



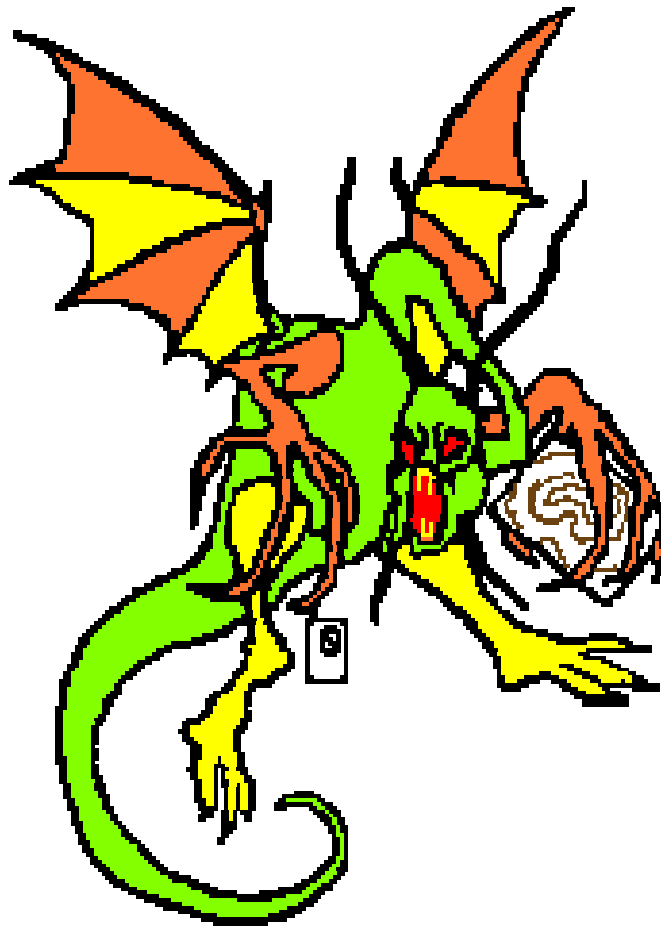
West Anglian
Orienteering
Club



JABBERWAOC

Vol.36 No. 4

September 2008



*And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burred as it came!*

Editorial

Hopefully everyone will have October 19th in their diaries. Not only is it my birthday, it is also the day of the CompassSport Cup Final in Sutton Park. I can't emphasise enough how important it is to get as many runners there as possible. Every runner has the potential to score, and it would be great to have a good showing in what is our first ever final. The club is investigating the possibility of laying on a coach to make travelling more cost effective and amenable. The cub captain will be in touch shortly to encourage entries and to give you more information on the event – keep your eyes on the WAOC website and your email inbox for further information. Even if you decide to travel separately, this is one occasion when I hope that everyone will make the effort – it promises to be a great day out.

Away from the CSC Final, there are some great training events coming up – suitable for all ages and abilities. My recent visit to France has taught me that you are never too old to improve, and has convinced me that good technique is even more important than basic fitness if you want to become a better orienteer. These activities involve a lot of organisation, so I hope the efforts of the team are suitably rewarded by a good turn out.

See you at Sutton Park!

Mike Capper

Grateful thanks to this month's contributors. Next Copy Date – November 7th

Great Britain wins World Championship gold

For those of you who did not follow this on the BOF website*, July 20th proved to be an historic day in British orienteering with the relay team winning a first ever World Championship men's gold medal. Well done to Graham Gristwood, Jon Duncan and Jamie Stevenson. Wouldn't it be great to see this happening in the Olympics?

* *Editor's note – Blanka Sengerova was one of the spectators and it sounds as if she had a great time. Read her report in the November Jabberwaoc.*

Chairman's Chat

This September edition of Jabberwaoc ushers in the main winter season of orienteering, with the club's first event being the Try-O at Therfield Heath on Sept 28th followed by the District event at Warden Warren on November 2nd. We look forward to seeing many WAOC colleagues at these and other O-events. Not many WAOC members seem to have strayed as far as Wales for the multiday Croeso 2008 – but congratulations to those who did, and especially to Thomas and Catherine Hemingway who ran well in M12A and M10B respectively.

Many thanks to those who kept WAOC orienteering alive during the summer, with the SMILE and Galloppen events – and particularly to those who have organised the various training events (for details see emails and back page of Jabberwaoc) in advance of the Club's first-ever appearance in the finals of the CompassSport Cup. The Committee is hoping to organise a coach, at subsidised fare, to take WAOC members to this event at Sutton Park near Sutton Coldfield on October 19th. Sufficient interest has been expressed for orders to have been placed for the new-design Club O-

top, and the new tops for the junior teams are confidently expected to arrive in time for the Peter Palmer Relays near Leeds on September 7th. Hopefully a good number of us will be wearing the new WAOC strip in the CompassSport Cup finals – though of course all members will be very welcome at this unique event, whatever dress-code they care to follow!

By the time this edition of Jabberwaoc reaches you, the Committee will have grappled, at its meeting on September 10th, with a number of important issues facing the Club. In particular, a decision needs to be taken on the subscription for 2009 and the availability of Jabberwaoc on paper as well as on line. The motion at the AGM, to the effect that those who want Jabberwaoc on paper should have to opt in specially for that (presumably at extra cost but with a reduced basic club subscription), was passed with no votes against – but the motion had not been advertised beforehand in the agenda (as an amendment to the Club’s constitution has to be). This motion may not strictly have been an amendment to the constitution, but it is very close to the heart of the Club’s activities – and it is known that not every member of the Committee agrees with it. So your Committee will have some hard thinking to do in the next few weeks – and it seems quite likely that some temporary compromise will emerge, for ratification (or otherwise) at the next AGM in March 2009. Still, hopefully these behind-the-scenes discussions on organisation will have no affect whatsoever on anyone’s enjoyment of orienteering, in all its various splendid forms, in the coming season!

Chris Morley

.....

Club News

Club communication via email

One of the best ways of keeping informed about current events, training and news is to subscribe to the WAOC email list. If you do this, you are guaranteed to be fully up to date on any important information.

Contact Bruce Marshall if you would like to be added to the list bmarshall@theiet.org

.....

The Committee

The list of current committee members and their contact details is available at www.waoc.org.uk

.....

WAOC Membership Information

Good luck to Bjorn Basberg, Torild Hage and their son Bard who have returned to Bergen after a year in East Anglia. We hope to see you again some time in the future.

Anne Duncumb (WAOC membership secretary)

.....

JOHN HIND 1969 – 2008 RIP

It is with great sadness that I report to members the death of John Hind. John died on the 19th May 2008 aged 39. He joined WAOC with me in the late 1980s and represented us at many events until the mid 1990s when his career took him to the City of London where he worked in the high pressure environment as a money broker.

John also partnered me in several mountain marathons mostly in the Lake District but also in Scotland and Ireland. We were usually the only representatives of our club, sometimes joined by the late Dave Wotton who I think was partnered by Clive Baker of NOR.

He was a fantastic friend to me and had a remarkable personality that endeared him to just about everyone he met.

John was not married but leaves a long term girlfriend Gislaine. If anyone would like to make a charitable donation in John's memory, his favourite causes included

The Army Cadets
The Royal British Legion
& Multiple Sclerosis research

His father also suffered from the latter for many years.

John Beadle

NEW WAOC O-TOPS



The first order has now been placed and a second will be sent in to Ultrasport as soon as a further 10 tops are requested.

Here are the details.

Cost £31.95 + £1.50 p& p (same price for all sizes and for long or short sleeves)

Sizes:

XXS	to fit 32 - 34" chest	L	to fit 40 - 42" chest
XS	to fit 34 - 36" chest	XL	to fit 42 - 44" chest
S	to fit 36 - 38" chest	XXL	to fit 44 - 46" chest

M to fit 38 - 40" chest

The new O-tops are available to order only. It is not planned to keep an assortment of sizes in stock. Delivery time is 4 weeks. Some sample tops (not in our design) are available at Anne Duncumb's house, if people wish to try them on for size (phone/email first).

If you wish to place an order, please send the following information to:

Anne Duncumb
5A Woollards Lane
Great Shelford
Cambridge CB22 5LZ

Size(s) and number(s) required, long or short sleeves, your name and address and a cheque made out to WAOC for £31.95 x number of tops ordered (+ £1.50 p & p, if required)

Anne Duncumb (WAOC membership secretary <memsec@waoc.org.uk>)

Congratulations



Many congratulations to Blanka Sengerova and Mark Collis on their recent engagement.

Improving your skills - BEARINGS

Since I qualified as an orienteering coach I have probably spent more time on bearings than on any other single skill so I have suggestions, nothing more, about taking bearings.

BEARINGS FOR BEGINNERS?

Most coaches develop White and Yellow skills in juniors without using a compass at all, because the most important skill needed at this stage is the ability to fold, set (orientate) and thumb the

map. Often parents like to give their children a compass at this stage. If a compass is to be of any use to the junior it should be held on the map to replace the thumb and can be used on White courses to keep the red end of the needle pointing to the top of the map to keep it set and on Yellow courses to check the direction of a path (which is a very useful skill that many of us could use more than we do!).

SETTING THE COMPASS

Some Orange courses can be run without a compass but they are much easier with one, and this is where I introduce compass use. This is probably the place to talk about the SILVA 1-2-3 system of compass use: this is the method I use to introduce compass use to beginners and indeed the one I use myself.

SILVA 1 – 2 – 3 SYSTEM

1. Place the edge of the compass along the line of travel.



2. Rotate the bezel until the lines on the bezel are lined up with the north lines on the map



3. Hold the compass and map in front of your belly button and rotate yourself until the N end of the compass needle is lined up with the N lines on the bezel.



Now the edge of the compass is pointing in the direction you need to go.

Why do I use the 1-2-3 method myself? Because even when all the oxygen has gone from my brain to my heart, lungs and legs (quite a frequent phenomenon these days) it still requires minimum thought and the compass remains set until I alter it again.

Why do I use it to teach bearings to beginners? Many people, including quite a lot of juniors, do not find compass use straightforward. For them it is useful to have a 1-2-3 rule as it is easily learnt. At first it needs to be reiterated but after a time it becomes second nature.

ROUGH COMPASS / COMPASS DIRECTIONS.

This is the skill which is needed on Orange courses and is of course used on more difficult ones. Once the compass is set, it is just a matter of running on it.

Hold the compass (and map) in front of the body and while you are running keep checking that the compass stays set, with the N end of the arrow lined up with the N end of the lines on the bezel. If you have to divert round an obstacle, return to your line of run and check your compass again.

Rough compass is used to

- a. Check the direction of a path at a junction or when you join it from terrain
- b. Set off from the start in the right direction (Orange and harder courses)
- c. Cut corners
- d. Cut through terrain between 2 line features
- e. Run short legs through terrain to a control on, or in front of, a line feature
- f. (Light Green) Navigate long legs on a rough compass bearing to a collecting feature
- g. Leave a control in the right direction (set it on the way in so you don't need to pause at the control)

ACCURATE COMPASS BEARINGS

Light Green (and Green, Blue and Brown) orienteers really need to learn to run on an accurate bearing. Once the compass is accurately set, hold the compass and map tightly into the belly button, check the north arrow and sight along the line of run (either the edge of the compass or the direction of run arrow). Pick out a distinctive object along this line and run towards it. As you get to it, re-check the N arrow on your compass, repeat the sighting onto another distinctive object and run again. Remember it is important to reduce the parallax by sighting with your compass held centrally – hence the belly button. It is not easy compromising between keeping your eye on the distinctive object and looking at the ground, but hey, where's the fun if everything is easy?

Accurate bearings are needed for

- a. fine orienteering on short legs (using one control as the attack point for the next and navigating from an attack point into a control)
- b. medium / long legs where the only attack point is indistinct / non-existent
- c. medium / long legs where there are no definitive 'tick-off' features on the way

WHICH COMPASS?

FOR JUNIORS

Traditionally, the compasses sold for juniors had short baseplates and full-sized bezels (these are still the compasses supplied to schools in orienteering packs). WAOC had a set of these and many of our juniors had great difficulty in holding them on the map with one hand and turning the bezel - particularly if it was a bit stiff - with the other. Because of this many families have bought thumb compasses for their juniors so they can hold them on the map, but most of them still have full-size bezels

Then a couple of years ago Dil Wetherill showed me a new compass that he had bought for Ben which has a small, narrow baseplate and a small bezel which is very easy to turn but in addition has a thumb loop to make it easy for a small hand to hold the compass on the map. This is the compass I used to illustrate the 1-2-3 system and you may realise that my hand is a bit big for it but it is ideal for juniors. I think it is a winner and ideal for rough compass skills for juniors. WAOC has a loan set for coaching / training sessions and also a stock to sell at £12.50. Contact me if you would like one.

LIGHT GREEN JUNIORS AND THE REST OF US.

Now there are various choices to make. First of all, baseplate or thumb? Then rotating or fixed bezel?

BASEPLATE COMPASS

Most of us start out using a baseplate compass. I did because I already had one which I used for walking and when I bought my first O compass I bought a baseplate. I started folding the map, held my baseplate on it and learnt to take bearings with it: I remember being really pleased that they were so accurate. I think it's a good way to start because this is the basic compass, making good compass habits easy to acquire – you can always abandon them later. I am convinced from my experience that its big advantage is the ease of setting and following an accurate bearing with it: presumably because it is longer than a thumb compass so both the setting of the bearing (particularly when it is not along a connection line) and the sighting along the line of travel is more accurate. I have also realised recently that it is also much better at pin-pointing one's position on a bending path or ride, again presumably because it can be set more accurately along the line of the path. Quite a lot of people who use baseplate compasses hold them in the opposite hand to their map – I've never tried this so I can't comment on it except to say that I don't imagine that they would readily switch to a thumb compass.

THUMB COMPASS

Many people graduate from a baseplate compass to a thumb: I did and really liked it. The thumb strap was a good way to hold the compass on the map and it was really fast to set. My O friend bought one at a similar time and did not care for it so gave me hers as she returned to a baseplate. Because I had had a baseplate with a rotating bezel I bought a thumb compass with one. A thumb compass is used in a somewhat different way from a baseplate compass: the idea is to run on rough bearing, ticking off features as you pass them to keep in touch with the map. I found that this worked well a lot of the time but I had difficulties when I had a long leg over fairly featureless terrain or a considerable distance to cover from the attack point and I had no luck at all with bearings at night. After borrowing a baseplate compass in Australia and having huge success with really tricky diagonal legs up and down hill with no catching feature beyond I have reverted to a baseplate and continue to be delighted with my bearings. I can actually use a baseplate and a thumb compass interchangeably now but for serious stuff I shall stick to my baseplate.

RUNNING ON THE NEEDLE

This is another way of using the compass, rather similar to the way that White runners use it. Instead of setting it by rotating the bezel, you just keep the red end of the needle pointing to the top of the map and keep the side of the compass along your line of travel. I am sure everyone runs on the needle from time to time – I certainly do – and it brings me to the last compass choice.

ROTATING OR FIXED BEZEL?

Everything I have described so far has assumed a rotating bezel but for nearly every compass, baseplate or thumb, with a rotating bezel there is a comparable one with a fixed bezel i.e. one that

cannot be rotated to set a bearing. In essence people who use these run on the needle all the time. It's a really quick method – none of the 1-2-3 - and one of the Silva fixed bezel thumb compasses now comes with differently coloured segments of the bezel to enable what Silva describes as easy direction retrieval.

WANT TO SEE THEM?

I shall bring a selection of compasses, including the WAOC junior compasses, to the WAOC training sessions. Both Ultrasport and Compass Point, the 2 orienteering traders, have good on-line shops with extensive displays of compasses: Compass Point's descriptions are particularly informative. Their prices are identical, I think.

WHAT TO BUY

For adults, whatever you feel most comfortable with. Maybe you can borrow one of a different type from a friend to try? Just one thing: believe me you'll be happier with your accurate bearings if you use a baseplate.. For young juniors, parents please don't give them your cast-off compass which maybe already has a bubble in the capsule or a capsule which does not rotate readily. Please give careful consideration to buying them a baseplate compass, ideally the WAOC junior compass, which combines the advantages of the baseplate and thumb compass and is adapted to small hands. (Once more, it is the compass in the photos and can be bought from WAOC for £12.50) If it must be a thumb compass then please let it have a rotating bezel. Part of the progression through the skills involves setting and following accurate bearings and this cannot really be accomplished with a fixed bezel.

Next time I'll write in more detail about the various skills that need a compass.

Ursula Oxburgh

British Orienteering Licensed Level 3 Coach

.....

THE WELSH 6 DAYS

Only 14 WAOCers went to the Welsh this year. I'm not sure why there were so few of us – those who went experienced a variety of above-average terrain and about average weather (one fairly wet day and one very wet one). The rest of you missed a really good multiday event.

Apart from our juniors, dealt with elsewhere by Blanka, our main successes were on W45, 50 and 55S and it was good that they and I (W70L) were all on the same course and could compare routes (though not splits in my case!). After Day 4 there was the customary club dinner which I unfortunately missed, as I had not found out where it was to be held. I gather that there was the traditional junior table which seems to have had the usual good time while keeping an eye on their parents.

Day 1

Merthyr Common. An amazing start to the week: this was a complex undulating limestone area with lots of large pits (over 5m across), mapped as pits, and very large pits (over 10m), mapped as depressions, so you knew when you encountered one but on the other hand you had to be on top of it to see the control flag. The planners warned us that they had planned up to TD5 and TD5* so accurate navigation was going to be the order of the day. I was fortunate that my bearings worked well so that I was able to pick up fairly small markers on my longish first leg and nailed my first control. It was easy to overshoot your control as the common was remarkably runnable, partly because of a fire a couple of years ago from which the heather and bilberry have not yet recovered. Most WAOCers were still finding their O feet: maybe because I had gone to the training day the day before I had my best day of the week while some W70s made substantial errors.

Day 2

The Blorenge. No such luck as a fire here to cut the heather and bilberry down to size and apparently the very wet summer has encouraged them to grow to new heights and the marshes to new depths but when I got in after a very slow slog (with a couple of bad route choices as well) there was Pam Hemingway, after a fairly early start, clutching the first results printout for W45S, on which she was 3rd, on the grounds that she could not possibly survive the day in that position so would need to treasure the printout. I don't know how many more printouts she collected but she need not have worried as she ended the day in 3rd position on 42 minutes with the 4th runner 6 minutes behind her - her best ever run by far and a Silver standard. Well done, Pam! Obviously Janet Cronk then got the bit between her teeth as she returned in 41 minutes and 2nd place on W50S, also a Silver standard. Noreen Ives, who travelled with friends from another club so had different start times, also came 3rd on this course but on W55S – another Silver. So a great day for WAOC's women.

Day 3

Pwll Du. This was my third visit to this area, first used in a previous Welsh 6 Days and last for the British Champs 2007. Previous open-cast mining activity plus spoil heaps has left large areas of great complexity. It seemed even rougher than I remembered (probably the wet summer again) and the map, certainly in the rain, not very readable in places despite +4.0 specs. It would be much more fun for oldies to have maps at 1:7,500 for areas like this which are so complex that they are mapped at 1:10,000. Maurice Hemingway, a relative stripling on M45S had his best run this day (9th out of 37) and Noreen came 3rd again.

Day 4

Wentwood. I have to admit to looking at the map fragment of this which looked like East Anglian forest on a slope and deciding not to drive the considerable distance back towards England, so not much information. This was the only day on which younger seniors got a 1:15,000 map so presumably I would have been able to read the 1:10,000 had I gone. Another 3rd for Noreen Ives was the best WAOC result here.

Day 5

Mynydd y Garn. This was the furthest West we went, nearly to Ydtradfellte, for those who know their Brecon Beacons. It was a brand new area, all rough open and with similar pits and depressions to Day 1 but with more relief and again with reasonable to good runnability (for me at any rate). I'm not sure that the planner made the most of this area (unlike on Day 1). Be that as it may, when I got in this time it was Janet Cronk monitoring the results board and waiting to see whether anyone would overtake her, as she was 1st on W50S. It was a lovely day so we sat around, ate our Wilf's in comfort and talked but in the end Jonny persuaded her to leave before the last starters were in. Despite the weather the next day I bet she checked before she went out and she was still 1st – another Silver standard and only 1 minute off a Gold time! What a triumph for someone who has never had any formal coaching, began her orienteering very tentatively on yellow courses, did her first orange course as a pair and has worked her way steadily through the badges to green. Well done, Janet!

Day 6

Clydach Terrace. Another brand new area, presumably old spoil heaps, with remarkably obscure travel details – so obscure that it was impossible for those not coming from the Event Centre to divine how best to get there as all we were told was that we might not turn left off the Heads of the Valley road. I found the co-ordinator, however, and she set me right. As I approached over the moor the rain was pelting down, the wind was blowing and the cloud was settling and rising again, and that was how it stayed. I sat in the car for some time then ventured forth to ask a returning woman what conditions were like out on the course. She said that it was very cold and windy at the start but she had warmed up and was very thankful for a hat and gloves. My gloves, a lovely thermal pair, were in my bum bag but I had left all my hats at home along with my long-sleeved thermal so off to UltraSport to buy a hat. They only had 2 left by then so I was lucky, particularly as

one was fluorescent yellow – not my choice as I have had enough problems over the years running in a very distinctive O top that also looks like a control.

Off to the start, with 2 layers, including the control top, under my thicker cagoule. When I arrived at the pre-start they were dressing the officials in thick plastic bags tied round their waists with string and at the start there was only one official who told us cheerfully that the other official had been taken off to hospital with hypothermia! Since she was now doing both the starting and the replacement of maps under the map boxes after each start I reckoned she should be OK! So what about the map, again at 1:10,000 for all? As a short, technical course we zigzagged in and out of an entirely open area with masses of contour detail. The brown of the contours contrasted very poorly with the brownish-yellow of the open (much browner and less yellow than the open on Day 1, where it mattered much less). In addition, the map was laser printed, by Print5 so as good as laser printing can be but on waterproof paper which is rougher than regular laser paper and so less clear. As I picked up my map I realised I was running on a yellow-brown splodge and in the rain. My only hope for control 1 was a bearing off the path. It worked fine – there was my control ahead of me: indeed throughout the course my bearings (up hill and down dale) did not let me down and it was really good fun: even the rough open bits were OK as though the going was pretty rough these were the only parts of the course where I could see the map. I ended up soaked to the skin but reasonably warm and with just one serious error. When I got home and could see the contours I had a lovely time finding lots of lovely routes between the controls, and I also understood why I had gone wrong on the one leg – I just did not realise where my re-entrant reached the road. How much more fun it would have been at 1:7,500!

I realise that Day 6 has been all about me: that's because there was not much opportunity to compare notes afterwards: it was not the conditions to hang around in and on Day 6 everyone (apart from the Hemingways who were waiting around for Catherine's prize giving) always heads for home as soon as they have eaten. I missed her on the day but I see that Frances Cooper had her best run on Day 6 – improving fairly steadily throughout the week. Maurice Hemingway said he had a brilliant run apart from control 12.

Overall, how did we do?
Pretty well with 3 top half places!
Noreen Ives, 4/17
Janet Cronk, 5/12
Pam Hemingway 9/18,
And, in a very competitive class, Maurice Hemingway 21/38

And finally, and to my great pleasure, I managed to drive up the exit mud slide (maybe a slight exaggeration) out of the Day 6 parking without needing a push, secure in the knowledge that Pam and Maurice H were following me up in case I needed one. A perfect end to a really good week – thanks, guys!

Ursula Oxburgh

Editor's note – you can see all the courses on Routegadget (www.routegadget.co.uk). This brilliant website allows you to enter your route for uploaded events – and a great many clubs are using this facility now, so it is a great way to look at things like route choice and to compare your routes with those of others.



Some ramblings on the French 6 days 2008



My head exploded at #10. I am somewhere on a hillside. I think I ran off the map about 5 minutes ago, but I'm not really sure. I am surrounded by bushes, boulders and hillocks, none of which I can find on the map. Nothing makes sense. It is very, very hot. I am very tired and I am totally lost....

That experience on Day 1 just about sums up my French 6 days which were held near Millau in southern France in early August. And what a week it turned out to be. Canoeing. Jumping off big rocks into rivers and lakes. Bungee jumping. Drinking and eating. Oh and there was some

orienteeering as well.

Everything had begun so well.... Our 'luxury' gite turned out to be far from luxury and worse still its location (I didn't book it) meant that we were faced with a long drive each morning to get to the events. Not a problem in itself, but with start times on some days at 7.30 (to avoid the heat) it meant that there were lots of very early mornings.



Day 1 had already got off to a shaky start as we headed to the village named on the race map only to find that the event wasn't actually there – a simple mistake to make and one repeated by many others judging by the number of cars making u-turns in the beautiful village of Le Couvertoirade. The areas were mind-bogglingly difficult - very bushy, with enormous boulders, rock stacks, limestone paving and crags that I found totally impossible to interpret on the map. That's not to say that the maps weren't good, because they

were amazingly accurate, with every bush mapped on some days. Indeed, the last two days used 1:5000 maps meaning that there was a lot of overshooting going on. Coupled with that, the French were pretty good at hiding controls. Words cannot express how hard I found Day 1 and although I got slightly better as the week wore on I was still making one or two enormous errors on each day, meaning that I was finishing well down the field.

Nevertheless I learnt some key skills for doing well in France

Good hearing – vital for hearing the beeps of controls. There is always the chance it might be the one you are looking for. Even if isn't your control you may be able to work out from the number whether you are close or not. This is how I found number 10 on Day 1 – heading hopefully back on to the map in the direction I thought my control might be, hearing a beep, finding a control with a number only one out from mine. Deep joy – then listening carefully and heading for the next nearest beep. My control! Who said orienteering was difficult?

Perseverance. The French had adopted a rather idiosyncratic approach to overall results. No wimping out here with the best four days counting. Get disqualified or fail to finish and you were **punished** – slowest time on your course plus one hour. I am guessing this is what happened to Peter Haynes who had a time of over 4 hours on one day. At least a system where finding every

control was rewarded like this allowed me to have some (fairly hollow) victories over my travelling companions.

The ability to speak in more than one language. This was vital for asking where you were. It also helped when you walked around calling out your control number to be able to do so in more than one language. Controls were clustered and there was a lot of 'sharing' of information going on. I didn't resort to this technique until Day 3, but by then I was willing to try anything. Trust me, relocation was very, very difficult. My own 'sharing' reached its nadir on the last day, when I was having a reasonably good run until #11. A simple leg, which I totally mucked up. After several abortive attempts at relocating off the spectator control in the finish area (shouldn't be too difficult, should it?) I eventually found 176. I was looking for 177. The dialogue went something like this with the equally lost looking Frenchman –

'Are you looking for 176?'

'Oui'.

'I'll tell you where it is, if you'll show me where it is on your map'.

Well it worked for me.

Good compass skills.

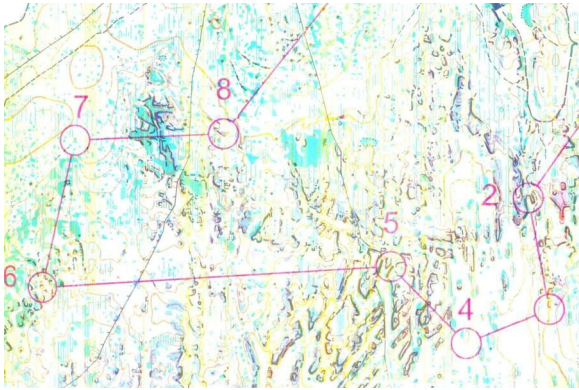


This picture may give you some idea of what the terrain was like. I think the man on the rock is lost. Now, I'm usually okay with compasses when orienteering in Great Britain. My skills aren't the best, but I can normally get away with it. Not in this event. Oh no! If you couldn't navigate accurately with a compass then you were done for. The ability to take an accurate bearing and to follow it through tricky terrain was essential and my orienteering skills were hopelessly exposed. I got lost, and I got lost and then I got lost again. Every time I found a control well I was

almost guaranteed to miss the next one. And I did this over and over again, getting only slightly more proficient as the week went on. A lesson learnt – you are never too experienced to improve your skills. I certainly intent to do something this winter about developing my compass skills.

Best moment. Day 3 when I picked up a 'shadow'. My friend, the Belgian, tagged on to me at #2 and stuck with me for the rest of the course, occasionally making suggestions as to the best way to go, but generally just following me round. At the end of the race he thanked me – 'I have learnt a lot. You are an expert!' On the last day, he sought me out at the start and I dutifully posed with him whilst his wife took a photo of the two of us together. It's memories like these that make orienteering abroad such fun.

Worst moment. #15 on Day 1. Yes this really was a bad day. This was a short leg of about 100 metres. Nothing too tricky- compass out of #14 (but see above), down by the two big boulders and into 118. Or in my case, into 119 – several times. The fastest time on this leg was 43 seconds. I took 15m 35 seconds and was seriously close to retiring just before stumbling across it (the old listen for a beep trick) -not just from the race, from orienteering.



Biggest mistake. Day 4. #6. Again I show an amazing ability to muck up when going reasonably well. I found #1 to #5 pretty easily and am feeling confident. I head off to #6 with far too little accuracy. I hit the hillside and hunt.. I stumble across 218, check the control descriptions and find the number on the description sheet and so, feeling pretty pleased with myself, I head off to #7. Brilliant orienteering! Except #6 is 221 not 218. 218 is #7. So I am now navigating from #7 to # 7 – think about it - AND DESPITE THIS I CONVINCED MYSELF THAT THE MAP FITS WHAT I CAN SEE ON THE GROUND. Oh dear. It took me some time to realise

why I couldn't find #7, and even longer to realise that I had already been there. So 21 minutes for a 5 minute leg – pretty impressive. Shortly after this, I become trapped in a very prickly bush and have to be rescued, blood pouring from my legs, by a passing orienteer – but that's another story.

So to sum up, I didn't do particularly well, but I learnt a lot. Most importantly, I had great fun. If you've never tried orienteering abroad you should do it at least once in your life. In the next Jabberwooc I will try to pick out some of the most interesting events planned overseas for next year. Believe me, you will be spoilt for choice.

White Rose Weekend 2008

Well, no-one can say that you don't know what you are going to get with the White Rose weekend – held annually on the August Bank Holiday somewhere on the North Yorkshire moors. The areas used are nearly always rough and tough, and this year was no exception. Courses on both days contoured along very steep sided valleys and took runners into woodland that varied from very fast run to virtually impenetrable wind blown.

I couldn't help feeling sorry for the organisers. They had to contend with horrendous conditions – knee deep mud caused by a week of nearly continuous rain prior to the event (the weekend weather was actually quite nice) and a camping area that began to resemble Glastonbury at its worst. They also had major problems with the electronic punching systems on Day 1 which made results 'unreliable'. I only ran on Day 2, and despite the physical nature of the terrain and rather against expectations, I really enjoyed my course. There were some great route choices – deciding whether to contour along the valley or to go down or up to the nearest path. I'm pretty sure that for the longer legs the path option was best – the slopes were very slippery and very difficult to run along. My times were slow but that didn't really seem to matter and it was all rather enjoyable (and after my escapades in France it was quite nice to get back to relatively simple British orienteering!).

WAOC performances

Duncan Cooper 5 th JM2	Thomas Hemingway 2 nd JM3	Todd Cooper 14 th JM3
Jonathan Cronk 4 th JM5L	Catherine Hemingway 1 st JW1	Ben Holland 9 th M21L
Stephen Borrill 5 th M35S	David Cooper 12 th M50L	David Cronk 14 th M50L
Maurice Hemingway 23 rd M50L	Frances Cooper 11 th W40L	Pamela Hemingway 7 th W45S
Ursula Oxburgh 6 th W70L		



Dear WAOCjunior,



I hope you've all had a good summer and apologies for the long delay since the last newsletter: my PhD thesis is currently taking up most of my writing time and I have also been away on holiday. It has been fairly quiet over the summer months (editor's note - apart from getting engaged), but here is a summary of the things that have been going on, and just a bit of a preview of the autumn events.

Since I wrote the last newsletter at the end of May, we've had several events taking place worth mentioning. Back on the 15th June, at Wivenhoe Park, in Colchester, some of you contested the East Anglian Schools Championships. Whilst this was overwhelmed by a bus-load of Barnardiston preparatory school runners, it was great to see some winning performances from WAOC's juniors - it looks like it's quality rather than quantity that we go for! Well done to William Louth (King's College School) who won the Boys' Primary category, and to Jonathan Cronk (Comberton Village College) for winning the Year 9/10 Boys' class.

At the end of June, members of the East Anglian Junior squad travelled to the north-east region of England to compete in the annual Junior Interregional Championships. Due to a current low of juniors coming through the squad, the region travelled with an incomplete team. As such, the EAJS weren't likely to be making appearances high in the team standings - however, congratulations to Thomas Louth for his individual result in winning the M14 class.

Leading on from my note on the low number of EA juniors in the squad. If there's anyone out there who is 12-18, not a member of the EA Junior Squad or the EA Potential Junior Squad, and would like to find out more, please get in touch with Ursula Oxburgh on (u.oxburgh@esc.cam.ac.uk), who is the regional coaching representative.

Being half-way through the summer holidays already, it won't be long before we're back in the orienteering season again. Whilst the spring focused on individual results, the autumn is dominated by team events. As a preview to the autumn orienteering events, there are three main events I would like to draw your attention to (some dates to put into your diary!):

1) The Peter Palmer junior team relays will be taking place in Middleton Park (Leeds) on 6th/7th September. This is a great opportunity to get involved by a) running for WAOC in the premier junior event of the year and b) getting to know some of the other juniors of the club because of the social side of the sleepover. If you would like to come along and haven't already done so, can you please contact our club captain Steve Hinshelwood (steve.hinshelwood@ntlworld.com) and our Junior Captain Jonathan Cronk (jc@brooklands.demon.co.uk). In your reply, please include the following information: **Your name, age class and up to which colour coded level you're comfortable with running.**

2) The regional round of the Yvette Baker Trophy will take place on 5th October at Reynold & Holcot Wood (South Midlands OC area). In order to do well, WAOC have to get as many juniors out as possible - everyone can count in the event, whether you are an experienced orienteer or a new member and a beginner, so come along if you can! It is a standard district event, so you can turn up on the morning without needing to pre-enter. However, as Steve and Jonathan will be doing some tactical decisions on who should run which course, it would be helpful for them to know who is planning to come along - if you are going, can you let them know on steve.hinshelwood@ntlworld.com and jc@brooklands.demon.co.uk to save them the hassle of having to ring round all the you! If WAOC qualify for the final, this will be conveniently quite local to us: it is due to take place on 7th December in Sandringham Park, organiser by Norfolk Orienteering Club.

3) The final of the Compass Sport Club, the all club version of the Yvette Baker will be in Sutton

Park, Birmingham on 19th October (some of you may recognise the area from past Peter Palmer relays). WAOC have qualified for the final in the qualifier round that took place in the spring so Steve Hinshelwood will be on looking for club members to come and run at the event, both juniors and adults. If you'd like to run, please get in touch with Steve also.

Results:

At the beginning of August (3rd-9th August), a number of you travelled to the Welsh 6 orienteering event in the Brecon Beacons area.

Congratulations to the following for their achievements:

- Lewis Cooper who was 6th on Days 1 and 6 on M10A
- Thomas Hemingway who finished a brilliant 4th of 15 overall on M12A, with two 2nd places (Days 2 and 6), one 3rd place (Day 3) and one 4th place (Day 5)
- Todd Cooper for a 6th place in M12A on Day 3, with a 9th place in the overall standings
- Jonathan Cronk who was 5th of 13 in the overall M16A results, with two 3rd places (Days 2 and 4), one 4th place (Day 1) and a 5th place (Day 6)
- Catherine Hemingway who WON W10B, winning 4 of the 6 days and coming 2nd and 3rd on the other two days

I think that should keep you going for another while - I look forward to seeing you in the forest at an event or another sometime in the autumn.!

Blanka

Fixture Section

The new season starts with a spectacular choice of events over the next couple of months. After honing your skills at the WAOC training sessions, there are plenty of opportunities to use your new skills. Don't forget the WAOC events coming up – **Therfield Heath** on September 28th will give lots of contouring practice and later in the year the delightful areas of **Warden Warren** (November 2nd) and **Rowney Warren** are being used for district and night events. Unfortunately, land access problems mean that only a limited range of colour coded courses will be available at Warden Warren, but Rowney Warren (November 29th/30th) will offer all courses up to Brown. On Saturday November 29th, WAOC is hosting the Midlands Night Championships. Rowney Warren is brilliant at night and will provide really challenging courses. If you haven't tried night orienteering before, this would be a great opportunity to give it a go – and you might even end up winning a trophy!

For me the highlight of the autumn is the **London City Race** on October 11th. This sounds like an opportunity not to be missed - I might even forgo the football for this one! Other than that, there are plenty of Regional events to choose from – **Hatfield Forest** on October 12th being the closest. This is the week before the CompassSport Cup Final and would be a good last chance to prepare for the most important event of the year.

Important date change – BOF has recently circulated information that next year's British Orienteering Championships have had to change dates for 'environmental reasons'. The New Forest venues are unchanged but the dates are now Saturday/Sunday February 28th/March 1st 2009.

Fixture List

For an up-to-date list of upcoming fixtures, please refer to www.britishorienteing.org.uk or www.waoc.org.uk

WAOC Training Events

These free training events will be held **2.30 - 4.30pm** on Saturday afternoons and aim to increase your orienteering technique and fitness leading up to the Compass Sport Cup Final or just for yourself.

Generally the session will start with a gentle warm-up and stretch. There will be a couple of exercises or games on a certain technique, followed by an optional last 30min of circuits or hill reps to increase your fitness levels.

DATE	TECHNIQUE	LOCATION
Saturday 6 th September	Pacing and bearings Route choice	Wandlebury – Bickle Family
Saturday 13 th September	Attack points and catching features	Therfield Heath – Dil Wetherill
Saturday 20 th September	Relocation – don't panic Speed O – how to go faster without running harder.	Bush Heath – Peter Allen
Sunday 28th September 10-12 at CATI	Contours – brown only exercises	Therfield Heath – Ursula Oxburgh
Saturday 4 th October	Route choice	Mildenhall South – Alison Sleigh
Saturday 11 th October	Traffic light orienteering	Mildenhall North – Dil Wetherill
Sunday 19th October	Compass Sport Cup Final	Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield

Suitable for all levels of ability whether you want to learn new skills or refine your technique. There will be a range of organisers although not necessarily a qualified coach.

More details will be sent round by e-mail before each event so do contact Bruce at bmarshall@theiet.org if you are not yet on the WAOC e-mail list. Even if you are not interested in the training you may want to sign up to the e-mail list as information is sent out about all WAOC events.

If you would like more information on these sessions (GR of meeting point etc) please contact Alison Sleigh (alisleighuk@yahoo.co.uk) or after the 28th August Hazel Bickle (hjc1000@esc.cam.ac.uk, 01223 842416). If you are not on e-mail, please phone – we are generally around in the evenings.

Please note: These exercises are mainly aimed at adults although older juniors are welcome. All participants take part at their own risk and juniors remain the responsibility of their accompanying parent.