



MDOC NEWS



Newsletter of Manchester and District Orienteering Club

August 2017



Matt Fellbaum at the Scottish 6 Days

(Photo: Wendy Carlyle)

SCOTTISH 6 DAYS

JWOC - FINLAND

LOCAL SPRINT EVENTS

O'CERDANYA

JIM NIGHTINGALE (1923-2017)

WINS IN SCOTLAND FOR MATT & VICKY

Andrew Gregory

Excellent wins for Matt Fellbaum in M20L and Vicky Thornton in W55L at this years' Scottish 6-days. With around 3000 entries, the competition was very strong in all classes, including a number of Scandinavian competitors, so an overall win in any class is a great achievement.

The week of events was held in Royal Deeside, with the first three days near Aboyne and the final three further up the valley near Braemar and Balmoral. A campsite was provided near Ballater, but those not camping were fortunate if they found any accommodation near to the events, as the whole valley is very popular with visitors.

The attractive valley has detailed forested hillsides, but also large flat fields near the river, which are ideal for car parking. The first three days were on adjoining areas on the south side of the river, and the whole area was used for the selection race for the 2015 world championships. Much of the area was quite tough both physically and technically, with many detailed contours and crags, but the shorter courses avoided the worst of these.

The fourth day, Creag Choinnich, was immediately south of Braemar, with a mixture of runnable marshes and steep slopes leading to high rough open areas. Days 5 and 6 were both on the north side of the valley at Glen Feardar, again with very varied terrain, including heather covered moorland.

Over 40 club members took part, including Charlie Bleau who is the president of Georgia Orienteering Club in the USA. It was a good chance to catch up with news from previous members, particularly the Salathé family from France who were all visiting. Club members were widely scattered around the region, so we did not have the usual club barbecue. However start times for clubs were put in the same block, so this helped people meet up to some extent.



Vicky



Heather & Matt Fellbaum

Summary of Scottish 6-days results

The overall results are calculated from the best four individual positions over the six days, and some people did not enter every day. The number of competitors in each class reflects the size of the event and the amount of competition in each class.

Class	Name	Position	No in class				
M16A	Ben Dempsey	32	66		Chris Rostron	45	
M18L	River Edis-Smith	35	41		Tony Wagg	69	
M20L	Matt Fellbaum	1	32		Trevor Roberts	70	
M21E	Jonny Malley	17	74		Chris Kirkham	72	
	Ali Thornton	19		M70S	Doug Edwards	16	33
M21L	Chris Embrey	20	49	M80	Andrew Gregory	3	24
M35S	Andrew Stimson	4	16	W21L	Cerys Manning	2	41
M40S	Paul Watson	25	31		Liz Hamer-Davies	33	
M45L	Liam Corner	20	83	W50L	Heather Fellbaum	9	73
M50L	Jim Trueman	25	107	W55L	Vicky Thornton	1	72
	Steve Dempsey	46		W55S	Kath Speak	16	45
M55L	Steve Fellbaum	87	109	W65L	Jillyan Dobby	18	54
M55S	Charlie Bleau	27	67		Alison Doyle		
	Stephen Bingham	35		W65S	Jan Ellis	12	41
M60S	David Dann	4	59	W70L	Julie Brook	15	39
	Eddie Speak	19			Irene Crawshaw	33	
M65L	John Britton	26	93	W75S	Margaret Gregory	7	10
M65S	Graham Crawshaw	44	49		Rae Lomas	8	
M70L	Peter Ross	32	83	W80	Sue Birkinshaw	5	9
	Ian Watson	41					



Eddie Speak



John Britton



Vicky Thornton

(Photos: Wendy Carlyle)

JWOC

Matthew Fellbaum

This years Junior World Orienteering Champs were held in Tampere, Finland. This competition has been my aim for a few years, ever since I started taking orienteering seriously. This year I've worked really hard to get into team, spending a lot of time training and preparing for the selection races, and I was delighted to be selected. Even though I knew selection was likely after my results, I was still nervous up until I got the call. It was a huge relief and kicked me into gear with my preparation.

My training for the whole year has been interrupted by injury - I've had shin splints on and off for a number of years and since September my shins have been flaring up on a regular basis. This has meant I've been forced to be very disciplined with the number of miles I train, and I've supplemented my running with a large volume of cross training. It hasn't been ideal but it has worked well. I've also spent a lot of time doing technical prep – map geeking, analysing my technique and working out how best to orienteer in the terrain.

I went on a training camp/holiday to Tampere with Edinburgh University a month before JWOC to get used to the country, terrain, food etc. This really helped as when I got to JWOC I felt comfortable and not stressed, an important mindset to achieve optimal performance. I also spent time training and racing in Stockholm and Bulgaria as part of my build up, to really nail my orienteering technique, and I got to run the Jukola relay, an amazing experience which I couldn't recommend enough to anyone who loves the sport, although I'd definitely advise setting more than 1 alarm....

Diet has been another thing I've worked on this year, something I've never put much thought into before. It's not always been perfect but mostly I've stayed sensible and eaten well, and I think my performance has improved because of it.

Build up

We arrived 4 days before the races started, and spent the time getting more used to the country, training on relevant terrain, doing some final geeking and mental prep, and I ran my taper intervals session, what is becoming a regular for me. The main thing was trying to stay calm and not get too excited, it's important to treat it all as normal races and just do what we always do, what we are very good at – go orienteering. Lets do this!

Middle Q

I went in with the aim to concentrate on the orienteering and nail the controls, which I knew would be enough to qualify. However, I was very nervous before the start, as I always am before the first race of an international. I haven't yet worked out how to deal with this, I think that the more races I run the more comfortable I will feel. I tried to have a good plan into #1 but vague terrain and a panicky mindset caused me to lose concentration at the crucial moment and lose track of where I was. I saw my control but thought I was too soon, so carried on before coming to my senses. From there I pushed hard and ran well but knew qualifying would be a close cut thing, and when I missed another control later on I knew the game was up. I missed the cut by 1:20, it's a brutal sport. I was disappointed but knew I'd done most of the

course very well, and after analysing the race with my coach Mark realised that with small tweaks good performances could be had.

It's the view of the management team that athletes struggle with running 5 hard races in a week, so I was given the choice of running the middle B final or the sprint. This is one of the hardest choices I've ever had to make. On the one hand, I'm stronger in the forest, all my prep had been towards the forest races, I would be better in the long and relay having run the middle final, and my shins might not react well to the hard surface of the sprint. On the other hand – the sprint was a chance to become world champion – my dream. Head vs heart. After much thought and help from my coaches, I chose my head, and started preparing to race the middle final.

Middle Final

This was a race unlike any I've done before. Everything was the same – we still had to get up early, drive to the event centre, get a bus to quarantine, wait in quarantine for 2 hours, warm up on the model map, go to pre start, collect the gps, jog to start, go into start box, 3, 2, 1, go. The difference was that for me, and for the other athletes running this race, there was no pressure. There was nothing to gain, and nothing to lose. It was essentially a training race. I enjoyed this experience immensely. To be able to race at the world champs, in fantastic terrain, against top quality athletes, but no pressure and no fear, was fantastic. I went hard from the start and despite a minute mistake I ran well, getting caught by a Swede but held my own, and finished in 6th place. This was just the confidence boost I needed after the disappointing qualifier.

Sprint

The race I wasn't able to run. Although it was great to be able to support the team on what was mostly a great day for GB, there was always the feeling of "what if?", which was frustrating and quite hard to deal with. I personally feel that the mental effect of having to sit out of a race outweighs the physical benefit of being rested. Nonetheless, that was the situation, and I just had to deal with it and prepare for the long and relay.

Long

It was strange going into this race as my first 'real' race, when many of the other athletes had already raced to become world champion twice. I felt like I had something to prove, and I was determined not to blow the opportunity. I felt calm and ready on the start line, and this feeling continued for most of the race. I took my time and did things properly, and it worked. The only time I felt out of control was at the end of the ~3km long leg, during which I'd gone into the red running round the road, and thus went for a wander up the hill before swinging back round into the control. 3 minutes gone. It's strange thinking back to that moment – I was fully aware that I was wrong and losing time, but I just couldn't work out what had happened and where I was, even though looking back at it now it appears obvious. Pain does strange things to the mind.

After my mistake I got caught by Issac, last years 3rd place, and a fast French boy, so knew I had to work harder than I ever had to before to stick with them until the finish. They got away from me up a hill at one point but then missed the next control and I got back on the train. 20 minutes of pain and very little map reading later I

arrived at the finish, thoroughly exhausted, but happy. 39th place, a result to be proud of for my first JWOC (and better than Tom ever did!).

Relay

The relay teams were selected based on the selection races a few months ago. I was in the 2nd team with Ali leading off, aiming to come back in the pack, my job on 2nd leg was to run clean and hold my position, then Harrison to run us home and try to pick off places. We knew we had a strong team if we did our jobs and had a good chance of beating the first team. Ali came in a few minutes down on the lead but at the front of a pack of strong nations, and I went off with lots of other athletes. Waiting in the start pen watching this unfold I was relishing the situation, a chance to show that I deserved to be there and pull up some places. The relay ran as a large loop, then an arena passage, then a smaller second loop. I largely ignored everyone around me on the first loop and it all went well, I nailed my controls and came through the arena run through in a big group of guys. I correctly predicted that the next control would be gaffled and it looked tricky, even more so after blasting through the arena, so I knew it was important to get it right. I decided to get to the front of the pack and do my own navigation, which worked a treat as I nailed my gaffle and left on my own, as the other guys were still searching. One of the best moments of my life! The final part of my course I just pushed as hard as I could and sent Harrison off in a strong position, having made up 8 places and dropped the 7 teams I started just ahead of. Harrison had a great run and he held the position to bring us back in 12th, but 8th nation. Afterwards we were told that this is the 3rd best GB boys relay result ever, behind 2 teams containing a certain Jon Duncan and Jamie Stevenson. Wow. What an end to the week!

I got home exhausted but content, already excited for next year. After a couple of days rest I was back travelling, this time up to Scotland to coach on the Lagganlia junior camp and then run the 6 days, then in August I'll travel to Hungary with the GB team to train for next years JWOC. It's incredibly exciting to know that with another consistent year of training I will be in a position to be mixing it with the best in the world!

I'd really like to thank the club for all the support and funding they've given me over the years, it has been incredibly helpful and it is very much appreciated. I'd also like to thank the whole of the coaching team and everyone who came out to support us, it makes a huge difference!

SELOC Sprint Weekend

The first NWOA Sprint Championships were held on 17th June at a SELOC event at Skelmersdale. This was a two-part race held on a very hot day. The area was quite detailed, although bisected by a major dual carriageway, and a more distant start for the final race would have allowed more interesting courses.

Northwest sprint champions included Liam Corner (M45), John Britton (M65), Andrew Gregory (M80), Elizabeth Hamer-Davies (W35), Heather Fellbaum (W50), Irene Crawshaw (W70), Margaret Gregory (W75) and Sue Birkinshaw (W80).



NWOA Sprint Champions

The Horwich Festival of running the following day also incorporated a two-part sprint race, with the prologue in Queen's Park Bolton, and a mass start for the final in the centre of Horwich.



Mass start of the Horwich Sprint (Photo: Marie Roberts)

NORTHERN ROCKET WEEKEND

Trevor Roberts

In the early part of 2017, DEE were planning to put on a two day sprint event comprising of the British Mixed Sprint Relays at Edge Hill University with a supporting urban event at Frodsham. However they failed to secure permission to hold an event on the busy streets of Frodsham on a Saturday, so approached MDOC to help out with an event at Birchwood.

Birchwood is part of the 1980's Warrington New Town and MDOC had held a full urban event there in November 2016 using the two dissimilar residential areas of Gorse Covert and Oakwood. Oakwood is the more challenging of the two comprising mostly of a modern social housing estate with a complex network of residential roads, walkways, courtyards and public green spaces. It is an ideal area for a sprint requiring rapid thinking and quick decision making.

The original thinking was that the two day event would attract some of the best sprint orienteers in the country and the elite squad would attend en route to a squad training programme. Trevor Hindle took on the planning and Trevor Roberts, the organising both having been involved in the 2016 event.

Warrington Borough Council require three months notice of an event through a ten page notification form which needs to be supported by a detailed Event Management Plan plus appendices. Planning initially focussed on providing the best experience for the elite runners. Detailed discussions with Graham Gristwood pointed towards a single sprint race but this changed to the more usual two-part format as it became clear that a lack of funding meant that the elite training programme would not be taking place. The plans went through several iterations each aiming to make the best use of the most complex area. A significant problem was the distance between the assembly at the leisure centre and the location of the competition area. A two-part sprint would normally involve a return to assembly after the first part to download followed by the second part after everyone had completed the first. The distance to assembly meant that this would stretch out the day beyond the availability of the leisure centre, so a rethink was required. Eddie Speak came up with a way to run both parts without the need to download until the end of the second part so a further re-plan was required to facilitate this by positioning both starts and finishes in a compact central area to minimise the amount of walking from one to the other.



Excerpts from Birchwood map (from Trevor Hindle)

On the day, this proved to be a good plan since this central area became a focus for the event which generated a real buzz as competitors came and went, initially heading south on the first part and north on the second. The feedback from competitors was all positive, even from those who managed to lose contact with the map as their brains failed to work fast enough.

As organiser, my only disappointment was the low number (just over 100). The mixed sprint relay on the following day had a similar low turnout. Perhaps mid July is not the best time of the year to put on this type of event.

Oakwood has more of this complex urban terrain which has not been mapped. Because it is separated from the existing mapped area by a relatively busy road, it is best suited to be used on its own or as a single part of another two-part sprint combined with the existing map. We are looking into this as a future option.

British Mixed Sprint Relays – Edge Hill

This new event format was trialled last year at Sheffield, and will now become an annual championship. DEE hosted it this year at the Edge Hill University campus in Liverpool, which was an excellent area. Unfortunately the entry numbers were rather small. Due to funding problems the British Squad did not come, and even from MDOC there were only three teams entered. Paul Watson, Alan Ogden formed an 40+ team, John Britton, Marie Roberts and Alison Doyle in 55+ and Trevor Roberts, Grahame and Irene Crawshaw in 65+. All had respectable runs, but no prizewinners.

O’Cerdanya 2017

Peter Ross

The O’Cerdanya 2017 Orienteering event took place two hours drive north of Barcelona and near the Spanish town of Puigcerdá on the French border. This is a real wiggle of a border, and at Puigcerdá some of it actually jumps off the page and lands as a small Spanish circular enclave just inside France.



This is not the only sign that the area is not straight-forward. Puigcerdá was unique in voting for an anarchist government during the Spanish civil war and therefore has a history of not really appreciating state borders of any sort, not even wiggles and circles. And it's not the only place in this part of the world that has funny ways. Just up the road is Andorra which not only is a micro-state, but a diarchy, the joint rulers since 1278 being the French President (now that France no longer has a king) and the Spanish Bishop of Urgell.

So the orienteering was going to take place in a complex geo-politico area which is currently split between France and Spain despite the opinion of the locals who would probably prefer the Cerdanya region to become a mini state - which indeed it was until 1659. What I'm trying to say is that the terrain and the maps were likely to reflect the nature of the place and simple isn't the first word that comes to mind.

Day One arrived and the key issue was the parking. The problem, we were told, was that there was no space at the Arena (car parks 1 & 2 at the top of the hill) and so although most cars would be parked at car park 3 (at the bottom of the hill) the few cars allowed to the top would, like true socialists, fill their empty seats with passengers. Not so comrades. The camper vans - large and, may I say, ugly vehicles with few people - somehow gained special status from the-powers-that-be and snatched all the space in car parks 1 & 2 so that the rest of us - the many, in the relatively small vehicles- had to walk up the hill. We were in France but it's the same the whole world over...

At the start the air was cold but the sun was warm. It was a glorious morning and we were high in the beautiful Pyrenees. The views across to the mountains on the other side of the lowlands were magnificent. The forest looked enticing. The advertised course lengths were short. Back in the Arena the paella man was preparing a huge lunch that required two pans with enormous diameters and impressive gas burners. Big prawns were involved and garlic sausage. What could possibly go wrong?

Well there was the windblow that destroyed any thoughts of the straight line route, the ankle-grabbing juniper and the prickly broom were the things that headed my list. The poor lady whose door fell off her eco loo (built not dissimilarly to the wooden beach huts at Southwold, nearly as pretty and bursting with sawdust) could probably add another. Such was the queue for the loos (there were only six) that the doorless version became just as popular as the rest. The required technique, for those who still had modesty as a concern after a long wait, was to hug the loose door as you would a long lost friend. Well, mostly.

Anyway although the courses were physical and we all had a strenuous morning we at least were off the mark and on our way. The O'Cerdanya Five Days had begun. We were provided with a Marie biscuit and a bottle of water at the finish and that was a nice touch. Sadly, the paella sales never really took off after a man who had had a particularly strenuous morning collapsed next to the cooking area and the paramedics,

who were very concerned for his wellbeing, requisitioned and then cordoned off the area and the paella with it. A difficult situation all round, really.

Day Two was just down the road, but still in France. The start times were grouped by club and MDOC had early starts so got lucky with the parking. We were right next to the arena. The courses were middle distance and largely downhill. The sun shone. The terrain was really beautiful, fast with runnable patches of forest blended amongst the open. (Note to controllers, there was a timed road crossing with no limit, although competitors were instructed not to "dawdle". It worked perfectly well.) Great fun. Great views. Now this was more like it. Jillyan won her age group despite the early start because - apart from a great run - the planning and the terrain were never going to provide elephant tracks to aid the later runners.

Marie biscuits at the finish again and a bottle of water. No paella, and no other food either, although you could buy a beer or a fizzy, and that as it turned out, was the situation for the next three days too. Good news about the poorly man from the previous day who, we discovered, had been successfully transported to hospital by helicopter.

Now is the time to talk about the scoring system and the courses. The scoring system for five day event was very simple: every second of every day was to count. A similar simplicity governed the courses: only fifteen covered the field, and all those aged D60 or H70 or older were crammed into the last one. Every competitor had to run in their age group because there were no short or elite options. On the other hand only two of the days were long, and of the others two were middle distance and the third a sprint. The oldest competitor at O'Cerdanya, our very own Susan Birkinshaw, had to give twenty years to the others on her course, but you know what, she didn't give a damn.

The **Day Three** parking arrangements required MDOC teamwork which is what we do best. The event had moved south to Spain. Cars with fewer than four occupants were shunted into a field miles from the Arena and I don't know what happened to them. The occupants I mean. I think it was probably game over. I don't know what happened to the camper vans either. The remaining vehicles were allowed up a very long dirt track to the action, namely the Arena, the eco loos, the start and the finish, but not necessarily in that order. The thing that had become obvious about the final details was that they lacked both a comforting air of finality and some crucial details too. It wasn't possible, for example, to determine the distances between the parking, the

Arena and the start and this created an anxiety. As we got to the top of the hill the linear parking stretched ahead looking like it was going to take up an impressive number of kilometres. Fortunately we were able to exploit a little gap in some shade right next to the ecos. Nothing wrong with a bit of light touch anarchy.

The competition area, although at the top of the mountain, was actually an undulating plateau. The terrain was of the indistinct vegetation variety which the mapper had represented on the map by a baffling selection of irregular green, brown and white shapes. There were the occasional green crosses and circles and some black bits.



My first control, number 47, was described as being a distinctive tree and was represented by a green circle. The kite itself was easy to find being close to a tree close to a crossing point. But tree itself was just like every other tree - remarkably so. In fact if you were asked to find a typical tree you could do far worse than choose the one right next to control kite 47.

I didn't think about it too much at the time but it does put a bit of a question mark against the other green circles on the map. Were they representing typical trees or untypical trees? Maybe an Anarchist's idea of a practical joke? Or maybe not.

"The concept of distinctiveness is yet another example of a hierarchy that must be crushed, mi amigo"

"Sounds like we could buddy up with the Collectivists on this one, camarada"

"Now you're talking. I wonder who their leader is?"

Or maybe the mapper and planner had heard about the Night Street League...

Planner: A control here would be perfect but there's no feature.

Checker: We could use the lamp post, I suppose, but if we map one lamp post doesn't that mean we must map each and every one?

Planner: Not at all, the others aren't distinctive enough.

Checker: Come again?

Planner: I mean that the other lamp posts, although obviously physically very similar to this one, aren't actually distinctive enough to map *because they are not controls*.

Checker: Brilliant. Let's publish the NSL planning guidelines on the internet. You never know.

On my tortuous way to my next control, every second counting remember, I came across a kite - not mine - by a stone platform which was like a kind of mini limestone pavement. I couldn't find any stone features on my map, which was a bit of a puzzle. Afterwards I discovered from Steve Fellbaum that the control had been one of his and it had been described as a "viewpoint". A viewpoint! Well if that doesn't open a wealth of opportunity for creative control descriptions I don't know what does. To hell with boring knolls, reentrants and crags, I'm looking forward to visiting sites described as a "nice place for a beer" or "feels like Norwich on a wet Wednesday afternoon" or maybe, for the surrealists amongst us, a real kite placed next to a painting of a kite entitled "ceci n'est pas un control".

All in all the orienteering was technical and maybe some of the controls were placed a little sneakily, squished into tight spots like the control described as a thicket/boulder which was more of a low boulder under a thicket, or the crag that happened to be in a pit. Any loss of concentration was costly. The courses were middle distance but the times were more like classic. At the finish there was choice of a slice of watermelon, or cantaloupe or honeydew with an optional Marie biscuit and bottle of water. Personally, I'm a watermelon man and this was heaven.

Day 4. The same Arena served again for the fourth day. It was a large grazing area covering a wide col at the top of the mountain. We orienteers didn't have it all to ourselves. The crèche had to be moved because the toddlers were becoming scared of the wild horses that dashed back and forth. There were views of the Pyrenees in every direction and not a cloud in the sky. Shade was at a premium. Not surprisingly the terrain was very similar to the previous day, the courses finishing in the Arena once again. It wasn't physical because the white was runnable and there was no steep climb. However the distances were classic and the navigation was tricky, largely via vegetation

boundaries set in an open conifer forest with gentle contours, a really super area but some of the courses were very long. For example the winning time for the M21 course of 12km was 1hr 20m, the median time for those who finished was just over two hours, but a quarter did not finish and a prescient ten percent decided not to start. The W21 course was 7km, which from looking at the times and the healthy proportion of finishers, made a lot more sense.

Day 5. On the final day the Arena moved to the base of one of the chair lifts in the Spanish ski town of La Molina. It was still hot and sunny. The camper vans had reappeared in a car park of their own. I think they gathered there the previous evening. I think that's what they do a lot. It must be a herd instinct.

The longer courses started at the top of the mountain, and those competitors had to take the lift to the start. The courses were billed as middle distance but given the downhill nature of the terrain the day looked far more like a sprint. And so it proved. The terrain itself was fast and open which made it exciting and the steepness of the downhill finish straight (a ski piste in winter) which dumped everyone into the middle of the Arena made it even more thrilling. After the hours of concentration over the previous days how better to end the whole thing than with a mindless dash on grass for a great inflatable arch wobbling over the finish line whilst the music played, the flags waved, and the sun continued to beam on us all?



And so the running was over. The orienteering had been excellent, and it had been a joy to be amongst so many different nationalities and age groups enjoying our sport. Eight of the MDOC team had managed to complete every stage, which is pretty good

when you consider that fewer than half of the M21's managed the same. Better still, one of us, Jillyan, had a podium place as third in the W65.

The O'Cerdanya organisation had been a little quirky but it was always welcoming, and it worked, and although in a way I'm sad to say this, it certainly wasn't anarchic. I still wonder at the stamina of the helpers who never seemed to have any rest during their full day's shift only to have to take down their equipment in the evening and set it up again in the morning to do it all again the next day. All credit to them. Well done I say.



Jane McCann



Doug Edwards

Dom's Top Ten Planning Pointers

Hi – I'm Dominic and I'm twelve years old. This year I planned my first MDOC event which was one of the Lyme Park Introductory Series in May. I learnt a lot from this experience, so here are my top tips for planning a course:

1. Look at previous course maps of the area to get ideas of the terrain offered by the location and of possible control positions. The permanent orienteering course maps are also helpful.
2. Think about using areas within the location which have not been used recently to add interest to your event.
3. Look for clear features on the map for possible control points.
4. Plan the white course first because they are the most restricted by BOF guidelines.
5. White courses should have each control clearly visible from the previous one, however on orange courses and above try make controls less obvious until you get very close to them.
6. Make your courses more interesting by placing controls in positions which provide route choice.

7. Make sure that the first and last legs for the courses do not cross.
8. Visit the area and walk around your courses to check your proposed courses and control points. Make notes of any alterations as you go.
9. Save your work regularly when using Condes 9 planning software; best after numbering each control and also at the end of each course.
10. Take advice from your controller (Thank you Dave McCann!)

As the youngest person in the club to plan a course this year I enjoyed the experience and it has helped my map-reading and navigational skills. I am now looking forward to planning a Saturday morning event in Wythenshawe for the autumn series. If I can plan an event then anybody can – so give it a go and happy orienteering!



GMOA Chairman's annual report for 2016/17

Sue Birkinshaw

We've got our excellent website and its secondary maintenance system working well. We have over 30 postwatchers visiting parks and reporting every 3 or 4 months. We divided up the parks among a dozen "co-ordinators" to oversee and organise maintenance. We have had a massive effort during the year to get our parks and posts in good working order and have almost achieved 100%.

But we are not complacent. Vandals and even park maintenance people remove our posts. Many posts are over 20 years old and show it. We know that constant vigilance will be needed to keep our POCs as good as they are just now, and we have to ensure that the systems that we have in place will achieve that. We are not even sure that our co-ordinator system is the correct way forward.

Now for some detail....

John Britton continues to keep not only the website but also the GMOA maps up to date.

He and Dave McCann, with help from several other people, have planted over 50 new posts, and renovated many more. Phil Ellis has been kept working hard at making these posts.

Pete Ross has been the inspiration behind the on-line maintenance system, and Dave McCann has used the stored data to give us regular updates on how well we are doing and what needs doing next.

Dave also analyses the use that is being made of the website and the QR plaques in the parks.

Map sales have noticeably increased since we made two major improvements. We now offer on-line pdf maps as an alternative to printed paper maps, and they can now be paid for using credit cards or PayPal instead of having to send in a cheque. John continues to deal with all map orders as well as all enquiries.

A few other items of interest.

Beren's year-long project to visit all the parks has been completed. She has helped a lot with checking the POCs and locating cafes and useful contacts.

The MOBO project at Burrs, using special plaques and mobile phones, was interesting but not much used.

We have decided to withdraw the Bowlee POC, as it is a very unsavoury area.

We have had one new request for a POC at Mirlees, and the project is in hand.

Another request for a POC in a very small park was considered but left to the people involved to do it themselves.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed in any way to a very successful GMOA year.

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who could help with either post-watching or with an occasional work party, needed to maintain the high standard that we have achieved this year.

JIM'S BOX

Newer club members will know of Jim Nightingale through the club stores and equipment and through GMOA. Older members will remember Jim as an orienteer running in the same class as Frank Rose, our club president, where they enjoyed competitive challenges together.

Sadly Jim passed away on the 26th July 2017, after a long and happy life, at the ripe old age of 93 years, although in Jim's words the ripe young age of 93 years.

Jim's box was and still is the affectionate name given to a wooden box, made by Jim, that contained everything that might be needed at any event. The contents of this box epitomise Jim's attention to detail as anyone who has used it can testify.

The stores, after having its home in a number of places, eventually found its present home in the crypt of St. Aidens United Reformed Church in Didsbury, thanks to Jim who located this ideal facility.

Once the stores had a settled location, Jim became stores officer and his expertise and inventiveness were put to good use. He saw to it that MDOC would become the envy of many other orienteering clubs for this asset.

Jim was very clear in his mind as to what equipment was needed for an event and if the club did need something that could not be bought, he set about making it. Much of this equipment has lasted the years and is still there as a legacy to him.

Jim was very assertive about how the equipment should be stored, collected, used and returned. After a wet event a tent could be seen draped from the warm pipes in the crypt. Balls of tape flatly rolled in an exclusive way known only by Jim and stored in large boxes. Clothes pegs attached to various coloured tapes could be seen hanging on wire coat hangers. Red and white kites with letters of the alphabet on, kites with numbers on and blank kites all stored in crates and ready for the next event. Wooden signs for any occasion stored in alphabetical order all highlighted Jim's efficiency.

Jim made good use of his time. To contact Jim you had to ring him before 8.00 a.m. as his day started early and should your phone ring before 8.30 a.m. you knew it would be Jim.

Jim was not just committed to MDOC but also GMOA where his contribution could not be bettered.

In 1987, GMOA was formed as a project to provide Greater Manchester with 20 POC's and this gave Jim an opportunity to get involved and use his skills. With a router in one hand and a paint brush in the other he set about numbering and coding solid oak posts for these new POC's

Jim always played himself down with regards to what he did. In fact to make a presentation to him when he retired from GMOA, a trap had to be set to bring him

to the crypt. Jim duly came along thinking there was work to be done when in actual fact it was to present him with a small trophy for his work for GMOA.

There are many other stories which highlight his commitment and reliability when a job needed doing, from putting out wooden stiles at High Dam in the Lake District to road signing all the club's large events and steering organisers in the right direction.

As Jim got older, his eyesight deteriorated and he was unable to drive, so to enable him to carry on some of his jobs, he acquired a bike, initially a two wheeler and then a three wheeler. When a bike was not the answer he made sure that he knew all the bus services necessary to get him to visit and maintain GMOA's POC's, such was his dedication. When he became a post watcher for a large number of POCs and the maintenance man for GMOA, a delivery arrived of twenty 1 metre oak posts by Tomlinson Parbens to the church. Jim's skills were put the test as to how to get them into the crypt down a flight of steps. This he solved by laying down two wide planks of wood, sliding the posts down and then carrying them to their place in the crypt. When I casually commented "Are you OK carrying those posts?" Jim replied – "I'll tell you when I can't manage!!"

Several MDOC members attended Jim's funeral where we learned more about him. Both he and his wife had been keen tennis players, he had served in the army and had run a grocery business with his father in the family business after attending Stretford Grammar School. He was also a very committed father and grandfather

In conclusion I would just like mention one of Jim's quotes.

"I do what I do because I enjoy doing it and do not want any rewards"

What a lovely philosophy to have - he was a happy man.

Peter Lomas



Jim (aged 91) after being presented with a trophy by Phil Ellis

OMM ICELAND 2017

A mountain marathon in Iceland, organised by OMM, was held on 27-28 May this year. The bleak terrain consisted of volcanic rocks and ash fields, and the weather was also relatively bleak. The only two classes were Long Score and Short Score, and the clear winners of the Long Score event were Tom Fellbaum from MDOC together with Nick Barrable, editor of CompassSport.



Tom & Nick camping



Tom running over the ash fields

FINLAND 100

Manchester and District Orienteering Club in co-operation with The Consulate of Finland (Chris Rostron) are putting on a themed weekend of Orienteering activities in order to celebrate 100 years of Finnish Independence. This comprises an evening street event in South Manchester on Friday 13th October, a classic event in Lyme Park on Saturday 14th and an urban event in Stockport on Sunday 15th.

In particular, for the urban event we will have local Finns, in blue and white hats, at strategic points around the town to inform the general public what the event and orienteering is about and to promote Finland at the same time.

Entries can now be made via Fabian4. There is a discount for club helpers.



Typical local Finns! (Eija Rostron on right)

MDOC EVENTS

Autumn events (Saturday mornings – Co-ordinator: Chris Rostron)

Sat	16 Sep	Vernon Park/Woodbank Park	Stockport
Sat	7 Oct	Wythenshawe Park	South Manchester
Sat	4 Nov	Bruntwood Park	Cheadle
Sat	25 Nov	Bramhall Park	Bramhall
Sat	9 Dec	Chorlton Water Park	South Manchester

Finland 100 (Co-ordinator: Chris Rostron)

Fri	13 Oct	Evening Street event	South Manchester
Sat	14 Oct	Classic event	Lyme Park
Sun	15 Oct	Urban event	Stockport

Wednesday runs (Co-ordinator: Marie Roberts)

Wed	6 Sep	Sue Birkinshaw	Hale
Wed	13 Sep	David Mawdsley	Macclesfield
Wed	20 Sep	Pete & Rae Lomas	Hazel Grove
Wed	27 Sep	Steve Fellbaum	Macclesfield
Wed	4 Oct	David & Jane McCann	Hazel Grove
Wed	11 Oct	Julie Brook	New Mills
Wed	18 Oct	Trevor & Marie Roberts	Bramhall

MDOC Committee Meetings

Mondays 11 Sep 9 Oct, 13 Nov 7:30 Ladybrook Hotel, Bramhall

Welcome to new Senior British Orienteering Member M21 Mark Burley who has joined us from BOK.

MDOC 2017 AGM

The 2016 MDOC AGM will be held on

Thursday 19th October at the

Ladybrook Hotel, Fir Road, Bramhall, SK7 2NP

7:00 for 7:30

Refreshments will be provided

After the formal business of the meeting there will be an open session, so do bring any questions or suggestions as to what you think the club should be doing.

SCOTTISH 6 DAYS



Alison Doyle



Julie Brook



Charlie Bleau



River Edis-Smith



Elizabeth Hamer-Davies



Chris Kirkham



Scottish Ambulance Helicopter

(Photos: Wendy Carlyle)