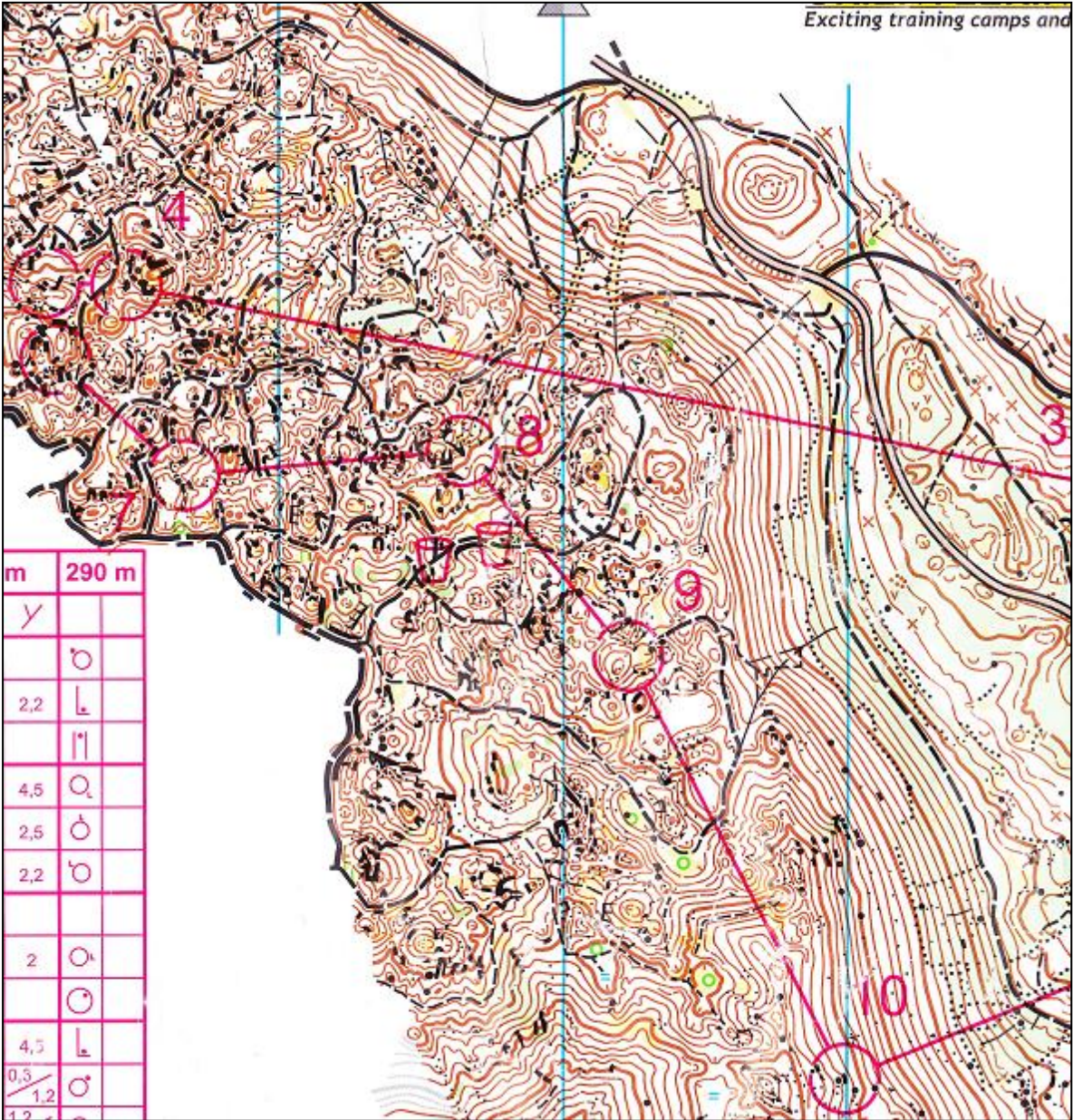


# Club Newsletter

## Sep 2011



OO Cup Slovenia, Day 3, map scale 1:7500. It is raining. You punch control 3 after a good leg, and unfold your map to check the next part of the course. This is what you see. Now plan and execute your routes to 10 without losing any time.... this is the challenge that faced Martin Wilson when he participated in the event in Slovenia this Summer, find out more inside.



## Help

This is the cry that has been calling from around the committee over the Summer with insufficient people coming forward for organising our forthcoming events or to undertake the fixtures role. Everyone leads busy lives these days so it's not easy for any of us to help out, Ken Ricketts puts forward his views with some possible suggestions, the committee would also welcome yours,

what would best way to share the work around so that we can keep things going without too big a workload for anyone

On the subject of help, I am again grateful to our contributors who have taken the time and trouble to submit articles for this newsletter, many thanks. I thought that we would be short of features for the Summer but we have an interesting newsletter including Martin Wilson's report from Solvenia which was in part inspired by Andrew Graham's trip and feature last year. Martin has also launched a new competition to add another dimension to our season and he explains this too. Also in this edition, Richard Rae reports from the Scottish Six Days and is featured in our "Know Your Club Members" article plus Denise Harper reports from the British Mountain Bike Orienteering champs so there's lot's to read.

## Summer Parks Challenge

David Jukes

Analysis of the events compared with last year shows:

### 2011

		Short	Medium	Long	Total
1	Whiteknights	6	17	26	49
2	Birch Hill, Bracknell	5	12	16	33
3	Ashenbury Park / Woodley	3	19	21	43
4	Great Hollands, Bracknell	13	28	33	74
5	Laurel Park/Lower Earley	9	29	39	77
	<b>Average</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>55.2</b>

### 2010

		White	Yellow	Lt Green	Short Ch	Long Ch	Total
1	Whiteknights	7	11	26	25	68	137
2	Cantley Park, Wokingham	5	9		14	18	46
3	Dinton Patures	10		6		21	37
4	Ashenbury Park / Woodley	8	8		14	34	64
	<b>Average</b>						<b>71</b>
				<i>Average exclud. Whiteknights</i>			<b>49</b>

(Number of results listed, not the number of actual competitors)

- It is clear that Whiteknights last year was exceptional and pulled people in from a much wider area. As it was the first use of the University campus I did circulate details to several neighbouring club secretaries prior to the event with a request for extra publicity. There was also quite a bit of interest generated just by people talking about it at other events. The number at Whiteknights this year is clearly much more typical.
- The events have not been attracting juniors and it is not clear why the numbers have been quite so low.
- The last two events this year were both popular (with a risk of running out of maps). However, given the smaller numbers at the second and third events, the increased numbers were unexpected.



I certainly enjoyed the 3 events I competed in this year (the last 3). It was good to run round Ashbury Park and Woodley Airfield for the first time on Ken's Long course having produced the map myself last year. It is difficult to comment on the challenge as I knew the area so well.

I thought Eric's map and courses at Great Hollands were excellent (pity I didn't remember the canopy symbol until about half way round).

I will admit to being uncertain when I heard that Neil's map of Lower Earley was at 1:10000 but I needn't have worried as I felt that in fact that the map was fine for the area and Tim's Long course made good use of the large estate.

So for next year? I would consider it worth continuing perhaps with a combination of further new areas and old areas

Should the name of the series be changed? It seems to be more of an Urban Challenge (certainly on the long course). Your views on the events would be welcome.

My thanks to all those involved in mapping, planning and organising these events and to those who have given support on the days.

## **Club Nights**

### **From Wednesday 14 September, Bracknell**

Following our initial trial series of weekly club nights in the spring, we are pleased to announce that these will recommence on Wednesday 14 September. We will have a regular coach as well as BKO club coaches and the intention is to run sessions both for beginners and for experienced club orienteers.

The venue has changed: it is at **Easthampstead Baptist Church Hall**, South Hill Road (RG12 7NS). This is just along South Hill Road to the West of the Bracknell Leisure Centre roundabout. There is free parking on site.

Times are from 6:30 until 8:00pm, every Wednesday, starting from 14 September. Charge is 2 pounds for adults, 1 pound for juniors. The hall has toilets and a kitchen so drinking water is available, but no showers. Come ready for outdoor and or indoor training.

## **Personal Performance System**

**Martin Wilson**

During the Spring season, we have been trialling a Personal Performance System for club members, using the national Ranking Points system to understand how each of us has performed at any particular event. Following these trials, the Committee has now approved the system for general use, and for details to be made available on the club website. This article gives an outline of the new system. Further information will be available on the website soon.

Ranking Points are awarded at almost all events to Senior runners on all colour-coded and class courses. The total of the best six scores of your runs over the past twelve months is your ranking at any date. These are awarded and published on the BO website whether we want them or not! The system is designed so that your score achieved is regardless of which course you run. The scoring mechanism may appear complex, but it does seem to produce very consistent results for regular competitors, who are achieving similar scores at many different events.

What we do is simply convert your RPs received at an event to a % of your average RPs to show how close you have come to your average ranking. This shows how well you have run on the day. The example below shows how this works:

Competitor A has a pre-event ranking of 6000 points. Their average ranking points are therefore  $6000/6 = 1000$ . They then obtain 965 points at an event. Their RP% on that day is  $965/1000 = 96.5\%$ .

Competitor B has a pre-event ranking of 4800 points. Their average ranking points are therefore  $4800/6 = 800$ . They then obtain 840 points at an event. Their RP% on that day is  $840/800 = 105\%$ .

Competitor B has thus achieved a higher RP% than A, despite having received fewer ranking points on the day. The system works for everyone regardless of their ability because it is based relevant to their own previous performance, not anyone else's. Thus it is truly a Personal Performance System. It is also self-balancing: if your ranking improves, your average becomes higher, and harder to match; if you struggle to match your ranking, over time your ranking will reduce, and become easier to match.

We operate a spreadsheet of results, focusing on certain 'Performance Events' only, which we compute after the events RPs are published. I usually send an email to those members whose addresses I have, and this information will in future also be published on the web site. Across the club, the highest % obtained is the person who has achieved the best Run of the Day (ROD). To keep it light-hearted, I award Gold, Silver and Bronze 'Hot ROD' Awards to the top three, and they get a mention in the email. There are no other prizes! The table below shows an extract from one table of results:

<b>Competitor</b>	<b>BOC Long Distance Champs 14/05/11</b>			
	Total RPs	Average RPs	Race RPs	Performance %
	pre-race	pre-race	RP	%
Ian Cooper	6828	1138	1069	<b>93.9%</b>
David Jukes	6720	1120	1090	<b>97.3%</b>
Martin Wilson	6671	1112	1075	<b>96.7%</b>
Richard Rae	6460	1077	1006	<b>93.4%</b>
Keith Ellis	6446	1074	934	<b>87.0%</b>
Stefan Stasiuk	6318	1053	1023	<b>97.2%</b>
Alexander Moore	6017	1003	1085	<b>108.2%</b>
Alan Springett	5812	969	926	<b>95.6%</b>
Gina Marwick	5356	893	761	<b>85.2%</b>
Clive Jenkins	5166	861	714	<b>82.9%</b>
Bryce Gibson	4882	814	795	<b>97.7%</b>
Catherine Springett	4872	812	788	<b>97.0%</b>
Katy Stubbs	4765	794	618	<b>77.8%</b>
Janet Gibson	4580	763	616	<b>80.7%</b>
Tim Booth	3575	596	386	<b>64.8%</b>
Kingsley Starling	1204	401	383	<b>95.5%</b>

You will see from this how the % achieved is relative to each person's current ranking points, not how fast they are on the day. We thus have a level playing field each time.

Performance Events for Autumn 2011 will be:

11 <sup>th</sup> September	SOC Regional Event (SCOA League)	Level C
25 <sup>th</sup> September	BKO Regional Event (SCOA League)	Level C
23 <sup>rd</sup> October	TVOC Regional Event (SCOA League)	Level C

6 <sup>th</sup> November	SOC November Classic	Level B
20 <sup>th</sup> Nov	BADO Regional Event (SCOA League)	Level C
11 <sup>th</sup> December	SOC Regional Event	Level C

We will be publishing more details of PPS on the club website in September. I hope also to be able to include an informal League and a knock-out Cup competition within the spreadsheet.

Despite all the arithmetic, this should not all be taken too seriously! The intention is to encourage us all to attend more events, to highlight good performances, and motivate us to consider our own individual performances more closely. If we cut out just one or two mistakes each time, we could all rise up the rankings without any more training!

I hope everyone has a successful Autumn season.

Martin Wilson

*PPS Administrator*

## Know your club members

**Richard Rae**

**When did you start orienteering?** In 1970. I was keen on cross-country running and hill walking in Scotland before I headed south for employment, so needed something to do in the anticipated flat south of England. (I was unfamiliar, then, with the roller coaster of the Dorset Coast path and the steep brambly slopes of the Chilterns!) I'd read Chris Brasher's articles on orienteering in the Observer, so thought it would combine my interests and be worth trying.



My first event was a score event at Checkendon organised by a club which later merged with others to become TVOC. Apart from a few "action replays" run for nostalgia, this was the only event I've run in which the map was a copy of the OS map. I remember swotting up the OS map legend before I ran. My second event was a year later at a ROC night event at Bucklebury Common. I've been orienteering ever since.

**Age class?** M65, although I'm not yet an OAP.

### Clubs?

BKO for most of the time, although it was called Reading OC when I first joined. I ran for BOK for 2 years in the 1980s when my work took me to Bath.

### Orienteering achievements?:

These date from a time when I was younger, fitter, injury free and didn't need specs to read the map. I ran a couple of marathons when they became popular in the 1980s and was super-fit for a while. Following 3<sup>rd</sup> place in a Scottish Championships, I was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in one heady edition of the ranking lists for the M35 class, but have been going downhill ever since.

I have won my age class in the Caddihoe Chase on 2 occasions, and have been part of podium placed relay teams in the JK and British Championships. The other relay team members included Peter Bennett, Ian Cooper, Don Cload, Alan Wilkes, Neil Frankum, and, for BOK, Dudley Budden and David Beal.

However, my most satisfying events were on complex open fell areas with few line features. One was in an event near Arisaig in the Lochaber 2001 6 Days, when I finished second on my course. The other was in a 2 day race in North Wales held on the eastern slopes of the Nant Gwynant valley in the late 1980s when I ran for BOK. After day 1, I was in pole position in the day 2 chasing start. Others were closing the gap on day 2, but I managed to hold them off to cross the finish line first. My prize was a large coaster which I dropped and chipped on my doorstep when I got home late that night....

### **Overseas orienteering?**

Nothing foreign, although I have had to fly to events in Northern Ireland.

### **Employment?**

I am now retired and supposedly enjoying the aesthetic pleasures of life i.e. I am trying to tidy and improve my pit of a house. Things are not going as well as planned, especially with mid-week army events to run in.

I have a degree in Natural Philosophy (i.e. Physics, at a Scottish University), and formerly, I was a scientist in various branches of the Civil Service. I dabbled in digital audio signal processing, digital image processing, computer graphics, simulation and analysis of trials' data, among other things. Most of the projects I was involved in were cancelled for various reasons, so I was a Jack of many trades and master of none.

### **O ambitions?**

At my age, these are now to remain reasonably competitive and injury free for a good few years to come.

### **Best things about orienteering?**

These are, for me:

- Choosing a route between controls and navigating so as to stay on the route whenever possible. There is always variety even in forests and moors I have run on before, and I still get caught out in repeat visits
- Visiting new parts of the country for a spot of apres-race tourism.
- Orienteers are an amiable bunch of folk.

### **Worst things about orienteering?**

Brambles and runs in the rain.

### **What training do you do?**

Very little these days. I used to go jogging 3 to 4 times a week besides a race on Sunday, but injuries and long hours commuting to work brought a stop to this. Now I make do with a race on Sunday, the mid-week army league events, and any evening or Saturday events going. If still feeling unfit and its cold and wet outside, I may jog up and down the stairs of my house for 15 minutes!

However, I try to walk as much as possible, and will go on a 12 - 14+ mile walk if there is no event on a Sunday. I also go swimming on occasions. Swimming seems to ease the aches and pains, and some say it assists with breathing.

### **Most memorable run?**

This has to be a November Classic when I was an M21. As far as I can remember, the event was the only occasion the NC was not of badge event or higher status.

It had been raining heavily and the streams were full. I had to cross one about 4 feet wide, so grabbed hold of a branch above me and stepped on another just above the water, meaning to swing myself across. Both branches broke simultaneously, and in I went. I never touched the bottom of the stream, and needed 2 breast strokes to flounder to the other side. I was soaked, but carried on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> master maps. I may have been suffering from mild hypothermia by then, as I lost my control card later (kept in my poly bag in those days), didn't notice, and was disqualified. Back at my car, I shivered for over half an hour.

### **Biggest goof?**

Turning up at the start without a compass at a New Forest event. Remembering that moss supposedly grows on the North side of trees, I risked continuing, and got round ok, much to my surprise.

However, of late, I have noticed a tendency to go from say control 8 to 10, missing out 9. Sometimes I notice and go back, but not if I've finished. I put this down to the problems of advancing years, rather than specifically a goof.

### **Favourite O areas?**

I prefer complex areas where I can run without bouncing off or becoming entangled in brambles or other dense undergrowth. The open grassy fells of the Lake District and open sand dune areas often fit these criteria as do the forested sand dune areas on the coast of the Moray Firth in Scotland. You are often running on moss in these coastal forests.

Down south, I like the New Forest which has a variety of terrain types, and Star Posts, with its sweeping contours which are enjoyable to run across.

Open fell areas may suit me because of the different navigation style required. In the open, I prefer to triangulate using features, usually large knolls or hills, I can identify well ahead of me. Marshes are also very useful. In forested areas, I prefer to consider a suitable catching feature not yet visible, and monitor progress towards it by ticking off features such as the axes of re-entrants and other identifiable features.

### **Any tips?**

Photochromatic specs are not a good idea when moving from sunlight open ground into forest marked green on the map. The lights go out. You come across a narrow ride which you cannot see on the map and you waste time wondering where you are. This problem cost me over 2 minutes in the Scottish Championships last May.

### **Favourite tipples?**

Beer and red wine, and perhaps too much.



**Favourite food?**

In a pub, I'll usually opt for steak and kidney pie, chips and peas. At home, I survive on mince and tatties and peas, often embellished with a red wine or curry sauce, but not forgetting my leafy green vegetables. However, comparing my diet with that of some orienteers, I appear to run on "2 star".

**Favourite music?**

All sorts, ranging from rousing hymn tunes, through golden oldies from Dire Straits, the Shadows and others, to popular classics. I listen mainly to Classic FM in my car.

**Favourite films/TV?**

Spaghetti Westerns and documentaries.

**Other interests?**

Walking and visiting ancient sites, both at home and abroad. Both have quite a bit of overlap with orienteering.

Navigation on top of a mountain can be very challenging in mist, but orienteering skills have made me much more aware of the lie of the land. However, bearings on a mountain top can be much longer than in a forest, and I sometimes check my watch, besides pace counting. I've had problems in near white-outs, and I suspect it's because snow on the grounds reduces my pace length.

As for ancient sites, I've noticed that many O-maps in the south feature Iron Age forts, and on Salisbury Plain, "gully" and "hill" features turn out to be barrows of the Bronze Age.

**Biggest fluke?**

Not orienteering but in a cross-country race in Dundee while at university. I'd run the course before, but on this second occasion the marshals must have been asleep. I was well down the field, but approaching a right turn I remembered from before, I realised that everyone in front had gone straight ahead. Suddenly the marshals woke up, so I turned right and found myself leading the field while those in front now skidded to a halt and about-turned. No-one could overtake me, as the course was now along a very narrow path through a forest. Only in the final stages of the race, when the course widened to a track, did 2 runners pass me. So I finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, and was listed next day in the sports pages of the Sunday Post, a well-known Scottish newspaper. Perhaps this was my 15 minutes of fame.

**Claim to fame?**

See last Q.

## Fixtures

Those listed on The BO website include:

Date	Club	Venue
10 <sup>th</sup> Sep	BKO	Burghfield
11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	SOC	Sluffers Inclosure, New Forest (Regional)
17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	SN	Horsell Common
25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	BKO	Hawley (Regional)
8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	BKO	Black Park
15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	SN	Aldershot
23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	TVOC	Hodgemoor Woods, Wycombe (Regional)
5 <sup>th</sup> Nov	SARUM	Sprint event – Sandy Balls, New Forest
6 <sup>th</sup> Nov	SOC	November Classic, New Forest (Regional)
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov	BKO	Benyon's Inclosure, Mortimer

## BKO Youth League

**Ken Ricketts**

Once again we will be running the Youth League in conjunction with the BKO Saturday events. The principal change from last year will be a new scoring system. Instead of getting 100 points for a win, 95 points for 2<sup>nd</sup> etc., there will be a target time for each age/course combination. The target times have been set from last years results, and should allow a good competitor having a good run on their 'preferred' course to score 100 points. Running slower will score fewer points, but running faster will score more than 100 points. This means that no-one will be able to sit back having scored maximum points by half-way through the season – it will always be possible to improve your score by having a better run! The first event will be at Burghfield on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September. See the website for full details.

Ken Ricketts  
BKO Youth League Co-ordinator

## Club Championship 2011

**Ken Ricketts**

After a break of some years, we have decided to revive the Club Championships. This is a competition open to all members, which takes place at a nearby club's event. This year it will take place at the BADO event at Pamber Forest on 20<sup>th</sup> November. There will be a handicap system so that you can run a course of your choice rather than having to run one specific course for your age class. More details nearer the time, keep the date free!

## Your committee members

<b>Chairman:</b> Katy Stubbs	<b>0118-978-2875</b>	<a href="mailto:katy.stubbs@bko.org.uk">katy.stubbs@bko.org.uk</a>
<b>Secretary:</b> David Jukes	0118-969-2514	<a href="mailto:secretary@bko.org.uk">secretary@bko.org.uk</a>
<b>Treasurer:</b> Peter Entwistle	01628-635278	<a href="mailto:treasurer@bko.org.uk">treasurer@bko.org.uk</a>

**Fixtures:** Vacant

<b>Membership:</b> Alan Springett	07712-672712	<a href="mailto:membership@bko.org.uk">membership@bko.org.uk</a>
<b>Development:</b> Denise Harper	0118 948 2934	<a href="mailto:denise.harper@bko.org.uk">denise.harper@bko.org.uk</a>
<b>Publicity:</b> Keith Ellis	0118 9771101	<a href="mailto:keith.ellis@bko.org.uk">keith.ellis@bko.org.uk</a>
Neil Frankum	0118-975-1528	<a href="mailto:neil.frankum@bko.org.uk">neil.frankum@bko.org.uk</a>
Ken Ricketts	0118 9787168	<a href="mailto:ken.ricketts@bko.org.uk">ken.ricketts@bko.org.uk</a>
Dave Rogers	01344 628-623	<a href="mailto:dave.rogers@bko.org.uk">dave.rogers@bko.org.uk</a>

## **Club Kit**

The Berkshire Orienteers club O-top comes in long and short-sleeved versions and is available from give Sue Wilkes on 01635-522-356. If you don't yet have your top, give Sue a call and she will be able to get you kitted up.

## **Fixtures Secretary Required**

**Keith Ellis**

Following a year in the role Andrew Graham is unable to continue in the role of Fixtures Secretary due to work commitment. The Committee would like to thank Andrew for the work that he has undertaken over the past year in the role and to thank Eric Harper who has kindly offered to help with securing land permissions in the short term until a new Fixtures Secretary is appointed.

It is important that the club appoints a Fixtures Secretary to ensure the smooth scheduling of our events calendar. The role involves maintaining the schedule of fixtures, securing permission for the land to be used and for the appointment of the planner, organiser and controller for each event and liaising with the SCOA fixtures secretary to avoid a clash of events with other clubs. The role includes being a member of the committee with six committee meetings each year at which the forthcoming fixtures schedule is reviewed.

If you feel that you could undertake the role then please contact Katy Stubbs, Club Chairman who would be delighted to hear from you. The more people that can help with the running of BKO activities, the less onerous the tasks for each person involved. Please do help if you can.

## **Colour Code Standard badges**

If you have achieved the required standard on colour coded courses you may apply for a badge. For further details apply to Bryce Gibson, telephone 0118-947-2220

## **Dorset Coast Path Relay**

Unfortunately two runners had to withdraw from the BKO team due to illness and injury and so we have not entered a team this year. Watch out for details of the event next year, it would be good enter a team (or teams) again.

## The British Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships (Long) @ Longleat

Denise Harper

This year has seen a substantial increase in the number of MTBO events being staged in the south, and consequently the participation in MTBO amongst BKO members, especially since our Star Posts MTBO event in March, has steadily risen. For some, MTBO offers a welcome opportunity to take part in a related sport if unable to run through injury, or advancing age; for others it is another form of map reading exercise, albeit on a bike, with all the extra challenges which that presents..



Earlier in the year, the BMBO Championships in the Middle and Sprint categories, held in Staffordshire, attracted 3 BKO members, but with the Long championships in June rather more conveniently held in Longleat, 7 members made it to the event. Winning times were estimated at 90 minutes – which meant on a blisteringly hot day, we were all out there for somewhat longer, finding the hills, mud ( the previous few days of rain had turned some tracks to gloop) and course length exceedingly hard work. Although MTBO navigation is not in itself difficult, it is all too easy to miss turn offs and junctions when trying to read a map on the move and stay upright on a bike over very rough surfaces. Added to this, the recent rain and heat had caused a burst in vegetation growth which made spotting the smaller tracks, and trying to ride along them, very hard work in places. So, a very physical course which provided a suitable Championship challenge.

Needless to say, we all got our money's worth – especially Ian Hudson, who not only spent 2 hours out on the course, but cycled some miles up hill (and back – also uphill) from his daughter's house in Warminster to get there. Meanwhile Steven Davidson had a wager with his son, over from Finland, as to who would get the faster time on the B course – I won't reveal the result...Liz Yeadon went out after a long session of helping at assembly – and then even summonsed the energy to help collect controls in afterwards (on foot). We all staggered back to the village hall at the bottom of the hill afterwards to have some welcome tea and cake, compare notes and have a very welcome shower to clean off the worst of the mud.

For those interested in trying some events, here are some useful websites:

[www.mbosouth.co.uk](http://www.mbosouth.co.uk)

Genuine MBO events using an orienteering map – also planned for autumn is a series of score events using OS maps.

[www.bmbo.org.uk](http://www.bmbo.org.uk) The national website for MTBO

The following organisations offer OS map based score events in the South. Placing of and finding controls can be a bit more problematic than genuine MTBO, but they still give you the opportunity of getting out for a map based ride.

[www.gorrick.com](http://www.gorrick.com) Gorrick. Local organisation, based in Crowthorne area

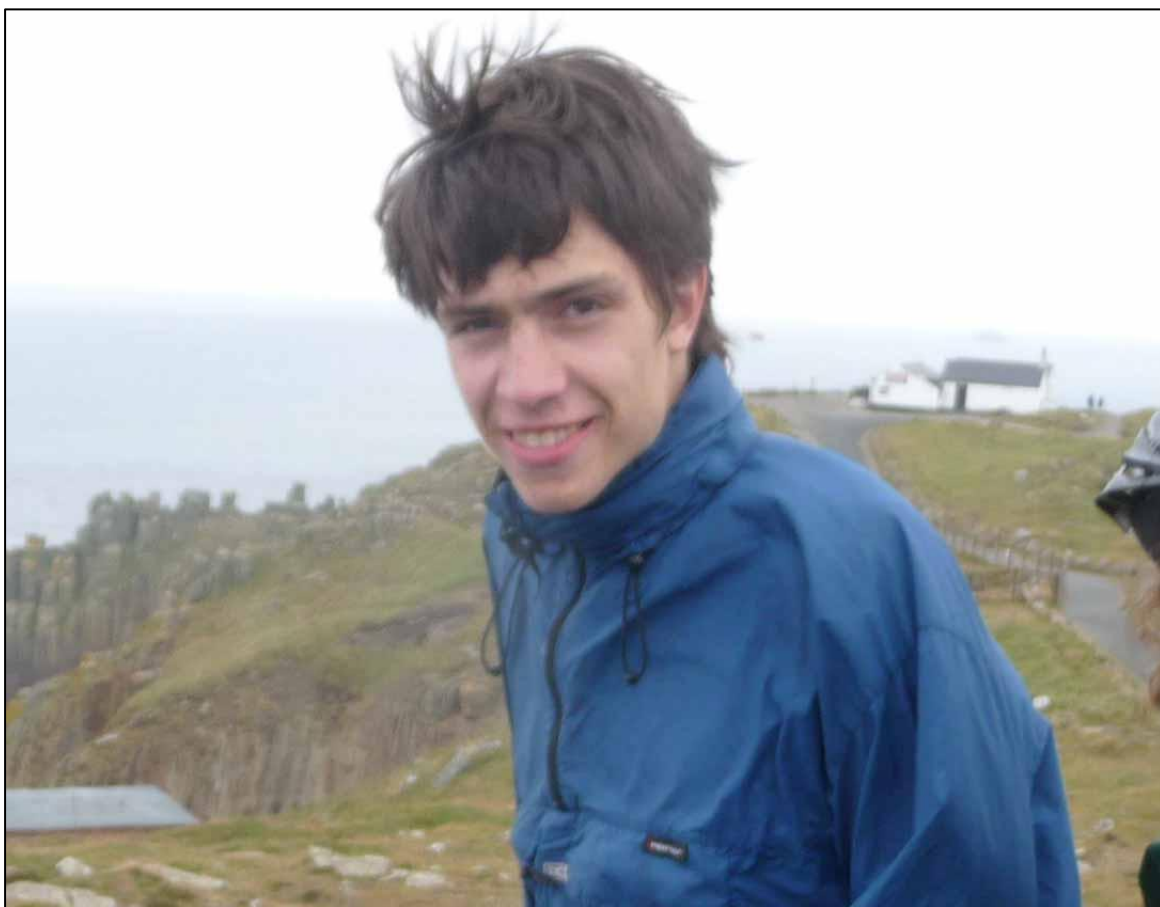
[www.midlandtrailquests.co.uk](http://www.midlandtrailquests.co.uk) Midland Trailquests. Events in Midlands, but as far South as Chilterns/Berks Downs.

## Oban 2011 - Top 10 M21E place for Pavel

Richard Rae

The biennial Scottish 6 Days Event was held this year in the vicinity of Oban on the west coast. Over 3200 competitors enjoyed the week, with many coming from abroad. Ten BKO members and a few others wearing the colours of other clubs journeyed north for a week of tough and technical orienteering. We were Janet and Bryce Gibson, Liz and Alan Yeadon (SARUM), Sally Collins, Catherine and Alan Springett, Stefan Stasuik, Andrew Graham, Dan and Andy (CUNOC) Straka, Keith McCarthy (RAFO), Pavel Prochazka and Richard Rae.

Most of us had a mixture of good and bad runs, but congratulations are due to new club member Pavel Prochazka who finished 9<sup>th</sup> in the top M21E class, a superb performance in the world-class field for this class. Congratulations are due, too, to Janet and Bryce Gibson who also made the top 10 in their more senior classes.



Pavel Prochazka

All of the Oban 2011 race areas had few line features, many marshes, and many colls and hills on open moorland with isolated patches of woodland. You navigated mainly by the contours to stay on course.

Day 1 was at Dunollie, just North of Oban. Many courses started on a sandy beach with views to the outer islands before heading inland to their 1<sup>st</sup> control with a direct through the marsh or round the paths option - most opted for the latter. This was perhaps the most “Southern” forest with reasonably firm short grass in places and many controls on gorse thickets. Early starters found these confusing, as the bracken surrounding them was yet to be

flattened. Apparently even the planner and controller had problems finding one control site on the day of the race.....

For day 2, we parked on the South shore of Loch Etive with views over to the venue for day 6. Ardnaskie was a physically tough, technical moorland with many hills, ridges and pockets of woodland. It paid here to stay on your bearing to find the control. Failure could take many minutes to recover - I lost contact and made two four minute errors, so, for me, this was a day to forget.

Day 3 returned to Craig Mhic Chailein, again south of Loch Etive, and the site of past 6 Days, JK, Scottish and British Championship events. This area was as technical as Day 2, but perhaps more runnable. The organisers had arranged a giant video screen to display the action at various radio sites, but most people seemed more interested in the results displays! BAOC Military Police manned traffic lights so that everyone could cross the busy A85 safely en route to the assembly field and back.

After a rest day, day 4 was SE of Oban at Torinturk, the Hill of the Boar. This area was perhaps technically simpler than days 2 and 3, but it was physically tough, and the courses were longer than usual. The first control for many was straight up the hill. Overnight rain had made the marshes wetter than anticipated and these proved hard going. Most BKO runners had an early start time, so helped make the bullock trails through the bracken and marshes for the later starters. Heavy rain added to the problems of early starters, so the early start slot meant that many BKO runners finished further down the field than on other days.

By contrast, BKO runners had a very late start on Day 5 and should have expected to benefit from the bullock trails. This day was held at Loch Nell and Shenavallie, a coastal peninsula north of Loch Etive and close to the event campsite. Some certainly benefited from the trails, but still suffered knee or waist high mud in places, as this area was very boggy - even the portaloos lorry arriving at the assembly field got bogged down (sorry), much to the consternation of the rapidly developing loo queue.

The day 5 area featured a number of intricate parallel wooded ridges rising above a very large open marsh adjacent to the sea. There were even marshes on top of some ridges. When navigating from one ridge to another you followed the trail through the marsh, but had to be sure of where you were when you reached the ridge on the other side to know which way to turn to the next control, so it was by no means a case of "follow the leader".

I had similar standards of runs on days 4 and 5, but finished 20<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> equal respectively, showing the effects of an early/late run. To even out this problem, clubs start in a different time slot of six on each day.

The final day featured a return to Ardchattan on the N shore of Loch Etive, and first used 10 years ago in the Lochaber 2001 6 days. This is a very runnable open hillside. It was much drier than the previous 2 days, so fewer bullock trails developed. Again, you navigated by the many small knolls and re-entrants, and ticking off the marshes. However, even small mistakes pushed you down the finish list. A two minute error on the 3<sup>rd</sup> last control on the downhill run to the finish cost me quite a few places in my position for the last day and possibly overall for the week.

The final placings for the M and W21E classes were based on the total time for all 6 events, so the elites had to finish on all days. The results show many big names mispunched and were disqualified. The elite competitions featured a mix of long and middle distance, a chasing start on day 4 and seeded start on day 6 with the leaders-to-date starting last to keep the suspense going to the very end. Alistair McCleod (EUOC) and Jenny Johansson (IFK Goteb, SWE) took the elite honours.

For the other classes, overall positions were determined by the sum of your best 4 scores for the week. For Oban 2011, rather than a score based on time as in previous 6 Days, your score for a day was your finish position in your class that day, or a large number if you mispunched, retired or did not start.

A 6 Days badge scheme added incentive to do well. This year, it was based on the number of active competitors, N, in your class and your score for the week. Gold (G), Silver (S) and Bronze (B) required a score less than or equal to  $0.8 \times N$ ,  $1.6 \times N$  and  $2.4 \times N$  respectively. I was pleased to get gold, but suspect that running at the young end of M65L helped. Others might agree!

Results for BKO are below. However, Janet, Bryce, Stefan and Keith did not compete on all 6 days, so might have finished higher.

Andy Straka (CUNOC)	W20L	11 <sup>th</sup>	(S)
Pavel Prochazka	M21E	9 <sup>th</sup>	
Keith McCarthy (RAFO)	M35S	28 <sup>th</sup>	
Dan Straka	M45L	53 <sup>rd</sup>	(S)
Catherine Springett	W50S	17 <sup>th</sup>	(S)
Andrew Graham	M55L	72 <sup>nd</sup>	(B)
Stefan Stasuik	M60L	42 <sup>nd</sup>	(S)
Sally Collins	W60S	27 <sup>th</sup>	(B)
Alan Springett	M60S	25 <sup>th</sup>	(S)
Liz Yeadon's (SARUM)	W65L	31 <sup>st</sup>	(S)
Richard Rae	M65L	14 <sup>th</sup>	(G)
Janet Gibson	W70L	9 <sup>th</sup>	(S)
Bryce Gibson	M70S	6 <sup>th</sup>	(S)
Alan Yeadon's (SARUM)	M75L	19 <sup>th</sup>	(B)

When not orienteering, there was much to do in the area. On the sunny rest day, the Monros of Ben Cruachan, Beinn a'Chochuill and Beinn Eunaich were crawling with orienteers not too concerned about exhausting themselves for the rest of the week. Janet and Bryce crossed the sea to the islands of Mull and Iona, and Sally journeyed on the scenic railway line across Rannoch Moor to Fort William and onwards over the Glenfinnan Viaduct ( now of Harry Potter fame) to Mallaig.



Ben Cruachan

There were many ruined castles to explore in the vicinity. Dunollie Castle even appeared on the Day 1 map marked as OOB, and offered a magnificent view across Oban Bay if you clambered up later. Kilchurn Castle by Loch Awe was visible on arrival soon after we had collected our race bibs and bought the T-shirt in Dalmally .



Kilchurn Castle



Or you could just relax and admire the scenery.



Loch Creran

All in all, it was another great week of well organised technical orienteering. The next two 6 Days will be on the Moray coast, with the 2015 event running in parallel with the WOC. I hope I'll be there.

## **Finding Organisers**

**Ken Ricketts**

### **Is it time to bring in the Professionals?**

We have recently come close to cancelling two events: Rushall in May, and the upcoming September event at Hawley. In both case this was due simply to the difficulty in finding anyone willing to act as the Organiser. This is despite the fact that we have only three major events per year, and over 200 members! If only 10% of the membership were ever prepared to act as organisers, we could cover our major events for the next 7 years, without anybody having to do the job more than once. Yet Katy Stubbs is acting as joint Organiser for Hawley despite having already been the Organiser for this year's Concorde Chase. This has prompted me to wonder – is it time that we considered paying for event Organisers?

## **Getting someone to do it**

On the day help at events is rarely a problem. There are plenty of people who are willing to come forward to act as marshals, put in a stint at Registration/Start etc. Getting a planner is not usually so difficult; the recent membership survey gave a number of names of people willing to plan events. Trying to get anyone to be an Organiser is a different matter entirely. A regular feature at committee meetings is going through the fixtures list trying to identify individuals to act as event officials. When the question of the organiser comes up, everyone tends to be studying the carpet avoiding eye contact with the poor fixtures secretary. They don't want to do it at all, or feel that they personally have already done enough this season. Why is this so?

It may be stating the obvious, but I believe the main reason is that people join BKO because they want to orienteer. Members are generally willing to help out as well, but the primary motivation is taking part. Helping on the day doesn't preclude this; you can do your stint and have a run as well, as a bonus usually at a reduced cost. The Planner obviously cannot run at the event, but then planning is in a way another version of orienteering. It is non-competitive and less physical, but still involves playing with maps and courses. You are setting the puzzles rather than trying to solve them.

Organising an event, on the other hand, doesn't really have much to do with orienteering. It's about budgeting, doing risk assessments, organising people and resources, booking the loos, wondering if the weather forecast means that you'll need a tent for the start team and generally trying to make sure all the non-orienteering stuff happens. It takes time and effort, you have to arrive early and leave late, and normally means that you are not going to get a run that day. Very much the Cinderella job; everyone else goes to the ball while you're stuck in the kitchen with a mountain of dirty dishes. Perhaps it isn't really surprising that so few are prepared to do it on a regular basis. Yet if no-one comes forward to organise events, then they won't happen. We appear to have reached, and possibly overstepped, the limits of what those individuals who can be prevailed upon to act as Organisers at all are prepared to do. Either we are going to run fewer events in the future, or we need to find capable organisers who are not bothered if they don't run. I wonder if the only way that we can reliably do that is to pay people to do the job. After all, the mapping is often done professionally. Both First Aid cover and Emit timing are services that are routinely bought in for our larger events. Why should Organising be any different?

## **Who would do the job?**

First thing to say is that, although some knowledge of orienteering would obviously be advantageous, it would not necessarily be essential. Events will be better run by a reliable and competent manager who knows little about orienteering (but does know who to ask for advice when necessary) than a competent orienteer who couldn't organise the proverbial in a brewery! This is especially true if the latter is only there because they were too polite to say no thank you when asked to do the job. They would need to be a reasonably 'outdoorsy' sort of person, prepared to tramp round muddy tracks and fields whatever the weather on the day. Sufficient computer literacy to use email and spreadsheets would be essential.

The detailed terms, and exactly what the Organiser was expected to provide for any given event, would have to be agreed in advance with a simple written agreement. The Organiser would not need to be a member of the club putting on the event (full BOF membership is

required though, for insurance purposes), although they would obviously have to work closely with club officials and the Planner. It might suit a (semi-)retired person with a bit of free time, but some of those who currently organise events have full-time jobs. An ideal candidate might be the spouse/parent of a regular orienteer who isn't really interested in running, is fed up with spending their weekends staying home alone or sitting waiting in the car, and would welcome the chance to do something useful while earning a little extra.

### **How much would it cost, and would this affect entry fees?**

It would significantly increase costs. Event officials are currently only paid expenses, and often do not even claim those in full. This could certainly not be expected of someone who is being paid to do the job. First aid cover last year was costing £15 an hour, while Emit charged 50p per competitor plus £1 per hired Emit card. The Organiser's presence on the day is required for longer than either first aid or Emit, and there would be other work to be done both in advance of the event and afterwards. I imagine that the cost would vary from around £100 for a local event to possibly a 4-figure sum for a National event, depending upon the size of the event, the Organiser's experience and the exact duties being undertaken. According to the club's and the Organiser's preferences they might be paid a flat fee, a 'per head' cost, a percentage of the income (net or gross), or some combination of these. My guess is that it would add between £1 and £2 per head to entry fees. Even so, our entry fees would still be pretty cheap compared to many sporting events.

### **What are the alternatives?**

If you are one of the very large majority of members who have never volunteered to organise an event, you could step up to the plate and help to spread the burden! As I noted above, if enough people come forward then it won't be necessary for anyone to do it more than once every few years.

Another possibility is to have joint organisers, so that the job can be done in shifts in the same way that other 'on the day' jobs are, giving the organisers the opportunity to run. This could be difficult to co-ordinate, but might suit a husband-and-wife team, or work colleagues.

The only remaining alternative that I can see is that we will almost certainly have fewer events in the future ... unless you have any other suggestions?

The ideas expressed above are my own personal ramblings, and do not represent club policy.

## **Pilgrims Way Challenge**

**Keith Ellis**

As a space filler just before going to print with this newsletter, I thought that BKO members may be interested in hearing about a trail challenge, a cross between running and orienteering with controls being on or near paths and the event not intended to be a technical challenge. I entered my first on 28<sup>th</sup> August, the PilgrimWey Challenge (no typo) organised by GO.

I opted for the medium course which was 14k but my Garmin GPS watch logged at just under 18k with 384m of climb. This was the longest run I had undertaken for 20 years with just a couple of 10m races a few years ago being the closest I have come to this. Consequently I was shattered after the 1km uphill finish to the top of the downs.

I enjoyed the course, all on paths and a mix of up and down the North Downs, running along the canal and a few urban controls in South Guildford. I would go again next year. I wasn't expecting a spectacular finish spot and came 10<sup>th</sup> of 15, a control in the wrong place on the secondary detailed map provided and running up as long steep hill and down rather than a parallel flatter route didn't help (no contours on the map). Richard Rae ran and was pleased with finishing just 5 minutes after me and beating his target time of two hours.

I'll certainly look out for trail runs in the future and this one was good, being just before the start of the season to help avoid the first event of the season fitness shortfall.

## **Latest British Orienteering Rankings**

Ahead of the season start in September, this was where the top rankings were for BKO members at the time of writing (27<sup>th</sup> August). The key point to note is that we have a new member who has shot to the top of the table in an impressive 44<sup>th</sup> place in the national rankings. Welcome to Pavel Prochazka and congratulations on your ranking position.

There has been a lot of debate about ranking points and many of us don't understand exactly how they work but what we can say is that more events now qualify for ranking points than was the case a year or so ago and so there should be more opportunities for BKO members to register six ranking scores. With Martin Wilson's new competition, we will also have another dimension to the ranking points. It will be interesting to see how we all fare this season.

<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>YOB</u>	<u>M/F</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Contributing scores</u>
1 (44)	Pavel Prochazka	BKO	1990	M	7614	1275, 1276, 1256, 1266, 1270, 1271
2 (502 +15)	Ian Cooper	BKO	1943	M	6820	1152, 1142, 1123, 1149, 1130, 1124
3 (568 +11)	Simon Turton	BKO	1965	M	6736	1120, 1129, 1125, 1132, 1104, 1126
4 (613 +16)	Dan Straka	BKO	1966	M	6685	1124, 1095, 1093, 1100, 1096, 1177
5 (663 -7)	Martin Wilson	BKO	1947	M	6633	1095, 1104, 1124, 1095, 1140, 1075
6 (704 +22)	David Jukes	BKO	1952	M	6580	1103, 1147, 1084, 1070, 1086, 1090
7 (837 +20)	Keith Ellis	BKO	1964	M	6446	1083, 1068, 1093, 1076, 1045, 1081
8 (882 +24)	Andy Strakova	BKO	1991	F	6410	1127, 1069, 1042, 1054, 1046, 1072
9 (901 +23)	Richard Rae	BKO	1946	M	6396	1108, 1065, 1074, 1046, 1065, 1038
10 (913 +22)	Andrew Graham	BKO	1955	M	6388	1039, 1097, 1050, 1059, 1046, 1097
11 (936 +24)	Alexander Moore	BKO	1992	M	6367	942, 1022, 1100, 1093, 1082, 1128
12 (955 +22)	Stefan Stasiuk	BKO	1951	M	6356	1073, 1053, 1054, 1059, 1051, 1066
13 (1111 +29)	Andrew Southwood	BKO	1964	M	6196	1013, 1105, 1018, 1025, 1012, 1023
14 (1298 +23)	Derick Mercer	BKO	1964	M	6000	1018, 991, 992, 996, 995, 1008
15 (1311 +30)	Ken Ricketts	BKO	1954	M	5983	1009, 1026, 1002, 977, 1008, 961
16 (1370 +35)	John Briggs	BKO	1958	M	5928	1104, 1034, 921, 948, 935, 986
17 (1562 +31)	Alan Springett	BKO	1950	M	5730	943, 953, 946, 1002, 953, 933
18 (1691 +2)	Peter Bennett	BKO	1940	M	5589	918, 928, 929, 968, 922, 924
19 (1850 +41)	Gina Starling	BKO	1970	F	5411	958, 886, 880, 905, 890, 892
20 (1886 +34)	Steve Fletcher	BKO	1951	M	5374	979, 940, 824, 877, 833, 921
21 (1920 +32)	Clive Jenkins	BKO	1966	M	5335	867, 869, 840, 934, 942, 883
22 (1940 +33)	Nigel Jefferies	BKO	1962	M	5318	956, 911, 900, 835, 821, 895
23 (2026 +35)	Neil Frankum	BKO	1969	M	5218	1097, 1023, 1070, 1035, 993
24 (2040 +36)	Steve Bouch	BKO	1950	M	5198	833, 845, 946, 838, 871, 865
25 (2072 +38)	Araba McMillan	BKO	1964	F	5164	897, 856, 913, 869, 785, 844

“Probably the most difficult OO Cup terrain so far...” ran the advertising blurb. Well, I couldn’t resist that challenge, could I? Slovenia is famous for its intricate karst terrain, with detailed rock and contour features presenting a real challenge to even the best orienteers. So, one Easyjet ticket later, there I was in west Slovenia raring to go.

The OO Cup comprises five successive days of orienteering, with only the second day being Middle distance. Overall results are based on your cumulative time over the five days, with no discards, so every error counts against you, and you have to find all the controls! It’s like playing five rounds of golf at the Open against the professionals, but as an 18 handicapper. You hope you’ll go round in level par with no mistakes, but in your heart you know that will not happen. I just wanted to test myself against the best and see how I got on. I set myself an informal target of a top half finish overall in my class, to give me something to aim at, but had no real clue how well I might do.

The week before the event the temperatures in Slovenia had apparently been 45 deg C, but it was cool throughout the competition. A pleasantly small event, with 900+ competitors, and several national teams present on M21E, including a British team. M60 had 28 competitors entered all five days, plus a few others only doing some days. There were a few Brits, probably staying on after WMOC in Hungary, but mainly it was other Europeans. Maps were at 1:7500 for most days, perhaps a warning of how intricate the terrain would be, and M60 courses seemed short (around 4k) with 5-6% climb.

At the training day beforehand, I spent six hours (yes!) in the forest studying rock and contour detail and how it was mapped. The areas were full of deep karst depressions – best to run round those – which could have huge crags within their sides, and hill(ock)s which had small, large and very large boulders and crags. Anyone could go mad trying to read all this on the way round. I could think of no strategy other than trying to use the major contour features, rough compass to an attack point, and go slow into the controls - and hope for a large chunk of luck!

I could write a bible describing each leg of my event, and the problems I had, but perhaps it’s better if I summarise some of the key points:

- The terrain was mostly runnable, though with a lot of rock making direct running on compass difficult. Pacing distances was also impractical for long stretches because of this.
- The maps were incredibly detailed, with rock and contour detail everywhere. This made it extremely difficult to read the appropriate amount of detail. If one lost contact with the map, it usually led to expensive mistakes, as it was very hard to relocate exactly, even after just a few metres from a known position. One rock-strewn hillock or large depression looks remarkably like any other when you’re unclear exactly where you are!
- Many control circles contained a multiplicity of different features: crags, depressions, re-entrants, etc. It was necessary therefore to treat the control circle as almost a separate leg. Having (hopefully) reached an appropriate attack point, you had to pick your way into the control feature by feature. Twice I missed controls by around 10m or less through not

reading the exact topography of the immediate surroundings. I wouldn't have minded, but these mistakes cost me many minutes each time!

- There were small paths and tracks marked in many areas between the contour detail. These could offer faster routes. However, many of the paths were overgrown; they had many junctions, and could be very complex to follow for longer distances. Heading for the first path in such a sequence was fraught, as you could not be sure just which path you had found.

Any mistakes were very expensive in time, as relocation was so difficult. And sooner or later, everyone did make mistakes. The winning times in M60 were 12-15 mins/k, depending on terrain and climb, which gives an idea of how tricky it was to get right. I've provided a Highlights section at the end of this report which has some map detail as reference. I finished 14<sup>th</sup> overall, thus meeting my target of a top half finish, which was good, though a top ten finish was clearly within my reach with fewer errors.

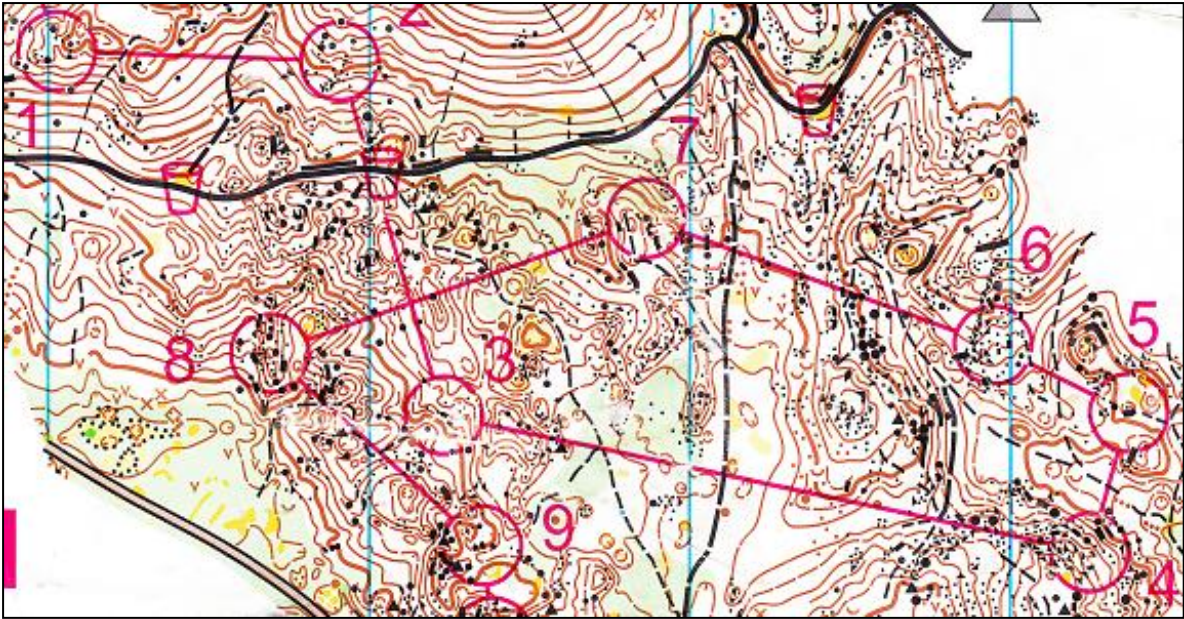
Day positions were 17<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> (best Brit position of the week!). My overall time was over 40% behind the winner, and included an awesome 86 minutes of errors. But Days 1 to 3 were really very difficult to get right all the time. The only way to succeed was to stay in full contact with the map throughout, and navigate carefully through all the detail in the control circle. My technique in both these areas clearly needs to improve. On the plus side, though, I was leading at one point on Day 1, 4<sup>th</sup> during Day 4, 5<sup>th</sup> during Day 5, and had twelve 'podium splits' during the event (a podium split is where my split time on a leg was 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest in class, excluding the run-in). So I was on the pace when I got things right.

The event was very well organised, and used a team of just 30 people throughout. The event details were a 6-page on-line booklet, and quite adequate (compare this with our current 60-page bibles for major UK events!). We also had small warm-up maps each day to take with us to the start, a lovely touch. They did sometimes place controls on similar features only 40m apart, which could confuse the unwary. I thought the rule was for 60m separation.

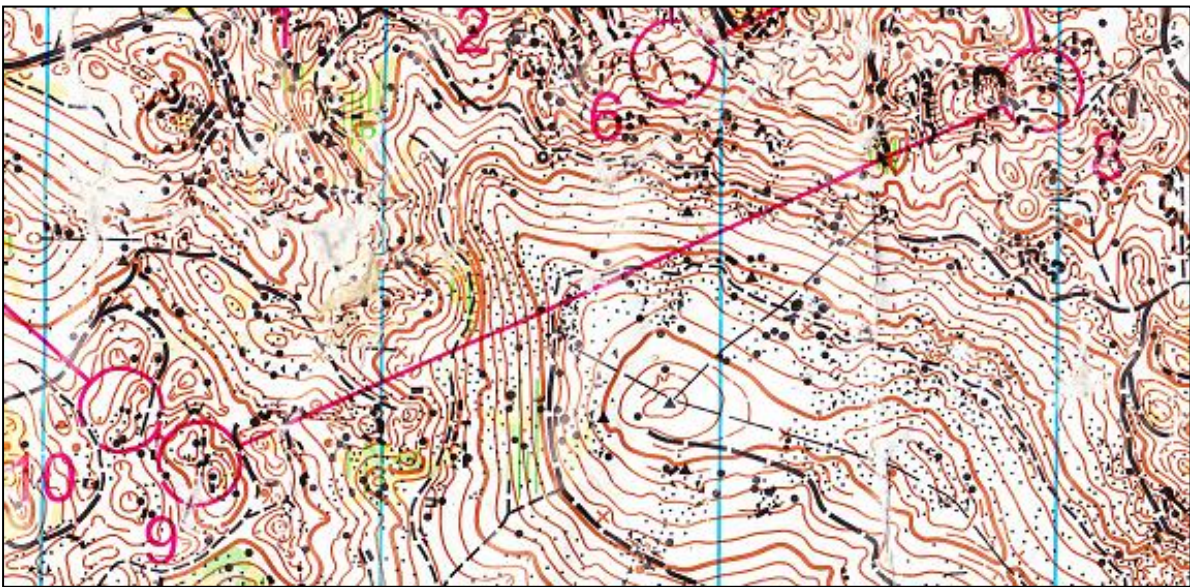
Slovenia is a very beautiful and hilly country. I used some of the days to visit some sites. I had a trip down an old mercury mine, which had been one of the world's major mercury producers for 500 years, until legislation banned the product from most applications. I also visited some beautiful karst caves.

Driving on minor roads in Slovenia is quite tiring in a small rental car. The roads are narrow and very twisty. To reach the mercury mining town, I had to negotiate eight hairpins in succession. Signposting was not always clear either. The best thing I did was to bring my TomTom car satnav with me. This was brilliant, and I never once had to use an atlas to get anywhere. It is so much safer when you're travelling on your own. I just wish I had it with me in some of the trickier parts of the forests!

**OO Cup Highlights** Some highlights of the competition to consider at your leisure – a luxury I never had!



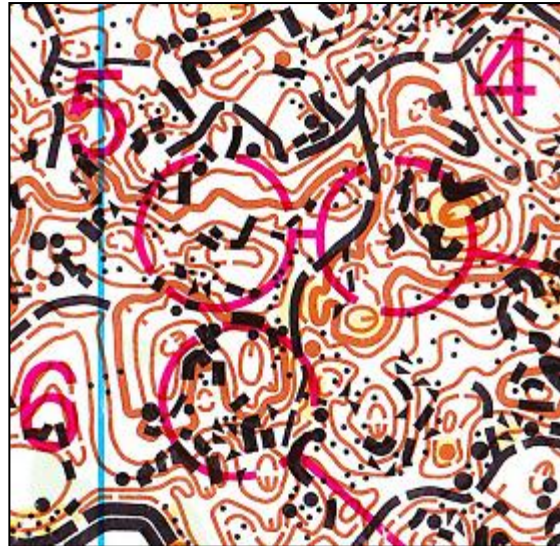
**Day 1:** Leg 7-8: The hardest leg of the week. Incredibly difficult to stay in contact with the map throughout the leg. Too hard for me, especially on the first day.



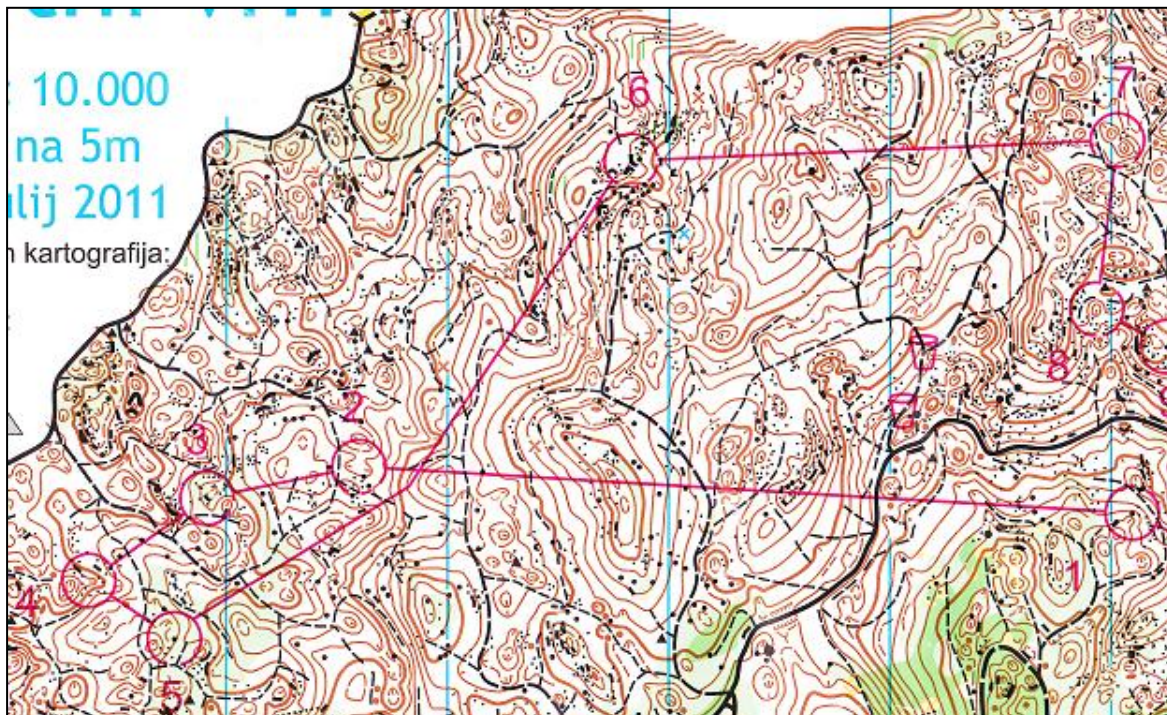
**Day 2:** Leg 8-9: A superb long leg, very hilly and rough. Relocating on the valley floor near the control was very awkward.

**Day 3:** [map on front cover]. Legs 4-10. Some of the most difficult O to be found anywhere. Took path routes to N of 4, but missed last L turn, and ended up at 5. On 9-10 I took a low contour route E round the hill, but this was slower than taking early climb and going more direct. I just wanted a break from complex terrain for a while! Leg 5-6 is described on the back cover.

**Day 3:** Legs 4-6: Map expanded here to 1:2,500. Does this scale make the route to 6 any easier? Hardly! The path to the E does not go anywhere near the control. Can you work out the detail round 6?



[The terrain actually comprises one huge karst depression to the SSW of 5, with major crags to the E of that, then another very deep depression to the E of those. The second depression has several huge crags on its S side. The control is on the lowest of these crags, very hard to reach either from the N (uphill) or S (dangerous downhill route used if coming round from the track to the E). All in all, an absolute nightmare to execute at all, never mind quickly, especially in the rain!]



**Day 5:** Map is 1:10,000. Excellent long legs. Contour shapes on second half of 5-6 were very hard to read accurately on the run: what was uphill and what was downhill?