

Berkshire Orienteers

Newsletter

September 2016





**Summer Park /
Urban Event
and Club Picnic
6th August 2016
Lily Hill Park**



Simon Moore



Mark Saunders



Editorial

As summer draws to a close, many people will feel that the best part of the year is over and there is little to look forward to until spring next year. For the orienteer, things look very different. The dense summer undergrowth can sometimes make woodland orienteering rather more a matter of luck than skill and the presence of ground-nesting birds can prevent the use of many areas - the New Forest for example.

So the arrival of autumn can bring new excitement and a feeling of expectation as to the challenges to be faced in the coming months. And for all members of BKO we are able to offer a new challenge as we will be using a new area, Bramshill, in October - see pages 14-17 for more

information. The largest event for the Autumn will be the November Classic which this year is hosting the Southern Championships. This Level A event will attract orienteers from across the country and will be using high quality terrain in the New Forest.

Orienteers can look forward to the coming months - why not tell your friends when they regret the passing of summer!

David Jukes

Club Notes

Keeping you informed about the club and its members

2016 Urban Leagues Update

Southern England Orienteering Urban League 2016

With two urban SEOUL events over the August Bank Holiday weekend being relatively close (MV's Leatherhead event and TVOC's Grove event) it is worth taking another look at how the scores stand now. The listing of top BKO performers is given in the table on the right.

Mark Saunders is well placed in the Men Open class as the 4 people above him have all run in more events. The class leader is in a very strong position but the second and third positions are still wide open depending upon the results in the remaining events.

In Veteran Men, **Derick Mercer** started the year strongly but unfortunately due to injury he has not been attending events and has slipped down the order. **Terence Hosking** has however been a regular attender and has reached 10th place. Veteran Women is being led by our **Fiona Clough** who also has been a regular attender at events. It looks however that it will be a tight finish as the second placed person has so far only entered 6 events and potentially could catch Fiona.

Cover Picture: Our second Summer Park/Urban event was based around Chalfont Park, Lower Earley. The cover shows one of our youngest competitors tackling the Short course. See also page 8 for more information.

Note: Photo used with the agreement of the family.

SEOUL 2016 - Top BKO Placings (after 12 of 19 races)

Men Open		Races	Best 7
5	Mark Saunders	5	453
Veteran Men 40+			
8	Derick Mercer	7	552.5
10	Terence Hosking	11	529
Veteran Women			
1	Fiona Clough	12	642
Super Vet Men 55+			
7	Nigel Hoult	8	580
Super Vet Women 55+			
5	Jane Courtier	5	442
Ultra Vet Men 65+			
2	Richard Rae	7	618
10	Martin Wilson	6	489
11	Eric Harper	6	486
Ultra Vet Women 65+			
3	Denise Harper	11	658

In Ultra Vet Men, **Dick Rae** has been doing well but there are quite a number of potential top 3 competitors within the current top 10. This includes **Martin Wilson** who has had some winning scores but has not yet done as many events as most of those above him. He did well in the Bank Holiday Monday event at Grove where he won his class with a 30 second lead from one of his main rivals, Mick Smith of HH. In Ultra Vet Women, **Denise Harper** has been having a good year. Her current third place is not quite secure but she is certainly in contention for one of the top 3 places.

There are still several events left this year within easy reach of Reading including Guildford (18 Sept), Salisbury (5 Nov) and Oxford (19 Nov).

UK National Urban League 2016

With the need to travel much further, the national league has fewer BKO contenders. However in Women Vets, **Fiona Clough** is currently in 3rd position. Although the top position looks secure, the next 3 are all potential 2nd and 3rd placed finishers. But it is **Martin Wilson** who is currently doing best as the leader in the Men Super Vets class. His lead is quite strong with 5 wins and 2 high positions making up the 7 events used to determine the score.

Committee News

The Committee met in early July and this is a summary of some of the matters discussed:

- Information for organisers of BKO events (particularly our Saturday events) in being added to the club's website. This is available under 'Club Information' - 'Event Handbook'. The information will be extended as time permits.
- The club is offering to support the regional SCOA Junior Squad by sharing proceeds from one of our future Saturday events. **Fiona Clough** is in discussions with the Junior Squad Coach about which event to use (potential in the Spring) and how to involve the Squad in assisting with the event organisation.
- Updated event hardware and software continues to be used at our Level D Saturday events. **Brian Sewell** has trained several people to act in support and they will now gain experience in using the system at future events. In due course we will aim to run the new results system at our Level C events.
- Attendance at the first summer event at Easthampstead was disappointing. The Committee will review the value of these events at the next meeting after the set of three for this summer is completed.
- The format for the Club Championship to be staged in the Autumn will need to be reviewed - probably at the September meeting. Suggestions from members would be welcomed.
- **Mark Foxwell** provided an update on training activities. Attendance at the summer training evenings had been satisfactory but he wondered whether something for juniors should be added. The 'weekend' training in South Wales had only been taken up by 6 members and it had consequently been reduced to a single day. That had however been considered

Membership Memo

Ian Hudson - Membership Secretary

Summer is usually a slow time for membership matters but since my last Memo it has been two in and one out! So a very warm welcome to:

- **James Mollard** in Reading and
- **James Wilkinson** a transfer in from Saxons.

It is goodbye to:

- **Chris Wood** a transfer out to Devon OC.



Those members with a long memory will recall that in the September 2014 Newsletter we announced the engagement of **Annika Hermick and Doug Greenwood**. We are now delighted to report that after two years of planning, the wedding took place in August.

Our congratulations to the new Mr and Mrs Greenwood!



useful and worthwhile by those who went.

- **Ian Hudson** offered to take on the role of 'Permanent Orienteering Course' (POC) manager and would aim to update the details on the club website and on the national British Orienteering site.
- Details for the proposed mapping/surveying course were discussed and it was agreed that the cost would be subsidised by the club. It would be offered to other clubs to fill the places and reduce the cost per person.

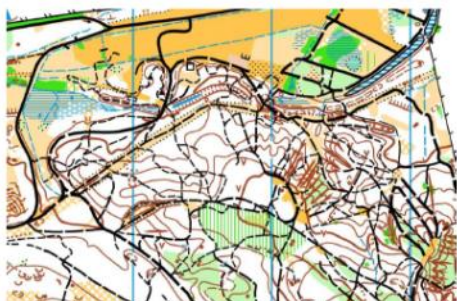
Photo Challenge: The last Newsletter included information on a 'Photo Challenge' using controls on the Medium course at Easthampstead. The solution is given below. Well done to **Nigel Hoult** who I know managed to successfully complete the challenge.

1 E / 2 J / 3 S / 4 F / 5 N / 6 U / 7 B / 8 K / 9 H / 10 T / 11 P or R / 12 M / 13 A / 14 D / 15 G / 16 P or R / 17 L / 18 I / 19 Q / 20 O / 21 C

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. If 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



MAP SURVEYING

HOSTED BY BKO

NOVEMBER 12, 2016

BUILDING 25, LONGMOOR CAMP
LISS, HAMPSHIRE, GU33 6EL



BKO has relied very heavily on Katy for our maps (*see her report on mapping Bramshill later in this Newsletter*) with a few others supporting her (mainly with updates and with the production of urban maps). Several members have indicated that they would be willing to have a go at surveying but they would benefit from some initial training. The Committee has agreed to subsidise the running of a one day course to be given by the team that provide training to the army orienteering club.

Details have been circulated by e-mail but for more information, please contact **Ian Hudson** using his new e-mail address:

ctianhud@gmail.com

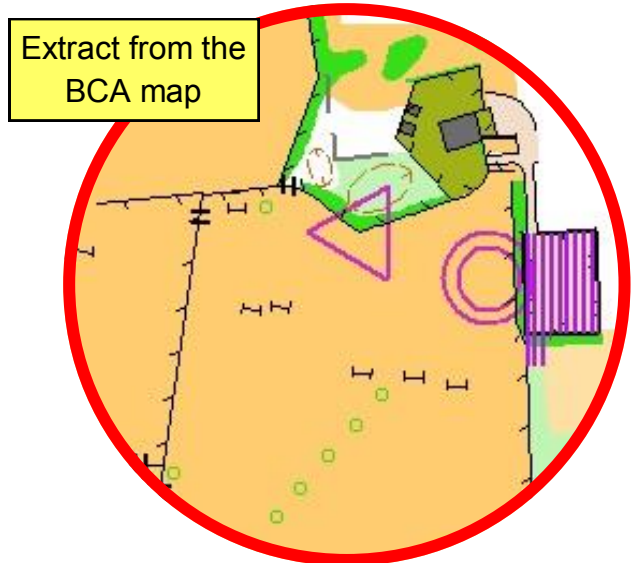
The Berkshire School Games Orienteering 2016.

Denise Harper

This year, as last, BKO again supported the delivery of school orienteering competitions throughout the county, to culminate with the county final, held at a new venue, the Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA).

BKO supported qualifying competitions in West Berkshire, (two events, one each for East and West), Bracknell, Slough, and Ascot & Maidenhead.

Wokingham and Windsor organised their own competition to provide their teams to battle it out for the county championship. These competitions were held during April and May, both on school and park sites, and needless to say, involved a great deal of assistance from the BKO volunteer team to run them, as each competition involves running a mini event with 12 team members from each school, running as 6 pairs at minute intervals. However, after years of practice, we are pretty efficient with our delivery, hence the demand for our services.



This year unfortunately saw a number of our competitions adversely affected by the fickle nature of the weather and other last minute glitches. The first competition for West Berks went very well, with the usual efficient and much appreciated hosting by Glyn Thomas and St Andrew's School. Downhill from there the following week, with the Slough competition completed in pouring rain with the Results team huddled under a large umbrella to keep the rain off the laptop and printer. But this was nothing compared to the next West Berks event the following day at Park House School, Newbury. Storms were threatening when we arrived but then a sudden lightning strike very close to where Eric was putting out controls, accompanied by massive hailstones/frozen snow (in May!) caused a very inconvenient delay to proceedings. This on an afternoon where we had needed to get started very promptly after school, with 13 teams competing, and an urgency to finish because of parents evening. The competition eventually started, only to be halted after 20 minutes or so by more thunderstorms which delayed things even further. A memorable event but we coped somehow!

After that we had a thankfully uneventful competition at Sandhurst Memorial Park for Bracknell, but then more problems at the final competition for Maidenhead, held at Altwood, as a VERY last minute decision by senior management to veto our course, and movement round the site, because of exams, caused us huge challenges, with the course having to be re-planned, maps re-printed, new letters sent out to parents to change the arrangements for pick up etc. Again, we coped – but were hugely relieved to have this one behind us.



And so to the final.... A new venue created a new set of challenges and possibilities. A more interesting course could be planned without the problems from previous years of conflicts with other sports, but the area available to us

had its own issues, being agricultural land with no paths. However, a pre-event site meeting proved very successful, with reassurances that the sheep would be moved, horse-jumping not permitted on the day, and the 7 large heavy gates connecting the fields we would use, would be unlocked and left open for us on the day.

Leading up to the final, the one worry was the weather, as the forecast, though it kept changing, suggested we were likely to be inundated for parts of the day. On the day itself, extremely heavy downpours were heading across the area all morning, with yet again lightning flashing as Eric put out controls.

The event management eventually decided at lunch time to cancel the afternoon outdoor competitions, which included orienteering. Unfortunately the decision came too late for Eric and I to contact the majority of our helpers who were on their way, which meant wasted journeys, especially for Liz and Alan, who had come the furthest, from Wiltshire. So little remained but to wait for the next downpour to pass over, collect in the controls, stuff all the wet kit in the car and go to the café. Ironically after that, the clouds passed and the remainder of the afternoon was relatively pleasant. It was a huge disappointment for both ourselves and the school teams there to compete for their districts to have to miss out after having won their places in the final, and a difficult decision for those responsible. However, after the first lightning strike, there was always the possibility that we might get more, and with the children out on a very open exposed area this could have been quite dangerous.

My grateful thanks go to all the magnificent willing volunteers, without whom none of this would be possible.

I was especially happy that my appeal for more volunteers last year resulted in an extra influx of helpers, which did make manning these events so much less of a headache, and reduced the burden on everyone. With a greater pool of volunteers, it meant I didn't have to beg people to turn up to every event, and I had some slack if people unexpectedly couldn't turn up. I do hope you will all be available again next year as we couldn't run these events without your support.

Some interesting statistics:

Schools taking part in competitions run by BKO:

SSP	School teams	Participants
West Berks 1	9	108
West Berks 2	13	156
Bracknell	6	72
Ascot & Maidenhead	10	120
Slough	10	120
Total	48	576
<i>Total 2015</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>528</i>

So yet again, we have seen an increase in schools participation in our competitions, with both Slough, and Ascot/Maidenhead fielding 10 teams each this time, up from 7 in the previous year.

We have already been asked to provide orienteering competition again in 2017 if the funding allows. Bracknell, West Berks, and Slough have all already requested their competition dates for next year, so we look set to continue again. And I thought I could retire...



Planning for Juniors at Summer Urban Events

The club has for several years planned a short series of summer urban events combining areas of parkland with complex urban estates. These have evolved such that we normally have 3 courses: Long, Medium and Short. Safety is paramount for all competitors and although courses need to be planned to take into account significant hazards we can expect adults to take responsibility for their own safety whilst competing.

The situation is though different for younger competitors. Nationally the rules of orienteering include the following statement:

Particular attention needs to be given to courses planned for competitors under 16 years of age. In the eyes of the law, the Organiser is acting in loco parentis for children under the age of 16 and must be seen to take precautions over and above what a careful parent would take for the safety of their children.

This means that courses for juniors under the age of 16 must not have any routes that require competitors to cross roads with significant traffic unless appropriate traffic management arrangements have been put in place. A disclaimer signed by a parent or guardian does not circumvent this rule.

Our summer events are organised with limited manpower and so specific 'traffic management arrangements' are not possible. So what should we do for any juniors who attend these events? Remember that juniors going around without a parent might be as young as 8 or 9 as well as old as 15. Given here are two examples from this year's events.

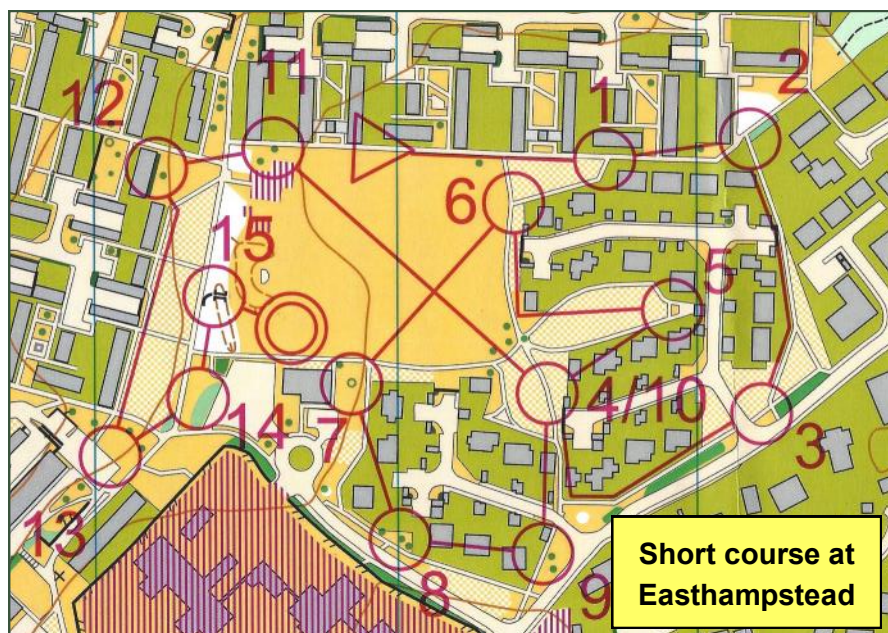
At Lower Earley (planner David Jukes), the 2 km course was kept within Chalfont Park but this meant criss-crossing the area. To make the course clear, it was split over 3 maps. Perhaps a satisfactory challenge for the younger juniors but very limited for those more experienced juniors or at the top end of the age range.

At Easthampsted (planner Martin Wilson) there was more limited parkland but the path network around the houses provided the option of taking competitors around some of the blocks of houses. The course, also of 2 km, did however cross two cul-de-sacs (legs 3-4 and 9-10) where traffic was considered to be not 'significant'.

We do not get many juniors at these events. Putting on the short course significantly increases the number of controls needed although, as they are all close to the event centre this does now pose a large extra load on the planner.

The club's committee feels that providing a 'Short' course suitable for juniors at these events is important as the events have the potential to introduce some of the local families to the sport.

Is this policy correct? Take another look at the cover photo of this Newsletter. This shows a competitor (with Dad) on the Short course at Lower Earley tackling Leg 6-7. It may have limited technical merit but it provided a potential future orienteer with a memorable morning.



Event Summary

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

Date	Name	Level	Club	Venue	Town
Sat 17 Sept	BKO Winter Saturday Series	Level D	BKO	Benyons Enclosure	Mortimer
Sun 18 Sept	GO Guildford City Race	Level C	GO	Burpham	Guildford
Sun 18 Sept	WIM Galoppen	Level C	WIM	Godshill Wood, New Forest	Ringwood
Sat 24 Sept	TVOC Saturday Series	Level D	TVOC	Bradenham	High Wycombe
Sun 25 Sept	OK Nuts Trophy	Level C	SLOW	Glovers Wood	Gatwick
Sun 25 Sept	NWO Urban Event	Level C	NWO	Royal Wootton Bassett	Royal Wootton Bassett
Sat 01 Oct	Caddihoe Chase Day 1 (UKOL)	Level B	WSX	Agglestone Heath	Poole
Sun 02 Oct	Caddihoe Chase Day 2 (UKOL)	Level B	WSX	Agglestone Heath	Poole
Sat 08 Oct	SOC Level D	Level D	SOC	Ocknell	Southampton
Sun 09 Oct	SARUM SCOA League	Level C	SARUM	Collingbourne Woods	Ludgershall
Sat 15 Oct	BKO Winter Saturday Series	Level D	BKO	Bramshill	Sandhurst
Sat 22 Oct	TVOC Saturday Series	Level D	TVOC	Kings Wood	High Wycombe
Sat 22 Oct	NWO Four Colour	Level D	NWO	Hens Wood	Marlborough
Sat 29 Oct	BKO/BADO Night event	Level C	BKO	Greenham Common	Newbury
Sun 30 Oct	BKO/BADO SCOA League event	Level C	BADO	Greenham Common	Newbury
Sat 05 Nov	Salisbury City Urban	Level B	SARUM	Salisbury City	Salisbury
Sun 06 Nov	SOC November Classic & Southern Championships	Level A	SOC	Fritham / Islands Thorn	Southampton
Sat 12 Nov	SN - Saturday Series	Level D	SN	Alice Holt	Farnham
Sun 13 Nov	CHIG District event	Level C	CHIG	Epping Highams Park	tbc
Sun 13 Nov	GO Level C event	Level C	GO	Norbury Park	Leatherhead
Sat 19 Nov	Oxford City Race	Level C	OUOC	Oxford City Centre	Oxford
Sun 20 Nov	TVOC SCOA League	Level C	TVOC	Shotover Country Park	Oxford
Sun 04 Dec	SOC SCOA League	Level C	SOC	Ashurst wood / Matley	Southampton

Youth League 2016/17

We are again running our Youth League in conjunction with our regular Saturday events. This year it will be for individuals, and there will be prizes for the top scorers. The list of Youth League events for this year is shown below. Note that we will have the prizegiving for last season's Youth League at 10:00am at the first event – please try to attend if you are a winner.

Date	Location	Notes
17/09/16	Benyons	2015/6 prizegiving at 10:00am
15/10/16	Bramshill	New area
03/12/16	Bucklebury Common	
31/12/16	Whiteknights	New Year's Eve
14/01/17	Langley Park	
18/02/17	Swinley East	
12/03/17	Cold Ash	Note Sunday event, and Compass Sport Cup qualifier
08/04/17	Bloom Wood	

The scoring system

In summary, for each age class there is a target speed in minutes per kilometer for each course. The target speed is fastest for older runners on easy courses, and slowest for the younger runners on the more difficult courses. Achieving the target time scores 100 points, running faster scores more points, and running slower scores fewer points. There is a 'guideline' course for each age class, but you can choose to run up or down from this according to your experience. As long as you complete the course you will always get some points. Note that this year we will be using Age Class, rather than age.

Please ensure that you put your age class on the entry form, as your score is calculated according to your age class. If you don't put your age class down, I will not be able to tell that you are a junior, so no age means no score!

The full rules are given on the next page and are also on the BKO website.

2015/16 Awards

Congratulations to the winners from last season's Youth League:

Class	Winner	Team
Overall Winner	Alistair Wynne	St Andrews
Under Tens Winner	Alistair Wynne (9)	St Andrews
10-11 Winner	Anna Cawley (10)	St Andrews
12-13 Winner	Amy Slatford (12)	St Andrews
14-15 Winner	Megan Evans (14)	

Prizes and awards will be given out at the first event of the 2016/17 season. This will take place at Benyons Enclosure on **17th September 2016.**

The following runners qualified for an award by successfully completing 4 events:

Fenella Greatrix (10)	St Andrews
Bia Teagle (7)	St Andrews
Amelia Wing (10)	St Andrews
Maddie Woodcock (8)	St Andrews
Natalie Wing (8)	St Andrews
Archie MacPherson (11)	St Andrews

As no 16+ runners completed 4 events, there are no awards in this age class

The team competition was again won by **St Andrews School.**

BKO Youth League Rules 2016/2017

Eligibility

Any junior of school age attending events will automatically be ranked in the Youth League unless they request otherwise.

Events

- The Youth League season will take place over the period September-May
- Events which form part of the Youth League will be nominated a minimum of 1 week in advance by BKO, and publicised as such on the BKO web site.
- Events will normally be Saturday local events, but may at the organiser's discretion include other events organised by BKO.
- There will be at least 6 events over the course of a season.
- Youth League colour-coded events must provide a minimum of four courses, normally White, Yellow, Orange and Light Green.

Age Classes

- If the normal colour coded courses are unavailable, eg at a park run type event, alternatives for each age class will be nominated in advance.
- Only the age element of the age class will be taken into account for scoring, ie M12 and W12 will both be treated as 12.

Scoring

For each age class there is a 'guideline' course and target speed in minutes per kilometer, as shown in the table below. These target speeds are set from previous results and should be achievable by a good competitor having a good run on an average area. Some age class/course combinations are not scored; this is mainly to prevent younger runners, however confident they may be, from overstretching themselves running courses that are really too long for them.

N.B. If you are new to orienteering, do not try to run a particular course simply because it is the 'guideline' for your age. The 'guidelines' are set for experienced orienteers, not beginners. There will always be some points for completing a course. Attempting to run a course that is too long and/or difficult for you will score nothing if you fail to complete it.

	Courses				
Age Class	White	Yellow	Orange	Light Green	Blue
Under 10	7:30	9:00	10:30	N/A	N/A
10/11	6:45	8:00	9:15	N/A	N/A
12/13	6:00	7:15	8:15	9:00	N/A
14/15	5:00	6:30	7:30	8:00	N/A
16+	N/A	6:00	6:45	7:30	8:00

- Highlighted fields are the 'guideline' course for each age class.
- Age class/course combinations marked 'N/A' will not be scored.
- Completing a course in the target time 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.
- Completing the 'guideline' (or higher) course for Age Class will score a minimum of 20 points.
- Completing a course below the 'guideline' level for Age Class will score a minimum of 10 points.
- An individual's score for the League will be the sum of their best 4 event scores.
- Individuals running as pairs will be scored in the Age Class of the eldest of the pair
- Individuals running in groups of more than 2 will not be scored.
- Shadowing is permitted, but if the junior is materially assisted by their shadower, then they should declare themselves non-competitive for the Youth League.
- If an individual runs more than one course at an event, only their best score will be added to their individual total.

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 class
- There will be an award for every individual completing at least 4 events over the course of the season.

Know your sport: Orienteering - Long, Middle or Sprint?

There are four annual national championships for individuals - Long, Middle, Sprint and Night. It is quite easy to appreciate what a night event is but can you define the others? Here we take a look at the official explanation as to what is expected from events classified as 'Long', 'Middle' and 'Sprint'.

It is not easy to find precise definitions for these three types of events. However buried within the Rules of the International Orienteering Federation's World Championships (WOC) is the table given on the right. As this provides the structure for the WOC, British Orienteering have based their Championships on the same concepts.

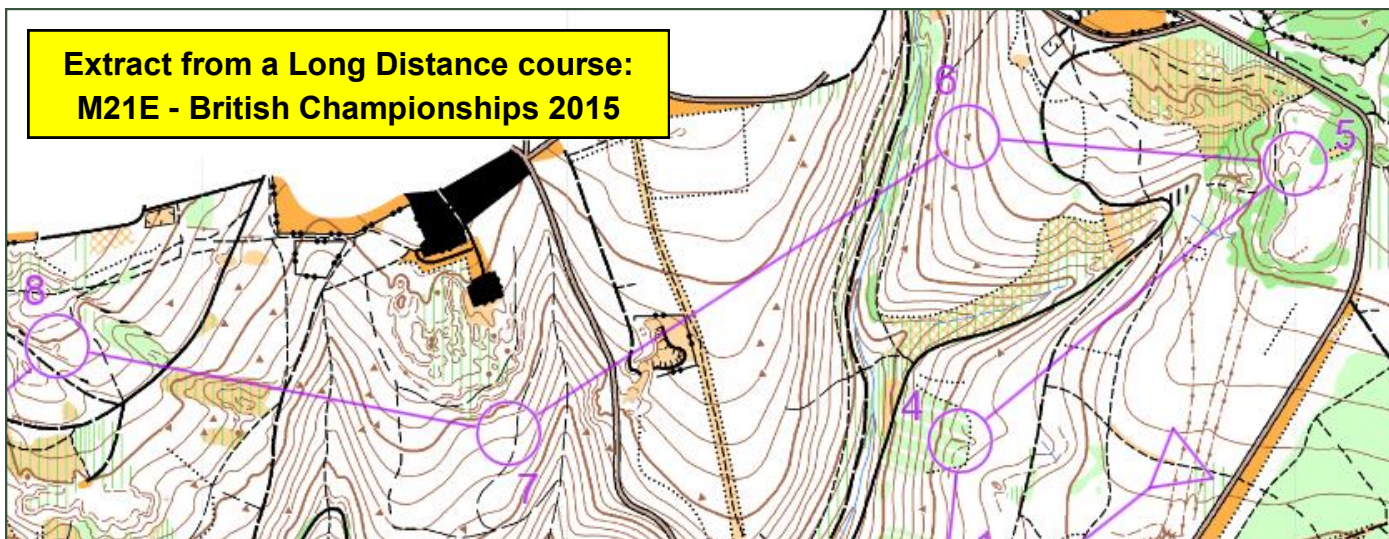
Looking into the various Rules of Orienteering given on the main British Orienteering website provides similar explanations. The following are extracts taken from different parts of the rules which give an indication of the differences.

- **Long distance (Classic) Orienteering** usually takes place in forest terrain. The emphasis is on route choice to test a competitor's ability to use a variety of navigational techniques in physically challenging terrain over an extended period of time.
- **Middle distance Orienteering** usually takes place in forest terrain. The emphasis is on continuous map reading in the terrain, Technical Difficulty, a relatively high density of controls, changes in direction and micro rather than macro route choices. Runnable terrain of Technical Difficulty 4-5 is most suitable, the more technical the better.
- **Sprint Orienteering** usually takes place in urban or semi urban areas and parkland, the technical standard is enhanced by the need interpret the map and make decisions at high speed. The emphasis is on continuous decision making, map reading and interpretation, and route choice rather than finding controls. A clear and very accurate map and clear control descriptions and placements are essential. Safety is a key consideration where traffic may be encountered. A more detailed mapping standard is used in comparison to Long or Middle formats.

Of course one key element is the expected winning time. The rules for the Championships give expected winning times for different classes and a selection of these are given in the table on the right. It can be seen that these vary for the Long distance but are the same for the other two types.

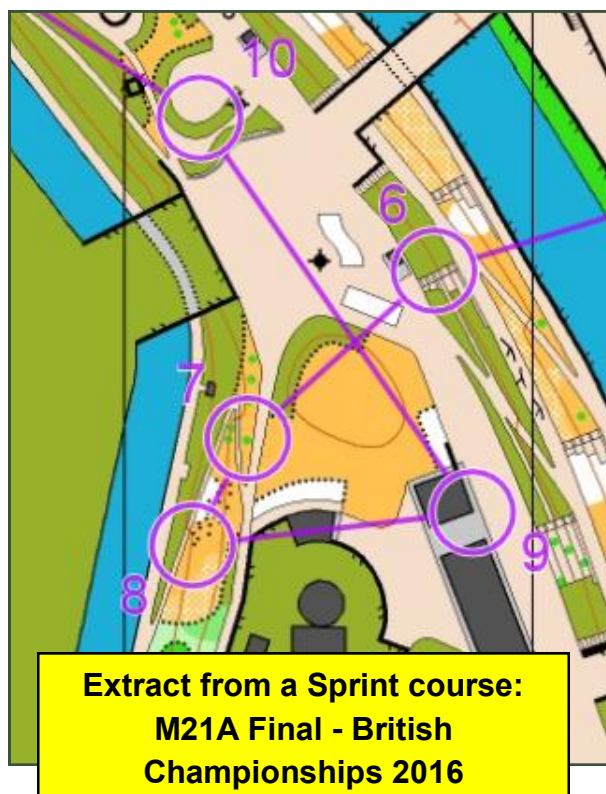
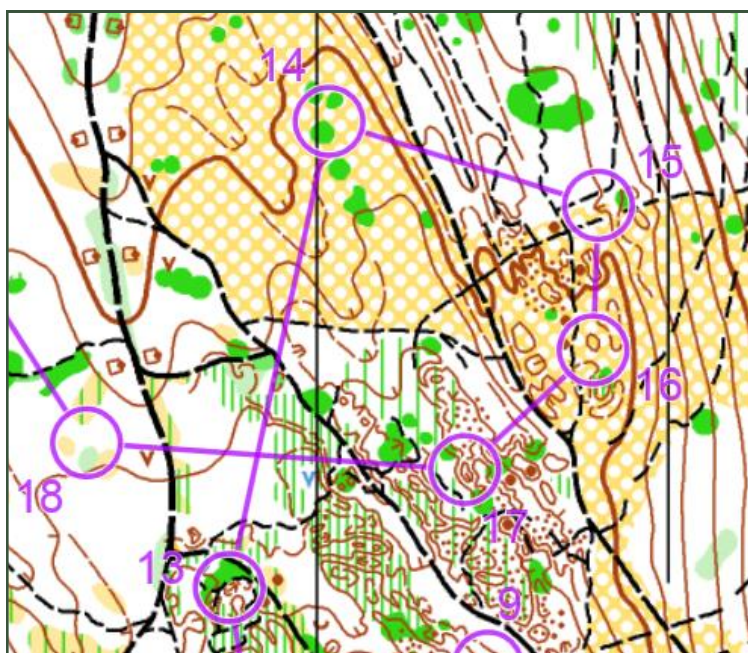
Expected winning time (minutes)			
	M21E	M55L	W45L
Long	90-100	60-70	55-65
Middle	30-35	30-35	30-35
Sprint	12-15	12-15	12-15

**Extract from a Long Distance course:
M21E - British Championships 2015**



	Sprint	Middle Distance	Long Distance
Summary	Sprint orienteering is a fast, visible, easy-to-understand format, allowing orienteering to be staged within areas of significant population.	Middle distance orienteering requires fast, accurate orienteering for a moderately long period of time. Even small mistakes will be decisive.	Long distance orienteering tests all orienteering techniques as well as speed and physical endurance.
Controls	Technically easy.	Consistently technically	A mixture of technical
Route Choice	Difficult route choice, requiring high concentration.	Small and medium scale route choice.	Significant route choice including some large-scale route choices.
Type of Running	Very high speed.	High speed, but requiring runners to adjust their speed for the complexity of the terrain.	Physically demanding, requiring endurance and pace judgement.
Terrain	Predominantly in very runnable park or urban (streets/buildings) terrain. Some fast runnable forest may be included. Spectators are allowed along the course	Technically complex terrain.	Physically tough terrain allowing good route choice possibilities.
Map	1:4000 or 1:5000	1:10000 (or sometimes 1:15000)	1:15000
Winning Time (for Senior Elite competition)	12-15 minutes	30-35 minutes	Men 90-100 minutes / Women 70-80 minutes

**Extract from a Middle Distance course:
M21 - British Championships 2016**



**Extract from a Sprint course:
M21A Final - British Championships 2016**

Bramshill Plantation

It is not often now that the club gets access to a new area of woodland for an orienteering event. But in October we stage our first event at Bramshill Plantation, near Eversley. Here we find out a bit more about the area and why it is now available for us to use - and what it has meant in getting a map ready for the event.

Bramshill over the years

On these two pages are some extracts from old Ordnance Survey maps of Bramshill and its surroundings.

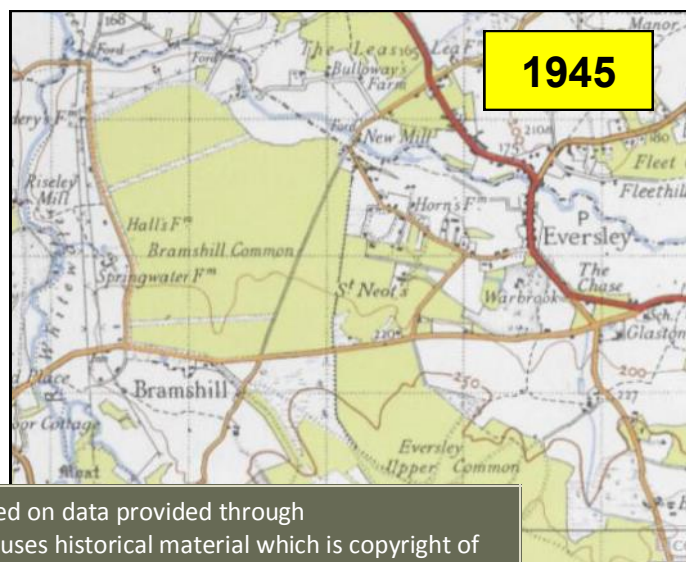
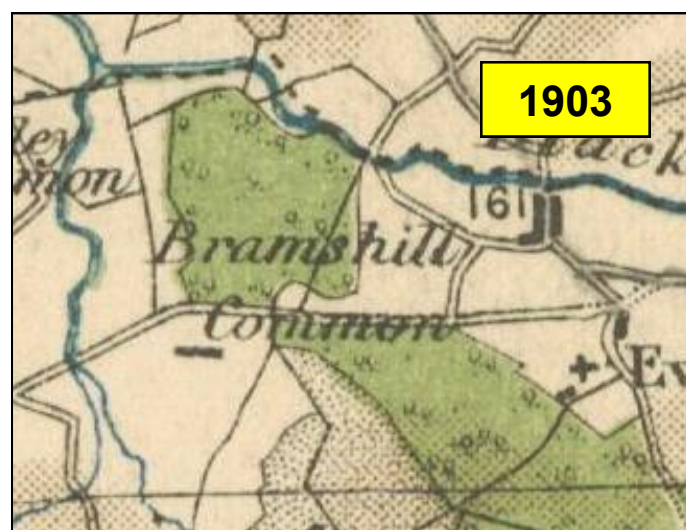
In 1816-17, the area was common land crossed by a network of tracks linking villages and farms and, in particular, the bridges over the River Blackwater to the North and the smaller River Whitewater to the West. This common land continued south and then east towards the village of Hawley.

A map from the 1870s (*not shown here*) shows the area to have been nearly fully wooded with just some of the strips around the edges still as common land. In fact the new woodland stretched down through the areas now known as Warren Heath, Yateley Heath, Minley Warren, Hornley and Hawley.

The map of 1903 shows this new woodland. By 1945 the woodland has been completed to the south and further east to include the buildings shown as St Neot's - these are now used by St Neot's Preparatory School. By 1961 the area looks much as it does today except there are no water features.

The major change to the area started in the early 1970s. The map from 1975 shows that a large strip down the centre of the plantation had been felled and was being used for gravel extraction. Interestingly, a lake is shown at the northern edge of the extraction area and this remains in place today. Gravel extraction continued across most of the area but once completed the area was replanted with trees. More ponds and lakes have been created providing a more varied terrain.

The young trees have now been growing for several years. 3 or 4 years ago the area was checked by Martin Wilson but it was still considered too 'green'. This year it was considered time for another look and, as explained by Katy next, a decision was taken to go ahead.



Note on maps: "This work is based on data provided through www.VisionofBritain.org.uk and uses historical material which is copyright of the Great Britain Historical GIS Project and the University of Portsmouth".

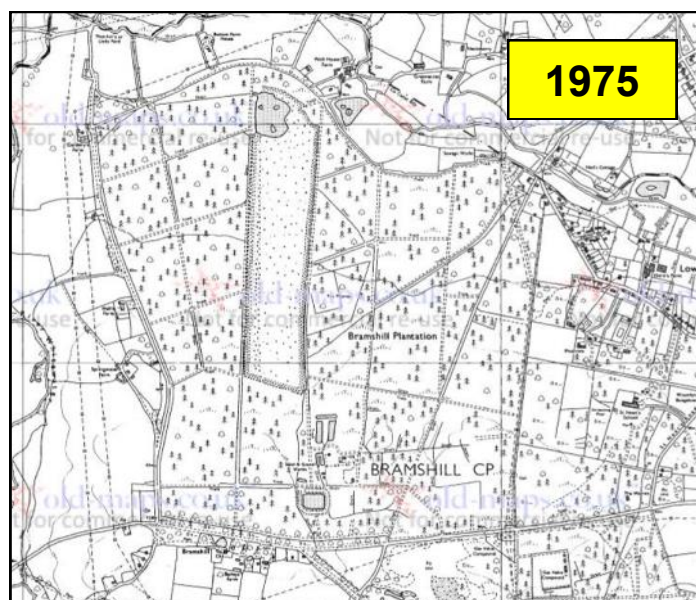
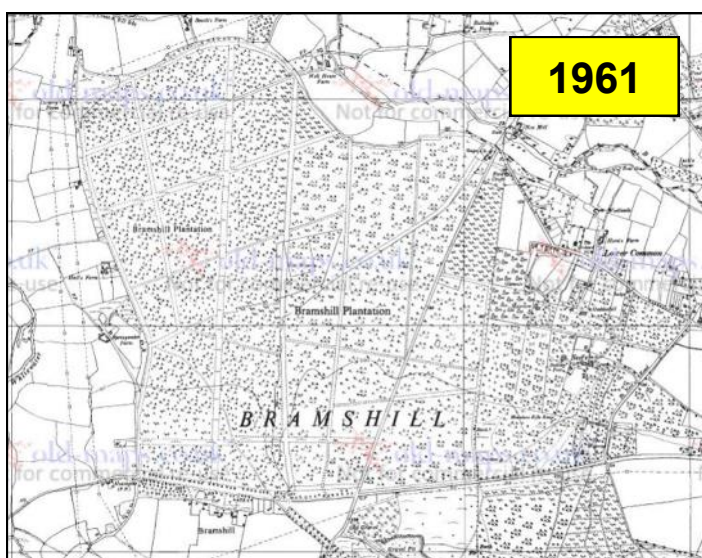
Mapping a new area. - Katy Stubbs describes her involvement

In May this year I was asked to take a look at Bramshill Forest between Eversley and Wellington Country Park to see if it was good enough for an event. Bramshill has been suggested on a couple of occasions in the recent past as a possible new area for the club. It isn't enormous, about 2km square, and I remembered it as old gravel workings mostly planted with young coniferous forest which had hopefully now grown enough to get through.

Fiona had got permission from the Forestry Commission to map the area with the caveat that people would have to stay away from the ponds/marshes as they are highly protected because of various amphibians. I spent a couple of days in May walking around various parts to get a feel and to be honest I wasn't too impressed. Most of the plantation looked pretty thick and much had undergrowth or brashings or both. There were open areas, but most of the open was covered with thick gorse. Some blocks had been felled and replanted with walk/fight, with a large block newly felled and just being surrounded by a fence so was obviously about to be planted. There was a good path / ride network so junior courses would be fine. My view was it would take a Saturday event, but the technical courses would probably not be very interesting. I had thought to map the area in the winter, when the bracken was down. However things change, in early July I was told that permission had been refused for another area for the Saturday event in October and I was asked to get the map done as soon as I could. Not a good time to get through thick bracken!!

First I had to get a base map to work from. I started with the OS as I had the base sheets for the area downloaded already. Typical but the forest was split over two maps so the first trick was to join them together. With geo-referenced files that should have been easy, but for some reason they came out about 50m apart so I had to shift the western one to fit the east block. Having walked tracks and paths around the area it seemed very flat and the vegetation was going to be much trickier to plot on the ground as it is very difficult to pace and go on bearings through thicker wood. So I decided to use google earth as the main data reference and sort out the contours as I went along. Especially as it looked like many of the landfill mounds could be seen on the aerial photos.

So before I went out I had a base map already created with the main tracks, most of the ponds, direction of planting in many blocks and most of the "mounds" in the unplanted areas on the map. As I went round the first check was around the perimeters of each block. What line features went into the area (small paths, rides, ditches, obvious vegetation changes)? Basic skills of pacing between fixed points gives where these come out onto the base map, accurate compass bearings give you what direction they go in. How many of the "mounds" that you thought were in



there actually existed? In some places they were lined up with the planting line, in some places they ran in a completely different direction and in some blocks there were no mounds at all. Also it became very obvious that the photos on google earth were quite old as the open areas had much more gorse than shown. Fighting through gorse is not my favourite occupation.

Well, when I finally got into the actual forested blocks many of them were more runnable than I first thought, so slow run rather than walk/fight. Just not much else in there apart from the mounds. In what had been "open" on google maps the gorse was much worse than I had hoped with some being completely over-run with it. However there are quite a few interesting paths and gaps bouncing in and over some of the mounds. The outer edges of the area have not been quarried in the same way as the main blocks. To the south, next to the road, there is a thin but not very useful strip of wood verging from empty run to walk/fight in the western part. In the southeast there has been tight coniferous planting (walk) which I have not fought my way through, could be good in a few years. But in the NE there is thinner wood with path routes and one or two big brown features, there is one hill which was a big surprise when I got to it. I'm sure that I have probably missed finding something in this area, but as visibility is limited you could spend a day hunting through a 100m square block. There are some lovely chunks of run in the middle that have never been quarried, again with some bracken, but accessible. Finally there is a fairly wide strip down the western edge which hasn't been quarried and has some interesting vegetation and small brown features.

The Forestry Commission are obviously very protective of a couple of areas with significant water features, presumably to protect the amphibians and two of these are newly fenced off. One of these is OOB, the other fence in the NW is frankly not worth the effort of trying to cross. I would say do it at your peril, because the deep ditch is not one I would climb down into (much deeper than head height) and it only goes southwards into thick bracken with young trees (fight) anyway.

So have a good run (or at least a satisfying one), take into account the area has been mapped when the undergrowth is at it's highest and there could well be things out there that are missing. Please let me know if there are any features that need to be mapped or updated when you get back.



Two swans nesting on the edge of one of the larger lakes (taken in Spring 2015)

*Now you have read about it,
come and try out our new area ...*

Saturday 15 October

**Winter Series & Youth League
Event**

Bramshill

*Parking is at St Neots School - Entrance is via Grid
Ref: SU767617 nearest Postcode:RG27 0PN*



The whole of Bramshill Plantation is a **Site of Special Scientific Interest** (SSSI). The ponds support Pillwort, a rare and very small aquatic fern, as well as many species of dragonfly such as Black Darter and Keeled Skimmer.

The recently restored or planted parts of the site generate heather and support rare heathland birds.

Has Bramshill been used for orienteering before? David Jukes investigates

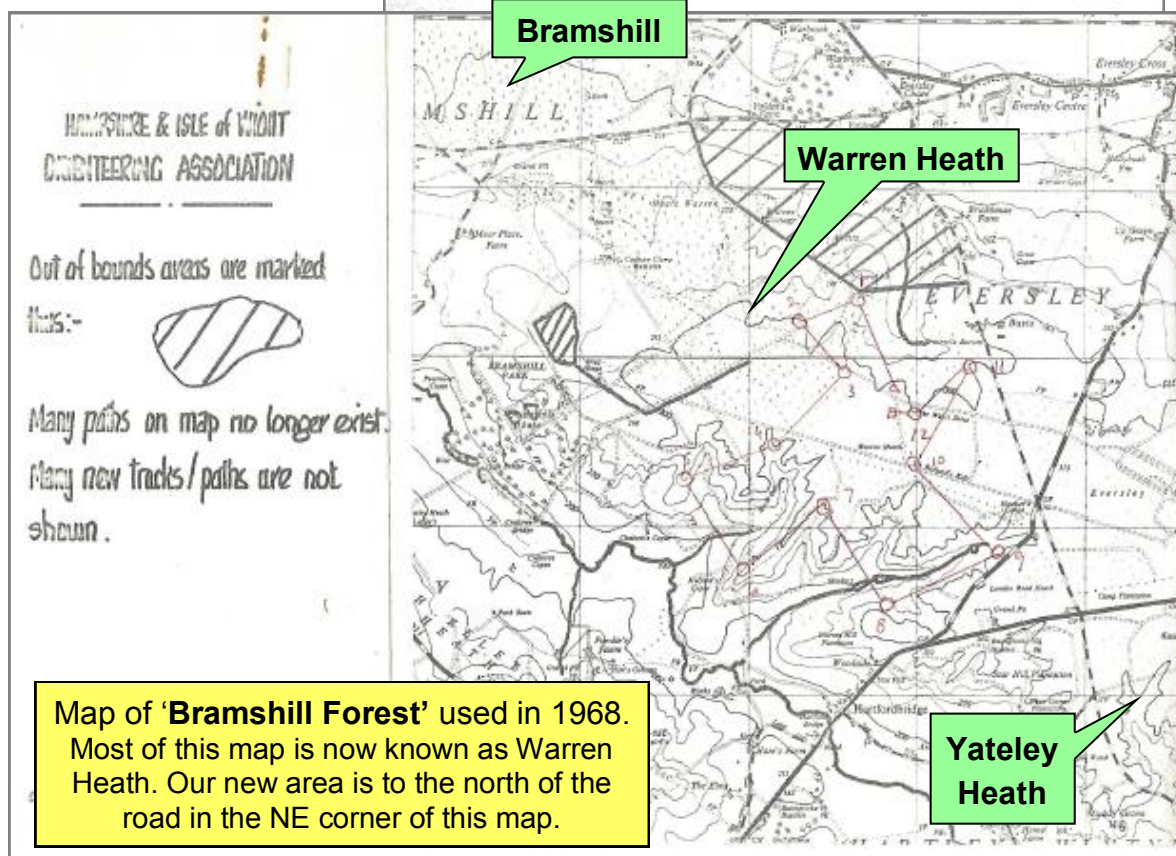
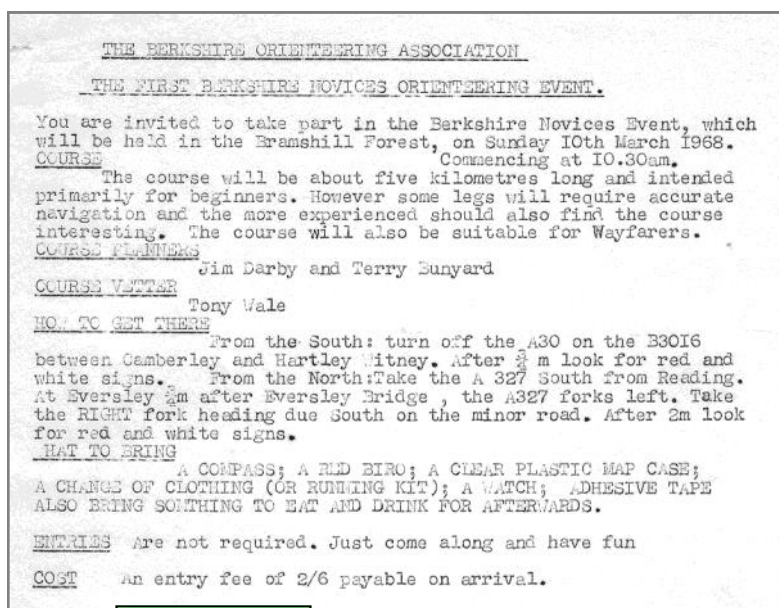
As the area had been wooded prior to the gravel extraction taking place, it would have been interesting to have included in this Newsletter an earlier orienteering map if one had existed. The maps provided on pages 14-15 show that gravel extraction had started by 1975. Any prior use would have had to be in the relatively short period between the start of orienteering in the region and the extraction starting, say from 1965 to 1975.

Katy was not aware of any prior use so I turned to the club archives which contain a small number of documents from that period. And I thought I had struck gold - there were event details, control description and results from an event held on the 10th March 1968 in 'Bramshill Forest'. A copy of the details is shown below.

However no map was available. So next I sent an e-mail to Eric Harper (our map coordinator for many years) and to our two oldest members - Bryce Gibson and Darrell Cruickshank. Eric was of the same view as Katy - he was not aware of any previous use of the area. Darrell replied saying that he had a copy of the map used at the event and was happy to send it to me. Bryce replied indicating that as far as he could recall, other areas had been a priority at the time and Bramshill had not been used.

I studied the details of the event more carefully and, checking the travel instructions, they pointed to a car park quite a bit further south than the current 'Bramshill Plantation' - in fact much more likely to be Warren Heath. I waited for Darrell's map to arrive and unfortunately this confirmed that the 1968 event only used, what would now be called, Warren Heath. So it would appear that our October event is the first use of Bramshill Plantation for orienteering.

Or is it? One curious point has not been explained. Whilst out mapping, Katy found a small orienteering kite in one area of the wood, the type sometimes used at training events. If you are able to explain this or add any additional information on Bramshill, please let me know.



Croeso 2016

The biennial 'Croeso' orienteering festival was held in South Wales from 24th-29th July providing 5 days of competition. Here are two reports from members ...



Day 1 - Kenfig Burrows - Course 7 (M70L): Dick Rae reports

Sand dunes - convoluted contours - few paths - terrain to make you think very carefully, to make you check the map very closely, to get easily lost in, but very satisfying if you have a good run!

Days 1 and 2 of Croeso 2016 were held on Kenfig Burrows near Port Talbot. Kenfig consists of a number of open dune ridges rising above flat seasonal marshes on the coastline. The vegetation was rough in places, especially in the marshes. With early start times on day 1, BKO runners helped forge the bullock trails, but were spared many of the heavy afternoon rain showers.

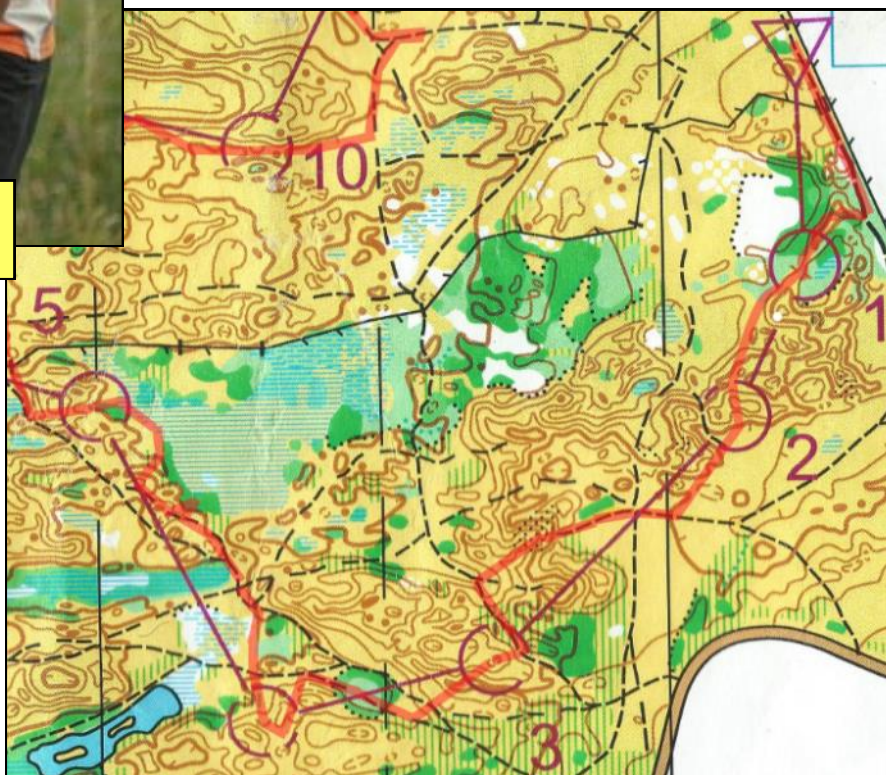


Dick Rae finishing at Kenfig Burrows on Day 2 of Croeso 2016

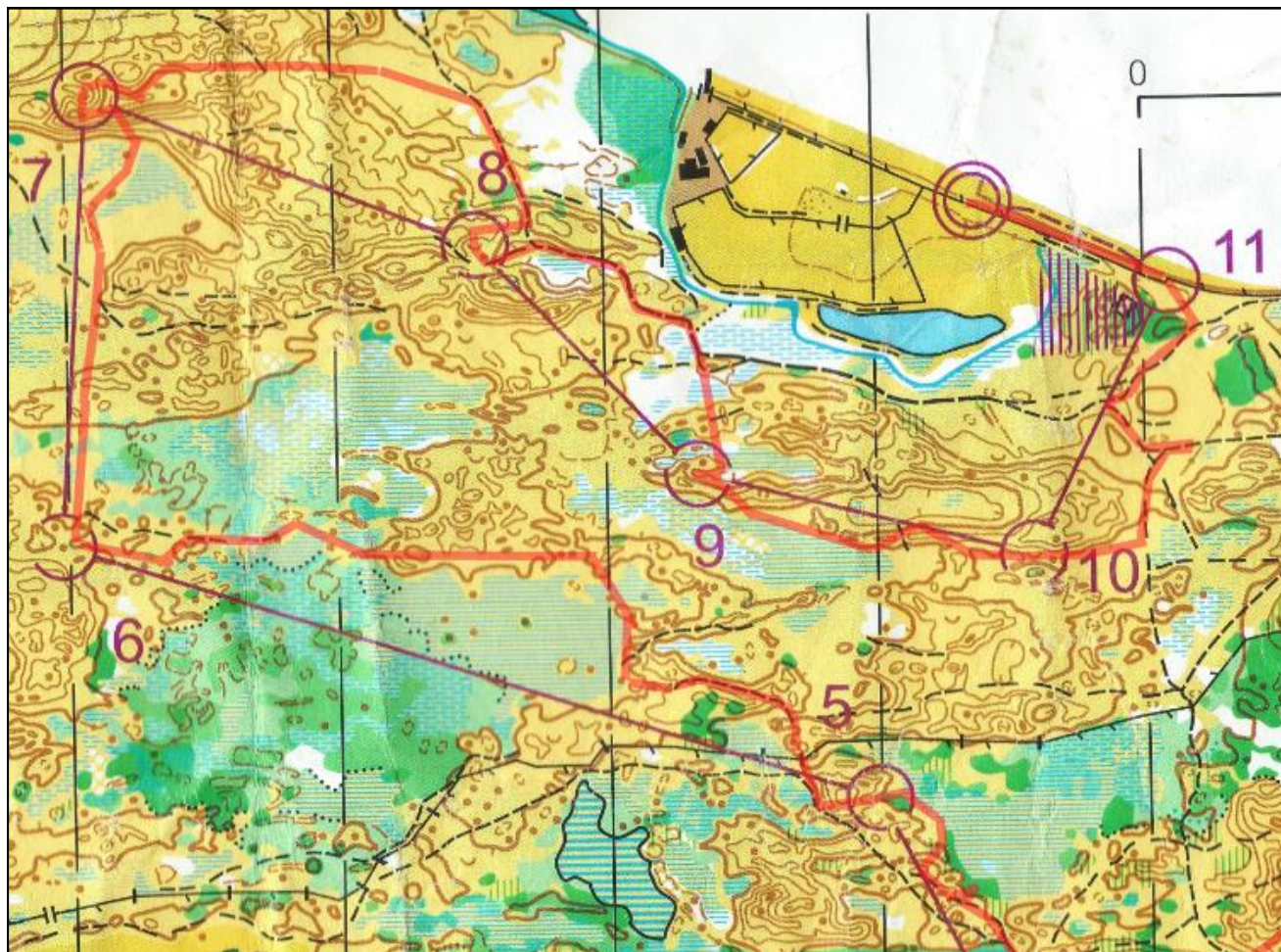
My course, 7, is shown on the two extracts illustrating this report. A number of the shorter legs could be tackled safely by choosing a suitable attack point, and heading to the control on a bearing, with some consideration for the lie of the land. These legs, with selected attack point, included 1 (slight bend in path), 3 (thicket), 4 (path junction) and 9 (path junction). On leg 3, I might have been better to take the longer path route to the south, rather than the sandy reentrant route, as it avoided climb.

I tackled Legs 2 and 10 by looking out for prominent reentrants, but managed to drift a bit on leg 10. The contour interval was 2.5m, but it was sometimes hard to correlate hills and depressions on the ground with what was on the map.

My route on leg 5 may not have been optimum. I



thought running along the edge of the marsh would easily lead me to the control. It did, as I could line up the reentrant with the "green" thickets at the N side of the marsh. However, the marsh vegetation was slow going, and I had to retreat at first. Running along the path and using the prominent hill as an attack point might have been better. Nevertheless, this leg let me know that the ground cover, off the



dunes themselves, was hard going, which perhaps influenced my route on leg 6.

The most interesting legs on course 7 were 6, 7 and 8 in the middle of the competition area. Of these, leg 6 was the longest and most challenging. The control, a knoll, was far from obvious attack points. Three routes were possible. The direct route crossed a large marsh, so would be a bit of a struggle judging by leg 5. The 2nd route headed roughly west, following a path and fence, to a gate in the fence. From the gate, the route would head north, but any drift in the long bearing might cause loss of contact between map and ground. I opted for the 3rd route, which followed a path from a stile, and then the edge of the marsh to the dunes to the north. From there I headed west along an increasingly narrow ridge, gaining confidence from the prominent vegetation boundaries, and successfully meeting the indistinct path on the map. I jumped off the path too early, but recovered quickly by noting that the control was SW of the end of the thickets to the north.

Leg 7 was straightforward, as the control (depression) was the far side of a prominent collecting feature, a ridge of dunes. Crossing the ridge proved to be a steep, slow, sandy climb. I could have aimed to cross the ridge further west, where it was lower, but this would have meant crossing more slow marsh. I did not see the indistinct path on the ground.

Leg 8 also had a number of possible routes. The shortest direct route would have been undulating, and keeping on the bearing difficult. The 2nd route would have recrossed the ridge, then headed SE along the edge of the marsh, then east to the control, either along the indistinct path, or by keeping the higher ground to the north. Partly because I didn't want to struggle up the sandy ridge again, I opted to contour in a roughly easterly direction to the large flat catching area bounded on the east by a path. From there, I reached the control via the ridge west of the small col on the path. Unfortunately, I could not see the control from the top of the ridge, at first, as it was hidden by a bush. Thankfully, someone dibbed below me!

On the leg to final control 11, the indistinct path junction confused me, so I had to retrace my steps a short distance rather than crossing the rough open to the control. (There was a bullock trail here, on day 2.....) The shattered ruins of Kenfig Castle, marked as a wall in the "Out of

Bounds", guided me into the control.

On finishing, I found I was first out of 9 finishers, and by quite a large margin. However, my moment of glory did not last long, and I finished 11th in my class. I was pleased with my run, as I had not made major mistakes, and had homed into the controls with little bother. (Unfortunately, I can not say the same for my run on day 4..... Check the results, if you wish.)



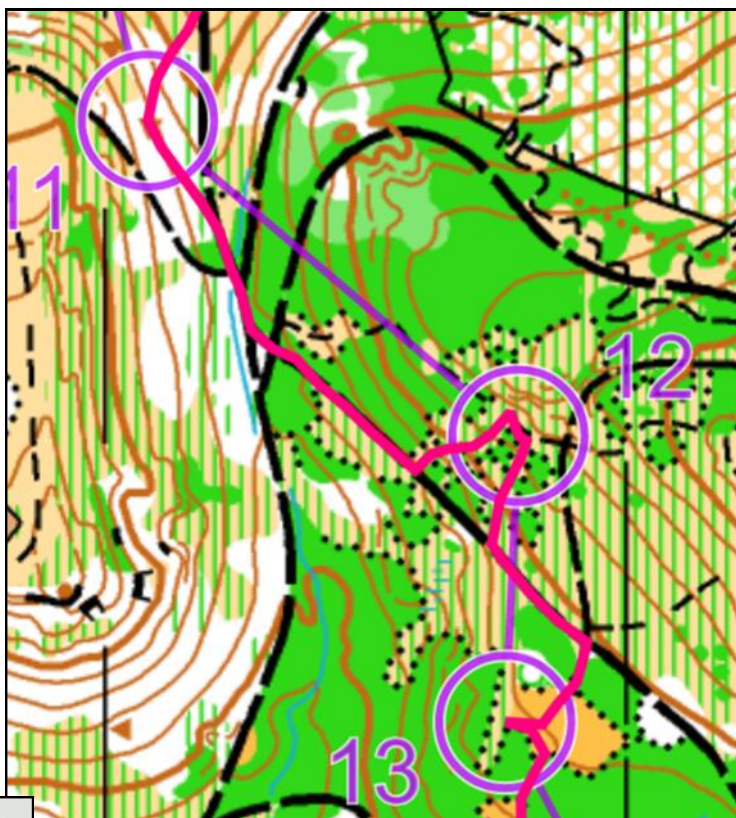
Day 5 - Margam Country Park - Course 4 (M60L)

Andrew Graham comments on two legs where he dropped time - but was it simply poor route choice?

I have focussed on just two legs from this, the final day of Croeso 2016. The map shows legs 11 -12 and 12 - 13 with my less than ideal route choices also indicated.

In my defence, I was very tired by this point and, having had some spectacular mud slides/falls on the slopes of the wood earlier, my map was, in spite of efforts to clean the muck off it, pretty hard to read.

Also, it was only when I got home, cleaned the map up, and had a close look, that I realised there was a path under the purple line between 11 and 12. Mind you that is no excuse for not seeing the path continuing eastwards beyond 12 to a good path down to 13. Instead I ploughed down through the rhodies and bracken that I had just thrashed my way up through (mind you there was evidence of other lummocks having done the same so perhaps others didn't see the path either.)



Comment from a Grade 1 Controller (Katy Stubbs):

‘Classic example of the planner not looking properly at the courses before sending them to the printer. For Leg 11-12 they should have either moved the line slightly to the south or broken it.’

Andrew Graham finishing at Kenfig Burrows on Day 2

Photos on Pages 18-21 by Altitude Design
<http://www.altitudedesign.co.uk/>



More photos from Croeso 2016

Four out of the five days were largely wet making visibility on the hills difficult and some of the steep wooded slopes a bit hazardous



Peter Entwistle
(Day 3)



Katy Stubbs
(Day 4)



Nigel Jefferies
(Day 5)



Sue Wilkes
(Day 5)



The OO Cup is held each year in Slovenia, famous for its karst limestone terrain, full of deep sink holes and myriads of rock and boulder features. It is a 5-day competition, cumulative timing with no discards, so every mistake counts. I'd run the event in 2011, where I made 87 minutes of mistakes over the 5 days, yet still finished in the top half of M60! It is fiendishly complex, a war of attrition with each mistake mounting up, and just to complete each day is a success in itself. But it is fantastic terrain, giving a real challenge.

This year I returned to try again. The event was held near the northern border of Slovenia, with one day in Austria, two days in Italy, and two in Slovenia. There were around 1800 competitors overall, 30 in M65. Maps were at 1:7500, 5m contours for all classes. I find 1:7500 very difficult to run on, as I tend to move faster across the map than I realise, and can overshoot controls.



Day 1 went fairly well for me. Despite making several mistakes, around 6 mins in total, I actually won the day by 2.5 minutes from second place, and 5 mins from everyone else: not what I was expecting! It showed that I had the pace to match the leaders, and had managed to avoid any lengthy loss.

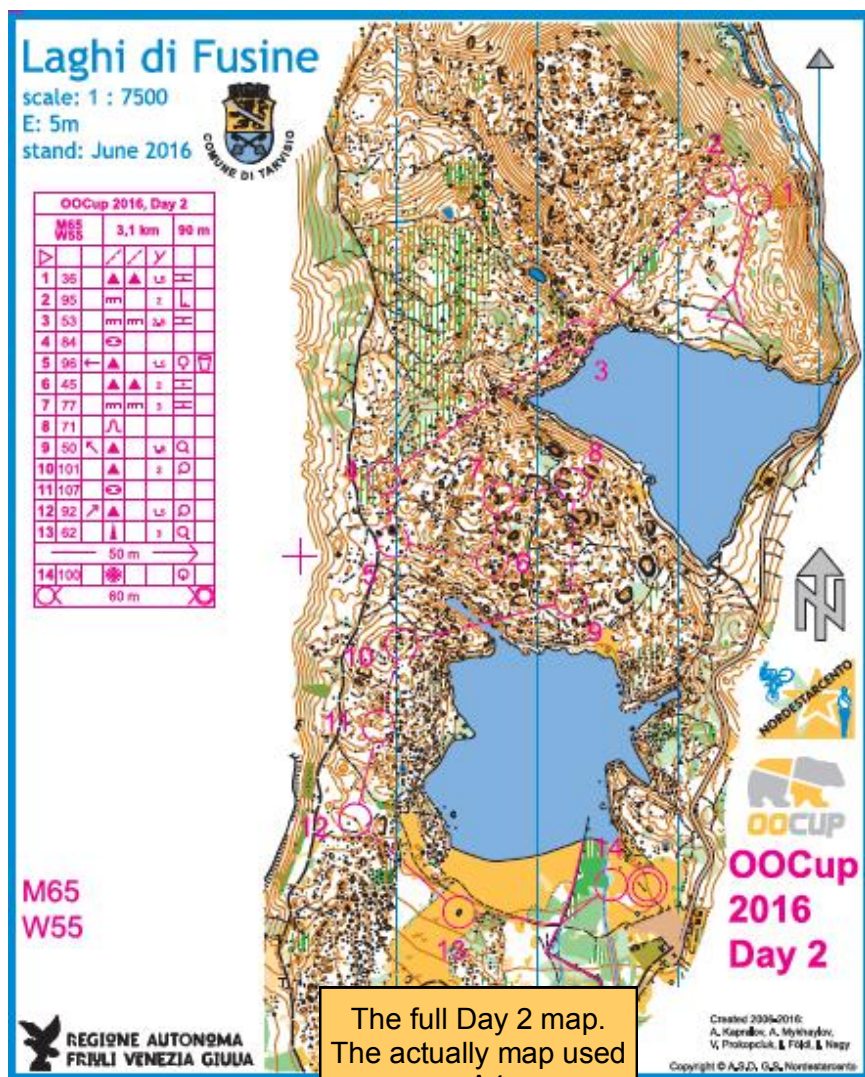
Day 2 in Italy was perhaps the most complex terrain I've ever run in. The map is shown below with the middle section on the next page. This is enlarged from the actual map size to make it more readable(!). It was a hot, humid day, and whenever I was forced to slow down, my glasses would steam up, making it hard to maintain a good race rhythm. By number 5, I'd already made a couple

of errors, and was then confronted with this section:

To navigate this type of terrain, you have to simplify each leg, ignoring as much of the rock detail as you can, running on compass towards a clear feature, usually a path, obvious contour, or huge rock pillar. The story continues....

5-6: aimed to keep S of the green to the re-entrant, then E to the rock pillars, but drifted a bit S and found the larger pillars just S of the number 6 on the map. Relocated slowly N then W to eventually find 6. OK, poor technique but not a disaster.

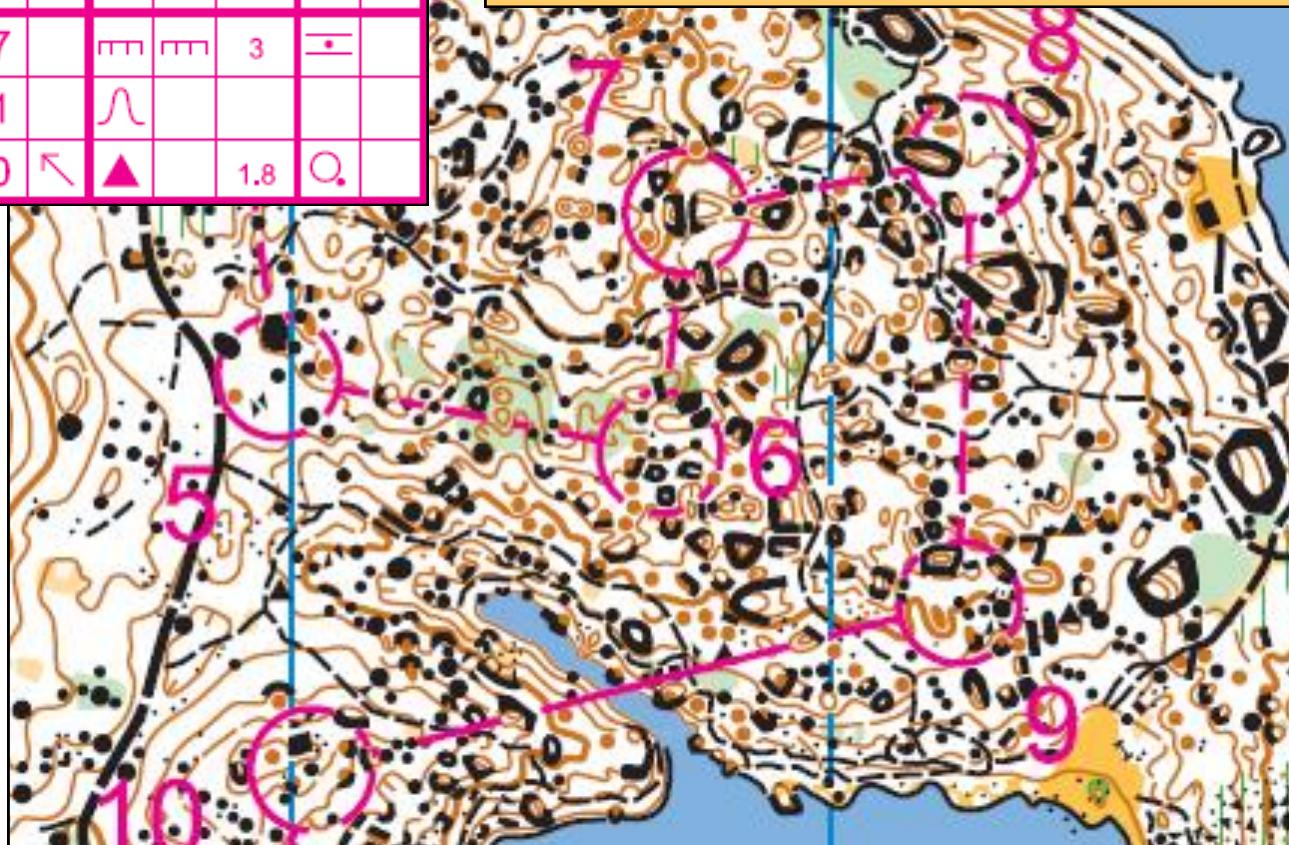
6-7: turned to head towards 7, to pick up cross-path at half-way. Spent 2 mins running L and then R along this path, but could not make the rock features match the map. Re-orientated map and compass: OMG, I'd headed S from 6 to the path N of lake inlet. Now very stuck: how to find 7 from an unknown point? Estimated where I was along path, headed NNE on compass over the hill onto proper track, still confused, ran on, and saw



The full Day 2 map.
The actually map used
was on A4 paper

5	96	←	▲		1.5	♀	♻
6	45		▲	▲	2	≡	
7	77		≡	≡	3	≡	
8	71		∩				
9	50	↖	▲		1.8	♀	

The central part enlarged to show Martin's controls. Note that for the competition map, the magnetic north lines were only 3.3cms apart.



twin pillars with passage between them on L. Went in and dibbed.

7-8: came out of passage, set compass and ran towards 8. After 200m+ still had not found path, ground did not match map. Stopped to check compass again, and found I'd been running W not E (expletive deleted: how could I do this twice?). Now really stuck, no idea of my location. Ran back steadily along inverse of compass setting, and eventually saw enormous rock tower far ahead. This was the thick black circle NW of control 8. Then worked via paths to reach 8.

What a dreadful pair of mistakes. 6-7-8 was about 230 metres in total. The best combined splits were about 4 minutes: I had taken almost 22 minutes, and frankly, was fortunate to achieve that time. And of course I then made more mistakes later in the course, being punch-drunk and tiring. Not one of my best O days, I must say.

I tried to work out that evening what had happened. It seemed that at 6 I had forgotten I was now approaching it from the E, not the W as planned, and just turned the wrong way on exit, perhaps not having turned the map properly. At 7, I realise now that I thought I'd entered and exited the passage from the N, and therefore turned R on exit, when I'd actually entered the passage from the S. Duh! The learning seems to be that after approaching from an incorrect direction, after dibbing one must give up another 10 seconds or so to really re-orientate the map, the compass, and your brain to get them all back in synch.

Overall, I achieved finish positions of 1st, 23rd, 17th, 2nd, 5th, an odd mix, which gave me 6th place overall, just one second behind 5th place (moral: always sprint hard on the run-in!), so not too bad, but 53 minutes behind the winner. But just turning the wrong way at 6 on Day 2 cost me 18 direct minutes, and probably another 10 or more later through tiredness, so an expensive error.

I'd recommend the OO Cup if you fancy a real test of physical and navigation ability in complex terrain, in a beautiful country. If you want to see what it's like, M/W21E courses for each day are on the website at www.oocup.com. Just don't set your sights too high on achieving a good result!

With thanks to **Ivan Nagy** of the **OO Cup** Organising team for permission to use the map to illustrate this article.

Summer Park / Urban Event

9th July 2016

Lower Earley - West



Jacqui and John Briggs
discussing route choices after
completing their courses



Terry Hosking -
Below setting out on the Long course
across Chalfont Park and, above,
coming in the finish.

