



Edition 117
January 2008

Editorial

Recent articles in various newsletters and magazines I have read, lead me to believe that there is a big divide coming to orienteering. We have the Matlock-led changes to keep in line with requirements from Sport England so that they will continue to support orienteering as a minority sport, although I gather this may diminish as a result of the 2012 Olympics.

There is the other faction who say that we have survived for a long time, why so many changes?

One proposed change to the event structure that I welcome is the increased prominence to be given to Regional Championships, as it was in my younger days. Maybe this will avoid ridiculous situations, like this year, when the Devon Galoppen clashes with the Southern Championships. How does a competitive runner decide which to enter?

As editor I must “sit on the fence” but I do think that we are rapidly pricing ourselves out of the market. BO membership fees

have increased dramatically for the casual orienteer, entry fees have risen sharply and this in addition to the steep increase in the cost of travelling. I can certainly see that participants will be more selective in their choice of events. Maybe the local events will benefit. Who knows?

And so to this edition. Quite a mixed bag this time. No weddings to report or photos to break up the pages. However one of our latest recruits, Kiran Thakur, has written a report. I thank him and all the others who have contributed to this edition.

I hope that 2008 is kind to you all and may you continue to enjoy good fortune both in and out of the forest.

Chairman's Chat for Issue 117

To seek inspiration for this edition, I thought I would look back at the sort of things I was writing when I was last chairman in 2004. Surprise surprise, the first one I looked at, Issue 93 (March 2004), was about the perceived need to encourage participation. We were being encouraged, by what was then known as BOF, to expand our membership, publicise our events more effectively and all that sort of thing. Now move forward four years, what has changed? Well several top people, both paid and voluntary, have come and gone, but we are still getting the same message. We, not just QO but most of the UK clubs, have presumably failed, or are the goal posts being moved to urge us on to recruit even more soldiers to fund someone's great plan?

It was quite interesting to see, in the latest issue of the BO magazine Focus, the results of the recent survey for what is known as the 'Whole Sport Plan'. This had been sent to all UK clubs. Only 52% of the Open

Clubs bothered to reply, 7 were from the 13 clubs in SWOA. This was felt to be a good response! The average for the 'high' expectation of membership increase seemed to be about 20% by 2013 or about 5% per year, the 'low' average being about zero, i.e no increase. The figures we submitted were both almost exactly in accord with these averages, we are obviously getting better at ticking the right boxes.

Bill Vigar.

News of people

Nothing to report. Please keep me informed of any newsworthy items.

Club News

Notes on the Nov Ctte meeting - Some items (full version of Minutes available on line on the News page of the web site)

1. Club whole Sport Plan being developed (Submitted to BO and SWOA since the meeting)
2. Coaching Licence discussed.
3. Cost analysis of Membership and Event Fees presented to ctte suggesting we are not paying our way on a 'day to day' basis.
4. Brian Fletcher advises QO take a long term view in the recruitment and retention of juniors.
5. Non BO participation at QO events, new insurance requirements discussed.
6. New look web site and forum discussed.

Next Meeting 7th February

If when reading the minutes you have questions then direct them to the Secretary, Ted Heath, who will try and get an answer for you.

Quantock Orienteers have a new website thanks to extensive work by Nathan Fernandes. Included on the site is a Forum facility. Please register and use it.

<http://www.quantockorienteers.co.uk>

Membership renewals

Most of you have now renewed your subscriptions. Thank you. Anyone who is not renewing please let me know so that I can update my records.

Relays

The JK and British Championships are fast approaching. Anyone wishing to compete in the relays at these events are asked to contact Brian Pearson as soon as possible.

JOG draws it's first breath!

We knew we needed something to consolidate and continue Brian Fletcher's inspirational work with Somerset schools.....but what?

Dave Bullock, the Schools /Club head man and great supporter of orienteering in schools, suggested a regular meeting where all youngsters interested in orienteering could meet once a week for a training session.

Good idea but where would we meet? Who would run it? How would we organise it? What qualifications/CRB checks etc. would we need? The problems seemed endless...until Richard Llewellyn-Eaton suggested a meeting with TAC (Taunton Athletics Club!)

Now we were beginning to move forward.

Charlotte Fisher, a senior coach at TAC and an employee of SASP (Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership) discussed the situation with us and we decided that we would approach young, vibrant and enthusiastic members of QO (do you recognise yourself?) to a meeting to discuss the possibility of them becoming athletics and orienteering coaches.

This would enable us to join forces with TAC training on a Thursday evening, at Castle School Sports Hall between 5.30-6.30pm. We would be offering more 'man power' to assist TAC and they would be offering

us experience in coaching organisation and techniques, leading to the opportunity to gain basic qualifications in athletics coaching.

This group of QO potential coaches would work alongside the TAC qualified coaches for about a term. They would then take the basic grade athletics and orienteering qualifications and hopefully also a First Aid qualification.

During the second term they would continue their athletics coaching with TAC but offer our orienteering juniors (and any other interested children) 20-30 minutes orienteering training at the end of the session. Every 3-4 weeks (with the agreement of TAC) there will be a session from 5.30-7.00 pm at a local mapped local venue (Vivary Park?) for full orienteering training.

Brian Pearson agreed to organise the newly formed JOG (Junior Orienteering Group) and their coaches. If you would like to join this initiative, then please ring/e-mail him for further details.

It is hoped that a group of about 6-8 'Oldies' will be able to support this group by putting out controls and generally being there in the background!

Judy Craddock

Events

Christmas Street-Score Event

Tim Spenlove- Brown

Ted Heath organised an excellent Score Event just after Christmas. It was centred on North Town Primary School in the centre of Taunton and the school playground doubled up as the Assembly Area and car park.

The map had been produced some 11 years ago but the modern version was a multi-coloured 1:10,000 job – perfect for this type of event. In this urban setting the safety issue was highly important,



with a number of children and juniors taking part, along with parents and first-timers. To this end Ted produced 10 point controls that were in a relatively safe environment in the North of the map, on streets away from main through roads. All children under 12 had to be accompanied by an adult and written consent was required for those between 12 and 16. For those heading for the higher-scoring, but more remote, controls there was a compulsory crossing-point of the main road that bisected the map from East to West. .

My overall impression of the course was that it certainly tested ones fitness! The controls were generally straight forward with the clues being interesting, quirky and amusing. Planning a successful route was a lot more taxing! Could I get to Control 34 and back in the time required? What about leaving out the intermediate controls 10-15 and hoping to collect them on the way back after bagging some 30 pointers? In the end my nerve failed at Control 35 from which I beat a hasty retreat, picking up what I could on the way back.

Congratulations to Gavin Clegg and Andrew Appleby who managed these problems to win the Senior and Junior prizes respectively. In fact Gavin was just short of registering all the controls. When it was all over we retired to the "Kings Arms" for a buffet lunch, which rounded off an enjoyable day.

Well done Ted, ably assisted by Lennox with Roger and Judy Craddock in close support. This type of event can cater for a wide range of abilities and could draw in jogging clubs and Hash Harriers, some of whom might join us once they have tried it!

Christmas street event – 27th December

Nath Fernandes

Ted's organisation of a street event over Christmas meant I could take part in my electric wheelchair which I haven't been able to do for a long time. The event centre was at a primary school in Taunton which caused me a slight problem as the accessible entrance was not open but the weather was nice and the briefing was held outside.

The course was straightforward with me and dad going round together and while I visited the easier controls on main paths, dad went and got

the ones down alleyways and small paths. Towards the end of the course dad ran to get a control so I made my way back to the school but forgot to tell him. I had a good laugh but dad was a bit concerned until he realised that I was okay.

We didn't win but it was a good event and seemed to have a big turnout and I think there should be more of them.

The Compass Sport Trophy at Sallowvallets Mike Crockett

Q.O. were well represented for the Compass Sport Trophy event at Sallowvallets on Sunday 13th January. The weather in the days leading up to the event had been pretty awful with snow lying on the parking field on the Friday afternoon and the prospect of having to use forest tracks some distance away were a real possibility. However things improved and parking in the field at Worcester Lodge was satisfactory and conditions on the Sunday were quite good although cold.

A long walk took us to the vicinity of last year's JK start and the courses followed much the same pattern. There are severe limitations in this area but I think some attempt at reversing the direction of flow could have been made. However I enjoyed my course (Green Men) in spite of the fact that the box was missing at control one, as was one at an adjacent control site. A rather strange piece of vandalism; leaving the stakes and control flags intact and just taking the boxes, which are usually hard to remove. There were no back up punches either.

At download our printouts presented another conundrum; time taken from 10 to 11 was 66 minutes and overall time was 13 hours and 3 mins. A certain amount of repartee ensued as to whether it would have been better to use the Joe Lee system. This and a later announcement that there was a rogue control on the Blue Course made me wonder whether it is the operators who need approval rather than the system. There was a notice on the website to the effect that results were delayed but they were quickly sorted and provisional results were up by lunchtime on the Monday. This was quite an achievement in view of the nature of the failure.

Quantock put up a strong performance considering they had no representatives the two junior courses. (Light green and Orange). With 1186 points we were third behind South Wales(1268pts) and Swansea Bay(1258) and ahead of NWO(1163).

Bristol beat Harlequins, Devon and North Gloucester in the Large club category to reach the final.

Point Scorers for QO were

Brown Course Richard Sansbury 96, Ian Bartlet 90 and Nick Fernandes 87

Blue Men Chris Philip 99 and Brian Pearson 98 and Martin Longhurst 92

Blue Women Jo Evans 92 and Jo Williams 84

Green Men David Holmes 96 and Ted Heath 92

Green Women Ruth Chesters 82 and Marie Edmonds 78

Short Green Vets Sue Gard 100

Well done to them and to the others who backed them up.

And a few words from your club captain

Hi Folks,

Just a quick line to say thanks for taking part. I was pleasantly surprised by our good result, considering that the format of the competition doesn't really benefit our class profile. The ladies in particular who ran either up or down from their usual courses did a great job. I am hoping to post a topic on our new website forum to discuss improvements to the competition which is under review for next year. I have already submitted a comment to the CS organiser, asking to allow more vets runners to score and be less reliant on juniors.

Thanks again

Brian Pearson

QOFL no 3 at St Audries Forest

Steve and Tom Elliston

Two of us went out and two of us came back...

Tom M14

I thought it was a good event, if a bit long and uphill. I got lost once or twice, but found my legs again...then lost them again! I started to feel a bit ill, but completed the course anyway in a time of one and a bit hours - not my best time, but it's still points on the board.

Steve M55

I enjoyed it too. How lucky to have a sunny day and all the beautiful views.

I normally lumber round the Green but as we were helping I thought it would be better to do the Light Green and get back sooner. And with all the contours around, I'm glad I did. Is this the most gorse'y QO area? There is a technique for surviving gorse that doesn't rely on leather Ron Hills or the mind control of a Zen master - if only I could have remembered it... And something else I need to work on is concentration - allowing myself the luxury of thinking about how well things are going is a recipe for disaster!

Thanks to Bill for a lovely map of what I'm fairly sure is a new area and to everyone else for helping to make it a great day.

Ed—There was a Millfield map produced in the early eighties by Simon Beck which we used for a galoppen. It was my first attempt at planning and can remember that the courses were very severe. The longer course went down into the Weacombe Valley and up the otherside for just two controls and then back again to where we had the carpark before heading north to the forest.

It seems as though St Audries has become a testing ground for new planners. This was Jeff Pakes first event and a very good job he made of it, much better than my efforts all those years ago.

British Schools Orienteering Event.

Kiran Thakur (M9)

Sunday 18th November was one of the wettest and coldest days you could ever imagine! Mum, Dad and I went orienteering - it was the British Schools Championships final in Bovington. We picked Joel Llwellyn-Eaton up, my friend, who was also not chuffed with the weather but we enjoyed the drive. As we drove past Monkey World and the Army Tank Museum I wished I was going there rather than running in the rain. We tried to keep warm in the car as we found a parking space, then after we did we got ready for running around in the wet, wet weather.

We walked to a tent where I collected my Yellow Course map, then we had to walk (actually we were sort of jogging because it was cold) to *ANOTHER* tent and I got my dibber card. As I looked at the map half of me was excited the other half was nervous....could I do this? At this rate I was busting for a toilet so we had to walk to the other side of the park so I could go! Joel had gone off by now, I hoped he was O.K. It was a few minutes until I started so I did a few laps around a group of trees, the ground was *VERY* soggy!

My time had come. I started with a little sprint, tried to jump across a stream and failed! I found number 1, number 2, number 3, number 4, number 5, number.....I got lost on number 6. I found number 7 before I found number 6! The rest of the course was great especially when the Sun came out....it was only for a second!

When I reached the final control everyone in the crowd, even people that I did not know, cheered for me. They gave me more confidence so I tried to sprint as fast as I could on the boggy grass. At the results tent my score was 1st out of 1 finisher *AGAIN*. So all there was left to do was to rush back to the car and drink hot Ribena under my duvet.

Due to the bad weather there was no prize-giving but I was very pleased with my 5th place, out of 55, in my first try at the British Schools Championships.

I would like to thank you for all the support that Quantock Orienteering has given me with a big special thanks to Brain Fletcher who has encouraged and led me to enjoy orienteering.

Maps for Club Events (Part 3)

At the end of Part 2 I left you at an unmapped knoll, from which no other mapped features were visible. I usually carry my bits of scribbling paper in a A3 plastic bag. This can be used as a marker, just put it in a nearby tree so that you can find it again in a few minutes. Now look around and choose a large feature, usually a big tree, that is as far away as possible. Take a bearing on this and pace to it. Carry on this process in roughly the same direction until you get to an obvious feature like a path or track. It's quite a good idea to mark this point temporarily with a stick on the ground or scuffing your boot in the mud, you may need to find it again in a few minutes. Take bearings and pace count along the track until you reach an obvious point such as a junction. As a check you can then go back to your stick or scuff mark, and do the same in the opposite direction along the track. In theory this should be enough to fix the position of your knoll as your pace length can be found from the two known points as explained before. In practice you may not feel confident about it, if the wood was a bit thick it may have been difficult to pace count, or you may have forgotten which tree you were supposed to be walking towards! As a check, start from one of the track junctions you have just visited and take a series of bearing and distance measurements back towards your original knoll, now you will appreciate why you left a marker there originally, not only does it make it easier to find, but it ensures it is in fact the same knoll you started from. The details of this set of data should, when plotted, tally with the first set. I know the above seems tedious and time consuming, but using simple tools there is no easier way. I will consider the use of technological aids such as range finders and GPS in a later article.

Trying to place the feature by guess-work can be wildly inaccurate, and will probably result in problems later. A Planner, thinking of using it, will waste time looking for it. If he does eventually find it, he will then have to decide if it really is in the wrong place, or if he made a mistake looking for it. If he decides it probably is OK, the process will be repeated when the Controller can't find it. If they both convince themselves, wrongly, that it is OK, then the competitors will grumble, otherwise the site will not get used. Bad news all round.

The above example leads me on to another question, why was the knoll not on the previous map? It could be that this part of the wood was much denser when the original survey was done. If it was shown as dark green, it is unlikely the original surveyor ever went in there, firstly it was difficult to do, and secondly he would know no planner would want to put controls in there anyway. If this is not the reason, it may be it has been seen, but was deemed to be too small to show. This is a rather subjective judgement, some people try to stick to an absolute size, say 1 metre high in the case of a knoll, while others feel that the local significance of the feature is important. In other words, if there are no other features nearby, and the knoll is clearly visible, it should be shown, even if it is less than 1 metre high. Of course it may be neither of these reasons, the original surveyor may have just not noticed it.

Having considered how to add things, let's look at removing things. All areas change with time, woodland areas more so than open ones. Forestry work produces new extraction lanes, tree harvesting produces cleared areas that may, or may not, get re-planted. Some of these are very easy to do like changing a forest block from white to yellow. Recently however, things have become more difficult as clear felling seems to have gone out of fashion and been replaced, either by extreme thinning i.e. producing areas with very few trees, which could be classified as 'semi open', or felling parts of an area producing irregular shapes. All more work for the mapper I'm afraid. It may, one day, be practical to use online imagery, Google Earth etc. to see these irregular shapes in plan view, but this is dependant on having recent images available. Until then it is just more bearing and pacing to be done. The accuracy required for these shapes is generally less than that needed for point features, the important thing is to ensure that existing features, depressions etc. are on the correct side of the new boundary.

Extraction lanes and rides are another problem. They were probably quite clear when the area was surveyed previously but, as they have not been used, have now faded. How faint do they have to be before you should remove them from the map? I think the correct test is, 'would you notice it on an event, if you ran across it at right angles', if not then delete it.

