



The QuOnicle

No. 164 November 2015



The Newsletter of Quantock Orienteers

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Andy Rimes	01823 451942	SI & Equipment
Jim Mallinson	01278 784714	OCAD maps

Front cover: Evie enjoying the JOG event at Fyne Court on a fine day!

EDITORIAL

So here it is—my last QuOnicle as editor. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have made a contribution over the last six years. From hereon you can quite safely talk to me at events without running the risk of me asking you for a QuOnicle article!

I'd also like to express my immense gratitude to Gavin Clegg, who has stepped in at the 11th hour and agreed to take over as editor (it's public now Gavin, so no turning back!). Whilst wishing to extricate myself for time reasons I really didn't want the newsletter to be abandoned, so it is good to know that The QuOnicle is in safe hands in 2016 and beyond.

That's it from me—on with the show!

—*Adrian Edwards*

POST FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I write this I am a bit in the dark regarding the future of the newsletter. I believe there is a meeting in the near future to discuss which direction to go. I read an article in the BOK newsletter which said that "The club exists to fulfil its members needs and wishes as orienteers and that the committee is elected to deliver them." Please make your thoughts and views known to the committee, on this and any other subject.

In my last piece, I reported that Spencer Modica was incapacitated. It was good to see that he was at the Triscombe QOFL. Welcome back Spencer. Our other absentee, Tony Hext, is progressing well but will not be back for a while. We wish you well Tony.

On Wednesday I went to a BAOC event at Minley near Camberley in two minds about my future. Various aches and pains rear their heads occasionally and I was seriously considering retiring from active competition. When I registered my Emit Dibber was declared faulty—

battery defunct. I took this as divine intervention and have decided that my own battery has run down and I should retire. This does not mean that I am turning my back on orienteering, but I won't be actively competing at the same level as before. I have had many years of enjoyment and a few frustrations and can honestly say that it has enhanced my outlook on life and taken me to many places that I would never have dreamed of back in the seventies. Thank you O.

One of my peripheral interests is the Permanent Course at Combe Hill Wood. We have had the map updated and made a few small alterations to the recommended courses, which involved repositioning the start and a couple of controls. It has taken a while to get the information on to the website. For this I apologise. However controls 12 and 22 have been repositioned and are now accessible. They were in heavy undergrowth. Maps for this course are available at www.combehillwood.co.uk or by link from QO website.

And so I close by wishing you good orienteering both for the remainder of 2015 and in the New Year of 2016. Happy Christmas!

Late news. - At last night's meeting Gavin Clegg offered to take over as editor of Quonicle. Thank you Gavin. We just need someone to distribute it now.

—Mike Crockett

CLUB NEWS

QO and the 50th Anniversary Celebrations for SWOA

Did you know that SWOA (the South West Orienteering Association) is celebrating its 50th birthday this year? All clubs belong to SWOA which provides the necessary background services of co-ordinating the fixtures calendar, training courses, and overseeing regional championships and so on. To celebrate this all clubs in the South West are holding an event sometime over the weekend of November 21st/22nd to encourage people to try our sport.

On Saturday 21st November QO are staging a “Try Orienteering” event in Taunton town centre, starting from Goodlands Gardens (between Debenhams and the river), in conjunction with the usual JOG event. This will be free for everyone!



We are looking to publicise this event as widely as possible in the Taunton area, so can you please

- . offer to display a poster (A4) at work, school, or anywhere else appropriate?
- . come and help on the day wearing your colourful QO O-top?
- . promote it on Twitter, Facebook or anything else
- . put a note in any newsletters or local news to which you have access
- . and of course tell your friends!

This is also a rare opportunity to sample an urban event, which will be good practice for the forthcoming Bridgwater Urban Events (Night event on January 2nd, day event on March 19th), and of course you will get a free run if you wish! There will be two longer courses open to JOG participants and QO members between 14.00 and 15.00.

Please email me (sandjrobertson@btinternet.com) for a poster, or Judy (jandr.craddock@googlemail.com) with offers of help or for further information.

Thank you!

—*Julia Robertson, Fixtures Secretary*

New Members

We welcome two new juniors to QO this month— 11 year old Lily from Staplegrove and 7 year old Oliver from Crewkerne. Future world champions in the making. Meanwhile, dad Stephen Hopkins has joined son Kieron in the QO ranks. A warm welcome to all of you.

Galoppen Success for Luke

Huge congratulations to Luke Shopland on winning the Orange trophy in the Galoppen series. See the Captain's Log on page 9.

OMM

QO runners were rather thin on the ground in the Original Mountain Marathon (OMM) this year, but Olly Frost did the Elite course with Chris Turner of Wimborne and finished in a very impressive 13th place.

#GOOO

For those of you who dabble in a bit of social media, just a reminder that you can now find Quantock Orienteers on both Facebook and Twitter.

If you're on Twitter then please follow @QuantockO to keep up to date with the latest news and events.

The Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/quantockorienteers/

At the time of writing we have 86 'likes' - please see if you can help us get to 100. And don't forget that anyone can post on the page, so if you've got something to share or discuss then please don't be shy.

JOG Report: 12th September—24th October

Vivary Park was the first venue of the Autumn term, and proved a gentle start to the season with just 20 children and 4 seniors competing. The seniors used the street map of Wilton making the Fox more demanding and fun.

Staplehill, planned by Jeff Pakes, was an excellent event with courses planned to extend JOGgers. The Badger result was notable with Tom Perry - an M11 from Devon - finishing 20 mins ahead of the next competitor, while Chris Philip and Andy Bussell whizzed round the Fox.

We usually have hoards of competitors at Fyne Court so 52 seemed a rather low turn

out! It was a superb sunny afternoon and Brian Fletcher's courses used the area well and gave the 16 juniors on the Hare a good run for their money. On the Fox Jim Mallinson and Chris Philip decided to make it into a master map memory and completed 14 controls in 24mins 27secs and 18mins 15secs respectively.

Wilmott Pond (the first day of the Long O) was our 4th event and Mark Maynard planned the JOG courses. We were surprised that we had 45 people as this is further than most venues. It was good for JOGgers to mix with competitive orienteers and the good weather helped to make it an excellent event.

We thought that it would be a good idea to ask Ray Toomer to plan a JOG this term to give him some experience! (Ray won the Club



Fiona. Oscar and the new addition—a little girl!

Championships in July and is due to plan next year's event.) Ray (and Sue) rose to the occasion and planned some really interesting courses at Lydeard Hill. He even produced the map for a "blacked out" course for Fox. Many thanks to Ray and Sue for joining the group of JOG planners.

Jim Mallinson decided to use the buildings as the focus of his SCAT/Castle event on 24th October. These are quite complex but well mapped and this provided a real challenge for the Hare, Squirrel and Badger courses. The Fox was a Norwegian style map memory — it was an interesting format and you can read more about it in Jim's article on page 13. As competitors didn't know how many controls they should visit, only one competitor (a pair, Eleanor and Sarah Hasler) managed to complete the course!

We would like to thank everyone who has planned so far this term, also Bill and Jim for producing the maps and those people who turn up each week to help.

The current League leaders after 6 events (the best six scores will count) are:

Hare: Thomasina Mallett (376 points from 5 events)

Squirrel: Zachary Nevell (446 points from 5 events)

Badger: Andrew Page (557 points from 6 events)

Fox: Stephen Hopkins (226 points from 3 events)

— Roger and Judy Craddock



Andrew Page racing from the start

Captain's Log

The new season is off to a flying start. One QOFL already run with strong participation from QO members, neighbouring clubs and the JOG families and juniors. Also plenty of climb!

In the SWOA Galoppen series, Gavin Clegg is second in the Brown series, while Brian Fletcher leads the Blue after a very close win at the last race in St. Ives. Bill Vigar is second on the Short Green series.

Luke Shopland received the trophy for winning the Orange Galoppen series last year, with a string of very consistent races all over the region.

Selected special dates for your diaries:

- The QO Galoppen – St. Audries, Sunday 28th February. I am the organiser for this, our largest event of this season and will be calling for volunteers nearer the time.
- The CompassSport Trophy Heat – Cannop Ponds, Forest of Dean. Sunday 13th March. Club competition for adults, and juniors running orange and above. QO finished second last year; can we improve on that this time around?
- The Yvette Baker Qualifier - Black Down, near Cheddar, Sunday 17th April. Junior club competition for yellow and above. QO juniors just missed out on qualification for the finals last year; what about this year?



Luke receives hi Galoppen trophy from Cap'n Chris

—Cap'n Chris

The QuOnicle Chronicles

Bill Vigar trawls through the QO archives to see what the club was up to 100 'QuOnicles' ago...

Newsletter No. 64 July 1999

The committee decided on *Quonicle* as the name for the newsletter. The other suggestion of Quo Vadis, although appropriate, didn't seem to roll off the tongue quite as easily.

There was an *event report on "The British", which took place in The Lake District on 7-9th May 1999*. In the Individual event Jenny Tennant became the W65 British Champion, while QO finished 3rd in the relays. The notable QO results were:

1st W12A Ruth Holmes	6th W18A Rachel Holmes	5th W50L Sue Gard
1st W65L Jenny Tennant	8th M55L Ted Heath	8th M60L Bill Vigar

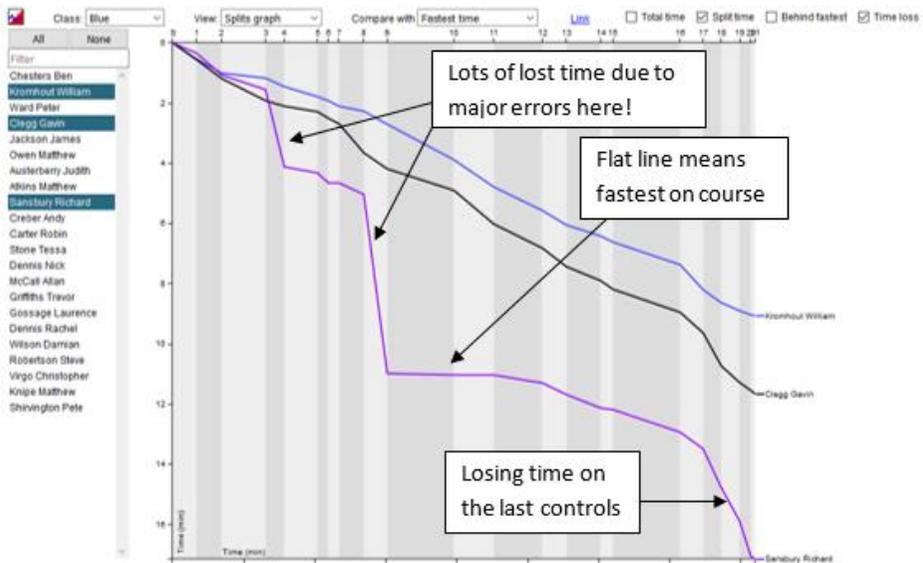
SKILLING UP: HINTS AND TIPS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Tip #27—Splitsbrowser

One of the major advantages of our electronic timing system is that it gives us lots of data to play with. And you don't have to have an unnatural interest in statistics to do it - as all the tools are provided, and some very useful information can be gained without much effort.

You can use your printout to compare split times with your friends on the day, or you can wait until the full results appear on the internet. In a previous edition I promoted the use of Routegadget - a powerful website which can be used to compare route choices and even replay a virtual head-to-head race. It's a shame that not more people make use of this as not only is it a great way to learn it is good fun too. But this article is about a feature within Routegadget, called Splitsbrowser.

Splitsbrowser uses everyone's split times and draws graphs which very quickly show the progress against time. The default view is "time loss" compared to the fastest time - a typical view is shown below. The steepness of the line indicates whether on each part of the course you were good, average or made a mistake. This example is from recent QOFL at Triscombe. I have shown my performance compared to Will and Gavin. Their near straight lines show they were fairly consistent from start to finish. Meanwhile my zig-zag line tells a different story.



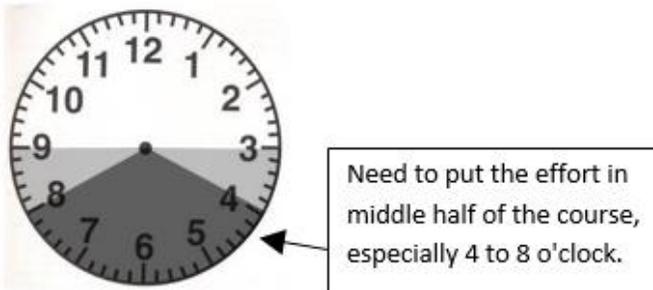
To be fair I already knew about the 2 mistakes, so I didn't need Splitsbrowser to show me that. But before looking at this graph I hadn't realised that I was quickest in the middle of the course, or that things went a bit wrong at the end.

The advantage of all this? It's all about finding your strengths and your weaknesses. If you want to improve, wouldn't it be a good idea to first find your weaknesses?

Tip #28—Clock Face

Getting away from the navigation theme, here's something about motivation and physical exertion. It is a competitive sport after all! In my last edition I talked about how easy it is to ease off the effort when no-one else is in sight. Here's how I try to keep myself going. I imagine a clock face. Whatever exercise I am doing I divide it up into twelve and imagine the hand going round once. So if I'm swimming 30 lengths, each length is 2 minutes on the clock. If I'm cycling 50km, each 10km is 12 minutes on the clock. And if I'm orienteering a course with 15 controls, each is 4 minutes on the clock.

As I do the activity, I imagine the clock going round starting from the top. From experience I know how I will feel when the clock is at 2 o'clock or 5 o'clock or 9 o'clock. I know in the first part of the activity I will be fresh and keen to get going. By about 3 o'clock I'm starting to feel the strain. But I know that the race is won or lost in the middle third between 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock. I know I have to put in some mental effort during this part to keep the pressure on.



I've no idea if this is useful for anyone else but it works for me!

— *Richard Sansbury*

How Accurate is Your Orienteering?

Richard Sansbury has been giving some excellent advice on how to improve your orienteering skills and find those elusive controls more easily. However, how often have you approached a control (from your attack point) thinking "my control is on A boulder (or A knoll or A ditch junction)" - even when there is more than one nearby? How often do you then look for A boulder and, when there is no control flag there, look for another nearby boulder? When there is more than one of the same feature you are looking for nearby, rather than attacking your control thinking "it's on A boulder", you should be thinking "it's on THE EASTERN boulder (or THE MIDDLE boulder or THE THIRD boulder)". This way you will be able to go straight to the correct boulder and so save time looking (unnecessarily) at other nearby boulders.

At the recent JOG activity at SCAT & Castle School, I incorporated an exercise to test the accuracy of some of the participants. This involved a Norwegian-style map memory course (the Fox course).

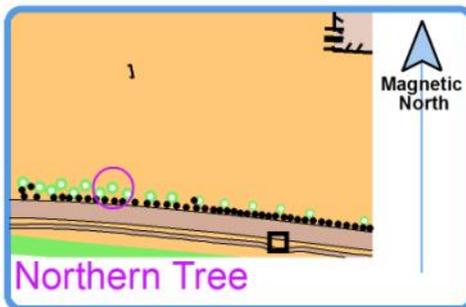
A Norwegian course is one where only one control at a time is given. Usually, the control codes and descriptions are given beforehand on a separate sheet of paper (this was done for the Badger course). At the start, a map section shows the location of the start and first control. The competitor marks the location of them on their map and navigates to the first control. At the first control they punch (or dib), and another map section shows the location of the first and second controls, and the process is repeated until, at the last control, the map section shows the location of the control and finish.

This type of course enables small areas to be used for long(ish) courses when no electronic punching is used (how many remember the good old days?). It also requires the competitor to check they are at the correct control each time. My variation of this was that, other than at the start, the location of the current control is NOT shown, only the location and description of the next control.

Nor is the control code given! This way, the competitor needs to be sure they are at the correct control as the control does not show your current location! When the competitor reaches each control, they have to write the control code onto their control card and make their way to the next control. Without knowing how many controls are on the course, the competitor will not know if they are going wrong until they arrive back at the finish and have their control card checked!

A map memory course is self-explanatory - the competitor does not have a map and has to memorise the route to the next control and its' location and description.

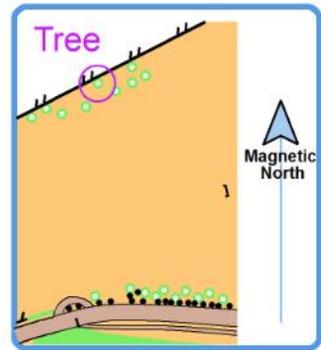
With the buildings of SCAT and Castle School, I was able to provide some route-choice legs round the buildings, giving the competitor the choice of which way to go round the buildings. Across the playing fields I was able to give some legs to test their accuracy, as described above - which of several features was the correct one. Two of these legs are shown below:-



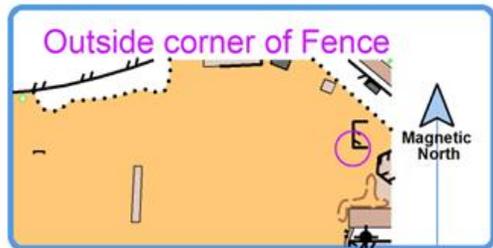
Leg 8 to 9 (Northern Tree): For those who arrived correctly at control 8 (N Boulder), the map section they saw is shown here. The next control was the FOURTH tree along from the boulder (which could not be seen from the direction of travel until they reached the

tree). However, there was a control on the SECOND tree. The map section on the SECOND tree sent them to a 'wrong' control, one much further along the course, thus resulting in them missing out some of the course.

Leg 9 to 10 (Tree): Again, for those who arrived correctly at control 9, the map section showed the next control on a tree just across the playing fields. However, there were controls on TWO of the group of trees, thus requiring the competitor to avoid being 'distracted' by the 'dummy' control - which (again) would send them to a control further along the course.



The map section below shows the locations of all the controls in that area, controls 8, 9 and 10 (codes 106, 113, and 114), control 17 (code 124) and control code 129 which was a 'dummy' control (that sent them to control 15).



Whilst these two legs involved controls on trees which were different but close together, different parts of the SAME feature could be used. This was done on the next leg, 10 to 11, (only the last part of the leg is shown here). The fence shown has the correct control positioned on the southern corner, but another control was hung on the northern corner. This also was a 'dummy' control, and would again have taken the competitor to a control much later in the course (control 16), thus missing out some of the course.

The whole point of this exercise was to make the competitor take careful note of exactly which feature, and which part of a feature, they were looking for. It could be extended further by having more than one control of the same (small) feature. For example, on one tree there could be controls on both the NORTH and SOUTH sides. An earthbank could have one control on the TOP and another, a short way along, on the SOUTH SIDE. It does not have to be a simple area like SCAT, although it is a good way to use a simple area, especially one which has clear 'uncrossable' boundaries that prevents anyone straying too far.

Any orienteering area can be used for this type of course, provided there are a few small areas where there are more than one of the same type of feature close together that are distinct and won't cause confusion with un-mapped features. The competitor should be 'tempted' to go to a 'wrong' control by passing it on the way to the 'correct' control. It's easier to have this 'wrong' control as the 'correct' control later in the course (to avoid having too many controls). It only needs a few (3 or 4) instances where there are controls very close together as it's the belief that there could be one more to come that should ensure the competitor maintains concentration right up to the end.

And how did the intrepid few who attempted the course fare? - Poorly! Despite magnetic north being displayed on all map sections, 2 people managed to make a 180o error at the start, and only 1 person managed to complete the course successfully! The majority failed to take note of how many trees they should have passed from control 8 to 9 (106 to 113) and went from 8 to 17 (106 to 124)!

—*Jim Mallinson*

(Don't Be) Afraid of the Dark!

I overheard planner Graham Hartley describing night orienteering as “a niche in a niche sport” at the first Quantock Orienteers After Dark (QOAD) event of the new season, to which Judy Craddock replied that it’s a shame more club members don’t give it a go. That got me thinking – why don’t more club members give a QOAD a go? Are you off down the pub on a Saturday night (fair enough, but you could retire to the pub with some fellow orienteers after the event), or busy watching Strictly Come Dancing (Worst. Excuse. Ever)? Or is it that you don’t think you could cope with orienteering at night, and find the whole prospect rather daunting (or possibly haunting – QOAD 1 was on Hallowe’en night, with one control at ‘Witches Lodge’!).

If it’s the latter, I would urge you to reconsider. Firstly, to state the obvious, night orienteering is pretty much the same as ‘regular’ orienteering but somewhat darker- and I’ll assume you enjoy orienteering or you wouldn’t be reading this newsletter. Granted you need a decent head-torch, but that’s it. Secondly, courses are planned with the nocturnal conditions in mind – they are not just daytime courses with the lights turned out. Thirdly, the areas used tend to be relatively compact (Orchard Portman, Fyne Court, Culm Davy etc.) so you’re never going to be wandering around the wilds of Exmoor until the break of dawn. Really the ‘scariest’ thing is bumping into Judy in the dark, but it’s nothing a stiff drink won’t sort out.

I’ll put it another way. Those of you that know me will also know that I’m not exactly God’s gift to orienteering and am prone to getting into the odd navigational fuddle even in perfect daytime visibility (it’s ok, you can put the violins away – I have learnt to live with this fact and continue to enjoy the sport!). Yet I really enjoyed the last QOAD, and went home with a smile on my face. If I can do it, so can you...

So what is a QOAD? It's a score event with controls of varying difficulty. The harder controls have a higher point value, but like all score events each person chooses the route and controls they are comfortable with. And here's the secret — you can actually do pretty well just by sticking to relatively 'straightforward' controls near paths or prominent line features. As an added twist controls are generally split into 'red' and 'blue' – you can start on either colour, but once you switch to the other colour you can't switch back. That adds a tactical element that you can use to your advantage.

Let's take the recent event at Orchard Portman for example. There were 20 controls in total, and all but two were within 50m of a path or track. From my own observations and those of fellow competitors I reckon that around 5 controls were of a harder standard (all in the southern part of the map), so let's rule them out. That leaves 15 controls, with a combined value of 320 points. If you'd successfully got round those 15 controls within the hour limit you would have found yourself in a very respectable 5th place. Of course you still have to plan a good route and physically get round to them all, but the points were there for the taking.

And there we have it – you really don't need to be superhuman to do OK at a QOAD. In fact (and whisper this quietly) it's not unknown for one or two of the more experienced and successful orienteers to come a bit of a cropper at a QOAD as their competitive nature sees them trying to bag all the controls within the hour (there's heavy penalties if you go over the time limit).

If you're coming round to the idea of a night event but still aren't 100% convinced then why not have a chat with any of the regular QOAD participants for advice (take a look at the results on the QO website). There's also an urban night event in Bridgwater on 2nd January with registration in the Coffee 1 café – how civilised is that?! On that note I'll wish you a good night (-O).

—*Adrian Edwards*

JOG Fixtures

There are three JOG events left this term:

Sat 21st Nov

Taunton town centre (Goodlands Gardens)
2-3pm

Sat 28th Nov

Huish Woods (ST 283218)
2-3pm

Sun 13th Dec

Ham Hill Country Park (ST 479164) (QOFL event)
11am-1pm

For more information on Junior Orienteering Group call 01823 323850.

JOG would like to thank Somerset Community Foundation for their grant towards some new equipment



Fixtures

Senior Club Events

14.11.15	QOAD 2	Castle Neroche	ST261190
21.11.15	SWOA Centenary Event	Goodlands Gardens, Taunton	ST226246
13.12.15	QOFL 2	Ham Hill	ST477167
01.01.16	QOFL 3	Wind Down	ST221343
02.01.16	QOAD 3	Bridgwater (Urban event)	ST299370
31.01.16	QOFL 4	Buckland Wood	ST182171
28.02.16	QO Galoppen	St Audries	ST117411
19.03.16	Urban Event	Bridgwater	
17.04.16	QOFL 5	Culm Davy	ST123165
15.05.16	QOFL 6	Castle Neroche	ST277161

The Forest League (QOFL) is our series of regular events with colour coded courses, White to Blue to suit all abilities. Start times 11am to 1pm. Costs: Senior £8 (£5 BOF members), Junior £2, Families £12, Dibber Hire £1.

**PLEASE CHECK DETAILS BEFORE TRAVELLING:
www.quantockorienteers.co.uk**



Editorial deadline for edition 165 will be 20th January. Please send all copy to Gavin Clegg (gavin.clegg@outlook.com)