



**The Newsletter of Quantock Orienteers
No. 147 January 2013**

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EDITORIAL

So the Turkeys can breathe a sigh of relief and Father Christmas is probably having a well-earned rest, but QO is as busy as ever. There was a fantastic turnout for the New Year's Novelty event that you can read about in this edition, and we have three QOFLs and a Galoppen in the coming months as well as JOG and QOAD events. We also have a special 'Taunt-O' event in July in memory of Dave Holmes who sadly passed away in November.

I first met Dave when I was planning a JOG event at Queen's College. I was a bit nervous about planning my first event, but I needn't have been. Dave displayed endless patience and good humour in taking my ropey sketches and notes and turning them into proper course maps, offering advice and encouragement in equal measure. I went on to plan several more events with Dave's help, and it was whilst surveying a sight at Hankridge for a forthcoming JOG event that Dave mentioned to me his idea of linking together the various Taunton maps he had produced to stage an 'urban Long-O' event in the town. I personally feel it's a fitting tribute that the inaugural 'Taunt-O' will be held on 6th July in Dave's memory, and I feel privileged to have met Dave and benefitted from his wealth of experience and enthusiasm.

—*Adrian Edwards*

POST FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I struggled up one of the steepest parts of Kingscliffe yesterday I thought, maybe as president, I should consider restricting my orienteering to just shaking hands on the appropriate occasions. However as time went on I got into a lovely slightly flatter bit of wood and thought how lucky I am to be able to enjoy a sport such as ours.

The occasion was of course our Christmas novelty event. I also shook Graham Hartley's hand and congratulated him on a truly great event in spite of the mud. Roger and Judy looked after the organisation including the Apres O at the aptly named Compass Tavern. QO owes so much to members like them and Graham who gave up so much time to make this event possible. There were numerous other people helping at the event and so I say a very big thank you to everybody who helped make it so successful. That includes the competitors from near and far who came and tackled the challenges with such enthusiasm.

Last night I filled in the calendar with all the events I hope to go to in the near future. I won't need to travel too far to get a varied programme of events. Having said that I have entered the British Night Championships at Sheffield in February. At the moment I am the only M75 but I will still have to complete the course which is by no means a forgone conclusion.

What does the future hold for you? Have you pencilled in some dates to compete and possibly help. Although not on the organisers list of jobs, a write up for the QuOnicle is always welcome, and quite a satisfying exercise without expending too much energy.

I hope to see you all in the forest. I hope to see you smiling and enjoying the challenges. Please accept my good wishes for 2013.

P.S. Another M75 has had the temerity to enter the BNC. I will now have to work if I am to gain the trophy.

—*Mike Crockett*

CLUB NEWS

In Memory of Dave Holmes 13th April, 1946 to 21st November, 2012

QO member 1987-2012. Club mapper, surveyor, OCAD cartographer. Previous chairman, committee member, Club equipment officer (construction, maintenance, storage). Instructor on course planning software and mentor for many QOFL/JOG planners.

It is with great sadness that we report Dave Holmes' death after a long fight against lymphoma. Running, orienteering, and the great outdoors were Dave's greatest passions and much of his time was spent contributing to and gaining great pleasure from them.

Jan asked me to say a few words about Dave as an Orienteer at his cremation in addition to the moving memories offered by his daughters, Rachel and Ruth, and family friends. A full copy of my eulogy is on the website.

We, at QO, inherited Dave's skills. When he transferred to Taunton in 1987 to teach at Kings College, he built on the work of our mapping expert, Bill Vigar. Dave developed the OCAD route and has left a great legacy by encouraging and supporting several Club members to become mappers and showing Junior Orienteering Group planners how to use the Purple Pen programme to prepare their own courses.

Dave saw orienteering as an important family activity, and although he was totally committed to his Outdoor pursuits at King's - Duke of Edinburgh Award, Cross country running, Ten Tors training - he always tried to leave himself free for his family on Sundays so they could travel further a-field for Regional and National events.

Dave was a very competitive orienteer and was usually in the top section of results. The pinnacle of his achievements was being selected in 1996 to represent England in the veterans Home International in Northern Ireland.

His contribution to QO's relay's successes must be recorded, - especially the time when, as a new arrival from the North, he was invited to be first leg runner in a team that seriously misjudged his speed, causing Ted Heath to be caught in the changeover pen with his tracksuit on - and a very red face!



L-R: Bill, Dave and Ted—a winning relay team

A group of QO members have felt that they would like to establish an event in Dave's memory. He helped survey and did the cartography for the Awards for All series of street maps of Taunton, and he was hoping to extend them to include the whole of the town for an Urban event. Ruth has offered her knowledge of this type of event, and we have willing mappers, organisers, 'guardians' of controls sites, and officials to put on an inaugural TAUNT 'O' on Sat, 6th July, based at King's College.

Dave will be greatly missed. As requested at his service, we hope that when he gets to where he was going, could he find time to use his surveying and mapping skills to provide an Orienteering map of that area for all of us ageing QO members!!

—Roger Craddock

New Members

A warm welcome this month to Lys Atkinson. Lys is married with two small children Archie (4) and Tilly (2), and has been living in Galhampton near Castle Cary for two and a half years. She joined the Wessex Orienteering Club when they were living in Poole, and took part

in a few local events. Lys has also run in some military events as she was in the TA which is where she originally learnt her basic orienteering skills.

Lys also sings with the Sherborne Chamber Choir, and dips in and out of local orchestras as a fiddle player. She says she's looking forward to meeting club members soon.

Quantock Orienteers membership is cheaper from this year

If you have not done so already your membership of Quantock Orienteers is due for renewal now. You will be pleased to hear that it will cost you less.

Seniors Membership £8.00 for QO +£5.00 for BOF **Total £13.**

Family Membership £13.00 for QO + £2.00 per child for BOF
Total for family of 4 £17.00

Junior Membership £2.00 for QO + £2.00 for BOF **Total £4.00**

You can use this address link to renew your membership:

http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/page/renew_membership

The SI course run by Andy Rimes on 30th Dec 2012

It was becoming increasingly obvious that QO was very dependant on Andy Rimes for setting up and sorting out problems with our SI equipment. A few people knew how to run the system on the day but that was about all. It came to a head when we couldn't access the programme at all at a QOAD and had to use our own dibbers and download them after the event. Will was heard to mutter "About time we had an SI course, count Elliott and me in"!!

We managed to get a date at the end of December when 7 members: Jeff Pakes, Brian Pearson, Will and Elliott Kromhout, Steve Robertson, Rosie Wych and Roger Craddock could all attend.

Andy arrived with 4 laptops, a large screen computer and some extra equipment kindly lent by Devon OC. He ran an excellent 3 hour course, involving plenty of practical work and probably covered about half that he had anticipated. However this was plenty for the



Andy giving Will and Elliott some Si tuition

participants to absorb and apply. It was agreed that Andy would try to run a follow up course as soon as it could be arranged.

Many thanks must go to Andy for managing to fit this into his very busy work schedule, but hopefully it will enable more people to take more responsibility for running the SI in the future.

—Judy Craddock

JOG Report—Autumn Term 2012 Part II

Buckland Wood QOFL was the next fixture on the calendar and was well supported by JOG members, in all 61 folk on our register attended.

The weather at this time started to become quite threatening and, with high winds added to the prodigious amounts of rain that had already fallen, we decided to postpone the Culm Davy event on the 24th November 2012 to 26th January 2013. This will continue to include a QOAD.

Saturday 1st December found us at Fyne Court with John Fisher planning some very different and enjoyable courses. Not easy on a small area that we use quite often and although the weather was unpredictable we were very well supported.



Evie gets her Hare badge from Roger at Castle Neroche

The Castle Neroche JOG + QOAD was planned by Will Kromout and the start was on the back forest road leading to Castle Farm, the same place Chris Philip had used before. This gives more choice for the shorter courses, although some legs still needed to be taped. Dave Hands used this as the second event for his group of 12 children from King's Hall and it was good to see them full of confidence and obviously enjoying the rather muddy experience.

Hart Hill QOFL was the last event of the term, a wonderful, if very physical area! This is a good deal further than most JOG families travel to events but 63 on the JOG register came along.



Adam gets his Hare badge from Nick at Vivary

Although not on the JOG fixture list it was encouraging to see so many families at Graham Hartley's very enjoyable New Year Novelty event at Kingscliff Wood. We were delighted too that many joined us for a meal afterwards at the aptly named Compass Tavern.



Nathan gets his Hare badge from Graham

JOG families will be saddened to hear of Dave Holmes' passing. Without Dave and Bill the JOG initiative would not have happened. The requirement to produce small events on different areas on about ten consecutive Saturdays was made possible by Dave's quiet, but utterly reliable manner. He produced and updated large scale maps, helped planners draw courses and offered them sound advice. He sought out new areas around Taunton, mapped them, and kept an overall eye on how future events were progressing - giving a prod in the right direction when Judy and the planners weren't producing their courses on time! It remains to be seen how we will manage without him.

The Fixture list for Spring 2013 is included on page 20.

—*Roger and Judy Craddock*

EVENTS

November Classic, Southampton

It seems a long time ago, but the November classic has occurred since the last QOnicle and it deserves a mention. After my article about the BOK urban series, Roger suggested I might enjoy this event and since my son Callum had just started at Southampton University, it was an excellent opportunity to combine a parental visit with a good run. It was fortunate too to have a son at the venue with the same size feet as me, as I remembered that I had forgotten (as it were!) my trainers as we passed Salisbury. So I borrowed an old pair which I had given Callum some time before.

The event was very well organised, based in a local leisure centre with plenty of (cheap) parking right by. The use of "Proximity Readers" was a new one for me. Although I hadn't tried them before, they were really easy to use. Basically instead of a dibber, you wear a watch sized device that recognised the control when you passed within about 50cm. The device flashes, you know you've done it and you've barely had to slow down. The future of orienteering, I think, although the set up costs will be tough for a smaller club like ours.



The "Proximity Reader" in action

It is hard to imagine more different location to a typical QOFL. The event covered the high street on a busy Saturday afternoon, the very posh looking Marina and the old city walls. The courses had a good mixture of short distance with very careful detailed map reading and much longer legs where good route planning was essential. As usual I

managed to muck up one of the longer legs, making a bit of a meal of getting past a rather obstructive railway line – going over the footbridge would have been much quicker than going over the flyover with all the traffic and having to double back the other side. There were words of encouragement from the Saturday shoppers - “he went that way, mate” - as I took slightly different route to the person who had just overtaken me.

I did the “Open” A course – not because I had any chance at winning, but because I’d come all that way and wanted to get my money’s worth! I finished 51st out of 57 but it did give my average speed which allowed me to calculate where I might have finished on one of the shorter courses. There were 6 different courses, and I think I would have been a little more competitive on the B course. Those M21s doing A are far too quick. I would thoroughly recommend going to this next year if you enjoy urban events. On the Sunday there was an off road event planned in the New Forest, but sadly it had to be cancelled for safety reasons when a stream near the start burst its banks.

—*Graham Hartley*

QOFL 2—A Bit Brambly at Buckland

“Bit brambly out there” said Richard, following a surprise retirement on his sixth control. What chance then for the rest of us, went the banter. And what colour would I now be doing, asked the organiser? “Still blue”, I said. That’s brave of you, came the reply. Well, I mused, from a fitness point of view, yes maybe, as I haven’t done much since (almost) completing the long course on September’s Long-O, a gruelling test that I’ve only just physically recovered from. But I hate to turn down a navigational challenge and for me, the Blackdowns shades the Quantocks. It feels like it has less paths. It feels less familiar. Maybe it’s more technical. Or would that be testimony to the course designs of the regular (and resident) planning team of Bill and Sue?

Anyway, tricky ground would be combined with a deadline and that would be my main concern. For with the Start closing in five minutes, I would have an hour and 35 minutes before the early winter course closure time of 14.30. I'd have to choose the right mental approach and was reminded of a miserable run I endured in similar circumstances at Priors Park four years ago, albeit on a freezing cold day and while suffering from an upset stomach. I'd started badly, felt under pressure and clocked two and a quarter hours. This time, I'd think positively, pace myself - and avoid those brambles.

I started brightly and confidently. I even made time to briefly exchange thoughts with Judy about a dog-leg at #2 near the road. Will did his usual trick of galloping past me with a breezy greeting, this time nearing #7, a spur at the far W of the wood. I resisted the temptation to follow in his slipstream to #8. Halfway round and with just less than an hour left, I was sitting pretty. If I could only just maintain "good contact" with the map...

My reasonably flawless run continued till leg #10, when I got temporarily mislocated (lost). Somehow I refused to believe that a steep slope rising from relatively flat ground was the top part of the Blackdowns escarpment as mapped. Time stood hopelessly still for a while. With things becoming desperate, I resorted to retracing steps. I 'belted it' toward the last line feature 150m west, an earthbank which I hadn't seen first time round. I hadn't even seen the stream 'catching feature' when I'd originally 'overshot'.

I was beginning to struggle with the seemingly endless linearity of this wood. It's one long steep N facing slope punctuated by very few paths. Even my usually reliable pace counting was getting thrown out by the need to go round large thickets and I found myself lacking the concentration or patience to interpret the more subtle vegetation boundaries. Those followed the easier ones to the W, lovely large grassy rides letting in lots of sunlight.

My uncertainty continued on to #11, a clearing. Again I overshot, and unexpectedly hit (literally) a partially ruined fence. Exactly which bit

took me a while to work out, leaving only 25 minutes till courses closed. Tired, beginning to stagger and not to care, my first retirement beckoned after 120+ runs. Of course, the fact that I'd breezed round this same wood two years ago hadn't meant I'd 'cracked' the area.

Then I rediscovered a bit of momentum, broken only by a large bramble patch on the long climb up towards #13, in a field with several small ponds. I remembered Richard's remark and humbly retreated before the brambles slowly devoured me. On my attack point for #16 (located at the end of a long gully near the finish) I again managed to overshoot. I chanced on the flag to my left just as I'd almost given up trying to interpret the reedy grass and semi-mature trees in front of me. Maybe overshooting happens more on 1:7,500 maps? I like the extra clarity the scale provides, though.

A spring appeared in my step on the final straight. Disbelief turned to relief. Then elation, as the SI unit bleeped sweet music to my ears and told me I'd finished. I performed an involuntary fist pump and yelped with delight. I might have leapt while doing this! I'd made the 14.30 closure time, on the nail. I then still had some time and a bit of energy left for some control collecting, a chance to "warm down" and reinforce technique.

Wasn't till I left that it sunk in - we hadn't used Quants. Its eerie and atmospheric "abandoned reservoir project", that would have eclipsed Luxhay in size, seems to get mentioned every time we visit Buckland Wood. Today I hadn't encountered any of the strange structures of this water world that never was. That is, the overflow tower, the embankment, weirs, foundation trenches or the rusting, incomplete, high barbed perimeter fence. Nor did I see again the earthworks from the abandoned smallholding which predated the wartime project. Though thankfully no death-defying leaps materialised - I can remember vaulting a wide, slippy-sided concrete drainage channel during the heat of competition.

I followed up my curiosity and learnt about this historical sideshow in an article by Roy Coombs and Tanya James in *Along the Wild Edge*, a book about the Blackdowns published by the Neroche Landscape Partnership Scheme in 2011 and stocked by local libraries. I can recommend it as it has plenty of pictures, aerial photos, maps and histories of the woods we run in.

—*Jeff Pakes*

QOFL 3 Hart Hill— From the Point of View of an M10 on a Light Green

It was a chilly day with a small amount of frost during setup (I was on from 9.45am). Later on, at about 11am, the JOG certificates were handed out (I won the Fox (score) league.).

On my run I visited 131 which was easy enough to find in a platform, then I went down to the road, went down it until the thicket had passed and took a near South bearing to 108, which was hidden in a small depression, roughly East of the blues number 7. I took a-bit-south-of-west bearing to get to 127, but in the area nearby I looped around a bit, until I used the ride to comb the area. 126 I found easily, but as for 134 I went off the indistinct path too soon so I cut on to the small path which I went North along until I found some rough open which I went though into the forest, where the control was right in front of me.

North of the entrance road/track I had better luck and found all the controls easily, from between controls 135 and 142 onwards I was neck and neck with Sarah Maynard until control 138, where I ran to the next control, then to the finish, where I marginally beat her.

The course planned by Andy and Rosie was awesome. Looking at the map and my map from QOFL 1 there is a little overlap in the North-West corner.

—*Thomas Hasler*

QO New Year Novelty, Kingscliff Part 1

As we usually go to NGOC's Forest of Dean event on New Year's Day, we thought it would be a nice change to go somewhere different. I also liked the idea of going to the pub afterwards.

I had gone to Kingscliff last November (2011) and found it a little brambly. This time, the weather was good; it was very, very muddy, but the terrain was much more runnable.

The event was a one hour score with an interesting points system that relied on peoples knowledge of Xmas carols to choose the correct controls to visit. Extra bonus points could also be gained using map memory, carrying rucksacks (filled with water) and finding new years resolutions. I liked the sweets at many of the controls.

I decided to set off fast and avoid the queue at the first control which I was first to get to. I tried hard to get the correct answers to avoid having to run unnecessary distance. Some of the higher scoring controls were further away involving lots of climb. I missed out these controls, opting instead to get the map memory controls that were worth 40 points each. I have since worked out that I ran about 6km with 170m of climb.

There were lots of young, enthusiastic children and their families present. I think QO is becoming a very family friendly



Joe getting his prize from Graham

club and I enjoy going to QO events because of this.

After a good clean up, we drove the short distance to the aptly named Compass Tavern where I enjoyed my roast beef lunch. After the meal, there was a good turnout for the results and prize giving; I was pleased with my box of sweets.

A very good event all round. Thanks to Graham Hartley for planning and organising on the day and also to Judy and Roger for all their hard work through out the year and for arranging the meal.

I look forward to many more QO events this year.

—Joe Hudd (BOK)



The QO crew at Compass Tavern on New Year's Day. Next year's event will be held at the Dibber Inn.

QO New Year Novelty, Kingscliff Part 2

The New Year's Novelty was a very exciting event format, where there were eight master controls which formed a yellow course and were compulsory to do, and at each of them there was a name of a Christmas carol, which had 3 or 4 lines of carols underneath. Using your knowledge of carols you work out which is the rogue line, so you don't go to it because the wrong ones are worth zero! If you found one of Santa's Sacks and you carried it around the course you got 50 points; if you found Santa and you told him a joke or sang him a carol you could get 25 to 40 points. At some of the controls there were New Year's Resolutions which were 20-50 points. To make it even more fun there were four map memory controls, whose master controls had a map showing where they were, I dared myself to go to 137, which was in a platform just South of 108, in the 102 -103 window and was worth 40 points!

Between 104 and 105, on the North side of the bridge there was some deep mud which I crossed to avoid the rest of it, perhaps there could have been a sign like the one to the right! On the North side I didn't get any extra controls, because I was worried about time penalties, which I got-10 points (by 15 secs!).

—*Thomas Hasler*

JOG FIXTURES—SPRING 2012

Saturday events are from **2.00-3.00pm**
Sunday QOFLs are from **11.00am-1.00pm**

| | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| Sun 20th Jan | Wind Down QOFL | ST221 342 |
| Sat 26th Jan | Culm Davy (+QOAD) | ST123 165 |
| Sat 2nd Feb | Thurlbear Woods | ST265 210 |
| Sat 9th Feb | Staple Hill | ST246 159 |
| Sat 16th Feb | Lydeard Hill (+QOAD) | ST180 338 |
| Sat 23rd Feb | Bromfield Hill | ST211 326 |
| Sun 3rd Mar | Blackborough North QOFL | ST102 084 |
| Sat 9th Mar | Crowcombe Heathfield (+QOAD) | ST127 343 |
| Sat 16th Mar | Ramscombe | ST164 377 |
| Sat 23rd Mar | SCAT/Castle | ST217 248 |

Please confirm fixtures at
<http://www.quantockorienteers.co.uk>
Ring Judy Craddock on 01823 323850 for more information



John Pilkington

John was a founder member of Quantock Orienteers and long time treasurer of SWOA.

John died at the age of 92 on Monday 14th January after a short illness. There will be a service for the Celebration of John's life at St Peters Church, North Newton on Friday 1st February at 12 noon and afterwards at the Walnut Tree at North Petherton. Ann, John's daughter, says that they would love orienteers past and present to join them.

Further details from Ann Pilkington 07876 594085 or Mike Crockett 01458 445540.