

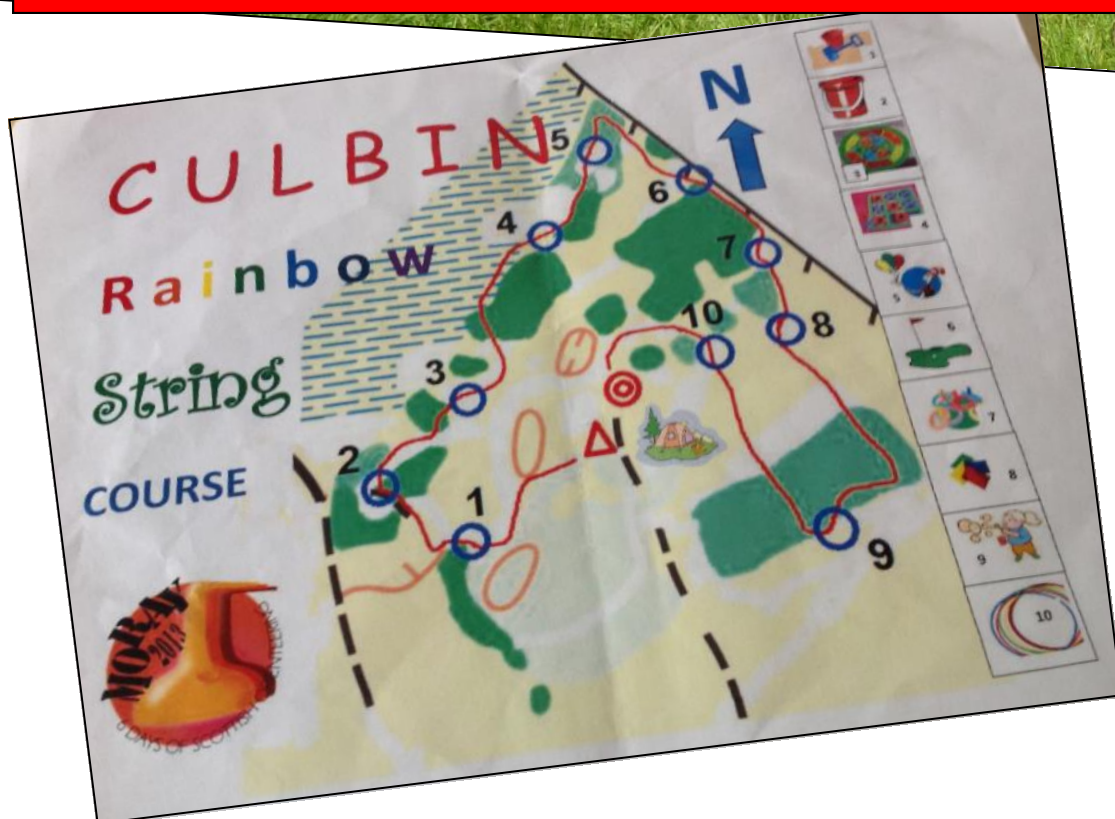
Berkshire Orienteers

Newsletter

September 2013



**SCOA Team Championships 2013:
BKO take Gold and Bronze in the Handicap Class**



Your 2013-2014 Committee

Chairman:	Katy Stubbs	chairman@bko.org.uk	0118 978 2875
Secretary:	Derek Mercer	secretary@bko.org.uk	
Fixtures Secretary:	Andy Parry	fixtures@bko.org.uk	
Treasurer:	Peter Entwistle	treasurer@bko.org.uk	01628 635278
Development Officer:	Ken Ricketts		
Membership Secretary:	Ian Hudson	membership@bko.org.uk	
4 Committee Members :			
Fiona Clough, David Jukes (newsletter@bko.org.uk), Dave Rogers and Brian Sewell			

Did you do anything exciting this Summer? Ian Hudson is able to say 'YES'!

As a longstanding challenge to do something really ambitious, he ascended Mount Belukha 4500m (14500 ft), the highest peak in the Altai mountains. This is in Russia and close to the Mongolian and Chinese borders. The trip involved flying to Moscow and then a further 4 hours flying time east from Moscow. He then endured 13 hours in a minibus, with some gravel roads, to reach the start point. Then a 3 day walk in, through forest and alpine meadows, to reach the base camp. Finally up a couple of glaciers including crevasses! Not forgetting that he then had to make the return journey. **Well done Ian!**



Newsletter Distribution

Our thanks to those who have indicated that they will be happy to only have the newsletter as a pdf file sent by e-mail as this does save the club money.

The newsletter is prepared in full colour but the printed version only has colour on the cover sheet. The pdf though is in full colour! However the newsletter is always added to the website a few days after publication so even those getting the printed version should take a look - often the maps are much better in colour!

It you are willing to only receive the newsletter by e-mail as a pdf file, please let me know and I will add your name to the list.
newsletter@bko.org.uk



Correction
The Editor tries to ensure accuracy in the material published in this newsletter. When a mistake occurs, then an apology is printed.

Unfortunately the label to the photo on the back cover of the July issue was of **Lynne Moore** (and not Christine Artus). My apologies to both of them.



Editorial

September schools start again, the nights draw in, the nettles die back, the first frost are expected and the Autumn sequence of orienteering events is eagerly anticipated. Although our own events will provide a great selection of local woods, there are opportunities further afield. For me, the Autumn highlight is the November Classic in the New Forest at the start of November. Last year the event was cancelled at short notice due to the heavy overnight rain - lets hope that is not repeated this year!

There is plenty to report on in this issue. The Scottish 6-Day event is the largest festival held in the UK and took place in July so I have included several reports from members who travelled North for the event.

My thanks to all the contributors and please remember that I always welcome submissions - articles, news, comments, route choice discussions and especially photos.

Whatever the weather, I hope you are able to enjoy the early Autumn events.

David Jukes

Club Notes

Keeping you informed about the club and its members

SCOA Team Championships 2013

This event, which is normally a traditional relay, was this year organised in conjunction with the SARUM event at Fonhill on 5th July. This used the format of a 'Harris Relay' which involves 3 people collaborating to visit all the controls on the map. A few core controls (the 'spine') had to be visited by all 3 team members but most had to be visited by just one. There was also a heavy time penalty if a control was missed during the event. Deciding who would visit each control was part of the event as the maps were only provided after the start.

Two BKO teams were entered into the Handicap Class - this provided for additional time for older (or younger) team members. The BKO teams were (1) **Martin Wilson, Ian Cooper and David Jukes**, and (2) **Richard Rae, Katy Stubbs and Simon Turton**. Since none had previous experience of competing in a Harris Relay, Martin made enquires and got some useful tips from Colin Dickson of BAOC (Harris Relays are quite common in British Army events). Essentially one person usually takes responsibility for allocating the controls and you don't waste time debating who should visit which ones.

The event was during the July heatwave making running tiring and the bracken and nettles had grown rapidly. Relatively few SCOA teams had entered but enough to provide good competition - there were additional teams from clubs in SWOA but they were not eligible for the SCOA Champs. There was actually only one team in the Open Class - a family team from BADO. The Handicap Class had a total of 21 teams. First was a team from Wessex but second, and first SCOA team, was the BKO team of Martin, Ian and David. Three Gold Medals! Coming in 11th, but as the third SCOA team, was the other BKO team of Richard, Katy and Simon. Three bronze medals! For the record, the second placed team was another BADO team (actually including our local member **Andy Macgregor** so we could also claim a single silver medal as well!)

SCOA Sprint Championships 2013

August Bank Holiday turned out to be a warm sunny day for once. It was consisted of. open event It was when Thames Valley OC organised a 2 stage event – the times for the 2 races being combined to decide the overall results. The results were also used to decide the results of

the SCOA Sprint Championships 2013. Those competitors who were members of the SCOA region eligible for this.

The venue was the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in Oxfordshire, a complex mixture of large building and smaller complex areas. An artificial hill was a surprise on an otherwise flat campus. The large Diamond cyclotron building was a major feature and there was some discussion as to whether its huge magnets would upset compasses. However, as in many sprint races, compasses were hardly needed as the buildings were distinctive features – the challenge was to choose the quickest route around the buildings.

BKO managed to get a good selection of SCOA medals with the medal winners listed below. Unfortunately all those listed had left by the time the prize giving was held so no pictures of the medal winners. However Dick Rae stood in for them and came away with 7 medals!

Young Junior Women 12-
2nd Jennifer Ellis W10

Young Junior Men 12-
2nd Dominic Ellis M10

Junior Men 16-
3rd Daniel Smith M14

SuperVet Women 55+
3rd Gill Godbold W55

UltraVet Men 65+
1st Martin Wilson M65

3rd Ian Cooper M70

UltraVet Women 65+
3rd Gill Bennett W70



Dick Rae with 7 medals!



Race 2

Above: Jillian Ullersperger
Right: Derek Mercer (using the zebra crossing)



The Berkshire School Games Orienteering Final ***Denise Harper***

This year saw the re-introduction of the Berkshire schools orienteering competition, this time as part of the national initiative, the School Games. Previously we took part under the umbrella of the Berkshire Youth Games – different names but essentially similar competitions.

The majority of the Berkshire School Sport Partnerships took part, and the final was held at Wellington College at the beginning of July. The general admin was organised by the School Games personnel, leaving BKO free to just concentrate on delivering the competition and we were also lucky enough to be allocated a number of adult volunteers from Mars in Slough, who were able to act as marshals and to help with the start procedure.

On the day we had 5 teams competing, as unfortunately Caversham Primary, representing Reading, were a no-show. The competition was intense, and it was gratifying to see how well prepared most teams were, having already experienced competitive orienteering to win their place to represent their partnership in the finals. As usual, we ran a very slick performance which was greatly appreciated by all, with results declared within minutes of the last competitors finishing.



Position	School Sport Partnership	School	Score
1	Bracknell Forest	Ascot Heath Juniors	19
2	Windsor	St Edward's	31
3	West Berks East	St Nicolas	47
4	West Berks West	Whitelands Park	60
5	Slough	Wexham Court	87



The results of the competition are shown in the table, with Ascot Heath Juniors returning to their previous winning form, and also a strong performance from a school previously unknown to us, St Edwards representing Windsor.

We have already been asked to provide an orienteering competition again in 2014, and I have also received preliminary enquiries from Ascot and Maidenhead who would like to be involved, so all is looking healthy for schools competition in Berkshire next year.

The UK's Best Orienteers 2013.

Is it possible to determine the top 100 orienteers taking into account the impact of age? An article, written by Dave Nevell of DVO, in the June 2013 issue of CompassSport attempted to do this. Using the National Ranking List data for 13th June 2013, the top 100 have been determined. The mathematical method used to 'normalise' the ranking scores are not provided in the article. Also, there are of course debates as to the method used to determine the ranking list in the first place.

Ignoring these issues, top was Carol McNeil of LOC (born in 1944) with first male being Colin Dickson of BAOC (born 1955) who was 4th overall. Only one BKO member makes the list. **Ian Cooper** (born 1943 and an M70) comes in at 60th. Congratulations Ian!

Committee Discussions

The Committee last met on the 11th July. Matters raised and discussed included:

- There was further extended discussion about the future of the clubs Emit controls, cards and related IT systems. **Brian Sewell** had investigated some of the costs including the alternative option of switching over to a full SI based system. It was recognised that the club needed to invest in new computing whichever system was adopted in the future. It was agreed that a suitable laptop would be purchased.
- Future events were discussed and **Fiona Clough** and **Derek Mercer** offered to take on the role of organiser for next year's Southern Championships which we will be staging at Star Posts. This had been the biggest gap in our officials since offers had been received for some of our other BKO events.
- Not on the provisional event list was a New Year's Day event. It was agreed that it would be good to hold this event and it was agreed to investigate once again staging it at Whiteknights. It would be good if someone would take on the role of 'organiser' for this.
- Another option which **Katy Stubbs** suggested was an urban event in Reading next September. This will be considered at the next meeting so comments on the idea would be welcomed.
- As well as his work on events, **Andy Parry** has made some progress with updating the website but there is still some work to be done to create a new style.
- **Josie Rogers** had set up our Facebook page last year but **David Jukes** has now been added as an 'administrator'. He will aim to regularly update the pages with additional items of interest to members.
- **Dave Rogers** is planning to provide some coaching at forthcoming BKO Saturday events. There is also the possibility of a dedicated 'Coaching Day' at some point. It was difficult to know how much interest there would be in this—he would like to hear from people who might be interested in this.
- The Committee will be discussing an updated 'Development Plan' at the next meeting - our last one is now out of date!

Some of the other items discussed are mentioned elsewhere in this issue.



Berkshire Orienteers on Facebook

Are you a Facebook user? The **Berkshire Orienteers** site is now displaying a more regular selection of news items, events and photos. Don't forget to 'like' the site and get updates direct to your main page. Also why not promote the page to your friends and increase their knowledge about orienteering?



Club Nights

Club Nights start again on

Wednesday 11 September, 6:30 until 8pm.

We are returning to Birch Hill Primary School, Leppington, Birch Hill, RG12 7WW.

So what do we do at Club Nights? The simple answer is we cover most of the skills that you need to improve as an orienteer.

Over the last year we looked at many different aspects including the following:

- hill training
- fartlek (a type of interval training especially suited to orienteering)
- warming up and cooling down
- judgment of distance
- using compasses and bearings
- understanding maps, symbols, vegetation, contours
- control descriptions, what do they really mean and how they can help you
- pre race preparation
- how to plan routes and execute them effectively
- recovering from mistakes
- different types of terrain
- post race review

Activities have ranged from indoor mazes and map making, sprint races and other exercises such as compass and pacing in the school grounds to night events in the nearby park and urban races. We usually have two coaches present and always try to make activities suitable for juniors / adult newcomers and more experienced orienteers.

We are always happy to take suggestions and provide what members want. For example if a group wanted to start training together, the school would be a good base, we have the gym so even could set up circuit training, say once a month if that is what people want.

We also look at upcoming events and talk about recent ones. Talking is often over tea/coffee and biscuits during the evening, but we usually also follow on at the Crooked Billet at Honey Hill so you can always join us there for a drink. If you are thinking of doing so then I recommend you call first to check where we are going.

Katy Stubbs, 07801 710641

Membership Memo's

Ian Hudson

Over the summer I spent some time in Siberia, not orienteering I hasten to add but looking at rocks and glaciers on the way up a 4500m peak. This meant I was out of contact for almost three weeks, no cell phone coverage or Internet access; it was like stepping back into the 70's. We had to talk to each other around the campfire each evening and practise those interpersonal skills, like commenting on a person's actions during the day without insulting them (too much). But it also meant new BKO members had to wait until I returned to get my usual welcoming Email.

So, after a belated note, a warm welcome to the one pair of new members since last newsletter:

- **Toni & Eddie Whittle** from Reading, I hope to see you in the forest soon. I am the one with the beard.

**Club Barbeque —
Wednesday 17th July**



BKO Youth League 2013-14



Our Youth League is upon us again! The League normally uses our Winter Saturday Series. Details of these events can be seen on pages 10-11.

Although open to individuals, there is also a team league which is aimed at Schools, Scouts, Guides and other youth groups (although official orienteering clubs are not eligible!). There is a page on the BKO website which gives guidance and a link to the 2013-14 Youth League Rules.

See:

<http://www.bko.org.uk/content/2011/09/19/berkshire-orienteers-youth-league-2011-12>

Summary of the Youth League Rules

There are eight nominated Youth League events. At each event there will be colour coded courses - White, Yellow, Orange and Light Green will always be available although others (such as Blue) may also be provided. Depending upon the actual age of the competitor on the day of the event (*and not their standard age class*), a particular course is recommended as shown shaded in the table below. Competitors are permitted to run other courses although there are restrictions as shown in the table. Also in the table are the 'guideline' speeds (in minutes per kilometre) that would be expected for an experienced orienteer. If a competitor achieves this speed, they will score 100 points. Slower runs score proportionally fewer points, and faster runs score more points. For each 3% faster than target speed, 1 point is added; for each 3% slower, a point is subtracted.

Although the Youth League rules allow competitors to run more than one course at an event and take their best score, this does not extend to running the same course more than once. If that occurs, only the lowest score will be accepted, as a competitor who has already completed the course once will have an unfair advantage. Youth League rules allow for pairs, but not for groups. Groups of more than two running together will not be scored. There are more details of special cases (pairs, shadowing, etc) on the full rules (see the website).

An individual's score for the League will be the sum of their best 4 event scores. A team's score for an event will be the scores for their best 4 individuals, regardless of class.

	Courses				
Age Band	White	Yellow	Orange	Light Green	Blue
Under 10	7:00	8:30	10:00	N/A	N/A
10-11	6:15	7:30	8:45	N/A	N/A
12-13	5:30	6:30	7:30	8:30	N/A
14-15	4:30	5:30	6:30	7:30	N/A
16+	N/A	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00

Prizes

To qualify for any prize a competitor must have scored points in at least 4 events over the course of the season. There will be a prize for the overall highest score, and a prize for the winner in each age band. To qualify for a prize in the team competition a group must have runners scoring in at least 4 different events over the course of the season. There will be an award for every individual completing at least 4 events over the course of the season.

Contact our Youth League co-ordinator, **Ken Ricketts** on **youthleague@bko.org.uk** for more information.

2012-13 Youth League: There is a correction to the list of winners published in the last Newsletter. Unfortunately one competitor (James Waite) had an incorrect age recorded at the final event. When this was corrected, the winner of the 14-15 age class becomes Luke Barrows.

The prize giving is being held prior to the start of the first 2013-14 on the 7th September.

Event Summary

This listing, provided by Andy Parry, shows a selection of forthcoming events. It is extracted from the national listing and shows all Level A events (important national events including championships) but only more local events or activities at lower levels. For a full listing, look at the British Orienteering web site.

Date	Name	Level	Club	Venue	Town
Sat 7 Sep	BKO Winter Saturday Series (Swinley East)	Level D	BKO	Swinley East	Bracknell
Sat 14 Sep	SN - Saturday Series 1	Level D	SN	Horsell Common	Woking
Sat 14 Sep	TVOC Saturday Series Bernwood	Level D	TVOC	Bernwood	Oxford
Wed 18 Sep	Military League(South) Event	Level D	BAOC	Minley woods	Camberley
Sat 21 Sep	LOK Ultrasprint (UKOL16)	Level B	LOK	Victoria Park	Hackney
Sun 22 Sep	London City Race (UKOL17)	Level B	SLOW	London Docklands	London
Sat 28 Sep	GO Guildford Urban Race	Level B	GO	Guildford	Guildford
Sun 29 Sep	CHIG Regional SE League	Level B	CHIG	Epping East	Epping
Sun 29 Sep	BKO SCOA League Event	Level C	BKO	Yateley Heath	Yateley
Sat 5 Oct	SARUM Colour coded +Dorset Schools League	Level D	SARUM	Stonedown Woods	Salisbury
Sun 6 Oct	SO - level C	Level B	SO	Rewell Woods, Arundel	Arundel
Sat 12 Oct	SN - Saturday Series 2	Level D	SN	Pyestock	Fleet
Sat 12 Oct	BKO Winter Saturday Series	Level D	BKO	Black Park	Slough
Sun 13 Oct	TVOC Regional Event	Level C	TVOC	Penn Wood	High Wycombe
Sun 13 Oct	SLOW Trail Challenge Half Marathon	Level D	SLOW	Richmond Park	Roehampton
Sat 19 Oct	TVOC Saturday Series Furze Brake	Level D	TVOC	Furze Brake	Abingdon
Sat 2 Nov	Salisbury City Race (UKOL18)	Level B	SARUM	Salisbury	Salisbury
Sun 3 Nov	SOC November Classic (UKOL19)	Level B	SOC	Round Hill	Southampton
Sat 9 Nov	Wessex Night League	Level D	SARUM	Grovely Woods West TBC	Salisbury
Sat 9 Nov	BKO Winter Saturday Series	Level D	BKO	Cold Ash	Newbury
Sat 9 Nov	TVOC Saturday Series Kingswood	Level D	TVOC	Kingswood	High Wycombe
Sun 10 Nov	SN Regional SE League	Level B	SN	Frith and Windmill Hill	Deepcut (nr Frimley)
Sun 10 Nov	Dorset Schools & SCOA League event	Level C	SARUM	Grovely West	Salisbury

Date	Name	Level	Club	Venue	Town
Sat 16 Nov	SN - Saturday Series 3	Level D	SN	Wisley	Woking
Sat 16 Nov	Wessex Night League - Hatchwarren	Level D	BADO	Hatchwarren	Basingstoke
Sun 17 Nov	BADO Level C and SCOA League Event	Level C	BADO	Pamber Forest	Tadley

BKO Club Championships:

Note that the above BADO event on Sunday 17th November is expected to be the venue for this year's BKO Club Championships. More details will follow by e-mail!

BKO Fixtures

The following details is a separate list of all BKO events over a much longer period. Don't forget that offers of help at these will be much appreciated!

Date	Event Name	Level	Location	Town	Grid Ref
Sat 7-Sep-13	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Swinley East	Bracknell	SU906661
Sun 29-Sep-13	BKO SCOA League Event	Level C	Yateley Heath	Yateley	SU802578
Sat 12-Oct-13	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Black Park	Slough	TQ005832
Sat 9-Nov-13	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Cold Ash	Newbury	SU520737
Sat 7-Dec-13	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Benyon's Enclosure	Mortimer	SU630641
Wed 1-Jan-14	BKO New Year Score	Level D	Whiteknights	Reading	SU733719
Sat 11-Jan-14	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Yateley Common	Yateley	SU833592
Sun 26-Jan-14	Southern Championships	Level A	Star Posts	Bracknell	SU875661
Sat 8-Feb-14	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Bloom Wood	High Wycombe	SU860890
Sat 1-Mar-14	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Star Posts	Bracknell	SU875661
Sat 5-Apr-14	BKO Winter Saturday/Youth League	Level D	Burghfield	Mortimer	SU639651
Sun 18-May-14	BKO SCOA League Event	Level C	Rushall Woods	Reading	SU802578
Sun 28-Sep-14	BKO SCOA League Event (TBA)	Level C	Birch Hill (TBC)	Reading	
Sun 25-Jan-15	BKO Concorde Chase	Level B	Cold Ash	Newbury	SU520737

Know your sport: Electronic Timing - Emit and SI

There are three obvious questions which need to be answered when someone completes an orienteering event:

- how long did you take?
- did you find all the controls? and
- did you get them in the right order?

For a fair competition, for the first question the organisers have to ensure accurate timing. For the

second and third there has to be a system allowing the competitor to demonstrate that they did actually reach the controls in the correct order.

The original system was to have clocks at the start and finish with competitors times being written down as they finish. The total time was then calculated by subtraction - not always accurately!

Proving that a control had been visited was by the use of a

control card which had to be punched at each control. Pin punches were used to perforate the card with different shapes. Courses had to be designed to avoid the risk that competitors would take the controls out of order. If necessary, there was the option of having a manned control to check everyone's card (often manned controls were threatened but not actually implemented).

Now though we have electronic systems which do all this - and much more! There are though two competing types of system, **Emit** and **SI**.

Emit

The Emit system was adopted by the South Central region (including BKO) when electronic systems were being introduced. It is therefore the most common one locally.

Competitors carry a 'brikke' which is inserted into the matching Emit control unit. A small light on the control unit flashes to show that the time has been recorded. Some versions of the Emit brikke have a display which allows the competitor to see the time taken and, on contacting the control, the display changes which is another way of confirming that the time has been logged.

An advantage of the Emit system is that there is a 'back-up' card inserted into the back of the brikke which allows a pin on the control unit to provide a mark independent of the electronic system to prove that the control was reached. Many competitors don't bother to press the brikke fully onto the unit to get this mark. The main disadvantage of the Emit system is that the brikke contains a battery and this has a limited life - possibly 5 years but they have been known to fail before that (particularly the ones with the display).

As shown in the picture, the brikke has to be inserted into the control in a fixed direction—this is not liked by many people. There are different versions of Emit which are designed to avoid this issue but then you lose the advantage of the back-up card and pin marks (see other box).



START: _____			
FINISH: _____			
TIME: _____			
21	22	23	24
13	14	15	16
9 re-entrant JA	10 Footbridge GO	11	12
1 cliff MH	2 clearing KL	3 Northern gully junct ML	4 gully PB
		5 stream junct XD	6 between gully PP
		7 gully junct XK	8 footbridge PA

The SportIdent (SI) System

The alternative system is SI. The unit carried by the competitor (known as a 'dibber') is smaller and usually carried on a finger. The time is recorded by inserting the dibber into a circular hole on the SI control unit. This gives a visual flash from the control unit but in addition there is an audible 'bleep' - can be useful if another competitor gets to the control and you haven't actually seen it!

Unlike the Emit system, the SI system has no back-up card. You will sometimes see an old style punch which you should use if the control unit does not respond. It also doesn't have any option of a visual display of your time.

Advantages of the SI dibber are that it does not contain a battery (just the memory device) so does not fail (or not as frequently) and, being round, it does not matter how you approach the unit to insert the dibber.



Which is best?

There is endless discussion about which system is best! There are frequent postings on the main discussion forum on the internet ('Nopesport') in which this question is debated. Some of the main points have already been mentioned. There are though additional technical arguments.

Emit brikkes are cleared of all previous data when you use the unit at the start. For SI you have to remember to use a separate 'clear' unit near the start.

Also, for SI, each control unit contains a clock so each unit has to be synchronised regularly as they tend to drift by a few seconds each week. Another issue is that the control units tend to go into a sleep mode when not in use and so the first competitor may find that an SI unit takes slightly longer to operate if they are the first to reach a control (this can be avoided if the planner or controller inserts a dibber into the unit when checking the controls prior to the event).

There are also different issues with the IT systems associated with the two types. But that is another story ...

Most parts of the UK adopted the SI system when the two systems came out about 10 years ago. This means that most regular orienteers have purchased their own SI dibber but many fewer have their own Emit brikke. Thus when a major event is held in the SCOA region, we have to provide large numbers of Emit brikkes to competitors coming from other regions.

For more information, see the websites:

- Emit: <http://www.emit-uk.com/>
- SI: <http://www.sportident.co.uk/>

The Emit site has some short videos which would be useful for newcomers to see how to use the brikke and the control units.

Emit Touch Free

The club has a set of touch free Emit controls which are often used at our Summer urban events (*as shown here*). There is also now a updated Emit system available which uses a new style of urban control and which operates when the competitor is close to the control.





Oone Rogers
completing
the Light
Green course



Moray 2013

The biggest competition of the past couple of months was Moray 2013, the biennial Scottish 6-Day Event. 10 BKO Members headed North to the Moray Firth, just to the East of Inverness.

Most members decided to go for the short course options as, even for the fit, 6 events in 7 days can take its toll. **Dick Rae** was one who took on the challenge of a 'long' course coming in 51st overall out of 133 on M65L. Having returned from Bohemia, **Martin Wilson** completed 3 days of M65L, winning the Day 5 by nearly 4 minutes - a huge margin. Also on a long course was **Stefan Stasuik** who was 38th overall out of 112 with an excellent 18th place on Day 6.

It was also good to see two of our juniors competing. **Philippa Jefferies** was 7th overall on W18S whilst brother **William** achieved 7th place on M16B.

Given on the next few pages are three separate accounts giving both an overview and a focus on specific route choice issues - highlighting good and bad legs!

Also given is a short description by **Sue Cload** of one of the added extras at the event - exciting string courses for the youngsters (and their carers!).



Scottish sunset: a wire-frame stag
on the shores of the Moray Firth

Dave Rogers (M55S)

The Scottish Six Days (S6D) is a festival of orienteering, held over a week in summer every two years. The first 'Six Days' was held in the Highlands in 1977 as a means to use up a few surplus maps from the previous year's world championships based at Aviemore. The first S6D attracted over 1,000 competitors and was based as a continental-style orienteering holiday, based on good quality maps, terrain, organisation and planning, with a welcoming, holiday atmosphere. Since 1985 each S6D has attracted around 3,000 competitors, of whom about 20% are from overseas.



Oone and I had been to the Scottish Six Days in 2003 (held in Moray) and we were keen to go back to the area. This wish, coupled with my coaching on the Deeside junior tour the week before the S6D in 2013, gave us the impetus to have an orienteering summer holiday.

Oone flew up to Aberdeen on the Saturday and from there we headed to Forres to register and pick up our race bibs. The registration area was in a school and was set up very professionally. We picked up our race bibs, which came with our commemorative slate coasters, a tradition of the S6D.

The hall was set up as a one way system and really got us into the spirit of the S6D and the welcoming holiday atmosphere. We passed various stalls showing tourist opportunities in the area, as well as merchandise from local companies, the Scottish Elite Development Squad (from which I picked up my pre-ordered copy of "A Few Surplus Maps - the story of the Scottish6Days Orienteering Event" by John Colls and also a Jigsaw based on S6D maps) and the S6D T-shirts, hoodies and other merchandise. We then passed through to an area with Ultrasport and CompassPoint, picking up new pieces of kit for the next week of six events.

The welcome continued as we picked up our supplies at the Forres Tesco (which seemed to be full of orienteers) and were welcomed by the cashier - it was clear that the influx of 3,500 orienteers for a week to the area was providing a significant economic stimulus. Similarly as we drove into Elgin towards our holiday accommodation, there was a large banner welcoming all the orienteers. Very impressive.

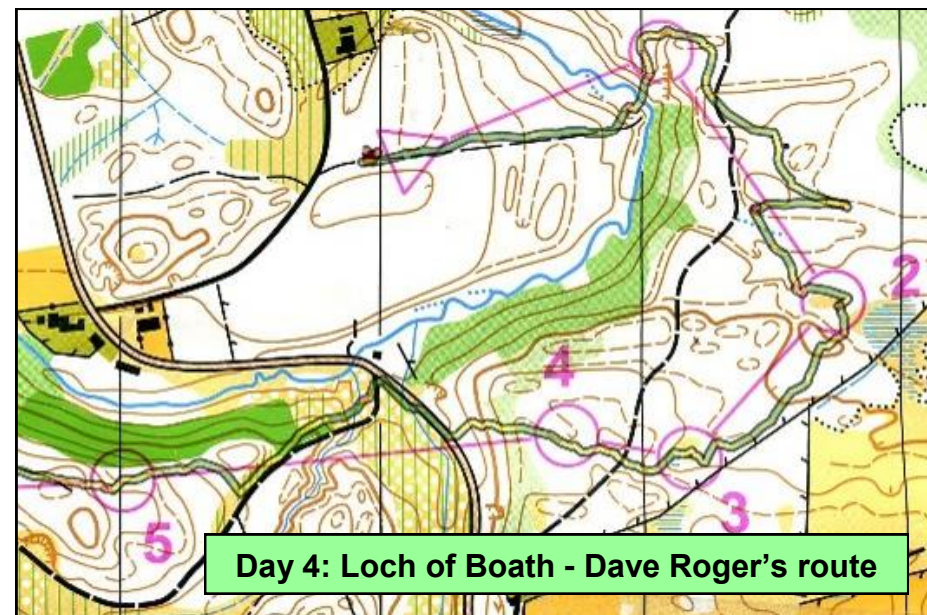
The next day (Sunday) saw a small band of BKO members (**Andrew Graham, Nigel Jefferies, Dick Rae** and myself) standing by the blue start and readying ourselves for the treats of Day 1 at Lossie. A lateish start meant that we had the worst of the weather and standing under the sparse tree cover of the start was akin to someone continually pouring buckets of water over you! At the start I picked up my map, gave back the second map stuck to it and set off, safe in the knowledge that there was no point worrying about the weather as I could not be any wetter. Immediately into the sand dunes and I settled into my task for the day - steady orienteering, good map contact with a plan for each leg involving simplification and visualisation. I was not worried about setting the course alight with my speed - this was out of the question as I had sprained my ankle badly chasing juniors around Scolty forest the week before and the ankle was still bruised and somewhat swollen. My plan worked well through my first 10 controls as I pinged smoothly around the fine contours of the sand duned forest. I then came unstuck in the much vaguer and flatter southern area and basically forgot to change my technique to ensuring map contact by using definite features and significant attack points.

Days 2 (Carse of Ardersier) and 3 (Culbin) were similar performances for me - great in the complex sand dunes but one or two errors when I got into the vaguer errors (note to self: remember to pull out the appropriate skills from the orienteering tool box at the appropriate times). After Day 2 we visited Cawdor Castle and after Day 3 we sampled (and purchased) the delights of the Glenfarclas malt whisky distillery.



Wednesday was a rest day and rather than doing the Lossiemouth sprint, we put our tourist heads on and visited Ballater and Balmoral Castle, just before the Queen took up her summer holiday residence.

Day 4 (Loch of Boath - classic highland forest with runnability varying from very fast to much slower in the worked and marshy areas) came, as did the rain. I had a late start (1330 hrs) and once again enjoyed the worst of the weather. Standing in the start box I was feeling somewhat



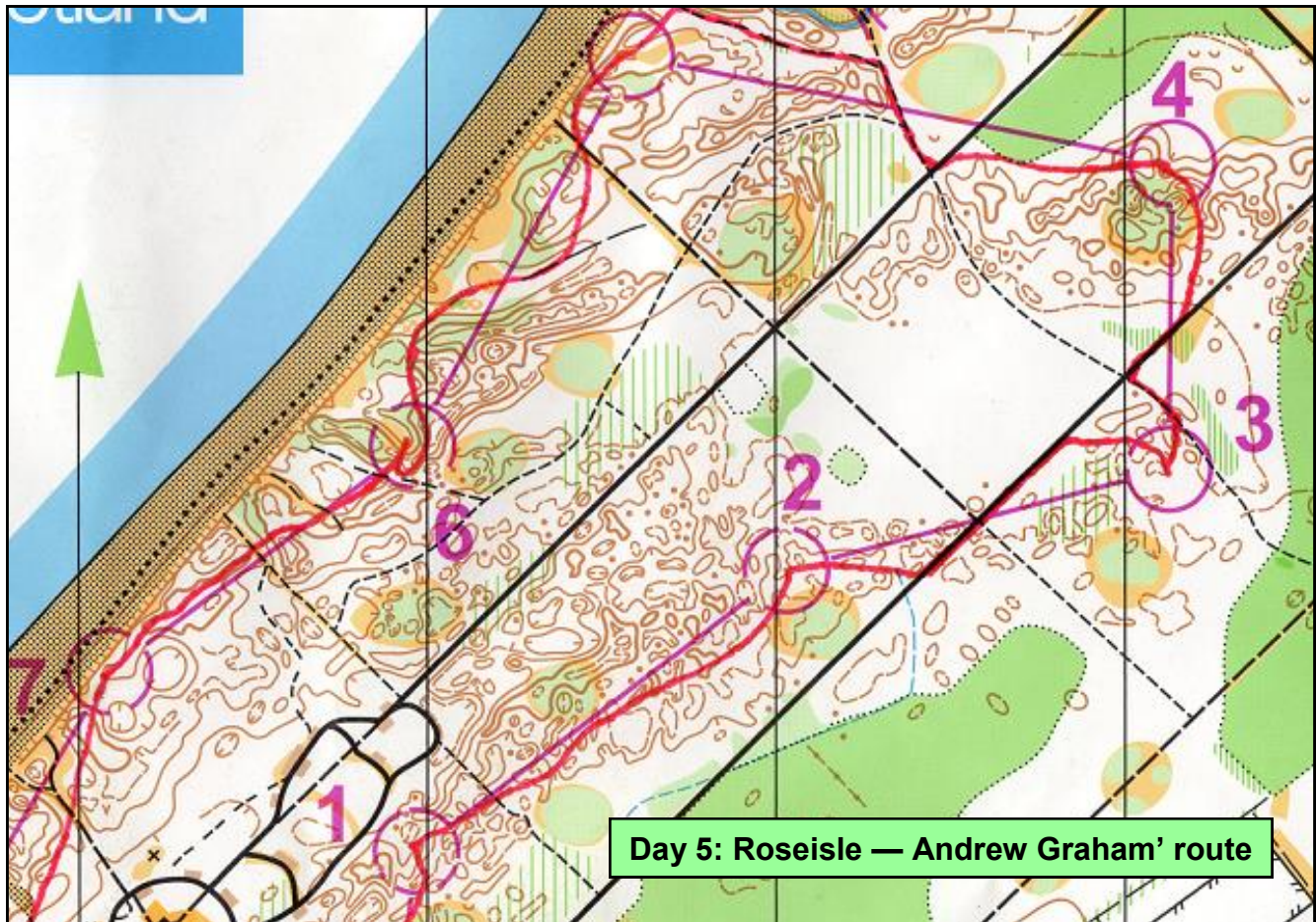
under the weather, but as my ankle had recovered I was determined to make the best of my course. Surprisingly, it was one of those days which nearly everything went smoothly - apart from a 3-4 minute mistake at number 2 when I turned in too early off a track (the previous 3 days had been at 1:7,500 scale and Day 4 was at 1:10,000), the course went particularly smoothly, and I executed a reliable plan for every leg, yielding my best performance of the week.

Day 5 at Roseisle and back to the forested sand dunes. A hot day and we had a longish walk to the start and from the finish, so that we could get the best of the area. I enjoyed the complex, fine contoured terrain and, apart from a control overgrown with bracken, had a steady and enjoyable run. After the event we visited the Pictish remains at Burghead (to be recommended) and looked around the marina at Lossiemouth (nice ice creams).

Day 6 and the final day at Culmony and Belivat, an area with deciduous and coniferous tress, marshes and heather, with some moraine area with fine contours. A lateish start and I felt the time pressure of the impending drive back south. My first nine controls went reasonably smoothly, but then I made a mistake and lost contact with the map. Eventually relocated and continued on directly back towards the finish. The intention had been to get our lunch at the event before setting off south, but everybody else had the same idea and the queues were 30+ minutes long so we headed off south.

Overall a most enjoyable S6D festival, with a great holiday atmosphere. It felt very international with so many competitors, particularly from Scandinavia, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, Spain and elsewhere. We can certainly recommend it to all BKO members, whether you are looking for intense competition or if you just want to enjoy the forests, the interesting and varied terrain, the scenery and the relaxed holiday atmosphere, together with tourist opportunities around the orienteering. For those staying at or near the event centre, there was also a full social programme during the evenings and on the rest day.

I was particularly impressed with the good quality of all aspects of this S6D and really appreciated the tireless efforts of the organising teams each day. The S6D is run and organised



by the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company Limited and works closely with the Scottish Orienteering Association and the Scottish clubs, who each take responsibility for the organisational aspects on one of the days.

We are already planning for our return visit to the S6D in 2015 - will you be there??

Andrew Graham (M55S)

Mid-summer in Scotland. What could be better? Add six (or more if you want) days of top notch orienteering and you have an ideal holiday.

Having really enjoyed the last S6D in the Oban area in 2011 I was keen to go again this year, finding the prospect of the forested dunes of the Moray coast particularly attractive. However, mindful of the aging frame and increasingly dodgy hips I decided to opt for pub accommodation rather than campsite and the sleeper up and down to Inverness instead of the long drive. Though costly, the sleeper was brilliant. Leaving home at 7 on a Friday evening and arriving in Inverness early on Saturday morning was wonderfully relaxing, especially having enjoyed breakfast in the lounge car travelling through the sunlit early morning landscape northwards from Blair Atholl.



The event was excellently organised each day having very good parking fields and assembly areas though doubtless the dry summer had been beneficial. With the numbers involved (3000+ I understand) this is really important and you never got the impression that late arrivals ended up in second class parking areas miles from assembly.

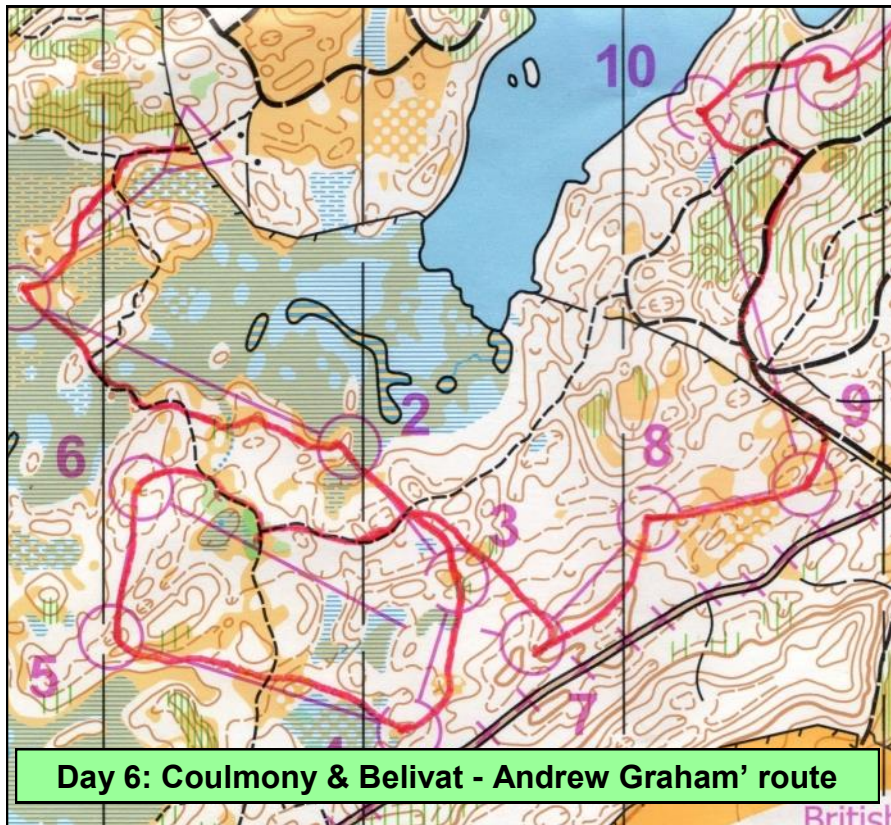
There were though some fair old walks to the starts. This was to ensure that runners got into the best bits of the terrain and back to the final run in at assembly (in all cases bar one). On the positive side it did give you a chance to get a look at the kind of terrain you would be running in and meant you had a good chance to warm up - especially important for me.



Four of the days were on forested dunes on or close to the coast. The other two were further inland and consisted of open undulating Scottish woodland. All the terrain was quite unlike anything we get to experience in southern England. Predominantly the running was fairly easy though some of the heather and blueberry on the inland maps slowed you up a bit.

With so many runners and courses you were rarely alone in the forest and this was always a potential distraction. I felt the course planning was not always as challenging as it could have been, and track running was often the best option. But I found keeping in touch with the map was essential and taking time to have a good look (with magnifier) at the terrain in the circle paid dividends. I had to learn this the hard way on the first two days where I had some nightmares but after that managed to keep my concentration together and get some decent results.

I was pleased I had decided to enter the M55 Short rather than my usual Long as the courses were long - there seeming to be little or no concession to the strain of six runs in seven days. This meant I couldn't measure myself against my usual opponents and recognised few of the names in my part of the results. But at least I was able to keep going all week with improving results. Perhaps this shows that with repeat runs my excitement (I enjoy orienteering so much), which makes me impetuous, starts to diminish and I am more able to concentrate and keep in control.



There was plenty to see and do after running but I mostly visited beaches and enjoyed the coastal scenery though I failed to see the whales and porpoises that are said to frequent the Moray Firth. On the free day I went down to Grantown on Spey and Aviemore, drove up to the base of the Whiteladies chairlift and then took a walk in the Rothiemurchus Forest which was wonderful.

In two years' time the Inverness/Moray/Aviemore area will be the site of the World Championships and Scottish 6 Days. This is bound to attract considerably more participants and associated visitors and I do wonder

whether the local area will cope. I found it difficult to find many decent hostelrys and places to eat and though the pub I stayed at was busy it was pretty scruffy and I did wonder what the foreign visitors made of it.

Dick Rae (M65L)

Here are a selection of legs, with comments, from 3 of the 6 days on Course 28 for starters.

Day1, Lossie, controls 1 to 5:- The first 9 controls were on the dunes bordering the Moray Firth. Surprisingly, many of them could be easily attacked from bends on a path or from features adjacent to it. Apparently, a motor cycle race had taken place after the courses had been planned. There was not enough time to replan the courses, so the path was marked on the map.

Day 1: Lossie - Dick Rae's route

Day 3: Culbin -
Dick Rae's route

On leg 2, I opted for the coastal path, adjacent to a line of WW2 anti-tank blocks mapped as boulders. Passing the building, a WW2 pillbox, I headed for the reentrant immediately east of the light green spur, and was distracted by a control in another depression close, but not too close, to the depression I wanted. Despite the motor cycle path, it was still necessary to remain in contact, and it was easy to overshoot at times as I did at control 5.

Day 3, Culbin, controls 5 to 9:- The western end of the Culbin Forest was used in Moray 2013. The more technical eastern end is earmarked for WOC 2013. Nevertheless, the courses made good use of complex dune areas, linking them together with less demanding legs which offered track running. Controls 5 to 9 were in one such complex area.

From the end of the narrow ride, I approached control 5 using the steep SE slope as a catching feature, then along the top of the slope to the very small reentrant. I was perhaps lucky to find control 6 as easily as I did, as I had misinterpreted the contours, thinking the flat ground to the west was high ground. I realised my mistake, just as I reached the control.



There was quite a lot of bracken, making contour detail difficult to discern, so on the way to control 7, I again used the steep slope as a catching feature, checking that I could see the pond, then N to the control.

For control 8, I headed north, hoping to see flatter ground at the foot of the slope, and a long southerly spur, roughly SE of the control. I found the flatter ground OK, but didn't see the spur until I was adjacent to it, perhaps because the contour interval on the four sand-dune days was 2.5 m.

On the next leg to control 9, my intention was to use the wide ride to access the flatter, and hopefully faster, part of the forest to curve into the control from the NW. Unfortunately, the wide ride never registered on me, so I struggled through the undulating forest to the forest road, arriving at an extension of the rough open. I wasn't sure which extension it was but went down it anyway and relocated off adjacent hills., then N to the control. Strangely, there was another wide ride, later in the course between controls 16 and 17, which failed to register on me. A number of other competitors remarked that they, too, had failed to see the wide rides. The ride near control 9 is visible on satellite data, but the later ride seems smaller than suggested on the map.

Day 6, Coulmony, controls 9 to 18:- The last day was held inland on complex morainic terrain, with some controls on a marshy, less contoured slope to the north. Most courses were much longer than on the other days. With an early start on day 5, I had felt very tired on course 28, won by Martin Wilson, and was somewhat apprehensive of the longer day 6. However, in my opinion, the day 6 course was the best of the week - the second half, after a timed road crossing offered complex contours (more easily read with a 5m interval), route choice, sharp changes of direction, and legs across the slope.

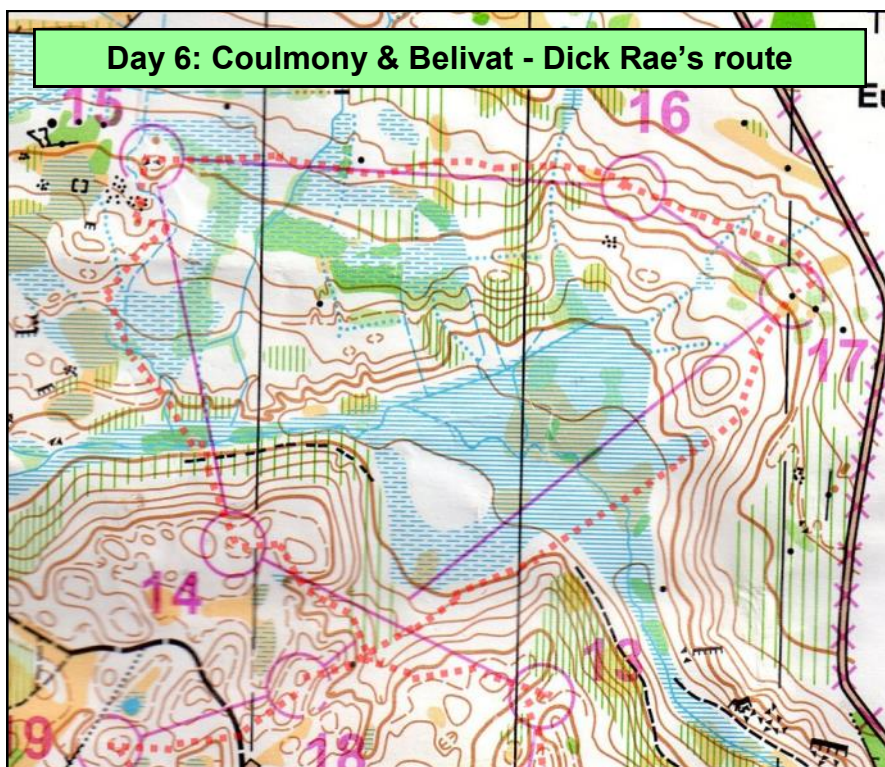
Controls 9 to 13 were reasonably straightforward. Crossing the large reentrant to control 14, I curved left to avoid too much climb and the undergrowth, picked up the side reentrant and so into the control. Data on RouteGadget and Splitsbrowser suggest that I should have stayed higher, however.

Looking ahead, controls 15, 16 and 17 looked ominous, as there were not many features to relocate from. However, once through the green "walk" at the foot of the valley, leg 15 went smoothly - the marshy open ground, and broad spur could be seen to the west, and a small

stream, not marked on the map, led me to the identifiable knoll south of my control.

A marshy bullock trail contoured East from control 15. It might not have been leading to 16, so it paid to keep a check on features, such as there were. The stream was barely discernible, but two clearings could be seen, above and below the trail, as could another clearing east of the distinctive reentrant before the control.

Another bullock trail contoured SE from control 16. This trail split. I opted for the upper branch, hoping it would pass above the upper light green area near the control. It did,



although there seemed to be more light green than marked. but I dropped onto control 17 without any problems. You had to cross a large bog en route to control 19. I tried to minimise the the amount of bog, and once across, used the reentrants to home in on the control, passing a boulder on the way. The remaining controls were straightforward.

Sue Cload

See the map on the front cover which illustrates Sue's article



There were String courses everyday of the Scottish 6 days but the one at Culbin, Moray on Day 3 Tuesday was the best I've ever been on & I have organised a few in my time!!

At each control there were activities for the children as well as a control. The first was building sand castles on a sandy slope, throwing balls in bucket, darts, noughts & crosses, story time - a rug in the woods and a story book, mini golf, hoopla, bean bags in a bucket, bubbles - all sorts of blowers big and small and finally hoops to roll or swing round your waist.

A lovely sunny day and being near the assembly area made it a great experience for everyone. My granddaughters enjoyed it as much as me - we did the course twice.

There was also a certificate to get stamped when you completed each day and a theme for each day that was published in the day news sheet the day before.

My sons Doug & Laurence are now both in M35 so competed against each other. Laurence did amazingly well and came 5th. Doug has planned a rematch as he could only compete on 2 days - travel and a 6 month old daughter Izzy. Izzy & Lou enjoyed their first String course experience and watching Doug finish.

We haven't been to a Scottish 6 day for a while & it brought back lots of memories. Maybe back in 2015 as the event is based in Inverness where Laurence now lives.

A Hobo in Boho

Martin Wilson

What makes a really good international event? How about the following: warm and sunny days / beautiful countryside / great O terrain varying from fast forest and brashings to rock towers / good value half-board accommodation package arranged by the organisers/restaurant facilities at assembly / bikini-clad equipment salesperson / running water washing facilities at assembly.

All this and more was at Bohemia 13, the bi-annual Czech 5-day O event held in the north of the country in a beautiful area known as 'little Switzerland'.

I was fortunate that a friend of mine, Carole Sparke (HOC) was able to join me on this trip. There was only one other British couple at the event, as it overlapped the Scottish 6 Days. Carole had visited the area for WMOC in the 1990s, and was keen to go back. Unfortunately, due to long-term injury she was only able to walk round, but she made a real go of D55B, and beat several of her class. The event uses cumulative times over four days to provide a chasing start on Day 5. Thus all errors count, with no discard. I entered H60 to give me more time in the forest. I



**Anyone for lunch at assembly?
The shade was very welcome!**

Kategorie		H60A		
		3,7 km 135 m 10 K		
Celkový čas		Akt. pořadí	Dokončilo	
44:29		8	26/42	
Kód	Čas	Mez.	Ztráta	Poř.
1(33)	14:07	14:07	+8:59	25
2(122)	15:38	1:31	0:00	1
3(121)	20:37	4:59	+0:33	4
4(119)	22:05	1:28	0:00	1
5(60)	29:09	7:04	+0:05	2
6(83)	31:12	2:03	+0:11	4
7(84)	32:22	1:10	+0:04	2
8(125)	34:56	2:34	+0:26	3
9(61)	42:07	7:11	+0:05	2
0(100)	44:20	2:13	+0:06	6
C	44:29	0:09	+0:01	2

Day 2

See key legs for 4 of the days in Bohemia and Martin's description of how he tackled them.

Note: printed at correct map scale.

had no specific target other than to enjoy each day and try to run well, but I felt a top ten finish out of 40+ entrants in H60 might be possible.

One of the things I've been trying to concentrate on is taking the first control carefully, to get into the map and terrain in a positive way, not worrying about the time. You can't win an event at the first control, but you can certainly lose it. Unfortunately, achieving this coaching mantra when you're out there in the forest is much harder than it seems from the armchair.

One lovely innovation they had was that you collected a map case at Start -1, walked to your map box, inserted your map in the case, and had about 30 seconds to read your map before starting. You also collected Control Descriptions (CDs) at Assembly. Another nice innovation was a sign at the start showing the distance from the start line to the start kite. This all certainly suited me fine.

So we're now in the start lane for **Day 1**. For your starter for ten, take a look at the CD and map for leg 1 (at 1:10k scale) on the next page. What would you do?

Day 2's first leg was even more of a calamity. During the longish leg, I changed course to take a more direct route, but became dislocated, and lost a lot of time sorting myself out. One clever innovation in the event was having your splits position on each leg on the printout at download. Given above is the evidence of my Day 2 run. At my finish time, I was lying 8th, and 26 out of 42 runners had completed the course. The fourth column shows how much time I was behind the fastest split on each leg at that time, and the fifth column shows my split position. Some fast running and control picking, particularly on the long legs, was ruined by the early big mistake, a real shame.

On **Day 3**, the first leg was a lovely technical leg whilst **Day 4** provided something quite tantalising. Again see the descriptions on the next page

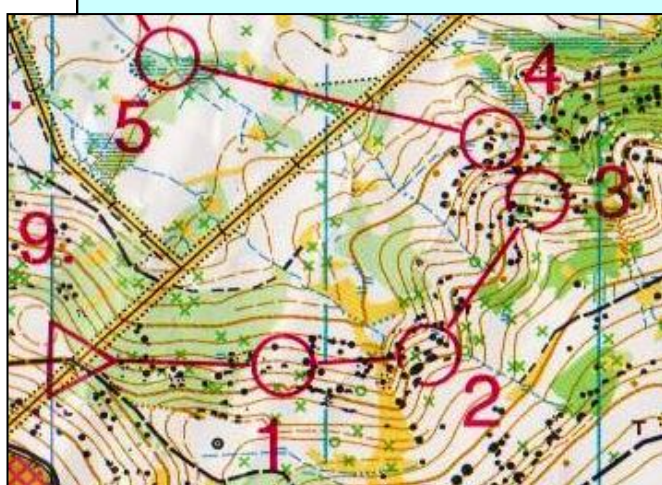
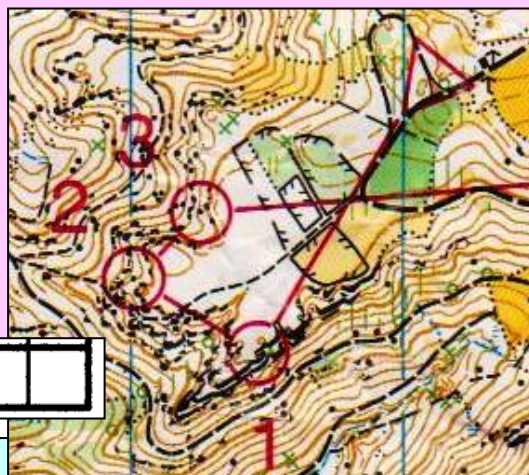
After four days, I was lying 11th overall out of 40, so a top ten finish was still possible with a good run on the last day - **Day 5**. It was not to be. I overtook the person in 10th early on, but

then had a series of errors culminating in a control in a range of rock pillars whose exact position was very difficult to spot correctly (see description on next page). I finally ended up 16th overall, still in the top half, but a bit disappointed. Without some of the control 1 mistakes, a top ten finish was quite obtainable, and with reasonably clean runs (yea, yea, we know...) a top five position might have been reached. So still a lot of improvement to come to compete properly at this level, but I greatly enjoyed the whole event. I can strongly recommend Bohemia to anyone wishing to gain experience in different terrain.

Purchasing a new pair of gaiters from the lovely Agnes. Now do you believe me?!



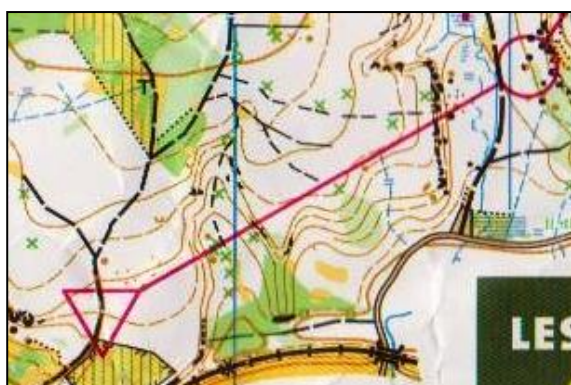
Day 1: OK, worked out what you're looking for? Can you spot the exact feature on the map? Now go find it. Take the track from the start between the fences, then SE to pick up the large re-entrant to be safe, work SW along the top of the pillars past another niche, try to spot the small ring knoll and go in to the control. Easy, innit? Well no, actually. The ring knoll was not evident on the ground, and there was no visible control at the edge of the pillars. The CD says it is a passage between rocks, but nothing like that was visible. The next few minutes were spent searching along and around, finding three other controls, only finding the correct control when someone came out of a very small crack at the top of the rock pillar. The control was 1 metre below the top in a metre-wide rock trench, unnoticeable unless you were right on top of it. I was not the only person who considered this somewhat unfair. Thus four minutes lost already, and the competition hardly started. After improving thereafter, I finished 19th on the day.



Day 3:

For first leg, climb S to avoid the green, or compass straight through the rough stuff?

I was very pleased to come direct through the tough green section out just below the control, so spiked cleanly, giving a good start. I spiked 2 and 3 cleanly also, before losing a minute on the short leg 3-4. Compassing accurately downhill into and through rough boulder-strewn terrain was not as easy as it might seem. But it was a good start this time at last.



Day 4: This had a tantalising first leg. Despite a longish 150m run to the kite, continuously route planning on the way, I was still unsure which route to take - a sign of a well-planned leg.

- Go low SE to the path through the green to the road?
- Go high N/NE to the track above the re-entrant?
- Follow the red line through the rock pillars?

At the kite, the direct route looked more runnable than the low route, so I tracked to the rock pillars, holding a line R of the red line. Found a gap in the pillars, then

down to the track. Unfortunately I swung slightly L while descending through the pillars, and was further L than I thought. A minute was wasted looking L before returning to the control, a silly mistake at the end of a well-run leg.



Day 5: Leg 4-5 was a control in a range of rock pillars whose exact position was very difficult to spot correctly. Despite coming out twice to relocate, I was mis-reading the exact rock details, and lost a lot of time. The rock pillars were actually in two layers, with the boulder control between them. I was repeatedly looking too low, below the second layer of pillars.

Scottish 6 Days : Moray 2013



Mark Foxwell

Photo by Chris Spencer
© ActivNorth



Dick Rae



William, Philippa and Nigel Jefferies:

*"Which start was it?"
"Better go to 'Information' and check!"*