



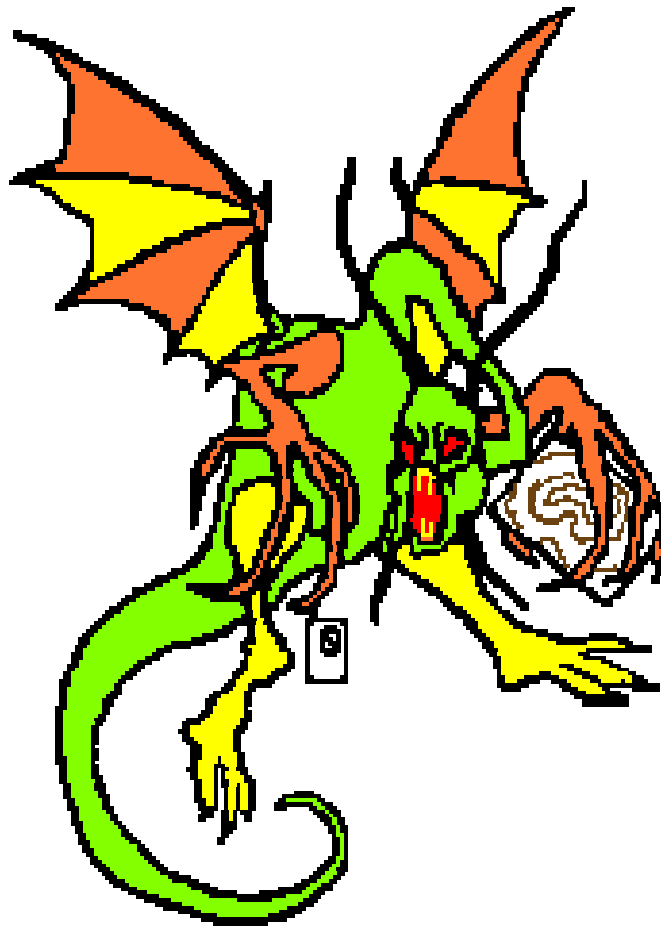
West Anglian
Orienteering
Club



JABBERWAOC

Vol.35 No. 5

November 2007



*And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!*

Editorial

There is a lot to read and think about in this Jabberwaoc. As well as reports on different events – for which many thanks to the various contributors – Chris Morley has written a thought-provoking piece about the future development of the club. In many ways WAOC is a very successful club – a thriving junior section, lots of competitors at events like the Scottish 6 days and some good development work taking place in Cambridge. But dig a little deeper and that success looks a lot more fragile. Not enough volunteers to run events, limited areas to use in the west of the region, all of which means too few events to run in. Now, whilst this may not be a problem to the determined orienteer who, like me, doesn't mind travelling a considerable distance to get his fix, it does mean that local orienteers have had little to do over the last few months. There is no easy solution to this, but at the heart of the problem is that if more members volunteered occasionally to help at an event the problem would at least be eased.

Regular local events are essential to keeping the life-blood flowing in, and I am sure that over the next few months the committee will be considering this matter more. I have my own ideas of the way forward – key to this is holding a monthly series of events, focused around one population centre in the region for two or three months so that newcomers get 'used' to orienteering regularly. Once they get addicted it is then a lot harder to stay away (in my experience!). Happy Herts do this very successfully in the south of our region, and their events are very well attended. Leicestershire OC has just started a similar programme, after having a major recruitment drive earlier in the year. It will be interesting to see how that develops.

Another idea being looked at by some club members is having widely publicised runners' courses – possibly even a series over a whole year, with prizes at the end. These would be attached to WAOC's district events. Again, the regularity is important as 'going orienteering' then becomes a part of the diary.

BUT, of course, all of this relies on volunteers, so we come back to the same problem.....you can help to solve this.

A final thought –some of you may have seen the following exchange on the BBC 2 quiz show 'Eggheads'.

Judith Keppel (the first winner of £1million on 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire') was asked the following question (after the 3 multiple choice questions):

Murnaghan: What is the name of the sport involving map, compass and cross country running?

Keppel: Orienteering. Is that a sport?

Says it all really, doesn't it?

Mike Capper

Next Copy Date – January 13th

Club News

Chairman's Chat

It was good to see WAOC running a District event again, at Mildenhall on 21st October in splendid autumn weather – our first major event since March 4th. Many thanks to our planner Tim Mulcahy and the organisers Karen and Pete Heybrock, and to all the WAOC helpers – 44 WAOC seniors and 29 juniors ran. The WAOC Junior team made it through to the final of the Yvette Baker Trophy on 2nd December near Scunthorpe – where we wish them every possible success.

At the last meeting of the Club Committee on 13 September there was lengthy discussion of the various challenges and opportunities facing WAOC for the future, on which I shall write more in the next issue of Jabberwaoc. Meanwhile, there is the question whether members should be encouraged to take Jabberwaoc on-line instead of on paper, to be greener and save expense. If everyone took the magazine in electronic form the Club subscription could be reduced, but unless that happens we need to cover printing and distribution costs. We need standard subscriptions (Senior, Family etc) because of the way they are collected through British Orienteering, but if there were sufficient interest the Committee could consider modest financial incentives for WAOC members not to take Jabberwaoc on paper, without altering the sub. - perhaps free entry to one Club event. Comments and views from WAOC members on this - as well as on the question raised last time of whether to cut down from six to four Jabberwaoc issues per year - would be most welcome.

The Club still has two officer posts unfilled. We are very keen to find someone to take on the role of Club Coach and trainer – to co-ordinate and drive forward our efforts in these areas – and someone to look after Publicity (for the Club, our Events, etc). Volunteers will be very welcome: could anyone who thinks that s/he might be interested in undertaking either of these roles please contact me or another member of the committee for more information on what would be involved.

Major changes are under way within British Orienteering. At an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Federation on 27th October, proposed changes to the constitution were adopted by just over the required 75% majority – replacing the current Council and Managing Committee by a Board of ten Directors, three elected each year at the AGM to serve for three years, plus the Chief Executive. There will no longer automatically be a representative of each region on the governing body, as each elected Director will have to promote the interests of Orienteering as a whole rather than represent one component – so it will be even more important for members to attend the AGM or send proxy votes in support of those they wish to see as Directors!

Another change in prospect, discussed at a conference just before the EGM, is to have only three main types of O-event; National, Standard and Local. This is prompted by a perception that with such developments as S-Ident punching and pre-marked maps there is now often little difference between Regional and District events. There would be fewer 'National' events of the current kind, perhaps only three or four area championships, plus such major events as the JK, British Championships, Scottish 6-day etc – and ranking would be based on Standard as well as National events. Standard events would have a full range of colour-coded as well as age-related courses (often using the same controls); with the aim of providing smoother advance to high-level O for newcomers of all ages. Doubtless we shall hear more of this anon from the new Board.

Chris Morley

WAOC Committee

The list of current committee members and their contact details is available at www.waoc.org.uk

.WAOC Membership Information

New Club Members

Welcome to:

Bjorn Basberg and Torild Hage from Norway and now and family (Bard Hage Basberg M17) living in Cambridge Bourn C of E Primary School

Phil and Helen Collins and family from Cambridge (Katherine W13 and Henry M10)

Jem Corcoran M10 from Haddenham, Cambs

Helen Judd W11 from Burwell, Cambridge

Andrew Turnbull and Joanna Burch from Little Walden, Essex and family (Alexander M9, William M7 and Flora W5)

We hope that you will enjoy orienteering with us.

Membership renewal for 2008

British Orienteering members will have received their renewal requests from BOF. Please deal with it soon, so that your card for 2008 reaches you in good time for the coming year - £2 event fee reductions and all that! Club only members will find their renewal form enclosed with this edition of Jabberwaoc – again, please do it soon. If you want to change to being a BOF member (either Local or National) I can provide the necessary form. Any one who has joined the Club and/or BOF since Sept 2007 has nothing further to pay until the end of 2008.

Anne Duncumb (membership secretary)

WAOC EVENTS - HELP NEEDED

We apologise for the small number of events we put on in the past 12 months: we have been beset by felling, access restrictions and our venues being pre-booked for other events.

Now we have all our permissions in place and we hope to see lots of you enjoying yourselves out on the courses.

This is the programme for the next 12 months.

DATE	EVENT	AREA	ORGANISER	PLANNER	COMMENTS
18 Nov 2007	District Event	Maulden Woods	Bruce Marshall	Mike Bickle	White to Brown courses
26 Jan 2008	Night Event	Therfield Heath		Chris Morley	Courses for all. Bring a torch
24 Feb 2008	District Event	Croxton and Devil's Punchbowl		Steve Hinshelwood	Steve hopes to include a runners' event alongside the usual courses

30 Mar 2008	District Event	Amphill Park			Different format? Mini blodslitet?
27 Apr 2008	Short Races	Chicksands Wood			Probably a chasing sprint.
29 Sep 2008	Come & Try It	Therfield Heath			A good event for a new planner or organiser

As you can see, we are still needing planners and organisers for most of these events: as you know, all of these will be volunteers, as are all our officials and helpers, so please volunteer to fill one of these spaces and ensure that the events go ahead.

Ursula Oxburgh 01223 357199

Email - enquiries@waoc.org.uk

Captain's Corner

Compass Sport Cup: - 13th January at Brandon. This is your chance to run for WAOC in the key interclub competition. I am looking forward to superb running on a crisp January morning. Just long enough after Christmas for the turkey to have finally been finished but soon enough after those New Year resolutions that you'll still be keen to get out and run hard.

I would like all members to get out to run if at all possible. The club will subsidise the half the cost of entries so it will cost you £3:50 for adults and £1:50 for juniors. All entries need to be made through me. Please email me if you would like a run. I will need the course you will run (Brown, Blue, Green, Light Green, Orange), your age class (e.g. M21), your BOF number and SI number. If you would like an early or late run then let me know.

New WAOC O top

It's time for new O top design and I've been asking around anyone who will listen about what they would like. Winter/Summer, long sleeves or T shirt style, thick and warm or ultralight and skin tight. Red and white or something altogether different. If you feel strongly let me or anyone on the committee know.

New junior captain

Many thanks to Simon Gardner for a super job as WAOC junior captain. He passed on the mantle to Ed Louth at the Peter Palmer Relays in September. Very best wishes for Simon in the future. Read Ed's report of the Peter Palmers in this issue.

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You know you are an orienteer when... Part 2

1. Someone tells you about their satellite navigation system and you launch into a 20-minute tirade about how those things are killing map-reading skills.
2. You are no longer surprised at finding a control.

3. At a new job, you actually look at the floor plan of your office. After all, it is important to know all the possible route choices to the toilet.
4. All of your white socks are no longer white or you buy grey or black socks so the dirt does not show.
5. Your room or office is strewn with recent maps that you have yet to file in your map filing system
6. There is a bag on the floor you have yet to unpack fully from your most recent orienteering trip
7. Any piece of paper your child sees with writing on it is a "map"
8. You have lived in your town less than one year, and can find your way round it better than people who have lived there all their lives.
9. You go for a run with others in an area you do not know, and feel you have to look at a map afterwards to work out where you went (or even draw a map of where you went).
10. Your five-year-old grandson draws you an O map for a birthday card.

British Orienteering's review of Event Structure

A British Orienteering working group has been reviewing the current event structure and has come up with a number of far-reaching proposals that would radically alter the sort of events offered by WAOC and other clubs. The proposals are being reviewed still and are quite a long way from being implemented. Below is a summary of the main proposals and my own commentary on these.

Recommendation 1: The event structure should be reduced to just three levels of events.

These will be National, Standard and Local events. There would no longer be a category of regional events. National events will represent the pinnacle of our sport in terms of quality – quality of terrain, map, planning, organisation and competition. These events should be continually striving to improve quality in all areas and the current system of allocation of the Major Events on a Rota basis makes this difficult. There is a need for greater monitoring to ensure standards are maintained and improved.

Recommendation 2: Further debate on the timing of BOC and the relationship to BRC is needed.

There have always been problems with the timing of the British Championships (BOC). To fit in with elite needs, separate Elite championships have been held in the past but these have generally been very low profile events. British championships are usually held in the months of April or May, thus clashing with school examinations. The working group gives no clear guidance on how to avoid problems like these. It looked at ideas such as holding BOC in the autumn and separating the relay and individual championships but made no firm recommendations.

Recommendation 3: BSC, BMC & BNC should exist as National level events in the fixtures calendar.

This sounds like a great step forward. In the past, British sprint, middle and night championships have received little publicity and have tended to be avoided by all but the keenest orienteers. The group proposed that the sprint and middle championships should be made more open by offering a greater range of classes. The format for the sprint championships, with heats and finals will remain unchanged.

Recommendation 4: The Sprint should become a formal part of JK although not included in overall scoring - the rest of the weekend should remain as it is.

This is excellent news! Those of you who enjoyed running around the university campus at the JK in 2007 will be pleased that it is proposed to make the sprint race a regular feature of future JKs. The rest of the JK format will remain unchanged for the time being.

Recommendation 5: The number of National events should be reduced to 4 or 5 per annum and form Area Championships (Scottish, Northern, Midland, Southern and possibly Welsh).

This sounds like a very sensible proposal that will represent a move back to the format that existed before national events were introduced. Regional Championships give a good target to orienteers of different ages, and should be more attractive to the elite. These may well be one of the few 'age class' events under the proposed structure. I hope that there will be a focus in the new regional championships on using the best areas. For this, rotation around the clubs does not necessarily guarantee the best orienteering.

Recommendation 6: The quality of competition at Area Championships should be improved by encouraging greater participation through use of these events for UK Cup and FCC and a higher weighting in the ranking system.

In my opinion, this is another good idea. Ranking lists can act as great motivators provided they are run well and are seen to be fair. The UK Cup and Future Champions Cup have both been good at providing competition for the relevant age groups. The Masters Cup for older age classes that was started in 2001 has been very poorly promoted and understood by very few orienteers. It could be a good addition to the competition structure if promoted properly. Hence...

Recommendation 7: The Masters Cup should be based on three x JK, four x British Championships and all Area Championships with scoring in line with UK Cup and FCC.

The Masters Cup would be run on the same model as the UK Cup and FCC, with the top 50 runners scoring in designated events.

Recommendation 8: All events at Standard level should have courses designated by colour. The current colour structure should be expanded slightly from 8 to 10 courses to give a greater range and choice.

Recommendation 9: At any Standard level event, age class competitions and awards should be permitted within the colour-coded course structure

To be honest the death knell for regional events has been sounding for a long time. Other than cost, there is very little difference between district and regional events – occasionally a better area is used but this is not always the case. Therefore, the proposal to do away with the two types of events seems to me to be eminently sensible, providing it does not lead to an overall lowering of standards.

There have been a great number of suggestions for the names of courses and much discussion about how the naming can be used to show technical difficulty and length. These events will cover both the old district (colour coded) and regional (badge) events so will be the ones attended most often by the most orienteers. Given that East Anglia has few areas suitable for Area Championships, most

EA events are likely to be 'standard events'. These events will need to cater for a range of orienteers. There seems to be a consensus that change is necessary, although the naming of courses seems to be more contentious and as yet undecided.

Other questions that arise from this change is the future of age classes – not particularly important to some (especially in the classes where there are very few competitors) but enjoyed by many. Presumably, colour coded course could be designated to age classes (as with the East Anglian Galloper). It is also unclear how the quality of standard events will be standardised. As this new category will cover the range from what are currently high quality regional events to events that are fairly low key district events it will making choosing which event to go to much more difficult. With regard to funding of clubs, regional events have generally been an important source of income (which fund new maps and better competition). Without these events, it is unclear how this shortfall will be tackled (although Recommendation 10 talks about designated standard events that will carry ranking points, so may be this will solve the problems and the Thetford Thrash might become two standard events with ranking status).

Recommendation 10: A single ranking list should be produced based on all National level events and designated standard level events.

This is a sensible proposal that all orienteers should be ranked in one list that takes account of gender and age and gives more important events greater weighting in allocating points. The aim of the ranking scheme will be to rank all orienteers in order of orienteering ability. This has already been to source of much discussion and several options have been floated on 'Nopesport' – to see an example compiled by Simon Errington using current BO ranking lists go to

<http://www.maprunner.co.uk/maprunner/rankinglistexample.htm> (2413 ranked orienteers)

Recommendation 11: Local events will remain largely unchanged.

These are the key 'entry point' for many orienteers and there they play a vital role in the sport. The review group felt that clubs should be left alone to put on a wide range of local activities throughout the year during the week, at night and at weekends. Strategic guidance and promotion of best practice should be the role of Development Committee.

Most of the ideas seem very sensible, although in some areas fine-tuning will be needed.

What do you think?

Mike Capper

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The Midland Championships 2007

Those of you who went to the Midland Championships in Salcey Woods at the end of October will know what a tough experience it was. The planning made best use of the area, but it was still pretty rough going in places. The general rule was that if 'the brambles didn't get you, the hawthorns would'. I can't have been the only one to have returned home scratched to pieces, but a few WAOC members returned with more than that. So well done to ...

Thomas Louth M14
Dil Wetherill M40
Chris Morley M65

...who were all **Midland Champions for 2007**

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Jean Sinclair goes...adventure racing

From August 06 to September 07, I was employed as a Research Nurse on the Gateshead Millennium Study, investigating food, activity and obesity in children born 1999 / 2000 and their families. So, I was based at Newcastle University, where I had happily studied Marine Biology 1989 – 92, lodging in Tynemouth, in sight of the sea. I still returned home regularly to Russ Ladkin, friends, cat, duck and part-time job in Cambridge.

Russ and I also met a few times after traveling independently to various adventure races - me having the much shorter journey in all cases. Northern England and southern Scotland has the highest concentration of adventure races in the UK. I also managed to compete in several orienteering races, organised by NATO and Northern Navigators, including 3 night races, and introduced two female colleagues and their male partner / husband to the sport.

September 06 brought my first experience of the Wan Dae Scottish Adventure Racing series – camping in the extensive grounds of Drumlanrig Castle. A fantastic setting for camping, although I was possibly most impressed by a permanent toilet block, instead of chemical cubicles, and the possibility of a shower! I spent the day manning a checkpoint at nearby ruined Morton Castle, where racers had to crawl in a drain.

The KIMM has been renamed OMM (Original Mountain Marathon) and is held in different locations each year, always in the last weekend of October, when the clocks go back. Fortunately for me, the 2006 race was held in Galloway, based at the same abandoned Forestry Commission campsite as the ACE race 2 day a month earlier. So, I benefited from a short drive – and gave lifts to two WAOC members who came up by train to Newcastle.

The first race of the spring wasn't a race, and wasn't in northern England – it was the second outing for The Full Monty 24 hour endurance challenge, starting and ending in Shrewsbury. See www.planetfear.com/article_detail.asp?a_id=960 for my full report and photos.

The ACE race 2 day series returned to Drumlanrig Castle in April 07, when I was stationed at a ruined bothy in hills around Arkland on Saturday morning, then at Kettleburn Burn mountain bothy in the afternoon, then checking racers through the mountain bike track on Sunday.

May / June 07 brought the highlight of the year – the Adventure Racing World Championship was held in Lochaber, Scotland. Only five teams completed the full course, but many others from the 49 starting teams shortened routes. I had a wonderful, exhausting week, including setting up the race start from the Isle of Rum, sleeping in a four poster bed for the only time, monitoring Russ overnight after he bashed his face when running (I think the medics thought he should have his level of consciousness monitored, but didn't want someone so muddy and sweaty in close proximity, so passed him over to a RGN, who happened to be his partner!), sitting on a rocky beach on Eigg to check sea kayaking teams before they headed across the sea to the mainland, then following in a safety boat, 2 very wet nights camping at a major abseil at Ardverikie Wall on Binnein Shuas, where I, obviously, tried the ropes and a rodent chewed through my food bag, and finally I checked though racers at the last checkpoint at Ben Nevis Inn before finishing at Fort William.

Summer 07 brought two of James Thurlow's excellent Open Adventure races – 12 hours in the Yorkshire Dales in June and 24 hours in the eastern Lake District in July. Open 12 and Open 24 races involve the basics of adventure racing – foot, bike, navigation, but also canoeing, caving, jumping into gorges, abseiling / ascending etc. In between, I had two new experiences – first time on Isle of Arran for a Wan Dae in June and my first Rat Race, at Edinburgh in July, plus a wet and midge infested ACE 2 day race in the Lakes. Fortunately, one of my cousins lives in Edinburgh, so after marshalling atop Salisbury Crags on Saturday evening, I slept in a bed and we watched the ARWC on Channel Four at 8am, before taking a 2 year old going to watch the Rat Racers at Crammond Island, then I spent the afternoon at Hill End Ski Slope on the northern slopes of the Pentland Hills. My cousins also provided hospitality for me at the Wan Dae in the Pentland Hills in September – and the toddler again came, this time to the bike drop I staffed all day. This was my last adventure race before heading back home. However, the first ever London Rat Race was held the weekend after my contract ended – so, of course, I had to go. In fact, I had been training for this event most of my life – our Mum made us navigate round London and learn Tube line colours on holiday trips from primary school age. She worked for Colony Holidays, which included “wide games” – I had dressed up as “ship's kitten” for a pirate themed game in Norfolk and in “flower power” clothes in the Malvern Hills. To save her embarrassment, I will not mention her dressing up exploits! So, I was a bit disappointed that the gorilla costume was missing for my checkpoint at London Zoo. In another classic error of Channel Four programming judgement, the showing of the Edinburgh Rat Race was at 8am on Sunday, 30 minutes after racers had hit the streets of London. For further details of Russ's Rat Race in London – see December 07 issue of Men's Fitness!

Jean Sinclair

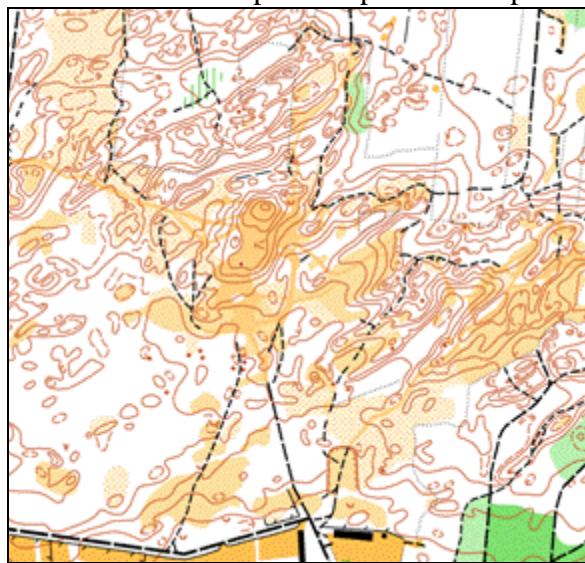


5-Daagse van België 2007

Following my exploits at the Scottish 6 days, I went straight on to the Belgian 5 days in the following week. My orienteering experience of Belgium has been limited to one fairly brief visit to the Ardennes in the 1980s so this seemed like a good chance to try something different. Different areas, different challenges...and so it proved. The event was based in the north east of Belgium where I had the massive advantage of not being able to converse with anybody in more than one

language (although I quickly found that asking for a 'big Stella' worked pretty well in most bars☺). The event information promised flat, fast and technical orienteering and they certainly lived up to this promise.

The week started off well as I headed off to the Day 3 parking area on Day 1. No problem – a quick turn around, back 40 kilometres, being careful to avoid the phalanxes of Belgian cyclists and I arrived at the right place with plenty of time to spare (and also feeling very confident that I would not get lost on the way to the Day 3 car park when that day eventually arrived). My first big shock was the assembly area – Belgian orienteers certainly like to make themselves feel at home and they provided all you could possibly need. The most important of these things was the bar, which sold an enticing range of Belgian beers and offered a very attractive option as the rain started (for the only time during the week) just before I headed off to the start. But of course, I was not there for the beer (well not until after I had run), so off I headed into some fabulous orienteering terrain - massive sand dunes, with areas of open sand, heathland and a lot of very runnable woodland. The sand dunes were hard to run on and difficult to interpret but provided superb orienteering.



Extract from Day 1 map

I love this sort of terrain, and small fields meant that there was a good competitive edge to the races, with enough 'Brits' that I knew to give me someone to aim at. It was great also that the event had a mix of long and middle distance races to provide different challenges. The only other big difference from British orienteering was that the start kite was always located a long way from the start line – in some cases 300+ metres away. This had the considerable advantage of letting you look at your map before getting down to the serious business of finding the first control, although of course you were being timed from the start line not the start kite so the temptation to sprint off and get into oxygen debt straight away was pretty strong. Emit cards were used and bulging with self confidence from using touch-free punching at several events this year I got into the bad habit of just wafting my card in the general direction of the control and assuming that it would register. Of course, sod's law determined that the day that I finished closest to the top of the field was the day I was disqualified for, apparently, missing a control. A lesson learnt! But apart from that, the rest of the week went pretty smoothly. Not too many mistakes, some great racing and beautiful woodland made it a really enjoyable event.

So would I recommend Belgian orienteering? Definitely yes! Everyone I met was very friendly and the brilliant assembly areas meant that there was a great atmosphere even though there were only 400-500 runners. The Belgian orienteers certainly liked to 'make a day of it' and this added value to

the event – I suspect some of them are still there now, eating and drinking. But first and foremost, the orienteering was excellent and the competition fierce,

I shall certainly be returning!

Mike Capper

Bruce Marshall goes...City Racing

I had my first experience of city sprint races at Warwick in October.

So what are sprint races? These are orienteering races based on short courses round city centres. They use a special drawn map which would be familiar to most experienced orienteers. The scale is usually 1:5000 so that the city can be mapped in huge detail. There are a few special symbols you need to know about. Thick black lines and thick green lines represent uncrossable walls and hedges. Buildings are shown in dark grey, but any building features which allow you to "tunnel" through at ground level are shown in light grey. The devil is in the detail - which street or car park or alley will get me quickly and safely to the feature.

I ran the Men's Short course which was 4.1km. There were 23 controls sited on a variety of features. The Men's Open course had a massive 43 controls on it! The event was certainly popular with over 230 entries on the city courses.

The first half of my course was round the streets and through a park in central Warwick. No 2 was easy being outside the sports centre and in full sight of the assembly area. I had already visited it before starting to practise my Emit punching technique. Out in the town I had to force myself to slow down to check that my intended route didn't cross any of the uncrossable features. All the time you need to be alert for cars, pedestrians, buggies and oncoming runners. This worked OK for me. The only control where I lost time (1 minute) was a crag in the hilly woodland of the park where my attack point was wrong.

Some of the controls were very close to each other (not on my course though) - the planner admitting that many were within 30m of other controls.

The highlights of the course were the 8 controls inside Warwick Castle. Orienteers were allowed in by a narrow manned entrance after which we encountered the "butterfly". This was 2 loops from a central control tucked under a bridge in the moat (no water!). The usual tourists where there in plenty and must have been amused by all the runners dashing about! My number 15 was in an ice-house with two underground entrances. Fortunately, I picked the one with the control inside. Number 18 was on the side of one the towers. This control proved a tricky one for many runners. It wasn't clear from the map whether the flag was going to be on the inside of the curtain wall, on the outside of the wall or up the top of the tower. Many competitors lost significant minutes climbing up a spiral staircase, following the one-way system with the public and then seeing the flag 40 feet below. After visiting the base of the tower I realised that the control was going to be on the outside



of the wall. After the Castle there was some fine sprinting around flower beds in the park, punching a control on the steps of the café, then across the playing fields to the bright red inflated arch over the Finish.

I was pleased with my time of 42 minutes, which brought me back in 8th place out of 13 M55 runners. The winner took only 30 minutes.

Bruce Marshall

Editor's note – just to show how city racing can muddle even the best orienteering minds, I'll quote from the race report on Nopesport. You need to know that the long course had a Part 1 and a Part 2. "John Rocke of Sheffield University, who had been in 2nd place, 20 seconds behind Rune, also suffered from a rush of blood to the head and failed to notice the instruction to turn over the map after the first butterfly, instead returning to the finish undoubtedly confused as to the strange way to finish the race."

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Ursula Oxburgh goes to...Australia (or O in Oz and the saga of the S hemisphere compass)...Part 2

(Having run on a fantastic compass lent to me by a Goldseeker, I then found the O trader and bought a second hand compass from him. I paid him for it but never set eyes on it again – I have no idea where it got to but not into the hire car...).

The next day we were running on Eugowra, an area which had been newly mapped and used once for the Australian Orienteering Championships so I reckoned that both the area and the map should be good. At the end of the day I was not so sure. I have never seen anything like Eugowra: it is entirely granite which fractures in that climate into cuboid blocks of all sizes from metres to millimetres. We were warned in the final details that the granite blocks made it rough conditions underfoot and that the pines produced particularly vicious dead side branches (ankle and eye protection were recommended). It was and they were.

Since I only had my Northern hemisphere compass I decided as I picked up my map and crossed the fence that I should have to rely on the contours for navigation. Up to the top of the elongate hill and the somewhat indistinct spur should take me down to the first control. Unfortunately the top of the hill was so uneven and the trees so close together that I could not locate the spur at all. A considerable time later, and to my great surprise, I arrived back at the fence and managed to use it to re-locate, relying this time on the bottom of the hill as a line which I managed to leave at the right place and eventually find number 1. Things did not improve after that: it seemed to be impossible to correlate the wiggles in the contours with the wiggles on the ground and it was not obvious to me which of the many boulders had been mapped. I searched for the next control along the hill, up the hill then down the hill from the top and In the end (too far down) turned back up the hill in time to

see an old josser (= M75ish and likely to be on my course) contouring rapidly across the hillside above me, dipping ever so briefly and disappearing from view. I made my way back up the hill to his dip point and there was the control!

Shortly after this, and on my way to the next control I was caught up by Boyd (the Karrimor guy who had been on download the day before) and his wife who were walking round her/my course together and I was delighted to complete the course in their company! On the run-in a man overtook me and commented that I was rather a long distance from WAOCland and did I know Hally Hardie – such is the notoriety of the WAOC top (or Hally?). That day there was a barbecue run by local people and again everyone hung around eating, talking, discussing routes and I paid my 20 dollars to join Goldseekers as an associate member.

Then Boyd suggested to me that I could follow them in my hire car along back roads to his brother in law's merino sheep farm where we had a cup of tea and watched them handling the sheep and also saw the shearing shed where the whole shearing process is laid out before one. Merino wool is very fine and crimped along its whole length – it really is amazing stuff and so different from, say, the wool that Herdwicks lose on barbed wire in the Lake District. Boyd and Fiona then insisted on driving ahead of me to the airport to see me safely onto my plane!

This year when I was planning my trip to Sydney (I partially salved my green conscience by travelling by train and bike to the majority of my UK events in 2006 and 2007) I discovered that I could coincide with the Australian JWOC trials, with both the middle and the classic races on Central West granite because they were so similar to the new granite areas near Dubbo (also in the Central West) that were to be used for JWOC and guess what – the classic was to be on Eugowra. So I sent off my entries in time by e-mail (entries secretaries are really nice and always let me pay on the day), booked my journey out to Orange by train and got in touch with Jean and Basil Baldwin, who had urged me to stay with them the next time I orienteered in the Central West. Then when I arrived in Sydney my son in law produced a Silva protractor compass he had bought in an outdoor shop – I gave him a big hug and was all set to go.

In the end Jean found me a ride out to Orange from a Sydney suburb so I cancelled my train ticket (no penalty!) and travelled to and fro with Neil and Christa Schafer (M75 and W65 so both running my courses – W65 is the oldest W age group in NSW), which was great, and I was able to travel to them by Cityrail – the Sydney metro. I have to confess that it was raining hard when I left my daughter's so I accepted her offer of a lift to the station – you can be too green.

My middle race on Molong was really pretty easy: the area had huge granite blocks visible from afar, definite cleared areas and distinct re-entrants and to top it all my bearings were spot on, so I was delighted (from accounts of JWOC I gather that their middle race area was extremely technical and not that similar to Molong), but Eugowra the next day would be the test.

We returned to the Baldwin's farm and managed a lovely walk round it in the fading light. Jean and Basil met when they were reading agriculture at Reading University and have been living in Australia ever since Basil graduated (Jean skipped her last year to get married and emigrate). Basil has lectured on agricultural matters and Jean has marketed the produce of their farms in Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia and now in New South Wales where their vines are now producing good wine, their hazelnuts thrive even in the dry years and their sheep (bred for meat not wool) are also doing really well. Both are great orienteers - Jean has just represented Oz at W60 and Basil controlled the JWOC Classic race (which the UK juniors found really hard but very well planned).

Despite my reservations Eugowra the next day was brilliant: Different parking from last time, different piece of the map, fantastic planner, fantastic compass, 1K long leg (on a 2.9 K course, so it can be done) the other side of a fairly rough ridge – follow it as a line, leave it at the right place and drop down to an area of open rock as an attack point. A bit of a blip at the next control (the area is very detailed and the going pretty tough near the Finish). Arrive at download to discover that I have not punched at 3! I know I was there because it was the drinks station and of course I drank but neglected to punch. Still, know that I had my best run by a long chalk in Oz, 3rd on the long leg and with a couple of notable scalps on the course overall and I have emerged with a new mantra for Oz-O – punch before you drink. Afterwards I renewed my Goldseekers sub and bought a Goldseekers polo shirt – I think my Aussie O club is fantastic. Finally I met up with Neil and Christa who delivered me back to the Cityrail station at the end of a great weekend.

So don't imagine that just because you learn and hone your skills in flat FE forests you cannot adapt them to completely novel areas. Oh, and by the way I am back on a (northern hemisphere!) protractor compass after many years with a thumb compass and guess what - my bearings are brilliant in the UK as well!

Ursula Oxburgh



WAOCjuniors newsletter: October 2007

First of all, I will start by blowing WAOC's trumpet and say well done to all the WAOC juniors that ran at the qualifying round of the Yvette Baker Trophy at Mildenhall Woods. WAOC finished as second club with 887 points, beaten by last year's runners-up at the national final, Octavian Droobers (OD) from Coventry, and quite easily beating local rivals SOS and SUFFOC. It was great to see that 28 (!) club juniors came to compete, and I was especially pleased to see plenty of newcomers and relative newbies to the club. The scoring team were **Emily Williamson** (1st girl on yellow); **Edward Louth** (1st boy on green); **James Haynes** (2nd boy on light green); **Jonny Cronk** (2nd boy on green); **Felix Barker** (3rd boy on orange); **Thomas Louth** (3rd boy on light green); **Alice Rigby** (3rd girl on light green); **Sophie Louth** (3rd girl on green); **Jonathan Heybrock** (4th boy on yellow) and **Katherine Collins** (4th girl on yellow) – well done, give yourself a pat on the shoulders. Nevertheless, this is a team effort and other non-scoring runners do help the club by pushing other clubs' runners down so you all deserve to congratulate yourselves too!

Due to OD's position in last year's final, it means that WAOC also qualify for this year's national final, this being the fourth year running that the club is through. The event will be on **2nd December at Normanby Hall** near Scunthorpe (Yorkshire and Humberside region) and it would be great if as many of you as possible could come and run for the club. Due to being slightly further away from WAOC-land (about 3 hours drive from Cambridge), the club's captain Steve Hinshelwood may be investigating the possibility of arranging some sort of shared transport, whether this is a coach or minibus or whether it involves arranging lift-shares. As a result, he needs to know sooner rather than later whether you can make it or not so...

...if you can make it to the Yvette Baker trophy final in December, PLEASE LET STEVE KNOW NOW (steve.hinshelwood@ntlworld.com; 01223 844541). Please also let him know whether you would be interested in shared transport and whether you would be interested in staying over somewhere closer to the event (village hall type place) if this were to be arranged. If you are

unable to come, a negative reply will help Steve and Edward Louth (the junior captain) in the process of getting a team together so please spend that minute letting them know even if you can't come.

With the start of autumn and plenty of district (colour coded) events taking place, it's great to see a number of you gaining colour coded standards, which will undoubtedly be leading to new colour coded badges soon. With this, I'd like to remind you of the possibility of gaining colour coded certificates at a colour once you've already gained your colour coded badge. To get a bronze certificate, you need 4 'below par' runs beyond the badge requirement of 3, for a silver certificate, you need another 4 runs (i.e. 8 in total) and for a gold certificate, you need a total of 12 'below par' runs. Just to remind you, a 'below par' run is one where you finish within 150% of the winner's time or within the first half of the starters on a course, whichever includes more people. On the white course, all finishers (unaccompanied and unshadowed) gain a white standard. The person to ask for your certificate is Ian Smith (smithfamilypuckeridge@hotmail.com; 01920 822421). Although Ian does sometimes send out colour coded badges if you have gained 3 standard runs, he cannot keep track of everyone's results so **it is your responsibility to claim your certificates** (and preferably badges) by letting him know the events at which you gained your standards. So get collecting!

I know it's possibly a little early to start thinking about the 2008 competitions, but as the qualifying round of the Compass Sport Cup competition will be taking place almost as soon as you're back from the Christmas holidays, I wanted briefly to mention this. The Compass Sport Cup is a whole-club competition equivalent to the Yvette Baker trophy for the juniors and WAOC will be competing at the qualifying round on **13th January 2008**, to be held at **Brandon in Thetford Forest**. As is usual with these club competitions, Steve Hinshelwood (see above for contact) will be pre-entering the club's runners. The scoring courses are from an orange upwards, but there will be a white and yellow available for younger children who are not yet up to running orange. If you would like to run for the club (whether a junior or a parent), please contact Steve, with a deadline to be provided via the main club mailing list closer to the time.

Junior profile:



Many thanks to **Edward Louth**, who has sent me his profile for inclusion in this month's newsletter. Edward has been orienteering for about 10 years, and has in the past been a British Champion as well as being selected amongst others for the Junior Home Internationals and the Start Squad (For those of you who are new-ish to orienteering, the START squad is British Orienteering's development group of up-and-coming juniors). He has recently become WAOC's new junior captain, so I thought I'd introduce him to you.

Edward on the run-in of the 2007 JOK Chasing

So, Edward... When did you start orienteering and what was it that caught you in the sport?

I started orienteering about ten years ago when I went along with my family.

What do you like most about the sport?

The mix of technique and running speed which

What are your greatest achievements in orienteering so far?

Winning the British Champs in Northern Ireland, Selection for JHI, Interland and START squad.

Do you have a favourite orienteering area or a favourite orienteering training exercise?

My favourite area is The Castle in Fredrikstad, Halden, Norway, which is a sprint area around the walls of the castle, with different levels and stairs.

And with the best achievements and favourite areas, there is of course also the opposite – do you have a least favourite area and is there any particular run that you would describe as your “worst ever run”?

I don't think any particular area qualifies as my least favourite but there are several bits of woodland in East Anglia that I wouldn't choose to go back to!

As for the second part, I have had a few disasters in my time orienteering, but the worst had to be during a “windows” [exercise where the map only shows very small bits around each control circle – ed.] training exercise in Uppsala (Sweden) when I had to use a map on a post to relocate.

What are your current goals in orienteering?

I would like to be selected to represent Great Britain at the European Youth Champs or another major event.

And of course orienteering is not everything: what are all the other things that you enjoy doing outside orienteering?

During the summer I am a regular dinghy sailor and I spend quite a lot of time working in the theatre at my school.

Thanks for your time, Edward, and good luck with all of your goals, both in orienteering and outside.Colour coded awards:

As I said above, there are plenty of events to be gaining your colour coded awards from so I look forward to being able to mention a few more names in this section. This month, I want to congratulate **Jacqueline Heybrock**, who has now got her **Green** badge. Well done!

Results:

The main result crop of the month was from the *Yvette Baker Trophy qualifier event on 21st October at WAOC's event on Mildenhall North*. With the scoring team mentioned above, I would also like to congratulate to the following juniors for their good runs:

- **Jonathan Heybrock** who was **4th** overall on the yellow, beating **5th** placed **William Louth** by 2 seconds
- **Emily Williamson** who came **7th** overall on the yellow, being the **1st** girl and thus a 100-point scorer
- **Katherine Collins** who came **15th** overall on the yellow, being **4th** girl and a WAOC team scorer despite being a relative newbie to the sport
- **Sam Woods** who finished **13th** overall on the yellow course

- **Felix Barker**, who did very well to finish **3rd** on orange, beaten only by one of Octavian Droobers' strong runners and a 20 year old
- **Matthew Haynes** who finished **8th** overall on the orange
- **James Haynes** who was **2nd** on the light green, just over a minute ahead of **Thomas Louth** who was in **3rd** place
- **Martin Humphries** who finished **7th** on the light green, in his last year of being eligible to run in the Yvette Baker Trophy, and who deserves a mention for being someone who has been turning up to the Yvette Baker events unwaveringly for the past few years despite having orienteered less in general
- **Alice Rigby** who was **10th** overall and **3rd girl** on the light green, thus scoring 98 points towards WAOC's team-score
- **Edward Louth** who has a very fast run to **win** the green course, with **Jonny Cronk** close behind him to finish in **2nd** place, both thus scoring highly for the club

Well done everyone, as well as everyone else who ran!

Happy running!

Blanka

Thomas Louth goes to.....the Junior Home Internationals 2007

Having flown into Belfast Airport at eight o'clock, we took a minibus to the accommodation, large huts with small rooms. The room which I slept in had two bunk beds and two mattresses on the floor and was fairly cramped. We got up at half seven the following morning for breakfast in the canteen, and boarded a fleet of minibuses to take us to the day's event. The area consisted of steep moorland with some woodland at the edge of the map. It was quite chilly and the thick fog that hung in the air made it feel colder still. This meant that the day's organisers required us to carry cagoules, much to the dismay of many. My course was nearly four kilometres long with one hundred and eighty five metres of climb. While the course was not particularly difficult, the fog did make it hard to judge height, and it was impossible to navigate off distant features such as crags. I finished the course in around twenty-five minutes, leaving me in fifth at the end of the day. After returning to the accommodation, everyone watched the Wales-Fiji rugby match, and were very happy with the result. The evening's activities took place in the local town, with the prize giving and an excellent meal. After which there was an 'O Factor' with the countries' teams performing in front of a panel of judges (the team coaches). Wales won by miles, as they were the only team which had practiced in advance.

The relays on day 2 took place in and around the historically sensitive Hillsborough fort. Due to the service in the local church, we were not allowed to start the relays until Eleven o'clock. The area was mainly deciduous woodland surrounding a lake, with dense undergrowth and Rhododendrons. The first W16 to come in was English, as was the third. The English M16s came in: 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th, with an Irish boy in fourth. The M14s went out almost together, and we ran round together, with only one, minor gaffle in the course. The M18s finished in the top four positions, with Ralph Street, the only first year M18 on the team, coming in first. The girls managed: 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th. After the event we were bussed into Newcastle, the local town, again, for then prize giving, were entertained to another delightful meal, and were allowed a complimentary swim in the pool before our flights.

Fixtures List

For an up-to-date list of upcoming fixtures, please refer to www.britishorienteering.org.uk or www.waoc.org.uk