor	Aylesbury
Sun 21 Feb	SE Long Championships	Level B	HH	Ashridge North	Berkhamsted
Sat 27 Feb	British Night Championships (UKOL)	Level A	LEI	Cademan & Thringstone Woods	Loughborough
Sun 28 Feb	Midlands Championships (UKOL)	Level A	NOC	Sherwood Forest	East Midlands
Sun 28 Feb	SOC - SCOA League	Level C	SOC	Bratley	Southampton
Sat 5 March	BKO Winter Saturday Series	Level D	BKO	Burghfield Common	
Sun 13 March	CompassSport Cup Heat	Level B	SOC	Denny	Brockenhurst
Sun 20 March	Sarum Saunter	Level B	SARUM	Grovely East	Salisbury
Fri 25 March	JK - Sprint (UKOL)	Level A	YOA	Leeds University	Leeds
Sat 26 March	JK - Individual 1 (UKOL)	Level A	YOA	Wass Forest	Thirsk
Sun 27 March	JK - Individual 2 (UKOL)	Level A	YOA	Kilnsey	Skipton
Mon 28 March	JK - Relays	Level A	YOA	Storthes Hall	Huddersfield



Concorde Chase 2016
Sunday 31st January - Barossa

Barossa is the military training area used by the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. Runnable forest with areas of heathland, well contoured in places. Watch out for e-mails requesting help and details of the reduced price for volunteers.

Know your sport: Orienteering Relays

Orienteering is usually a very individual sport. With start times spread over 2 or 3 hours and with numerous courses, it can often feel that you are on your own competing against the clock and the planner. And it can be only later at home that you discover how you performed compared to others. So how can this sport be made into a team activity? Competing as part of a relay team adds this additional excitement!

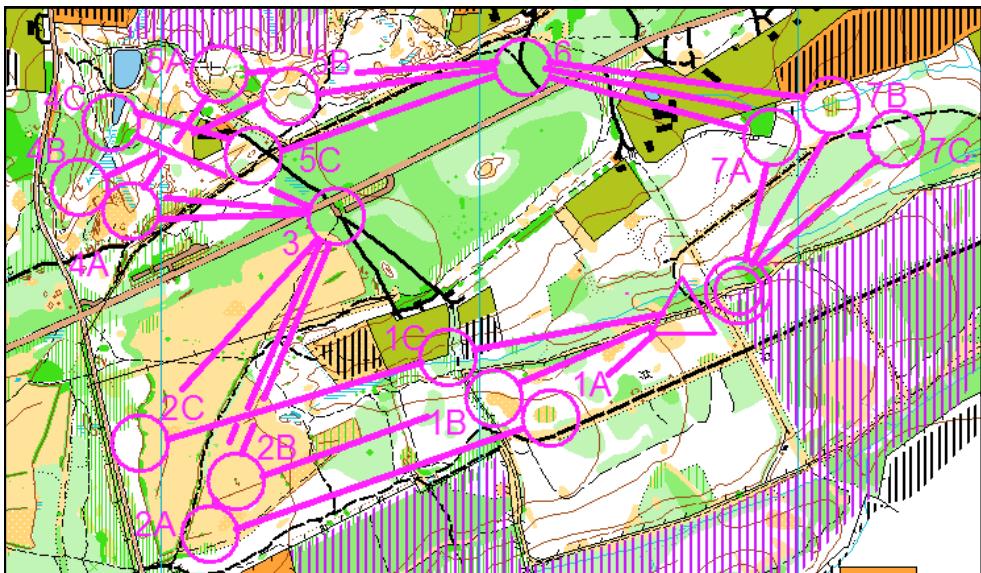
Overview

Although there are some variations, the majority of orienteering relays are based on teams of 3 members. Usually there is a mass start with all first leg runners starting together. This does mean that the first leg tends to feel more like a cross-country race than standard orienteering but, to make it more interesting and ensure that competitors don't simply just follow the fastest runner, different courses are provided. The simplest way of doing this is to provide 3 similar shaped courses but with different controls. Each team would take the 3 courses in a different order (e.g. A-B-C or C-A-B or A-C-B). Although everyone heads off in the same direction, no one knows which control all the others are heading towards. Over the whole event, each team would cover the same combination but in a variety of orders. This can be made more complex by the introduction of 'gaffling' - derived from the Swedish word meaning "forking".

Gaffling

By having 3 separate courses (A, B and C), competitors will soon work out which others are on the same course. Instead, a course is split into sections and each section had 3 options. These are linked by common controls (which all competitors visit).

A fictitious example is shown in the figure on the right. All competitors will start from the same place whether as the first leg runner (from a mass start) or as second or third leg runners (after the hand over).



Some will go Start-1A-2A-3, others Start-1B-2B-3 and the remainder Start-1C-2C-3. At control 3 competitors will then be mixed up again with 3 different options (3-4A-5A-6, 3-4B-5B-6 and 3-4C-5C-6). In the example there is then a third section with 3 options (6-7A-Finish, 6-7B-Finish and 6-7C-Finish). This then creates 27 ($3 \times 3 \times 3$) possible courses. Careful planning and map allocation will ensure that each team of 3 runners will cover all the 9 different sections but the order will vary. In practice, except at very large events, not all 27 combinations will be used as the printing would be a very complex task. However enough combinations are used to make it confusing to the competitors.

It is important to realise that each competitor only has their specific course (with their controls) marked on their map. Remember also that the competitors do not know which are the common controls and so will need to be navigating and in contact with the map throughout.

Men's World Championships Relay 2015 - Complex gaffling!

This 3-man relay took place in Darnaway in Scotland and the structure of the courses and the gaffling is shown in the figure. Note that the courses twisted and turned around the forest but is shown here diagrammatically as a sequence from top to bottom.

This has 5 different sections of gaffling (marked A-E). However 2 of them (B and C) appear to have 6 different courses. Careful reading of the control numbers will make it apparent that in fact the control at the start of sections B and C are the same and B and C represent the same options. In this case the planner had also used 'butterfly loops' returning competitors to control 67 to be given a second choice from the 6 options. The planner ensured that every team covered all the various elements of the course. One reason for having this complexity was to give the television cameras maximum coverage of the competitors out in the forest - a camera at control 67 therefore saw every competitor twice on their course.

Relay Events

As well as some smaller events, there are three major opportunities to take part in important relays in the UK each year. These are the British Relay Championships (BRC), the JK and the 'Harvester Trophy'.

British Relay Championships (BRC)

- This is usually held on the Sunday after the individual long distance championships (BOC). There are different classes based on ages - in fact the rules allow for a total of 18 different classes. As with any age-based event, several of these classes will however run the same course making perhaps 9 different courses (most then include gaffling). Although for the 'Championship' a team must consist of members from the same club, there are two 'ad hoc' courses allowing people to make up teams from various clubs. These 'ad hoc' courses also usually have different length legs (with no gaffling) allowing teams of mixed age to be made.

JK Relay

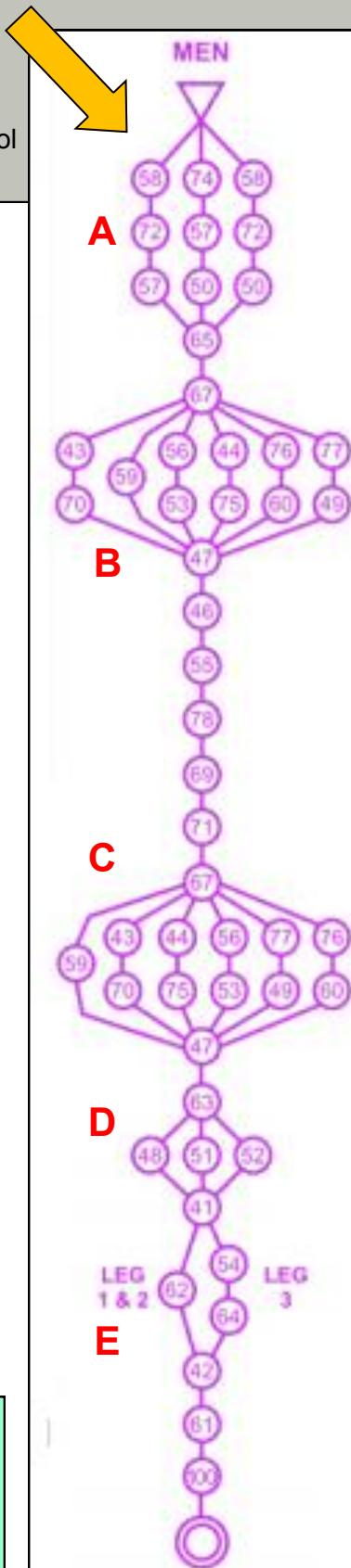
- The final event of the Easter weekend festival is a relay held on Easter Monday. Although this is organised in a similar manner to the BRC, in fact there are two important differences. For the JK, the classes are based on a combination of the age class of the team members. For example, one class is M165+. This means that the age classes of the team members must add up to at least 165 (e.g. M55 + M70 + M45 = 170). The second difference is that for most classes there are two 'long' legs with the middle leg being 'short'. This makes the selection policy rather different and more complicated for the Club Captain.

The Harvester Trophy

- Rather different is the '**Harvester Trophy**' which involves teams of 7 competing through the night and finishing after dawn (and an alternative handicap class with teams of 5). This usually takes place around mid-summer so as to give a combination of both night and day legs for all teams. The event is based on the world's most famous orienteering relay event which takes place in Sweden every year - the **Tiomila**. This actually involves teams of 10 (for the men) and attracts over 300 teams starting at 9.30 in the evening.

Links:

- British Relay Championships / JK Relay Rules:
See: <https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/page/rules>
- Tiomila website: <http://www.tiomila.se/index.php/en/>



Top Events: Winter - Spring - Summer 2016

Once again, a new year brings an opportunity to look forward and identify the top events that we can put into our diaries. This is your Editor's personal selection of some highlights. Of these, the British Championships (Long and Relay) on Brown Clee Hill at the end of April will be the most important but a close second, and potentially more interesting, is the British Sprint Championships at the Olympic Park in London in June. Do you have the same list?



Know Your Club Members —

Anne-Marie Hillier

As reported on page 5, our 2015 Club Champion is Anne-Marie Hillier. So it was time for her to be interviewed. These are her responses to the Editors inquisition.

Age/Class?

- W60

Hometown?

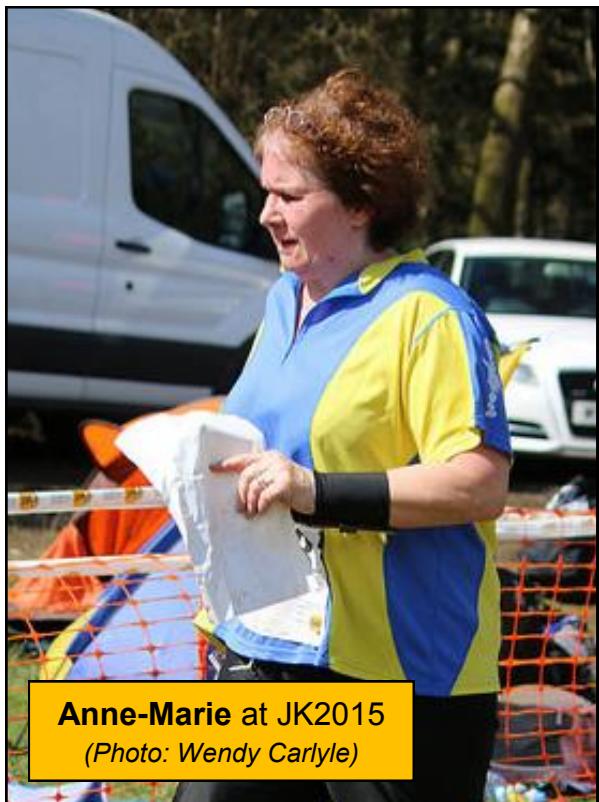
- I grew up in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire before moving to West London. In 1988 I moved to Maidenhead and then Bracknell in 1994.

How did you start orienteering?

- I started in 1986 when I met Peter who was already a keen orienteer. He took me to Burnham Beeches to familiarise me with a map and to learn how to use a compass. My first event was at Wisley and Ockham Common.

Clubs?

- MDDXO (a small select club now sadly defunct) for 28 years and BKO for 2 years.



Anne-Marie at JK2015
(Photo: Wendy Carlyle)

Best achievements?

- Nothing of significance although I did win a couple of W35B events in the 90's and of course BKO Club Champion. (Are you sure you've done the maths properly?)

Memorable events (and some I'd rather forget)?

- My first British relay in Northumberland. It was a mixed Ad-hoc course and I failed to notice I had been given the bag with the long not the short leg.
- The British Champs in Coniston when, with true club spirit, members waited for our last competitor to finish. She took so long the mini-buses down to the parking field near the village had stopped running and we had to hitch back.
- An event in Burnham Beeches organised by MDDXO when a student failed to turn up at the finish. For those who remember pre-electronic days, competitors were accounted for by matching the control card with the entry stub. Long after darkness had descended and we were about to enlist the support of the local constabulary, word came that she was safely ensconced in the pub. If memory serves me, BKO helped locate her through a contact at Reading University.

Worst event?

- No one event particularly stands out but I invariably make at least one 20+ minute error. I know I should relocate on a big feature and attack again but somehow the sweep search method has become ingrained into my psyche.

Favourite areas?

- The New Forest and Forest of Dean.

Least favourite areas?

- North Yorkshire – I'm so not looking forward to the next JK! [Ed: Only the Saturday is 'North']

What have you put back into the sport?

- I always make myself available to help wherever I can. I was on the MDDXO committee for a number of years and helped at many events including JK's and British Champs held in the

South East.

- When teaching in Ealing and Slough, I introduced many children to the sport organising activities in the school grounds, local parks and on residential trips.
- Unwavering support for WILFS, Tom's burger van and anyone else prepared to serve me pasta, coffee and cake in the middle of a field.

What is the best thing about orienteering?

- The sense of achievement after navigating to and hitting a particularly difficult control "bang on".
- Combining holidays in beautiful parts of the UK with an activity I really enjoy.

What is the worst thing about orienteering?

- The 3 B's – brambles, bracken and BIG hills.
- Marauding dogs and their owners who say, "They won't hurt you!" as they snap and jump up at me. (I'm a real Cynophobic)
- Washing filthy O gear. (I wish Peter would learn to make better route choices!!!)

International experience?

- None, unless a few permanent courses abroad count.

Employment?

- For over 40 (mostly enjoyable) years I taught in various Primary and Middle schools in West London and Berkshire until I retired last Summer.

Other activities / interests?

- Holidays and hill walking. Favourite places include: the Cairngorms, Skye, the Pyrenees and the magical snow covered fells in Finland
- In my younger years I played netball and squash and I've completed 6 Karrimor Mountain Marathons (now 'OMM') and many Capricorns. Nowadays, apart from orienteering, I'm more of an armchair sports fan and enjoy watching athletics, gymnastics and football.

What have you done that not many are likely to have done?

- Snowshoed up northern Europe's longest toboggan run (Kaunispaa Fell, Saariselka, Finland) at midnight to view the Northern Lights and tobogganed back down. (*Check it out in day light!*) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBvTEbSqFeo>



Favourite music / books / film / TV etc?

- Mainly Folk/Rock and Singer/Songwriter artists from days gone by but I guess the ones I return to most are Simon and Garfunkel and Dire Straits.
- I studied English Literature and really enjoyed 19th and early 20th century classic novels (Jane Austen, D H Lawrence) but now I enjoy spy and detective thrillers. My all time favourite book as a child was 'Anne of Green Gables'.
- Film - Notting Hill.
- TV – Morse and Lewis, quizzes from University Challenge to Pointless.



Meeting Orientamento di Venezia XXXIV °

14-15 November 2015

Brian Burt

The Venice event has been on my 'must-do' list for a few years now, so when I heard that the event was open to entries for its 34th edition, I couldn't think of a reason why not to enter. I'd never orienteered overseas before, but I'd visited Venice a couple of times in the past few years, so had an expectation of what might be on offer. Had a quick look at the event details – November, three urban events – the 'main' event at night – and entered (must get around to reading the details at some stage).

I remembered Katie had entered the infamous Venice Alta Aqua paddle-O event a couple of years ago (called off part-way through the race due complaints from the locals), and had mentioned that a medical certificate was required for all non-Italian competitors. I make the necessary arrangements for the doctor to have me certified.

MVO -3 weeks. Book hotel in the heart of Venice, just 5 minutes' walk from St. Mark's Square. Oh yes – better read the details and check what I've sign-up for. Three races within 24 hours (what?!?). Event 1- Urban sprint race at Ca' Savio, on the edge of the lagoon. Event 2 - the 'main' event – middle distance urban night-O around Venice. Event 3 – the morning after the night before so to speak; another sprint, this time on the island of Burano in the north of the Lagoon. Wonder if my body will hold-out.

Check transportation details in and around Venice. Will be using the valporetto (water-bus) quite a bit. Derick and Fiona have entered, but are getting a later flight out of Gatwick. Fiona kindly offers to drop me at Heathrow. Offer gratefully accepted.

Friday 13th November

Up before the birds. As arranged, Fiona drops me at T5. Flight delayed by 1 hour - Venice airport is fog-bound; could have had an extra hour in bed. Hmm – fog - this could be interesting. Spend idle time on the flight memorising the route from the valporetto pier at Fondamente Nove to the hotel. Arrive in a fog-free Venice airport fifty minutes late, and walk to the airport valporetto terminus. 30 minutes later I'm disembarking, and soon reach the hotel.

Settle-in, then go out on reconnaissance detail to determine quickest route from hotel to St. Mark's, and to Derick and Fiona's hotel near the Rialto. Find the correct valporetto pier for the cruise out to the first event at Ca' Savio, and check the assembly location for the second race.

Meet-up with Derick & Fiona and Melinda Riley (SYO) around 8pm for an aperitif (or two) and to agree meeting times for tomorrow morning for the trek to Ca' Savio. Since I've already reconnoitred the area it's agreed that I will meet them at the Rialto and the walk them to the correct pier (with a bit of sight-seeing thrown-in for good measure).



MVO day 1.

Meet-up with the others at the appointed time and walk via St Mark's Square to the pier to catch the O-boat to Punta Sabioni. Follow the crowd to the bus-stop. Hope the guy in front is heading to the same place! Short fight with the ticket machine at the bus-stop, and board a very crowded bus.

Event #1 - Ca' Savio Sprint

Chaotic scenes at assembly – organisers seem not to have anticipated the volume of competitors wanting to register at the event. Join queue and 40 minutes later we are official. Buy a tee-shirt (been there, done that, got the tee-shirt).

- Course: M50
- Length: 2.5km, 19 controls.
- Climb: zip

10 minute walk to the start. Apart from competitors, Ca' Savio seems pretty deserted. It's a cross between a university campus, a 1970s housing development, and a Butlin's holiday camp in winter. Join another queue (no start times). Luckily M50 course is not so busy and runners are being started at 30 second intervals, so only a short wait before I'm off.

Take it easy – saving myself for the evening. Very little in the way of route-choice; it's all about speed, so not going to excel. Mess-up at #2 having confused myself over direction of approach. Leg 6-7 has a choice of routes, but hard to tell what might be quicker. Opt for the one with fewer changes of direction.

No more mistakes until 14-15 – under-shoot and dive into the wrong turning. 17-18 – take the longer, southern route, but since I was facing that way anyway seemed like a good idea at the time. 18 to finish – you'd really have to try hard to get lost.

- Time: 19'17"
- Position: Not last
- Distance travelled: 3.7 km
- Canals crossed: 0

Derick finishes shortly after me – I take that as a good sign. Fiona is already there. Review splits. Derick's beat me by 4 minutes, but at least I'm not last! 20 minutes later still no sign of Melinda. Go in search and find her walking back from the ambulance nursing a shiner – she'd had a fight with the ground and came-off worse.

Event #2 – Venice Urban Night-O

Get lost taking the direct route to the event centre (this is rapidly becoming a habit). Encounter early starters on my way, so walking vaguely in the right direction (not). It all looks terribly different in the dark. Eventually find a suitable attack point (St Mark's Square) and successfully navigate to the event centre.

Derrick is already at the event centre. I have an earlier start, so get myself ready, and follow the crowd (again) to the start. Call-up is along the Viale Giardini Pubblici on the water-front – actual start is in the park. Remind myself to keep in touch with the map at all time, double-check torch, spare batteries and GPS tracker and before I know it I'm off.

- Course: M50, 12 controls
- Length: 4km
- Climb: Feet should remain dry

Start to 1 – straightforward. Through the white (aha! I've been in here before...) NW towards the park-gate and into an area of apartment buildings (naval barracks?). Choose an attack-point, dive into an alley between blocks, and straight-in (thankfully not into a canal).

1-2 Back out to my previous attack-point. Zig-zag right, then left towards a canal and a bridge



(check), over the bridge, R then L, down another alley, R and L (again) into a grassed courtyard. Run around the northern edge, then left and straight into a second court-yard. Bingo!

2-3 Long leg with lots of dead-running, taking us around the Arsenale (it's the 14c Venetian naval base, current owners - the Italian Navy, although not much sign of any activity going-on). Keep the Arsenale on my right and pop brain into neutral. Canal on my L, wall on R, main water gate to the Arsenale dead-ahead. Over the high bridge in-front of the Arsenale and note the pair of stone lions guarding the land entrance on my right. Recall that the lions were 'gifted/lifted' from the Greeks when the Venetian Empire stretched to Greece and the port of Piraeus.

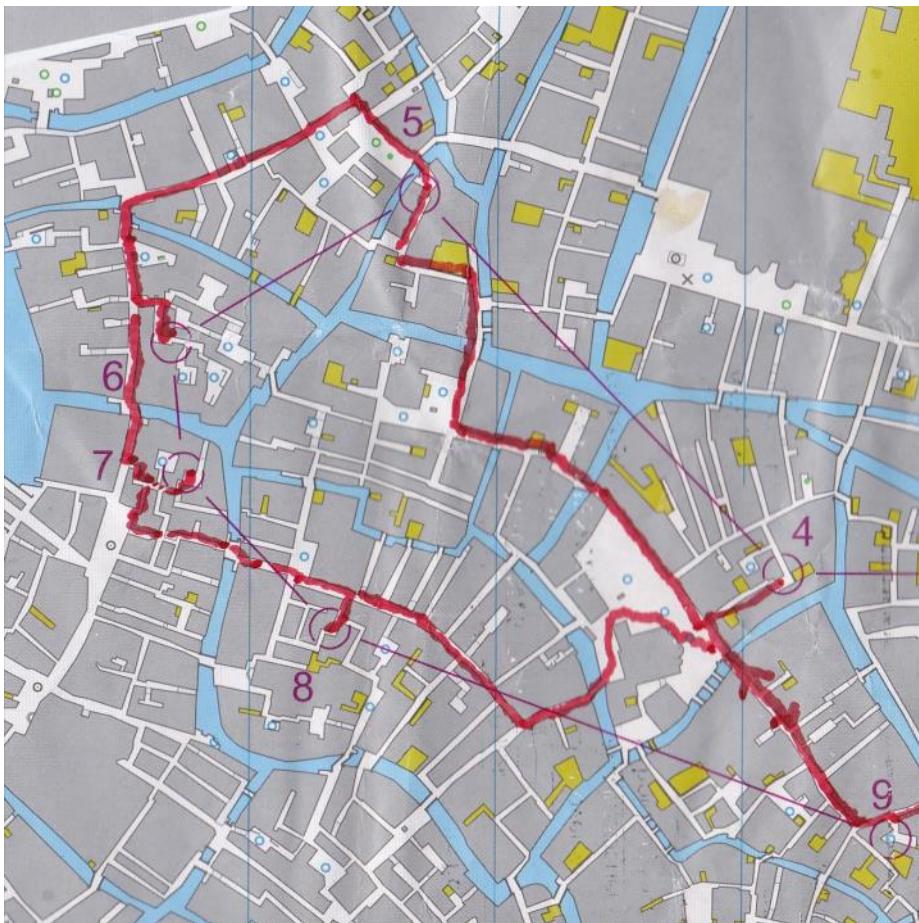
More dead-running W, along a canal, R across a smaller bridge and along another canal, heading north. Forget that I'd left brain in neutral with handbrake off, and navigate directly into #10 – bah! Never mind, at least I know where to find it. Easy re-locate and head into #3. All's well (and so is the control feature). Control 10 was en-route to #3

anyway, so minimal time lost.

3-4 No direct route. Spot the southern route and zig-zag my way through numerous alleys, across several bridges, and successfully navigate to #9. (Pay attention, Burt!) Again, sort of on the right(ish) path, but with hind-sight a northern route was probably quicker (and less confusing). Navigate to #4 (2nd time lucky). Something familiar about this - realise that I'm right behind my hotel on the Campo Santa Maria Formosa.

4-5 Another route -choice – north (5 bridges) or south (3 bridges). North looks shorter, but bridges slow you down. South is more direct as well so run back-out into the Campo and straight past the hotel where I get cheered by a group of young ladies watching the action. Give them





an appreciative wave whilst running in the wrong direction. Re-focus and run straight through the Campo, out the far-end and across a couple of wet ditches into a small square. Turn right here and follow my nose to #5.

5-6 Short turning leg. No route-choice, but plenty of zig and zag. Manage to maintain contact with the map.

6-7 Another short leg. Over canal, take next left into a maze of narrow arrows. Run past a crowded bar and distinctly hear a voice in an English accent shout “ere, you’re going the wrong-way, mate!”. Slow-down and check the map (just in case he’s already run the M50 course, spotted that I’m a fellow M50 Brit, and is offering me some helpful advice), and wiggle

through the various alleys to #7.

7-8-9 Wiggle back out through the maze around # 7 and realise that I’m on the route between the Rialto Bridge and my hotel. Accelerate, dive into #8, back out and continue into the Campo SMF, around the church and back towards #9 (please refer to leg 3-4).

9-10 North or South? To remain consistent I take the southern route again. Run past the Greek embassy and wonder if they’ve noticed the lions. Across three more wet-ditches and into #10 (see 2-3).

10-11-12 No route-choice/navigational challenge, so accelerate from first to second gear. Back over the wooden bridge at the Arsenale, and south along the canal to #11, and then out to the waterfront for the run-in to the Finish.

Meet Derrick back at the assembly area. Melinda is still out, and Fiona has just left to walk to the start, so we adjourn to a suitably located bar to rehydrate and compare notes whilst watching the run-in. All we have to do now is drink beer until Melinda and Fiona finish. Let’s hope they take their time.

- Time: 41'59"
- Position: A bit better than the morning's sprint.
- Distance travelled: 7.5km
- Bridges crossed: 25

Wow! What a venue.

Not the most technical of courses (due in most-part to the location of the start/finish), but still plenty of opportunity for the unwary to get lost.

Pleasant walk back to the hotel through a deserted St Mark’s Square, and so to bed for another early start for the final event – another sprint – on the beautiful island of Burano.

But then that’s another story.

For the record:

Race 1 - Sprint:

- M50: Derick Mercer - 20th (out of 48 finishers); Brian Burt - 40th.
- W50: Fiona Clough - 5th (35).

Race 2 - Venice Race:

- M50: Derick - 30th (out of 47); Brian Burt - 37th
- W50: Fiona - 6th (out of 32)

Race 3 - Sprint

- M50: Derrick - 16th (44); Brian ('that's another story'!)
- W50: Fiona - 6th (33)



Denise Harper comes off the shingle of Brighton beach before heading into the more typical urban terrain.
(Photo: Robert Lines)



Derick Mercer on the left inspecting his map at the start
(Photo: Robert Lines)

Brighton Urban Race - 19th December 2015



Denise Harper on the podium as winner of the WUV class
(Photo: Fiona Clough)



Martin Wilson displaying his MUV winner's medal and chocolate cookies prize.
(Photo: Robert Lines)



At the Start - pupils from St Andrews School get some final instructions



Tim Booth (left), on a visit from his home in the USA, seen here talking with Dave Rogers (right).



BKO Bucklebury Common SCOA League Event

8th November 2015

[A dull grey day made photography difficult resulting in a rather limited collection of photos]



Which way to the next control?