

# The QuOnicle



**The Newsletter of Quantock Orienteers**

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## **Quantock Orienteers Committee**

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Secretary	Ted Heath	01823- 251985	
Treasurer	Roger Craddock	01823-323850	
Committee	Bob Lloyd	01823-333251	Permissions
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	Tony Milroy	01278-427875	QOFL
	Judy Craddock	01823-323850	Membership
	Nathan Fernandes	01935-424128	Webmaster

## **EDITORIAL**

A new year, and a new editor. Mike Crockett has hung up his keyboard after presiding over this publication for the last 10 years, which is an awful lot of pages! On behalf of the club I'd like to thank Mike for all the effort he has put in over those years, and I know I'll be calling on his considerable experience as I attempt to step into those shoes.

For those of you who have successfully managed to avoid me so far, I'm relatively new to QO, and indeed to orienteering. However, I've definitely got "the bug" and I've written an article on page 14 on how a bored road runner ended up taking to the forests.

Taking on the Quonicle gives me an opportunity to help the club while continuing to develop my skills as an orienteer (I don't quite feel ready for planning or controlling yet!), but I can't do it without your help. This is your newsletter, and I need your contributions — whether its articles, suggestions or feedback (especially the articles!). I'm not looking for the sequel to *War and Peace*, just a few words now and again to share your experiences with fellow QO members. If you're not sure where to start (or maybe finish!), drop me a line.

## **CHAIRMAN'S CHAT**

Experienced orienteers will be aware that the JK is being held in Devon this year. For those who don't know what this is, the JK is probably the highest profile orienteering festival in Britain, comprising four events held over the Easter weekend. There will probably be around 3,000 competitors coming from all over the country and even from overseas. I highly recommend you all to go to the JK. Why? Because this is an opportunity to take part in a top quality event right on your doorstep.

When I started orienteering about 12 years ago I started off by attending maybe three or four QO events per year and really enjoyed it. But it didn't occur to me to look further afield until a few years later when I realised I could be quite good at the sport, and if I put effort more in I would probably get more fulfilment out. Putting more in meant learning navigation techniques, training by running up and down hills, finding out about those funny control symbols, and making an effort to go to events more often and inevitably slightly further away. Why is travelling to events further away a good thing? Well frankly the terrain is usually better than some of the areas we have around here!

So if you are a local orienteer only, and have at least one day free over the Easter weekend, browse the website [www.jk2010.co.uk](http://www.jk2010.co.uk) and enter. Be warned that the fees are a bit more than the usual local event. If you think the fees are a bit steep why not save some money by offering to be a helper? Also note that you will save a few bob if you pre-enter before the end of February.

Don't expect to win though. Naturally an event of this nature will attract the best in class. You will be competing against national champions and international contenders. See how you get on!

Oh and in case you were wondering the JK is named after Jan Kjellström - a Swedish lad who helped kick start orienteering in the UK back in the 1960s but who died in a road accident.

On a completely different subject, as many of you know it is standard practice to "tag" control sites with a piece of insulating tape. I was planning at Cothelstone recently and while looking at possible control sites I quite often found tape from previous orienteering courses, sometimes several tapes from events long past. While this does not constitute a serious case of environmental pollution, let's try to remove everything and leave no trace of our activities. Thanks.

*Richard*

## **CLUB NEWS**

### **News of Members**

Joel Llewellyn Eaton has been playing rugby recently and suffered injuries including a broken collar bone. I hear he is now on the way to recovery and we wish him a speedy recovery and return to full fitness.

### **Membership Renewal**

If you haven't already done so, don't forget to renew your QO membership for 2010. Do it online and save money!  
[www.britishorienteering.org.uk](http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk)

## **Committee Meeting**

The last committee meeting was held on 25th November. The main points arising were:

- The £1 hire charge for SI dibbers will be retained to cover ongoing maintenance.
- New event entry fees will be introduced in January 2010—see Richard’s note (below)
- A two-day format is under consideration for next year’s Long-O, with overnight accommodation and some other activities to compliment the main event.
- The club is pursuing the possibility of establishing a permanent orienteering course on the land behind Castle School in Taunton as part of the area’s regeneration.

## **Entry Fees**

The committee have decided to change the entry fees for forest league events as follows:

Adult entry fee remains at £5 for BOF members\*

Adult entry fee increases to £7 for non-BOF members\*

Junior entry fee remains at £1

Family entry fee remains at £10 for BOF members\*

Family entry fee increases to £12 for non-BOF members\*

Dibber hire remains an extra £1

If a hired dibber is lost, £20 will be charged to towards replacement

At some venues we have to charge for parking - this money usually goes straight to the landowner

\*Note: all members of QO and other orienteering clubs are BOF members

Why the change to non-members? The club's only source of income is from club membership fees and event entry fees. The current system of applying a flat rate to all entrants mean that non-members are being subsidised by members. This was felt to be unfair, considering that most of the benefits of membership are available to all.

Isn't it getting expensive? We don't think so. Compared with other sports and activities, our entry fees are very reasonable. The Taunton Marathon and 10k cost £17 and £11 for non-members. It costs at least £14 to go and watch Yeovil Town football match. Other sports can cost a lot more to take part in. It probably costs you more to drive to a QO event than it does to enter.

Is this increase to pay for the new electronic equipment? No. The new kit was paid for partly by a grant and partly by the clubs savings. However we need to charge for dibber hire so we can subsidise any dibber losses. The hire fee is not a deposit. We will charge £20 for a lost dibber, which in fact costs £30 to replace.

What does QO have to pay for? Obviously we have to pay for things like map printing, newsletter distribution, administration, trophies and website charges. Sometimes we pay a small fee for land access. We have to put money aside for one-off costs like tents and other bits of kit. We also subsidise entry costs for team events and club tops. Please note that although we pay expenses for planners, controllers and organisers, these and all other club officials give considerable amounts of their own time free of charge. Most years the club just about breaks even.

What can I do to keep costs down? Two ideas: (1) share travel to events - if you would like us to put you in touch with others you could travel with, please ask (2) offer to help - we always offer half price entry to event helpers.

*Richard Sansbury*

## **Event Cancellation—OOFL 4, Ham Hill, 14th February**

I am sorry to tell you that we have had to cancel this event. This is because we were unable to find people to plan and organise. We rely on volunteers to come forward and offer to help with events and currently our programme is very dependent on a small core of enthusiasts who do the vast majority of the work. We would be very glad to hear from anyone else who would be willing to help out and help spread the workload. Please contact me to find out more.

*Richard Sansbury*

## **EVENTS**

### **OOFL 2, Wind Down, 6th December 2009 (Light Green)**

There had been one common factor for me at events over the previous two months and this was the wet weather. There was also a comparison between two events on two moors.

The Galoppen at Craddock Moor on Bodmin Moor on 27th September was in glorious sunshine with a clear blue sky, dry running, and marvellous views. The Galoppen at Holne Moor on Dartmoor on 22nd November was in cold, wet, windy weather with very grey racing clouds and showers, and water, water everywhere. There were no views. The courses took us up to over 400 metres above sea level at which height there was the interesting sight of 3 club members trying to re-locate, but when the going gets tough the tough get going and we did it.

In contrast to this the drive from church to Wind Down on a sunny Sunday morning was very pleasant. But, with previous experience of this site and its steep climbs I knew this would not last, and course selection and climbing could be expected. From the Start to Control 1 this was confirmed, as it was either go through a fairly thick wood or follow a ride to a good downhill forest road. This latter route being the right decision to get to the control in the corner of the road and a path.

From there it was a muddy glorious mud route. The initial part was on the forest road and then it was off-road. At least there were paths, but wet slippery paths with some ankle catching brambles. Control 2 was close to an earthbank but on the unseen side so a short search had to be made. To Control 3 it was like a slalom run through the young trees but with it being almost due north I had some idea of where to go and it was found. My sensible route to get to Control 4 was to use the uphill muddy path to get to the forest road although I did hear someone crashing through the thick undergrowth on a direct route.

Another downhill slalom run first of all through young trees and then mature trees took me to Control 4 at a hide. Success so far then turned to dismay at the distance and route to Control 5. The distance must at least be a club record for the length of a leg on Light Green. And, it meant the inevitable climb which became a power walk up steep muddy paths, back through the Start, and along the original ride to the forest road. A circle had been achieved!

Decision time to get to Control 5 and it was a 50/50 choice. The longer and certain route along the tracks or the shorter direct straight down route through the trees that were not too close together? As a track junction was a very good attack point and it was downhill this was the chosen route and good time was made to the junction. A short slippery uphill climb and the control was found.

The route to Control 6 in a clear wood could have been a contour run, but with the thick undergrowth in a Quantock wood it was back to the track. This part of the route was not too bad along a wet track made worse by horses only to be faced with an uphill fight. The only route was to go straight up using anything to grab hold of and pull yourself up. The subsequent undergrowth still slowed the short search to find the control nicely hidden in a large deep depression.

Yet another climb to Control 7. At least there was the comfort of reaching a track, then a path, and then an earthbank and another control was found. However to get to Control 8 it was onward and upward. A

direct route through the trees may have been possible although with a fence going in the same direction this easier option was taken. Even so it seemed to go on for ever; probably the previous exertion was taking its toll. The fence did take me straight to the control.

The route to Control 9 could again have been direct but the fence was doing well and I opted to follow this to the earthbank and follow this downhill (at last). The undergrowth still slowed going downhill to the control and this slowed progress after the control. It was a welcome relief to come out into sunlight and onto the forest road.

The relief was short lived as it was again uphill to Control 10. I opted to go straight up but this meant getting up a steep bank first of all although with the trees being reasonably close together they helped with the bank and then the climb up to the control. And then to the welcome path to the last control. At this point one of the three aforementioned club members was met running in the opposite direction away from the Finish. A friendly comment stopped him in his tracks and he could be heard making stronger comments about his map and compass.

This last Control 11 was at least in a good and clear position with a short albeit slippery path to the Finish.

A combination of a sunny morning and a wet and muddy course confirmed by the amount of mud on my map. It was testing, enjoyable, achievable, (TEA) and to me this is the benefit of Orienteering. Wind Down is not one of my favourite courses and I do thank the Planner for not including the long climb at the east end of the map. All my kit has dried out and been cleaned to start again and thanks to everyone.

*Norman Harvey*

## **National Event and Midland Championships - Beaudesert, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

Beaudesert means Beautiful Forest and this it proved to be. In the heart of England on Cannock Chase the final national event of the season allowed the opportunity to grab that last standard time to qualify for Championship standard.

To attain Championship standard one must obtain this standard at three events during the year, one of which must be at the British champs or the JK. The standard is set as the winners time plus 25%. e.g. if the winner of your age class does 40 mins, then, if you take less than 50 mins you achieve Championship Standard for that event.

I had a late start and so was able to leave home at a reasonable time and arrived at the parking in the large Scout camp in plenty of time. I was directed past many cars towards the assembly area thinking “good, parking near assembly” only for my heart to sink as I was sent past the tents and on. However it was only about 200 metres from the hub and very convenient for all facilities.

It was cold but the sun was shining and I had a plan. – I needed another to obtain my three standards for the year (Arthur Boyt had scuppered my chances at the JK by really flying round), so I was going to use him.

Arthur was starting 8 minutes behind me and so if he caught me and I could stay with him, then I should achieve the standard assuming he wasn't faster than 32 mins. A lot of IFS but feasible, even Arthur at his best couldn't do 4.8 km and 160 metres of climb in 32 mins. I know it's not strictly in the spirit of the sport but I felt justified in thinking it even if I couldn't put my plan into practice. I was having a good run, but when I went a bit off line for number 8 I glanced behind to see if there was any sign of him, and there wasn't either then or for the rest of the course.

When I finished John Warren, the controller, congratulated me on a good run- announced as being in 2<sup>nd</sup> place only 3mins behind the leader. I waited around talking to various friends but still no Arthur and then it dawned on me that I hadn't seen him at the start, and in fact he wasn't there at all. Quite a few top M 70s were missing, why I can't imagine because it was a very good area with well planned courses, as they should be for a National, and the British Championships are in a similar forest nearby in 2010. I am looking forward to them as an M75.

*Mike Crockett*

### **QO Christmas Novelty—Triscombe Stone, 28th December 2009**

What better way to atone for too many mince pies than the QO Christmas Novelty? This year's event at Triscombe Stone was blessed with a picture-postcard crisp winter's day, with blue sky and sunshine more than making up for the fact that it was a tad chilly.

The Christmas event always offers something different, and this year was no exception. On the face of it, a one-hour score event with 20 controls—but there was a twist... Instead of control kites, each control was a sheet of A4 paper with a Christmas-themed question. Just getting to a control was not enough—to get the points, you had to get the questions right!

Not only did I have a nice orienteering event with some great controls (the 'tunnel through the trees' was a personal favourite—despite the sunshine, you almost needed a head-torch!), but I also greatly increased my knowledge of all things Christmas-related. I now know where you'd find a Christmas tree valve system (on an oil well), and that only male turkeys make a gobbling sound (presumably we're not talking about eating them here!). For those of you who missed out, a full set of questions (and answers) are available in the News section of the QO website. A big thanks to Jim Mallinson for organising.

*Adrian Edwards*

## **Forthcoming Relay Events**

### **JK**

The JK relays are being held as part of the Easter weekend at Braunton near Barnstaple on 5<sup>th</sup> April. Entries can only be made through the club. Anyone wishing to run or form a team should contact Mike Crockett on 01458 445540 or [mjcsquared@talktalk.net](mailto:mjcsquared@talktalk.net).

### **British Relay Championships**

These are being held at Abrahams Valley and Wolesley Park near Cannock on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2010.

Once more entries are through the club. Anyone wishing to run or form a team should contact Mike Crockett 01458 445540 or [mjcsquared@talktalk.net](mailto:mjcsquared@talktalk.net)

At one time QO could almost guarantee a podium finish in the relay events, but unfortunately we have outgrown the classes available. However there is an M40+ class at each. In QO we do have enough in that age range to form a team. Why not talk it over amongst yourselves and raise a team to fly the flag for QO. You know who you are!

In addition there is also an Ad hoc Class which gives the opportunity for differing age groups to compete

Usually the club pays half the entry fees for relays and subject to ratification by the committee I see no reason why this is not the case this year. So let's get away from this enthusiastic apathy which has been so prevalent in the past and fly the QO banner with pride.

Entries will need to be in by the end of February for the JK and the end of March for the British.

## **FROM THE FORMER EDITOR**

In January 1999 I edited my first newsletter (Issue 61) in its present format. (I had produced a few one sheet editions when club secretary). We are now at Issue 139. So what has changed in those 78 editions? It was given a name “Quonicle” suggested by Hazel Cole. Apart from that, very little. Richard Went as chairman commented that committee meetings were a mixture of Long O and Night O. Fixtures were on the back page and have remained so. There was a request for names for the British and JK relays (as there is in this copy).

I took on the role of editor as I felt that club members needed something more substantial than the single sheet of A4 that was produced by a very busy club secretary in his lunch hour. I hope that I achieved my aim. I certainly enjoyed myself and learnt a lot in so doing. I am proud to say that I didn’t miss a deadline. This of course was thanks in no small part to Margaret who invariably had to stop what she was doing to proof read my efforts before rushing off to the printers.

Now as I hand over to Adrian may I say thank you to all who have contributed during my 11 years tenure. Did I hear a whisper “I can now talk to Mike at events without risk”. Not strictly true! as I have offered to collect copy for Adrian until he gets to know you better.

I leave Adrian to tell you about himself but I know Quonicle is in safe hands. Please give him the support that you have given me and thank you once again.

*Mike Crockett*

## FROM THE NEW EDITOR

### *One man's experience of getting the orienteering bug...*

I was a bored road-runner. I still enjoy the odd half marathon, but running around in circles can start to wear you down after a while (just ask the bottom of my running shoes!). My old friend Richie Hill had got into orienteering in a big way, and he kept saying I ought to give it a go. And so Christmas '07 saw me at my first ever 'O' event.



That was the Christmas Novelty around the streets of Taunton, so it seemed like a good 'half-and-half' for a road runner looking for a change. It was also handy as I live in Taunton, so the chances of getting hopelessly lost and missing the New Year celebrations seemed relatively slim (though not impossible). In fact, the start point was just around the corner from my office in Bridge Street, so my first navigational challenge (finding the event) proved painless enough.

I tagged along with Richie on that event, and he talked me through the basics. Orienting the map made sense (my wife does this with road atlases, but that's another matter...), and I quickly learnt why thumbing the map is a very good idea. The hardest bit was learning to read a map whilst running, and I can only apologise to the postman I collided with — and to all those who didn't get their post that day.

Apart from the postman, the other thing that struck me was just how friendly everybody was. It was enough to make me want to try a 'proper' event, so I turned up for a QOFL at Ham Hill a few months later. I opted for the Orange course to try and get my bearings (literally), and despite a few wrong turns I put in the fastest time thanks to a sprint finish. It was on that run that I recalled another piece of Richie wisdom

– “you’ve got to learn to fall over again”. As I took a tumble over a tree root I learnt that falling over is actually quite easy – staying on your feet is much harder!

I thoroughly enjoyed Ham Hill, and by now I was pretty sure I’d be trying some more of this orienteering lark. A month later my daughter was born (9 weeks early!), and the only runs I had for a while were to the hospital and back. (Here’s a thought – why not have an O event in a hospital?? They’re impossible to navigate around). The next chance I got to partake was a score event at Staple Hill. I’d pretty much forgotten everything I’d just started to learn by then, so I took the only sensible route...as all the seasoned orienteers headed off in one direction, I went the other! I soon learnt some more valuable lessons (I always wondered what ‘fight’ looked like), and realised that many sleepless nights and abandoned gym visits had done nothing for my fitness...

The fitness issue was sorted out by accompanying Richie on the Dartmoor Long O . That gave me an incentive to up my training as I didn’t want to slow him down — especially as he may have left me in the middle of Dartmoor and taken the map! The weather was ‘interesting’, and it was also memorable for a particularly bad attack of cramp as I was getting changed in the car afterwards — why oh why did it have to happen when I’d just stripped down to my soggy underpants? I dread to think what the cadets walking past must have thought at the sight of two semi-naked men in a car, one of whom was shouting and then giggling uncontrollably.

A QOFL event at Triscombe was my next challenge, and I thought I’d have a stab at the Light Green course. That was when that I discovered that I seem to have a problem navigating through forests, which could be an issue in a ‘Forest League’! That run went from good to bad to worse, and I think I had the dubious honour of being the only person to run downhill to the finish after getting in a muddle on some bike tracks.

So here I am two years after my initial taste of orienteering, sitting on the QO committee and editing this newsletter. I’m still doing Light

Green courses, and judging by my performance at our Galloper I've managed to get worse instead of better. Do I care? Not really—I enjoy being out in the countryside, and as long as I finish the course I'm generally pretty happy. Sure I'd like to improve, but then sometimes I end up stopping for a minute just to enjoy the scenery. That's not something that often happens when I'm out running around the streets! I like the fact that orienteering can be as competitive or uncompetitive as you like, and I like the fact that it offers exercise for mind and body. This is what keeps me coming back, and this is what I tell my friends as I'm trying to persuade them to give it a go.

One of my friends did decide to give it a go, and I caught up with him after he'd just finished an Orange course at Priors Hill. He was cursing some of his mistakes, and muttering under his breath something about 'next time'. I can spot the symptoms....he's contracted the Orienteering bug.

*Adrian Edwards*

## **ROUTE GADGET**

You've been out for your run, maybe had to dash off not having a chance to chat about how it went and are at home wondering if you should have gone direct to that control or around the paths? Well, in the warm and dry by your PC you can replay your run against others and see how your optimum route, known only to you and maybe the planner, put you ahead- or how far behind you ended up when your gamble went wrong...

The tool is called Routegadget and this with Splitalyzer can be accessed from the QO website results page. Alternatively the [Routegadget.co.uk](http://Routegadget.co.uk) website will enable you to access events from all over the country which is good preparation before visiting a new area

or seeing how the elite run in the major championships.

Routegadget.net will allow you to access nearly 6000 events from 29 countries. We currently have 22 events with 216 routes plotted and it would be good to see more especially from the Orange and other shorter courses. We can all benefit and it is also useful for planners to see if their intended routes were used.

A list of events will be displayed containing the links to the tools.

Clicking on the event name link will open up the main RG page with various buttons (your computer will require Java for this- see RG UK for further info). When opened, sometimes the main part will look blank where there you expect to see a map. This because it is zoomed into the north west corner where sometimes there is no map detail. Simply click and drag to bring the map into view or click the zoom out button. At the top of the page there is a useful help button with basic instructions.

To see RG in action use the drop down menu to choose competitors. You will be presented with the list of runners for a chosen course, including those that have uploaded their routes from their GPS watches. The asterisked runners have already plotted their routes so select up to ten of these. If you select a runner that is not asterisked it will follow the red line so you will still be able make a basic speed comparison. Toggle the names on to label the icons and try out the other options including mass start on, or off to compare in 'real' time (this is handy for chasing start events). Click View Animation to bring up some control buttons then click start.

The runners icons will move along their routes and you can use the control buttons to speed up/slow down, pause or even go backwards. You can also read comments and see how long the routes were in pixels, this can help determine in terms of percentage the various speeds according to terrain.

Runners will plot where they thought they went and then upload their GPS route to make a comparison. The GPS replays in 'real time' so will show varying speeds uphill, downhill, along paths, through the

forest and stopped. On a Long O my icon spent a rather long time stopped at a drinks station as I watched the others cruise by.

So how do you draw your route? This is easily done via the tick box at the top. Select your course and name then click your route to each control highlighted in blue. You can pan and zoom the map while doing this. If you make a mistake hit the backspace button. Save the route and your done. A caveat with this is that you need a full set of splits, any punching problems cannot be processed by RG and bear in mind that these results are unofficial.

Splitalyzer is a very good tool for comparison using graphs. There are various graphs and you can compare against the winner, fastest times or other runners. The controls on the X axis are placed the correct distance apart in proportion to each other. The optimum line for a runner on the main graph would be straight (and horizontal if running at the same speed as the winner). Other graphs are interesting for instance you can see which controls you performed best on or which other runners you may have met while out in the wood.

So there we have it, some great post race analysis right at your fingertips and while your sat at your PC why not download a demo version of the orienteering game *Catching Features*?

*Brian Pearson*

## **JOG FIXTURES SPRING 2010**

Those in bold italics are QO SUNDAY fixtures. JOG events are between 1:00-2:00pm. PLEASE check the website BEFORE coming to events.

23.01.10	JOG	Broomfield Hill	ST 212327
<b><i>31.01.10</i></b>	<b><i>QOFL 3</i></b>	<b><i>Blackborough</i></b>	<b><i>ST 100084</i></b>
06.02.10	JOG	Lydeard Hill	ST 181338
14.02.10	JOG	Wellington School/Taunton School (provisional)	
20.02.10	JOG	Queens College	ST 218233
27.02.10	JOG	Wind Down	ST 221342
<b><i>07.03.10</i></b>	<b><i>QOFL 5</i></b>	<b><i>West Quantockshead</i></b>	<b><i>ST 116410</i></b>
13.03.10	JOG	SCAT/Castle School	ST 216 247

## **SELECTED OTHER EVENTS**

21.02.10	National Event & South- ern Championships	Lydney Park Estate	SO 607048
28.02.10	SWOA Galloper	Silk Wood	ST 855894
07.03.10	SARUM Saunter Re- gional Event	Groveley East	SU 066337
14.03.10	WIM Regional Event	Crane's Moor	SY 820890
28.03.10	Regional Event and South West Galloper	Rushmore	ST 969193

