

The QuOnicle



The Newsletter of Quantock Orienteers

No. 126 July 2009

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

Quantock Orienteers Committee

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	Brian Fletcher	Youth
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	Tony Milroy	QOFL
	Mike Crockett	Quonicle
	Judy Craddock	Membership
	Nathan Fernandes	Webmaster

Editorial

Rather a mixed bag this month, I'm afraid. I make no apologies for including two articles about the same event, both from outside the club. When people bother to write and send me articles then I do my best to include them. I am very grateful for their contributions.

I am not too happy with the current fixtures situation as regards to dogs. I subscribe to the magazine Compass Sport and use their fixture list quite often. The current edition has "No Dogs" for the majority of the events. However when one looks at the British Orienteering fixtures

website this is not the case. The Devon Relays is one event in particular to which this applies. I know we dog owners are a minority but this thorny problem crops up time and time again

Margaret and I went to the Half Iron Man Triathlon at Wimbleball recently, and took Toby, our dog. What a day! Up at 4.30 to get into the parking area before they closed the roads, only for the start to be delayed several times due to fog on the lake eventually getting away at 7.15 am, one and a quarter hours late. 960 competitors entered the water for the 1.2 mile swim followed by 56 miles cycle with some quite (for quite read very especially on the second lap) steep hills and then a half marathon on another tough undulating course. And you thought the Blackdowns or Quantocks were tough!

Of course I had a special interest in the event, Bev, my “little girl”, now nearing forty was competing, and what’s more, she completed in just over eight hours and smiling. The early start was worth it.

Please keep your articles coming

Edition 127 of Quonicle will be distributed on 19 th September
Copy to me by 12 th September please

Chairman’s Chat

Have you ever estimated how many hours of effort go into putting on an orienteering event? I had a go, I guessed that for a forest league event the planner would probably put in around 25 hours at home and out in the forest, the controller might spend about 15 hours, and organiser perhaps another 10 hours preparation and work on the day. Even if you set aside the original map preparation, there will be some time spent updating the map and preparing the marked up courses and control descriptions, say at least 15 hours. There is the time spent getting the permissions in place. Then on the day there are about 10 helpers and about 5 control collectors all putting in an hour or so each. That comes to about 80 hours of work. Even if you disagree with my figures, it is clear that a lot of time and effort is put into preparation and organising, and this limits the number of events we can put on as a club.

I have been wondering if there are other alternatives to this. Would it be better to have a larger number of less heavily prepared events? It would lead to more frequent activity, and possibly foster more of a club spirit. If the sport became more local it might actually reduce the amount of travelling. We might have to look for new places such as urban areas to do events in so as not to over-use the limited number of forests we have access to. But the biggest problem might be how to reduce the amount of preparation without a reduction in quality. Looking at where the bulk of the time is spent, perhaps one way forward would be to re-use old courses so as to reduce the planning and controlling time. After all, could you remember a course you ran several years ago?

Email bulletins

Those of you for whom we have email addresses will have had a number of recent messages from me, covering first aid and JOG events for example. Did you get these or have you missed out? If you want to get these then send an email to me at richard.sansbury@btinternet.com and I'll put you on the list. Alternatively if you would rather not get messages let me know.

News of People

We are sorry to hear that Dave Holmes has been in hospital for some weeks. Dave is back on his feet now but not yet back home so it will be sometime before he is dashing through the forest again. We send you our best wishes, Dave, for a return to good health.

Jan and the family have asked me to express their sincere thanks for all the help and messages that have been given at this difficult time.

Ian Bartlett is shortly embarking on a Lands End to John O'Groats cycle ride to raise money for the revamp of his school playground.

Nick Fernandes is taking part in a 100 km walk in aid of the Gurkha Foundation and Oxfam.

Club News

Welcome to new members



The Dunn family of Fiddington Rebecca, Keiran M12, Morganne W12,

They, together with Stephen and Darcie W10, have joined us as a result of the JOG initiative

Items discussed at the May committee meeting

JK 2010 - request for volunteers by SWOA

Club Funds healthy with injection of cash from AfA grant

Awards for All progress Report

SI chosen as new EP system for club.

Next committee meeting 27th July

British Orienteering SW Regional Development Conference -

will be held at The Holiday Inn, Taunton, Somerset, on the 28th November.

Cost £10 per person including refreshments and lunch.

More information and booking forms will be available in September. Please email me to register your interest in receiving further information.

Celia Watkinson

SW Regional Development Officer

Email: celia@britishorienteering.org.uk

UKCC Level 1 Certificate in Coaching Orienteering 17/18 and 24 October 2009

Venue: Kingston Maurwood College, Dorchester,

Cost: £200 (note grants may be available for BOF members)

Course information : Information pack and application form on the British Orienteering website www.britishorienteering.org.uk. Click onto developing orienteering and then coaching.

Tutor: John Tilsley

Contact for information: vicky@britishorienteering.org.uk

QOFL Final Results

Leading points scorers at the end of 2008/2009 season

The Points totals are the best four and the number in brackets is the number of events that each person has run.

Full results of the Elite and Handicap league can be viewed on the QO website. www.quantockorienteers.co.uk

		Elite		Handicap	
Blue	1	R.Sansbury	M35 3756(4)	C.Philip	3918(5)
	2	C.Philip	M55 3707(5)	B.Pearson	3473(6)
	3	B.Pearson	M45 3635(6)	R.Sansbury	3400(4)
Green	1	K. Bolling	M45 3712(4)	M.Crockett m70	4000(5)
	2	M Atkins	M35 3421(5)	H.Kelsey w50	3409(4)
	3	J. Trayler	M65 3192(6)	J Trayler	3208(6)
L.G	1	R.Green	M45 4000(5)	R.Green	3351(5)
	2	G. Pearson	M45 3490(5)	M.Kite w60	3142(4)
	3	M.Maynard	M40 3219(4)	N.Harvey m65	2928(6)
Orange	1	E.Pearson	W12 3169(5)	E.Pearson	3256(4)
	2	J. Wood	W40 3000(3)	E.Green w45	3028(4)
	2	S.Maynard	W35 3000(3)	J. Wood	3000(3)
Yellow	1	K. Thakur	M10 4000(4)	K.Thakur	4000(4)
	2	T.Hollingsworth	M9 3222(4)	T..Hollingsworth	3222(4)
	3	J.Green	M9 2427(4)	J.Green	2429(4)
White	1	A.Hollingsworth	M7 3802(5)	A.Hollingsworth	3518(5)
	2	M.Pearson	M8 2413(3)	F.Craddock	2585(4)
	3	F.Craddock	W4 2392(4)	S.Horsler w10	2518(3)

The relay season is well under way and this is just a quick update as to how your club has been getting on.

The opening race was at Culpepper's Dish on the northern side of the area. A team of four tackled the green, light green and orange courses, the latter two having to be run by all four team members, making the light green critical.

Brian Pearson and Richard Sansbury had the dubious pleasure of running all 3 courses in an area that had a few tricky bits to negotiate. Wessex, clearly had a very strong team and came through first with QO a not too distant second.

So onto the second fixture of the series which was held at Lydiard Park in Swindon; quite a hefty trip for Brian Pearson and myself. Just a duo this time with each of us running 3 legs of what were supposed to be a yellow, an orange and a light green course but all 3 were pretty much the same length and didn't really vary in difficulty. The area is a flat one so running was going to be fast and furious in quite warm conditions. A nastily hidden control in a large clump of nettles got us off to a slower start than we wanted and with Wessex and North Wilts in strong representation, we finished in 4th.

The most recent event was the Adams Avery Relay at Bath Uni. The courses ran adjacent to the golf course in a craggy and sometimes very overgrown strip. With all the teams starting together again, there was a very competitive approach to the initial leg. Your representatives on this occasion were: Jim Mallinson, Brian Pearson and myself, although not necessarily in that order. Jim & Brian ran light green and I did green which was basically the same with an extra loop attached. We moved up through the field of 15 or so teams to finish in 2nd (Wessex inevitably winning again) so there is an element of consistency in our results now.

There are 2 more relays as I write, although this will be 1 as you read (unless you're a very slow reader, in which case the series will be all over, done and dusted!). Devon are holding theirs on Dartmoor the day after the Club Champs and the Furrow Hoppers relay brings the whole extravaganza to a conclusion.

We may not be able to retain the trophy this year but the idea of running courses of a different level from what we'd normally run and seeing new areas has certainly been a rewarding one and remember – the relays are open to anyone who wants to have a go, so just contact your club captain if you want to get involved.

Events

It seems a long time ago now but the QOFL season finished with a good turn out at Staple Hill. We had visitors from other clubs and have received reports from two I make no apologies for publishing both. Peter's gives an insight of how his mind is working during the race.

Staple Hill

Tony Noot BOK

I would like the reader to understand that despite my pedigree and the size of my trophy cabinet, I am nowadays finding that having turned fifty a little while ago, the Green course is about my limit. Well, that's a bit of a generalisation and possibly excludes the QOFL events.

The areas used by Quantock Orienteers are, in my experience over many years, places you don't mess about with. You go there knowing that you will return home shredded or sore or both. You will vow to think very seriously about re-visiting those areas of great natural beauty for orienteering purposes because beneath the surface lie evil demons which impede thinking processes and turn Bill Vigar's wonderful maps into tangled jungles.

What nonsense you'll say. This man has been on the bottle. Well, I confess to liking a drop of something to fortify the over fifties, but I was determined not to bottle out at Staple Hill. Even so, I took just under 100 minutes for the 4.2 Km Green course and expected to come about last. So, the results came as a surprise when I finished up 10th out of 24 starters.

The weather was first rate, my chauffeur Trevor Griffiths good company and the reception by the Controller and Organiser

overwhelming. I made my way to the start full of good cheer and optimism, and sinking into 9 inches of slurry on the way barely dented my enthusiasm. The views took my attention just as my start time arrived and confusion nearly sent me ninety degrees off course by following the previous starter.

Experience, some 30 years of it, kicked in and persuaded me to look at the map and do some planning. Controls 1 and 2 were easy enough, but why was the code for 3 the same as that of 4? More experience told me that maybe I had got to 4 before 3. This is not one of my usual failings and anger bubbled up to the extent that my time back to 4 (a somewhat familiar route, you will realise) was exactly the same as the overall Green course winner. I feel smug about that, except that Bill V, the leg winner, was 20% faster than me. Mmm!

Numbers 5 and 6 were OK, but the tussocks approaching 7 were ankle rollers, so I went carefully. I enjoyed the route to 8, hitting all the markers that I expected to see. I attacked 9 in the classic way by hitting the stream early and then down to the control.

Now at 10, I had my first real trouble, missing the control from my vegetation corner attack point a mere 80 metres away and finding no 'white' forest until I hit the open. Some map revision necessary here I thought as I hacked my way south through the semi-open, back into the forest and straight into the depression. At this point I again did something unusual for me. I looked at my watch and then at the rest of my course. Wow, 50 minutes gone and 5 controls to go. I knew I was in trouble.

It was during the last 200 metres to go on number 12 that I renamed the QO series The Jungle League. Without the fence that I had encountered on my way to 8, I would have had even more problems. Even so, 12 plus minutes is a long time. So was the over 9 minutes to 13, shown as a hide in pristine 'white' forest, but in reality buried in thigh high brashings. Lack of care with my compass put me in the middle of the small patch of green on the way to 14 before seeing the man-made boulder which sorted me out.

I'm unsure whether to claim lack of care or bad route choice for the excessive time I spent on number 16. Number 15 had been easy to find though precipitous to reach, and then I made my biggest mistake of the day. With barely a glance at the map, I decided to continue the descent and approach 16 from below. It seemed to be a 50:50 choice of climbing immediately or later and I opted for the latter. This turned out to be a *very* bad decision, for the 'yellow' below 16 should have been the darkest of greens in Bill's computer colour spectrum. The brashings, comprising huge branches and tree trunks were 10 feet deep in places and I felt I was on an ultra-physical commando course. Mmm again. And then the home run, or in my case home stagger, for 100 minutes was approaching fast.

Later, on reflection and after two cups of coffee and a prawn sandwich, I felt most satisfied with my day out. Yes, the course was tough – look at the range of times – but it was a physical and navigational challenge throughout, which is what I always look for in orienteering.

So thank you QO, I *will* come again. But make sure the weather is good and the officials are still friendly when I first roll up at the car park, and again at the finish when I arrive demanding the heads of the planner and controller on a platter.

Staple Hill QOFL Event 10 May 2009

A Perspective From The Outside -

Peter Chapman (SO)

I regularly orienteer as a member of my local club, Southdowns Orienteers (SO) in Sussex, but am always keen to see how other orienteering clubs approach staging events. A trip away to visit family in Devon meant that I was unable to enjoy the bluebells of Cowdray Forest (the SO local event that weekend), but did get the chance to try the QO experience Staple Hill instead.

Although Quantock Orienteers are a long standing orienteering club, and I've been orienteering for nearly 30 years, this was my first ever

QO event. QO appear to have a loyal local following and stage a series of monthly local events similar to our SO Galloping events. These are called Quantock Orienteers Forest League Events and offer a range of colour coded courses. Many QO members are satisfied enough with the QOFL (and other local) events not to venture far off their own patch – similar to a significant proportion of SO members.

We arrived towards the end of the start window and found a relaxed, but efficiently organised registration area based on a small tent in a Forestry Commission car park. A friendly lady in the tent was busy advising some novices when I turned up to register and, when it was my turn, briefed me on the use of QO's electronic punching system.

In SO, we are very familiar with the Sport-Ident (SI) equipment that we have used as a matter of course for nearly all of our events for several years now. Many SO members have also used EMIT (the main competing system to SI) at other club events (e.g. Southampton OC and other South central club events or the regular Army events). QO (uniquely in mainstream orienteering?) currently use a third system developed by Joe Lee Computing. The ergonomics were not quite as good as SI or EMIT, but good enough and the forest units appeared very compact to me. All in all, for a very old system, I was pleasantly surprised by how well it worked. I note from the on-line QO news letter that there is now the intention to move on to one of the more main stream electronic punching systems (either SI or EMIT) and funding to do this has been secured off the back of a £8k+ "Awards-for-All" lottery grant for a summer series of street events in Taunton – Well done and good luck QO!

I chose to run the blue course (longest available) and was issued with my Joe Lee dibber from a computing camper van on my way to the start. The start was several hundred meters from registration and I was very close to the last advertised time, but the relaxed and friendly start official reassured me that there was no particular rush and gave me chance to catch my breath. He made a written note of my dibber No. and start time before setting me off. Course marked maps printed on

waterproof paper were issued after the punching start. After some stretching and a bit of time composing my concentration: I punched; picked up my map; and was off!

This was the first chance that I'd had to view the map and initial thoughts were to take care on my first leg: the terrain and the mapping style were both new to me. The course went immediately into some vague terrain with varying densities of visibility and undergrowth – this shouted at me to simplify the navigation as much as possible (even if it meant taking a longer route). I took the conservative long route and was rewarded with a fastest first leg – direct proof that often in orienteering you have to slow down to progress more quickly! During the first leg I started to get some idea of how the mapper had interpreted and represented the terrain (e.g. some obvious visible fences seemed to be omitted; the green was not usually too bad to get through, but the white was on the rough side).

I had completed about a third of the course before I realised that the map was 1:7500 rather than 1:10000 – my speed across the ground was significantly slowed due to the physicality! I progressed round the course and made a fairly average number of errors – sometimes down to mis-interpreting the map, sometimes because of bad luck, but usually because of navigational carelessness! There was easily enough interest on the course to keep me motivated in spite of the rough terrain and many small blunders. At one stage a young girl on one of the other courses asked me where she was. I spent a little time describing where I thought we were, before continuing on and realising that I'd actually been wrong – I hope that she found her way out in the end!

The area may've been a bit on the rough and tough side, but the reward was a very interesting combination of landforms and vegetation – some of it rather reminiscent of the typically rough White Rose terrain of the North Yorks Moors woodland. The views to the north that the area offered were also spectacular – not surprising really since Staple Hill (315m) is the highest point of the range of hills and the course went over the summit.

The course was well planned, with a good variety of leg lengths and some interesting route choices. The start at the bottom of a steep escarpment meant that there was an inevitable steep leg towards the end to get the courses back to the top (where the finish and parking were). The final couple of legs along the edge of the escarpment were less technical, but did give the opportunity to enjoy the views – nice touch! At the finish, an official noted the same details as the start official had (a manual back-up to confirm who had left the competition area). I lingered for a while with my wife and baby son (who had had a gentle perambulation along the escarpment to meet me at the finish), to catch my breath and enjoy the view before returning to download and the car.

I was pleasantly surprised to see that my finish time (62 minutes 25 seconds for 5.5km 255m climb) was good enough to leave me leading the course. 11 min/km leading speed is a good indication of the physical nature of the terrain!

All in all, it was a thoroughly worthwhile experience taking part in the QO event. The QO organisation team came across as very competent, enthusiastic and friendly and the technical standard of the course and map was good. It was also a great way to break a long journey home and enjoy a part of the country that I had previously not even known to exist. The power of the internet was how I found out about this event – initially through the British Orienteering fixtures pages and then with a bit of digging around the various relevant club websites. It wasn't really that difficult at all. I'm yet to find an open orienteering event (pretty much anywhere in the world!) that does not welcome newcomers (even itinerant ones like I was!). If you fancy a little bit of the familiar with a twist, then I suggest you give it a go – a bit of web surfing can lead you to a very satisfying orienteering experience.

NB1. My own club runs a series of similar events on Saturday mornings – If you're in Sussex on a relevant weekend, then you'd be welcome to participate – details at www.southdowns-orienteers.org.uk.

NB2. If you want advance intelligence of the typical SO terrain, have a word with your club captain: Ian Bartlett is an ex-Southdowner!

No cock-ups! - The Wessex Hardy relays

Richard Sansbury

The grandly named Wessex Hardy relay was the first of this year's southwest relay series. Last year it had been the last, and the scene of a famous victory for QO in which we secured the relay trophy for 2008 by beating our rivals at NGOC in a head to head competition. That day it had been a bit chaotic - having stressed the importance of completing the course successfully and keeping to the agreed plan, we promptly made a complete Horlicks of the whole thing by losing dibbers, doing runs out of sequence, and generally forgetting the plan. Our victory was only due to the fact that NGOC made more of a botch of their courses than we did.

This year we would ensure a strong start to the summer campaign by avoiding all errors, hence the team motto "no cock-ups!"

At this stage let me explain the format. The relay requires a team of four. There are three courses - orange, light green and green - but only one map of each. All four in the team need to do the orange and light green and two do the green, making 10 runs in total, all of which need to be completed correctly. It sounds complicated, but if you have the right plan all should go well.

So our team of Brian Pearson, Mike Crockett, Ian Bartlett and myself all met up in good time for our handicap start and decided on the plan. The key was to always have someone running the light green course and fit the other runs around it. On the start line we repeated our "no cock-ups" mantra, then as we started I promptly cocked it up. Charging off confidently towards my first control I had not actually punched the start. Fortunately, howls of protest came from my teammates and I made a sheepish return to the start to complete the proper procedure.

After that things went pretty well. Amazingly we managed to stick to the plan. There were the usual difficulties of hard to find controls and I think we all felt the light green was actually harder than the green. Mike finished our final light green course and we breathed a sign of relief to hear that all our courses had been run correctly. Although we were not prize winners on this occasion, we came in a respectable second place to a very strong Wessex team.



The QO team after the Wessex Hardy Relays

The Bill Vigar 2X2

Mike Crockett

This event with a revised format to reduce the overall time scale saw 13 teams assembled at Buckland Wood. However before the start we were treated to a health and Safety Briefing by Bill. The problem is that the Blackdown Hills are now being returned to their original state and this involves the use of Longhorn Cattle to graze the vegetation. They do graze well but in so doing leave rather a lot of uneven ground or deep mud to slow down progress. Part of some of the courses went through an enclosure which housed some of these cattle. They look fierce but are actually quite docile. Bill thought an introduction to them was necessary.

The courses were tough as one would expect for anywhere in that neck of the woods, and times were well outside the expected 30 mins. However most seemed to enjoy it.

The winners were Graham Hartley and son Callum, with Sue and Roger Hateley of Devon in second place.

JOG Notebook Summer 2009

Starting with the QOFL on the 10th May JOG/SOG have met each Saturday between 2.00-3.00pm at different venues in and around Taunton, finishing with an event at Broomfield Hill on 4th July.

We found that the pattern of attendance changed during the summer months with several of our previously 'regular' families opting for other activities on Saturday afternoons. However we have had 14 new families coming and these, together with regulars who have continued to come, have made the events worth staging. We've usually had about 14-22 children and between 5-9 adults running.

Following the Norton Camp Orienteering Festival (coordinated by Brian Fletcher) we were able to give information about JOG to children who had enjoyed the activities. We have had 3 families (8 children) who have come to events as a result.

17 adults have used the events for their training, 11 QO members and 6 other interested people. As the term has progressed we have tried to offer specific training opportunities and these culminated in 'map memory' and 'compass-bearing' exercises planned by Nick Fernandes at Broomfield Hill on July 4th. Reports of these are included in this QOFL.

I should like to say how grateful we are to both Bill Vigar and Dave Holmes for their expertise and for generously giving their time to update, produce and print the maps. Both have made improvements to the map format, suggested possible areas which we might use in future and given other useful guidance. As we become more experienced we will commit to giving them more time to produce their maps!

If you haven't been to one of our events try one next term, we'll be starting on Saturday September 19th and further information will be on the website.

Judy Craddock

Jeff Pakes view of Broomfield

Outside of competitive action, opportunities to practice orienteering seem to be too few. Enticed by the rare prospect of a “map memory” test and “bearings” exercise, I ascended the Quantocks to a sweltering Broomhill for the last session of the JOG/SOG summer season, planned by fellow JOG coach Nick Fernandes.

“On the bearing-only course I might give the participants the distance as well, depending on how cruel I’m feeling,” a Nasty Nick had reported to the organiser, Judy - my appetite had been suitably whetted.

The action did not disappoint. Appropriately, map memory means running without a map and only receiving a map excerpt at each control, just sufficient to enable navigation to the next control (and the next map). With legs averaging a few hundred metres each, the threat of retracing steps focussed the mind, as did the element of competition provided by two other seniors (Chris Phillip and Mike Crockett) in close proximity.

After some fairly straightforward legs, a couple of controls sited within tricky patch of bushes and tree clusters seemed to throw most participants. One of our most senior members later mused that he had no problems with the map, only his own memory!

On the bearings course, Nick *did* give us distances to work with– but only where it would otherwise have led to ploughing through six foot high bracken or risking overshooting a knoll (small mound) and into an endless valley. Nasty? No, I felt he gave us just enough rope to work with; providing a bearing e.g. “312 degrees” enabled fine navigation to each control across the fields of the National Trust area. Not too fine, mind you, unless you wanted to directly encounter the magnificent though formidable-looking, long-haired, long-horned cows grazing there.

It was felt afterwards that this session would be a good blueprint for the autumn term's sessions. The small wood adjacent to the car parking and meeting area, with its natural boundaries and intricate path network, served as an ideal place to let loose juniors of limited experience. The network of long rides amidst the gorse and undergrowth provided intermediates with a physical challenge and seniors experienced sufficient complexity in the outlying areas.

We have now taken further steps towards a successful and sustainable format. With Judy and Roger taking on the burden of the organising and reception duties this term, there is now more time for the planners to make the activities more enjoyable and varied. See you all again in the autumn.

JOG event at Broomfield Hill - Saturday 4 July 2009 Chris Philip

This was actually a SNORE event - Sneaky Nick's Orienteering and Routefinding Exercise

This event came in two parts - Map Memory and/or Compass and Bearing. Well I do need training in both these areas - after all orienteering exercises are the best form of training for orienteering. Orienteering is a technical sport and so we need to keep our skills active and sharp. Nick Fernandes (the planner) identified the most appropriate exercises for the area and got it right on both counts. I chose to run his Map Memory course first. The area is not too complex, open fields (with Highland Cattle), path networks and some wood (mapped by Dave Holmes at 1:5000), this was my first visit. I was off to a steady start running in the right direction, but as usual did not think about the course before starting. If I had done I would have made sure that I had noted the distance and taken a safety bearing on the small section of map before leaving it, even after committing what I considered the important elements of the route to my very short term memory, it is still worth having a bearing from the final attack point as an added safety margin. Last week at Kings Cliff I forgot my compass. This week I didn't use it. - pathetic! Anyway, I had no problems with the early part of the

course but nearly came unstuck in the more complicated part. When I was heading for where I thought a control was and the ground didn't match my snapshot of what I was trying to remember, I checked my compass (no safety bearing taken) and realised I was heading SW and downhill. It was then I remembered Jeff muttering due south as he left the control and so quickly adjusted my direction and picked up the features I had remembered. I should have used the training to make sure I knew the distance from one control to the next and had a bearing to fall back on. It's a good job the area wasn't more complicated as I would probably still be there.

Next came the Compass and Bearing event. Well this is a first for me and I should have given it far more preparation and respect than I did. I picked up a blank map and a sheet of numbers off Nick - bearing, distance and control code was all it gave - so it had to be enough!!!! So now to think about techniques and plan my strategy. Wrong, I picked up my control card, wrote down the time and I was off. Well not quite off but thinking hmmm, now what do I do. Bearing 35, distance 270, control code 24. I have no protractor, no dividers or distance measuring device and no writing device, oh great - how hard can it be? Hard!!! So using guesstimated angles and distances I decided where 24 would be so off I trot. Well it wasn't there so another quick look - oh yes must be just a few more meters E. Not there either (there are lots of possible control sites in this area, remember I have no control description), OK must be the very next junction - spot on and not too much time wasted. Same for the next two. Not feeling good about it - after all I could have sat down at the start and just plotted them onto the map and run the course as a normal course - I'm sure that is not what was intended but it would work. So number 4, hang on all I have is a bearing, the distance value is empty, could this be a rogue printing or has 'sneaky Nick' done this on purpose? The next few are in the open and he has left off the distance on purpose, so 24 degrees and must be the thicket about 200m away as any further and I would be off the map. Got it. Now 256 degrees and no distance - looks like it is probably the trig point. Oh no it's not, curses! Now what? Probably the trough just over there, nope. Maybe the stile - all these things are

roughly 256 degrees from where I started - give or take about 20 degrees unfortunately. If you draw a straight line at 256 it actually goes through several possible control sites, how far do I have to go. Well I visited many and realised I had gone too far, but I had nearly reached the other end of the map by now. So back to the trig point and rethink. My thumb compass is not the ideal tool for measuring angles, but must try harder. Using the side of the control card and the compass I realise that 256 degrees clips the thicket just 70 metres away and there she blows. It would have been the first item on the bearing - only covered 8 times the distance I needed to. OK more respect for angles from now on. When Nick says an angle he does not mean give or take 20 degrees! The last few now go really well, accuracy is the name of the game - although I did get a lot of exercise for my money and hopefully have learnt some new skills. Especially, improvisation, preparation and strategy.

Thanks to 'Sneaky Nick' for the mental and physical exercises and particular thanks to Judy and Roger for the excellent training events that I wish I had been able to get to more of.

Cattle

Cattle appear to feature quite prominently in QO events of late.

The fences Peter encountered at Staple Hill are there to contain the Long Horns' shown here in this photograph taken by Bill Vigar



At Orchard Portman, Andrew Appleby decided to venture off the junior course and tackle one of the senior controls only to come face to face with one of the resident beasts. He retreated quickly .We all have our excuses for mispunching but that one ... Well!

Jeff Pakes met up with some bullocks at Fyne Court whilst putting out controls and had to beat a hasty retreat. I have tried to explain the best way of dealing with the situation is to stand your ground and stare them out. I don't think Jeff believes me but he now calls me "Country Boy". So he might just believe me but is not inclined to put it to the test.

Humour

A couple of items that Bill came across

Firstly from an interview with a British runner who fancied doing European Mountain running, he went to live in Europe, funding himself by winning races. He summed up his method thus:

"Instead of measuring those calories, poring through how-to magazines and shoe-buyers guides, worrying about the weather forecast; instead of downloading streams of heart-rate data; rather than logging-on to a website forum and talking about yourself for hours - you could have been training!"

The second is from a piece about an M73 fell runner, who had just lowered a record for the V70 class. A year or so ago he had not been feeling quite himself so went to see his doctor. To summarise, he was told he had an 80% blockage in a major artery in his heart and would not be running again. He has stent inserted and as part of his remedial treatment, went to see a rehab nurse. She earnestly inquired, "Do you do any walking?", to which he replied, with equal earnesty "Only when the slope is too steep to run up".

Fixtures (page 24)

Please note

1. We hope to arrange a sixth QOFL in due course
2. Any of the fixtures could be subject to change or cancellation, you are advised to check with the website or phone the organiser before travelling
3. South West and nearby fixtures can be accessed from the SWOA website.

Taunton Sprint-O series



Orienteering in the parks and streets of Taunton

The "Award for All" project is now ready to go! We are going to hold a series of five special events in Taunton itself plus a sixth "transition" event to bridge the gap between orienteering in the streets and in the forests.

- | | | |
|---|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Sat Sept 12th | Vivary Park |
| 2 | Sat Sept 19th | Blackbrook Pavillion Sports centre |
| 3 | Sat Sept 26th | Castle School, Wellington Road |
| 4 | Sat Oct 3rd | Taunton Park, Cheddon Road |
| 5 | Sat Oct 10th | College Way, Comeytrowe |
| 6 | Sat Oct 17th | Orchard Portman |

All events take place from 1pm to 3pm and will be completely free of charge, although at some venues those coming by car will need to pay for parking.

We will have a selection of courses to suit all ages and abilities. For families with young children we will have a course within a "safe" area i.e. not crossing any roads and staying relatively close to the event centre. For adults we will have controls attached to road signs and fences along the surrounding streets and we will be using five new street maps currently in preparation.



LOTTERY FUNDED



This project has been paid for partly out of club funds but mostly with a £8300 Award for All grant from Sport England. This money has come from the national lottery as part of the government's strategy to encourage more participation in sport.

The series will feature our new Sportident (SI) kit. This state of the art electronic punching system has been paid for by the project, and afterwards will be QO's to keep. If you have been to other club's events you are probably already familiar with this system, and you may even have



your own dibber. The only difference you may notice is that for the urban environment our controls are likely to be fixed rather differently from forest controls to make sure they are tamper-proof.

When we heard about the success of our grant application in March I wrote an article in QuOnicle explaining why we had made the decision to launch this project. To summarise there are two objectives:

- to promote our sport - other clubs have found urban orienteering to be a highly successful way of bringing new people into the sport
- to be a means of funding the new SI system - we had found the Joe Lee system was causing difficulty for QO as it had a perception of being inferior to other electronic punching systems

We are now ready to launch the series to the public. We hope you are inspired about this venture and we'd be grateful for your support in order to make this a success.

Four ways you can support the project:

1. Training - the project funding allows an opportunity for club members to attend training courses that will help us reach out to the community. Specifically we have opportunities for:
 - first aid training - we hope to have a free one-day first aid course taking place in the Autumn
 - coaching training - the 3-day level 1 coaching course demands more time commitment but is also free and for anyone interested in coaching juniors this is a great way to start
2. Promotion - critical to the projects success we need you to:
 - distribute publicity - we will have postcard size flyers to give to people or larger posters which you could put up at work
 - spread the word - mention it to people you know
3. Helping - we need:
 - helpers to set up the flags and banners etc
 - people to be on hand to offer advice to newcomers
 - computer operators for our new SI kit
4. Participate - just come along and add to the atmosphere!

Contact me if you can help, or want to any more information about this project I look forward to hearing from you!

Richard Sansbury

Two wheels, two weeks and too late to back out!

Ian Bartlett (deputy head at Great Torrington Junior School) is attempting to cycle from Lands End to John O'Groats in July/August, setting out on Monday 20th (if it's not raining!). The journey will be around 1000 miles depending on how long the gps system keeps working and I'm hoping to complete the distance in 10 days but this will depend on rain, heat, number of pasties consumed, punctures and other factors.

What prompted this decision to do something so gruelling I hear you ask? Really just to be able to say I've done it. However, it will be a bit different from the 20 mile ride I sometimes undertake to school.

Having looked through different contributions on the internet, it's clear that there are a plethora of different route choices to choose from. Should I go east of the Pennines? Up the A30? Through Glasgow? Take a ferry to the Isle of Arran? As yet, I'm pretty open to revising my original route which was crystal clear through Cornwall and Devon, not too vague through Somerset and Gloucestershire but became hazier by the mile as I looked through the road atlas beyond Lancashire and when it comes to Scotland it might just as well be the land where the jumblies live!

Some people have amazingly asked if I intend to camp each night. No chance! If I'm able to cover 100 miles in a day, I'm going to make sure I get a slap up meal and a decent bed in a B & B.

I'm hoping to raise some money for the development of our playground as we don't have any funds currently available to improve this area. Any money raised will go towards the following projects:

- Shaded seating area large enough for a class to sit in and use in lessons, for children to be able to sit in at breaktimes and for parents to use when waiting for children at the end of the day (£1400)
- Playground markings to provide more interest for children at breaktimes (£)
- Set of pe mats for children who want to do street-dancing (£35 each)

If you'd like to sponsor me, you can send a cheque (made payable to Great Torrington Junior School) to me at 1 Pook's Cottage, Hayfield Rd, Exbourne, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 3RS. Any donations will be greatly appreciated.

Hopefully I'll be able to complete the journey and can fill you in on what happened in the next edition of The Qounicle (this should keep Mike happy too!) although if no major technological hiccoughs occur, I'm hoping to keep people updated with my progress on the school's website (just google Great Torrington Junior School).

Fixtures

05-9-09	Come& Try It	Ham Hill	ST 478 165	B. Fletcher 07796 156849
12-9-09	Taunton Sprint-O 1	Vivary Park	ST 228 240	R. Sansbury 01823 288405
13-9-09	QOFL	Cancelled		
19-9-09	Taunton Sprint-O 2	Blackbrook	ST 248 239	R. Sansbury 01823 288405
25-9-09	Come& Try It	Montacute	ST 498 170	B. Fletcher 07796 156849
26-9-09	Taunton Sprint-O 3	Castle School	ST 217 248	R. Sansbury 01823 288405
02-10-09	Come& Try It	Nine Springs	ST 554 154	B. Fletcher 07796 156849
03-10-09	Taunton Sprint-O 4	Taunton Park	ST 227 268	R. Sansbury 01823 288405
04-10-09	Long O	Simonsbath	SS 774 393	M Longhurst 0117 951 6145
10-10-09	Taunton Sprint-O 5	Comeytrowe	ST 215 236	R. Sansbury 01823 288405
17-10-09	Taunton Sprint-O 6	Orchard Portman	ST 261 190	R. Sansbury 01823 288405
25-10-09	Galoppen	Castle Neroche	ST 268 155	J. Pakes 01278 433687
30-10-09	Come& Try It	Ham Hill	ST 478 165	B Fletcher 07796 156849
08-11-09	QOFL 1	Cothelstone	ST 182 335	R. Cradock 01823 323850
06-11-09	QOFL 2	Broomfield Hill & Wind Down	ST 221 342	Ted Heath 01823 251985
TBA	Christmas	TBA		
17-1-10	Regional	Croydon Hill	SS 973 419	R. Sansbury 01823 288405
31-1-10	QOFL 3	Blackborough	ST 100 084	A Appleby 01404 861127
07-3-10	QOFL 4	W Quantockshead	ST 116 410	T Heath 01823 251985
11-4-10	QOFL 5	Kings Cliff	ST 270 320	R. Sansbury 01823 288405