

# MDOCC NEWS

Newsletter of Manchester & District Orienteering Club

December 2021

**M60 O-Ringen Special Edition!**



Also featuring:  
East Cheshire Urban Weekend,  
Motorcycle Orienteering,  
Interviews & Fixtures



# Editorial

Welcome back to MDOC News. This edition has a special focus on the club's fantastic MapRun project, the M60 O-Ringen. It offers fun, accessible orienteering around the whole city with 12 separate courses forming a continuous chain. Using gps technology you can record your route and splits, so any of the courses can be completed at any time, alone or with friends/family. Keep reading for reports from members who have already tried out the courses, including the first person to complete all 12 legs - John Britton at 70 years young.

It is hard to describe in words the true scale of the project, so hopefully the middle page spread of this newsletter will do it justice and will illustrate just what has been achieved by Peter Ross and his team of planners and checkers. I remember chatting with Peter in the Red Lion, about 3 years ago, just after the MapRun boom had hit the UK. Peter was positively buzzing with excitement as he described a whole host of potential events we could use MapRun technology for, including his top secret plan for an unbroken loop of orienteering courses encircling the whole city.

His enthusiasm was infectious and I loved the idea, but it just seemed too big and too ambitious to ever come to fruition, luckily Peter didn't give up and gradually persuaded more helpers to join the enterprise. He laid out a plan of action and before we knew it courses were coming together and the loop was being formed. It is fantastic to see the culmination of all this time and effort now that the M60 O-Ringen is complete and all that remains is for more people to download the MapRun app and run, jog or walk the courses.

This edition also features stats from the M60 O-Ringen's participations so far, as well as some ideas for possible future events using the courses - this is where we need your help. We want to know how you would like to use the O-Ringen courses; it could be sprints, relays, multi-day events, multi-month events... the possibilities are endless, so check out pages 10/11 and let us know. In the meantime get out there and try a few legs for yourself!

We also have results and photos from the East Cheshire Urban weekend, including the North-West Sprint Championship in Macclesfield. As well as hosting the event, MDOC members were successful in the races and we have 3 new champions, congratulations to:

Sarah Tookey - W12

Elijas Rostron - M12

Ruth Beresford - W21

**Sprint Champions of the North-West of England!**

Elsewhere in this month's newsletter we have more interviews so you can get to know the club and a vintage MDOC sweater design which you can knit yourself (just in time for Christmas). Some members have also started to venture abroad again, providing us with an excellent report from a 2 day, 24 hour event in Spain... with a twist. Enjoy!

*Sam Drinkwater*

# The O-Ringen Comes To Manchester

*Cecilia Fenerty*

David, Dominic and I were fortunate to get to the O-Ringen in Sweden in 2019 and enjoyed this so much we were planning on going again in 2020, but this time to bring along my sister and brother-in-law from Roxburgh Reivers. Covid put paid to that idea, and even the 2021 event was cancelled, so we have to keep our fingers crossed for 2022.

However, whilst we were all very restricted in what activities we were able to do during the worst of the lockdown months, as soon as we were allowed to get out and about, MDOC members were extremely fortunate in having plenty of choice of orienteering activities in the area. With over 50 parks in the Manchester area providing Permanent Orienteering Courses and with an archive of previous MDOC orienteering events and courses available on RouteGadget, even local training runs were possible to do with a map in the hand.

However behind the scenes the Manchester Navvies group were hard at work devising fabulous virtual orienteering courses to be executed using the MapRun app. This allowed events to take place without the need for putting out controls and for club members to do their run at a time to suit themselves. There are now activities in over 20 locations across the conurbation in the form of score events, linear courses or post-box challenges and further details can be found at <https://navvies.org.uk/index.php>

And when you can't get to the O-Ringen in Sweden, what better alternative but that the event should come to you in the form of the M60 O-Ringen. This is the piece de resistance of the Manchester Navvies challenges and the brain-child of Peter Ross. Imagine, then, the delight of the Wathey/Fenerty household when the challenge was launched in March of this year and we got ourselves organised pretty quickly to get out and try some legs. If you haven't tried any of these MapRun courses, or haven't read about them – then where have you been?! You are seriously missing out!

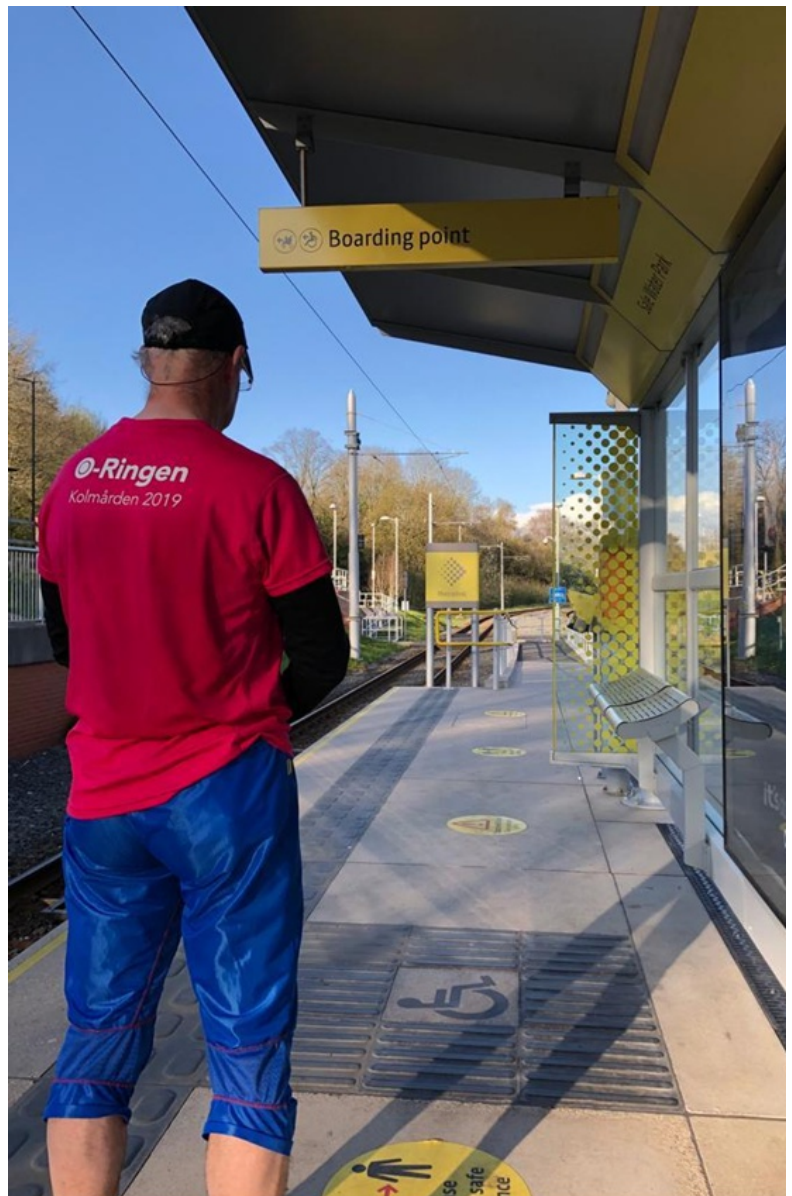
Essentially the M60 O-Ringen comprises 12 legs which circumnavigate Greater Manchester, with each leg beginning where the previous one ended. Advice is provided on the Navvies website regarding public transport opportunities, but equally there are convenient places to park a car for each leg too. The challenge is to pass 12 of 15 checkpoints, marked on the map of each leg, and choosing which controls to drop and which route choice to take is not always easy.



*Sharing the route along the Mersey with other users!*

David and Dom started by doing leg 6 starting from Heaton Norris Park in Stockport (the legs can be run in any order you choose), and when they finished at Millgate Fields in Didsbury they called me to pick them up. The next opportunity we took to do a leg, David dropped me at Heaton Norris to do leg 6 whilst he and Dom went on to Didsbury in the car to do leg 7. When I finished my leg the car was waiting in the car park and David and Dom shortly returned having completed their leg and having taken the tram back to the start.

After that we got wise to the best transport logistics to suit us and we played tag-team with the car and two sets of keys: David and I would run consecutive legs at the same time; he would drop me at the start of mine and then park the car at my finish location which would also be the start of his leg to run on that occasion; David would send me a What3Words message with the location of the car so I would know exactly where to find it at the end of my run and then I would drive to the finish location of his leg to pick him up.



*David at the tram stop in his 'alternative O-Ringen' T-shirt having just completed leg 7*

Part of the beauty of the M60 O-Ringen is varying terrain offered both within and between legs. Leg 6 starts as an urban challenge close to the Junction 1 of the M60, but very soon you lose all the road and rail traffic noise as the leg takes you broadly along the route of the River Mersey. The Mersey and areas of parkland, wood and playing fields continue on leg 7 to Sale Water Park and again through leg 8 to Urmston Beach, with some areas of residential estate to collect a few checkpoints. It was enlightening for me to see how rural this corridor of land is along the margins of the M60 and the river Mersey, most of which I have never previously explored to any great extent.

Leg 9 left the Mersey behind and was more urban in its outlook, particularly whilst approaching and running past the Trafford Centre. Thankfully there was no need to venture into the shopping mall itself, but an additional challenge experienced by Dom was the elevation of the A57 Barton Lift Bridge just before he approached the finish at the AJ Bell Stadium. We had staggered our starts with him setting out 5 minutes before me, and whilst I didn't ever have a chance of catching him up, I am very grateful to the Customs Boat that was cruising along the Ship Canal and delayed him by 15 minutes. It made my time differential to his look quite respectable!



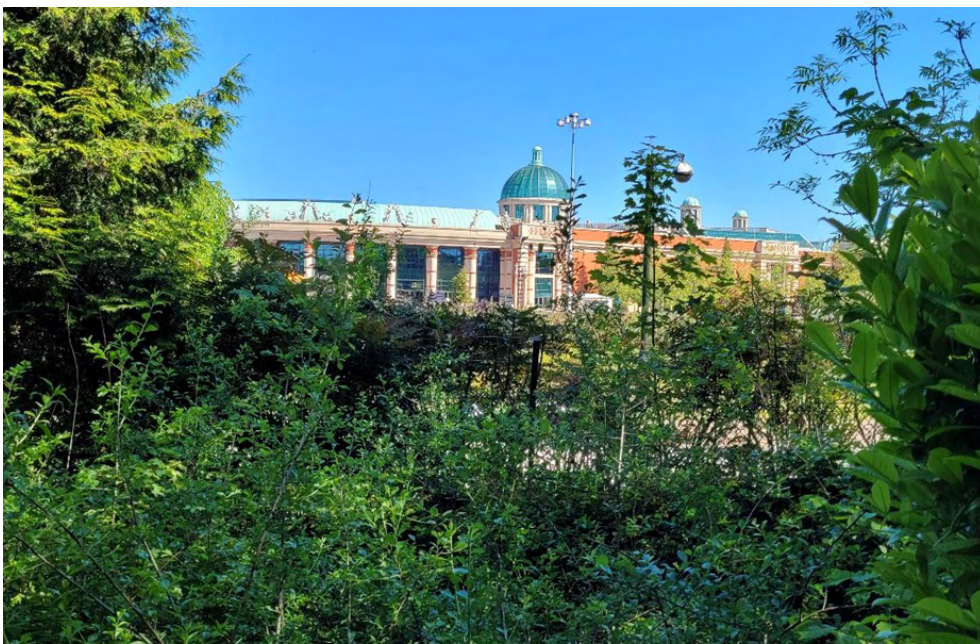
*Dom waits for the A57 Barton Lift Bridge to descend while his mum tries to catch him up!*

Unfortunately we have not had opportunity to complete any further legs since the summer due to holidays and injuries, but we are all back on form and raring (revving?) to go again around some more of the M60 challenge. Trevor and Marie Roberts have done well completing several of the legs over the Spring and Summer months and John Britton recently completed them all in one weekend for his 70th birthday!

The whole M60 O-Ringen is a fabulous resource and as yet not fully utilised by MDOC members. There have been several suggestions for using it for some informal but more organised challenges, either for individual runners, or perhaps for running as MDOC teams. I for one would be enthusiastic to participate if we could find a format that inspired more MDOC members to take up the challenge.

I hope more of you may be encourage to take a look at the Navvies website and try out some legs for yourselves, but for those of you who still have doubts my advice is:

- Don't be put off by the name M60 O-Ringen – you will see remarkably little of the M60 on these runs and some of the legs are surprisingly rural.
- Don't be put off by the name M60 O-Ringen – individual legs can be completed as stand alone runs, and it is also possible to do legs out of order – but of course completing the challenge in the round will give a real sense of achievement.
- Don't be put off by the name M60 O-Ringen – anyone can enjoy these legs whether they are M60, M45 or W21 or W70!



*The Trafford Centre emerges from the Davyhulme Jungle*

# M70 takes on the M60 O-Ringen

*John Britton*

I was trying to think of something suitably bonkers to celebrate turning 70 ... so I decided I'd run the whole of Peter's interesting but so far under-appreciated M60 O-Ringen creation, supported throughout by the ever-understanding Jen. As a reminder, there's 12 legs, which average about 9k each, all in the same pick-any-12-from-15 score format, each leg starting from the finish of the previous one. Choosing which 12 to do is often pretty tricky. The maps are OpenStreetMaps, which are mostly perfectly serviceable.

I decided the full 108k couldn't all be attempted in one outing, partly because necessarily there'd be quite a lot in the dark, but mostly because I (correctly) didn't think I'd have enough battery in my Garmin watch. So, at 9am on Saturday I set off on Leg 5 from Haughton Green, gently jogging happily...

Between each leg, there's a bit of techno-faff between watch and phone to upload leg results and download next leg. Also a spot of food and drink and regular changes of shoes and top (Saturday was dull but very humid, Sunday was brighter and hotter). By 5.30pm I'd completed 6 of the legs, but my watch had been saying "low battery" for half an hour and I'd begun to struggle to maintain any sort of non-walk - though the electronics say my minutes-per-km stayed pretty much constant all day, it didn't feel like it.

Sunday morning, 9am and we're back in Worsley ready to carry on, though the body was strangely much less willing this time. I'd changed my watch setting from every-second to smart recording in the hope of getting more battery life. A judicious mixture of brisk walk and weary shuffle seemed appropriate...

Through the day, the percentage of walk went up - to 100% on the last leg (minutes per km actually increased leg by leg!), so it was about 7.30pm when I finally made it into the little car park to complete the circuit, again with the watch saying it was about to give up on me. At no point did I find any mud, but to compensate there was a fair amount of enthusiastic brambles, nettles and balsam so my choice of decent leggings was bob on. Don't think there's anywhere that a mountain bike wouldn't be feasible, apart from maybe pushing a few narrow sections.



*John mastering the Phone-to-Garmin technology link*

Assorted entertainment, all of them visible on my Tracks - mostly goes to show you need to concentrate pretty much all the time, and not necessarily trust every detail on the map:

Leg 5 - took a slight detour to have a look at Arden Hall, which I'd heard of but never seen

Leg 6 - struggled to find the underpass under the M60!! (400m extra)

Leg 7 - missed an invisible path in Chorlton Water Park (200m extra)

Leg 8 - misread the map and initially looked in the wrong yellow bit for the last control, then ran a long way up the wrong exit path, then couldn't find a way through bigger-than-me balsam so took ages to reach the finish (900m extra) But I did manage to stumble on the actual Urmston Beach, which I'd heard of but never seen!

Leg 9 - never knew there was a big fence round the Trafford Centre with a path outside

Leg 10 - had to change plan when the exit gate from Winton Park (very close to my childhood family home) was locked (200m extra)

Leg 11 - one control to go, just have to get down to the river and cross into Philips Park, Prestwich ... but the mapped road network turns out to be mostly behind locked factory gates. If I'd aborted at the first one, loss would have been minimal, but carried on in unjustified hope (1km extra)

Leg 12 - couldn't understand the paths between 2 and 4, and ended up having to be rescued by OS Maps on my phone! (500m extra). Then, arrived at Heaton Park to find miles of Heras fencing and Security men for some major event. Got to 14 and 10 OK, just 15 to go. Security says no way Jose and says I'll have to do a lap of the lake to get to the car park. Not happy, went round the lake thinking I'd have 15 from the back, but stupidly ran close to 13 which I'd not planned on taking. So, when access to 15 from the back was completely infeasible, had to go back to 13 to achieve a completed course. Another 2.2km extra, tired and grumpy to boot. Checking the Heaton Park web site, there's New Order on 10 Sept and ParkLife the next two weekends, so the total lockdown was a whole week early!

Leg 1 - extremely tricky selection of controls!

Leg 2 - another tricky selection

Leg 3 - and another tricky selection

Leg 4 - and another tricky selection - after 13, I texted Jen to say I was close, and promptly went down the wrong street! (100m extra)

Saturday totals ... 54.9k, 339m climb, 7hrs15mins;

Sunday totals ... 52.2k, 486m climb, 8hrs45mins.

So, what conclusions can be drawn from all this nonsense?

Challenges:

> can anyone bike round all of it in a day? (or maybe in two goes - you'd need to have good technology, though when my watch battery was on the edge I was also recording progress on my phone)

> can anyone find shorter routes (ie, better selections) on any of the legs?

> could we do low-key low-effort events with a starter and a finish ferry back?

> could there be a club award for fastest legs, shortest legs?

> can you buddy up with someone to leave a car at each end and progress around in stages?

Basically, the club has a unique and well-crafted resource that has gone under-used for over a year. You might think well you could have done it a bit better or a bit different (eg. I'd personally have used the amazing Barton Swing Bridge rather than a rugby stadium), but the truth is that Peter has done it, and you haven't. There's a consistency of length and use of terrain and difficulty of strategy which must have taken a considerable effort. Yes, it is a big thing, but any elephant can be divided into chunks.

# The stats of the M60 O-Ringen, so far...

*David Gray*

Having heard about the experiences of some of our most enthusiastic competitors, time for the very important question, who is winning the race? But first let's have some more general statistics....

In total there have been 62 runs on the different M60 O-Ringen legs, covering 628km in total. 17 individual competitors have taken part, 12 of these from MDOC and the others unaffiliated/unknown.

The most popular legs so far have been Leg 6 (Heaton Norris to Didsbury, 11 runs) and Leg 7 (Didsbury to Sale/Chorlton, 12 runs) and interest peaked in April/May with 32 runs taking place, as we emerged from lockdown and enjoyed the spring sunshine.

As we head into the last few weeks of the year, John Britton is clearly head and shoulders above the rest, thanks to being the first and only competitor to circumnavigate the city. John has obviously completed the most legs which has helped him top the current leader board on 48 points\* and he also holds the record for the (only) "fastest lap" (34.5 hours or 17 hours and 11 minutes running time) but who are his closest competition?

In terms of who will be next to complete the full 360 degree circuit, Marie and Trevor Roberts are the only other competitors who have passed the halfway point, both currently on 8 legs. Can they get round before the year end?

Points-wise David Wathey is John's closest competitor in second place on 39 points and currently also tops the stats for the most leg wins\*\* with 4 victories. Next are Dom Wathey and Alan Barker tied on 28 points whilst Cecilia Fenerty and Marie Roberts deserve a mention having also passed the 20 point mark.

While there are many ways to interpret the results, what is very clear is that John's impressive efforts in 2021 will be difficult to match. The event has also brought many hours of exercise and enjoyment to club members and demonstrated the potential of the MapRun app, but what does the future hold for the M60 O-Ringen?

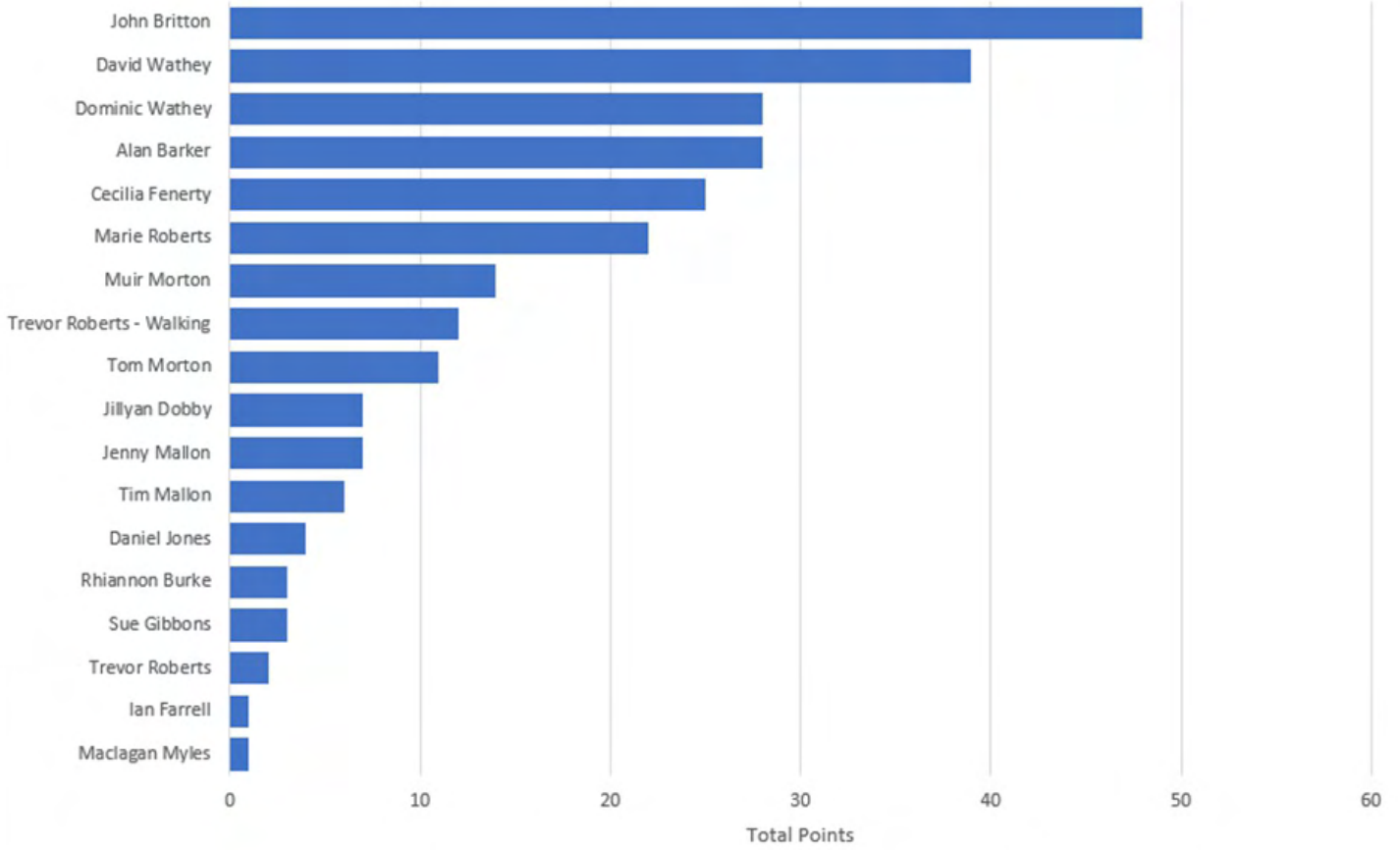
Notes:

\*Points awarded based on no of competitors who have successfully completed a Leg: (1st place = N; 2nd place = N-1, 3rd place = N-2 etc. where N = the no of runs on a leg).

\*\* Leg wins only counted where more than one run has taken place, otherwise John would top this leaderboard too!

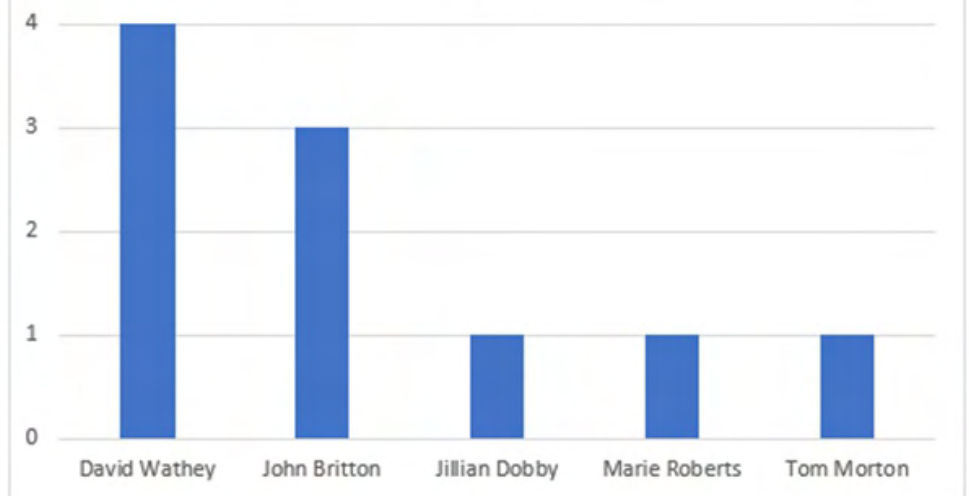


Leaderboard by Points



Name	Leg Wins
David Wathey	4
John Britton	3
Jillian Dobby	1
Marie Roberts	1
Tom Morton	1

Leg Wins



# Endless Possibilities for the M60 O-Ringen

*Peter Ross*

Here are some ideas/options as to what events we could put on in the future to utilise the M60 O-Ringen courses based on what the MapRun administration allows. i.e. the start times of a course can be opened and closed to one timetable, whilst the two types of results (time and route) can be published to their own separate timescales.

In addition to the public results published by MapRun the results can be collated by teams using data provided by MapRun. This could be published locally by email or via the MDOC website.

## Option 1. A Leg a Month.

### Description:

A simple monthly run aimed at individuals.

### How it will work:

Every month one of the Legs will be opened to runners for a weekend or maybe for just one day. All the 12 O-Ringen legs will appear over the period of a year.

Example: A monthly Saturday morning event. The course will comprise one of the 12 O-Ringen legs (with a new Saturday name) and open at 10.30am on the first Saturday of the month and will close at 12.30am the same day. Runners times will appear from 10.30am and stay visible for 12 months. The routes will appear at 12.30 and also remain visible for a year. The relatively narrow Start time window will make it more likely that runners will meet at the Start and Finish which will make its a little more sociable. Most Legs have a café at the start or at the finish... Prizes and awards for the most legs run, the quickest legs run, the accumulated fastest speed over the year and the shortest legs run.

## Option 2. A Sprint

### Description.

A relay race in which all the legs can be run simultaneously. The winning team will be the first to complete all the legs. (NOT the same as the shortest aggregate leg time). A team may have as many members as it wishes but teams with 12 members will have a distinct advantage.

### How it will work:

All the 12 O-Ringen Legs (suitably re-named) will open at the same moment. Each team can have up to 12 runners. The first team to complete all 12 legs wins.

### Example:

A Sunday event. All 12 legs will open at 11.00am. The results and the routes will be published on the MapRun site from 11.00am too. The winning team will have completed all the legs within an hour or so assuming 12 runners starting simultaneously.

The individual results will appear on the MapRun site as soon as each competitor finishes a leg. The Team results won't be far behind. It will be very exciting, and it won't take long.

Prizes and awards for the winning team, the fastest leg of the 12, and the shortest accumulated distance run.

### Option 3. A Two Day Event

#### Description:

A relay race that will cover all 12 legs over two days. Teams may have as many members in their team as they wish. The legs will have staggered start times. The winning team will be one that completes all the legs in the shortest aggregate time.

#### How it will work:

The first six legs of the O-Ringen will open on the first day but the Start times will be staggered by one hour in order to allow competitors to run one or more legs. Each team will have the time to organise its travelling requirements knowing the start time for each leg. The times will be published on the MapRun site as the competitors finish each leg and the routes at the end of the day. The team results will be published shortly after the last competitor finishes.

The second six legs will open on the second day with similar reporting. The overall result including both days will be available on the evening of the second day.

Prizes for the fastest team. The team that took the shortest route. The fastest team of 12 and of six.

#### Example:

A two day weekend event. On the first day the first leg opens at 10.00am, the second at 11.00am and so on until the sixth start a 3.00pm. The times taken for the first leg are published from 10.00am and the second from 11.00am and so on. The routes for all the legs are published from 4.00pm. The Team's aggregate times are published at 6.00pm and redone the following morning.

What do MDOC members think? Should we hold some M60 O-Ringen events as suggested and should these be for individual competitors or would team events be more popular? Do you have suggestions of your own?

Please respond to [editor@mdoc.org.uk](mailto:editor@mdoc.org.uk) and your feedback will help decide how we use this fantastic orienteering resource.



*The famous Urmston Beach (Photo: John Britton)*

# East Cheshire Urban Weekend 2021

Day 1 - Macclesfield West - 30th October 2021 - North-West Sprint Championships

## Women Open:

3rd - Ruth Beresford  
8th - Alison Fryer  
10th - Poppy Heap  
11th - Elizabeth Embrey

## Women Junior:

3rd - Joanna Tookey  
4th - Emma Kyd

## Women Young Junior:

2nd - Sarah Tookey  
3rd - Edith Grundy

## Women Super Veteran:

4th - Cecilia Fenerty  
6th - Jane McCann  
12th - Hazel Hindle  
17th - Penny Heap

## Women Ultra Veteran:

14th - Alison Doyle



*The start in Macclesfield (Photo: Peter Cull)*



*One happy planner  
(Photo: Peter Cull)*

## Men Open:

2nd - Mark Burley  
9th - Benjamin Kyd  
10th - Christopher Embrey  
11th - Joseph Herbert  
12th - Elizabeth Hamer-Davies

## Men Junior:

3rd - Keshav Ganesh  
5th - Aidan Rooza  
6th - Wilfred Ince  
7th - Sam Tyler

## Men Young Junior:

2nd - Elijas Rostron

## Men Veteran:

4th - Liam Corner  
10th - Alain Kyd

## Men Super Veteran:

4th - Trevor Hindle  
14th - Alan Ogden  
15th - Dave McCann  
16th - Andy Thornton  
19th - Graham Heap  
20th - Steve Nichols

## Men Ultra Veteran:

12th - Chris Rostron  
13th - Eddie Speak  
18th - Ian Gilliver  
19th - Douglas Edwards  
20th - Trevor Roberts



*Ruth Beresford on her way to becoming the new W21  
North-West Sprint Champion (Photo: Peter Cull)*

## Day 2 - Knutsford Urban - 31st October 2021



Liam Corner took 4th and 5th in MV (Photo: Peter Cull)

### Women Open:

3rd - Michele Dawson  
4th - Ruth Beresford  
10th - Alison Fryer

### Women Junior:

4th - Emma Kyd

### Women Veteran:

11th - Fiona Millington  
14th - Yvonne Hung

### Women Super Veteran:

6th - Cecilia Fenerty  
11th - Jane McCann  
14th - Poppy Heap  
20th - Elizabeth Embrey  
23rd - Penny Heap

### Women Ultra Veteran:

5th - Marie Roberts  
8th - Kate Bryant  
15th - Julie Brook  
18th - Alison Doyle



Alan Ogden in sprint action  
(Photo: Peter Cull)

### Women Hyper Veteran:

2nd - Irene Crawshaw

### Men Open:

1st - Thomas Fellbaum  
3rd - Mark Burley  
9th - Christopher Embrey  
12th - Benjamin Kyd  
15th - River Edis-Smith  
16th - Dominic Wathey  
19th - Elizabeth Hamer-Davies

### Men Junior:

3rd - Wilfred Ince  
4th - Aidan Rooza

### Men Veteran:

5th - Liam Corner  
8th - Nick Taylor  
21st - Paul Watson

### Men Super Veteran:

15th - Dave McCann  
18th - Peter Hayes  
19th - Graham Heap  
20th - Edwin Paul Van-Calster  
22nd - Steve Nichols

### Men Ultra Veteran:

5th - David Wathey  
6th - John Britton  
18th - Chris Rostron  
19th - Ian Farrell  
26th - Peter Ross  
28th - Chris Kirkham  
33rd - Ian Gilliver  
34th - Douglas Edwards

### Men Hyper Veteran:

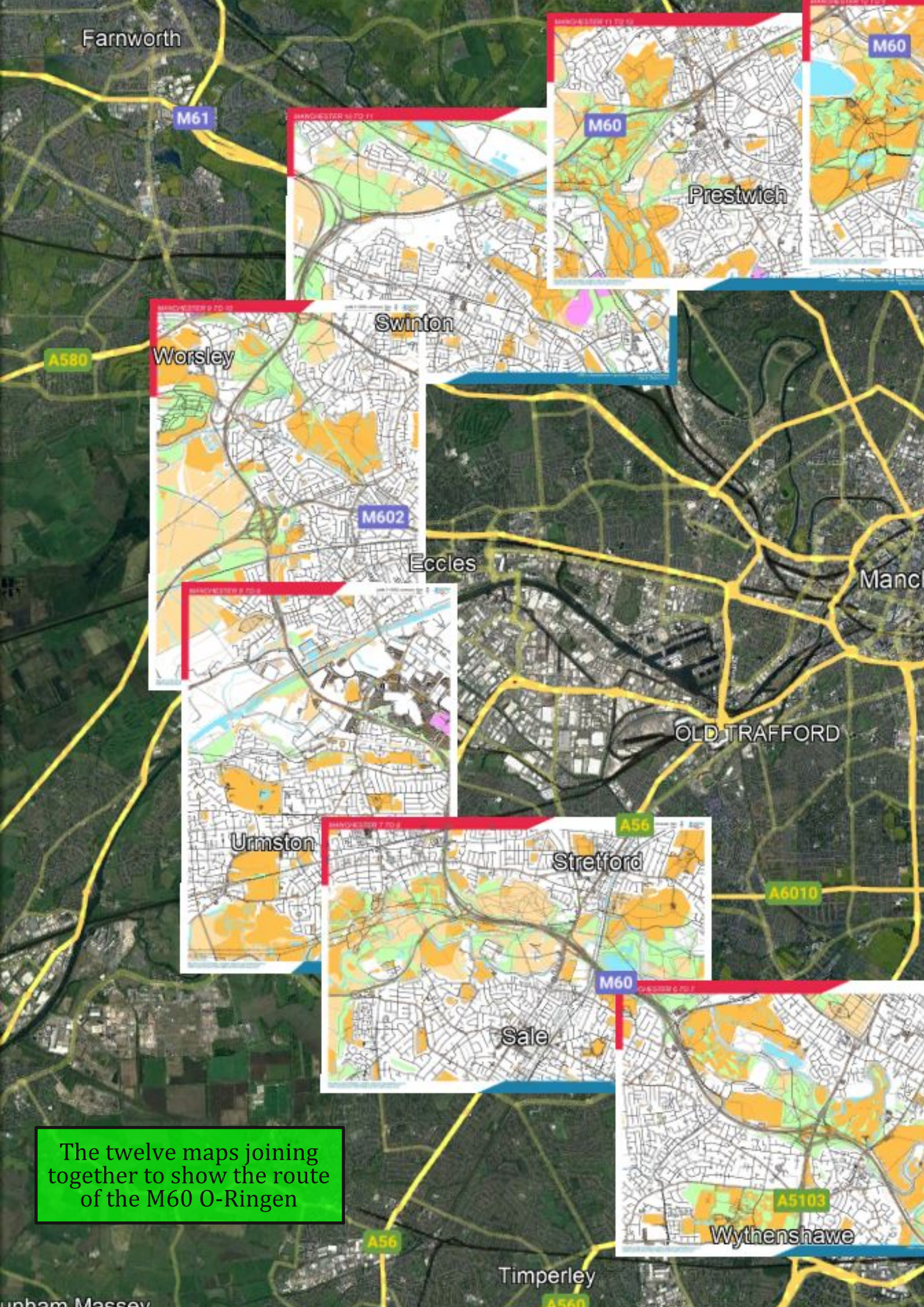
11th - Grahame Crawshaw  
13th - Iain Smith



Liz HD showed great endurance to complete the longest courses on both days  
(Photo: Peter Cull)



Happy orienteers (Photo: Peter Cull)



Farnworth

M61

MANCHESTER 10 TO 11

M60

M60

Prestwich

Swinton

Worsley

A580

M602

Eccles

Manc

OLD TRAFFORD

Urmston

MANCHESTER 7 TO 8

Stretford

A56

A6010

Sale

M60

The twelve maps joining together to show the route of the M60 O-Ringen

A5103

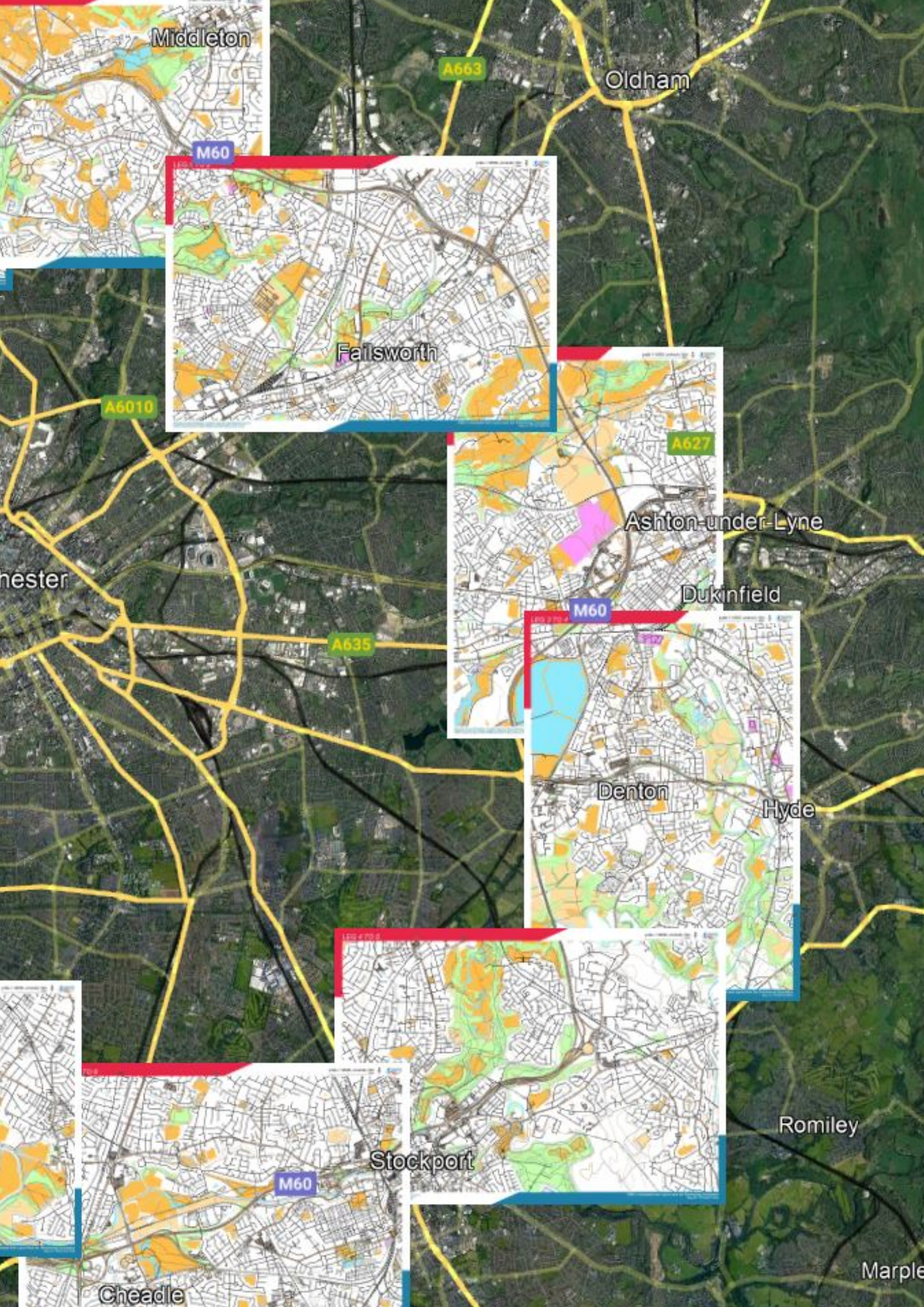
Wythenshawe

Timperley

A56

A560

unham Massey



Middleton

Oldham

A663

M60

Faisworth

A6010

A627

Ashton-under-Lyne

Dukinfield

Manchester

A635

M60

Denton

Hyde

M60

Stockport

Romiley

Cheadle

M60

Marple

# The Visibly Intricate Navigation Challenge Event

Clare Griffin

The VINCE (run by noted motorcycle adventurer Austin Vince) is essentially a trail score event, with controls worth between 1 and 5 points and stiff penalties for late return. Except that it is held over two 12 hour days in rural Spain and you have to do it on a motorbike.

The VINCE is not a race - the event ethos is resolutely 'low tech and low-fi' with motorbike racing clothing strictly forbidden - the final instructions advised 'wear armour yes, but underneath your crocheted poncho'. The urge to win is also discouraged (there is no prize save the joy of taking part), but we thought we'd give it a gentle go.

The obvious first problem for the wannabe motorcycle orienteer is how to hold and thumb the map when both hands are fully occupied controlling a motorbike on a mountain trail. Rik came up with an ingenious solution - attach magnetic clipboards to the bikes' handlebars, fasten the maps to them with bulldog clips and use small but strong neodymium magnets, which could be pushed around to mark our position.

The second problem was planning our routes. We were given the 'all controls' master map and the clue book beforehand and had to plan and print our maps before we left England. Strictly speaking, this was the third problem: Rik spent a huge amount of time working out how to transpose the 'all controls' master map into a large number of smaller maps at a scale suitable for navigating on, but that probably deserves a separate article, or a chat with him over a beer if you're interested.



*20 maps for 24 hours of orienteering*



*Watch out for local wildlife on the trails*

Receiving the documents the month before the event had the big advantage of giving us lots of time to plan. The downside was that we didn't know whether our estimate of how much ground we could cover in 12 hours was accurate, or how technical the trails would be, in both the navigational and 'likely to make you fall off' senses.

With our prep done and the bikes packed into our van, team Dubious Bearings (named both for the quality of our navigation and the mechanical condition of our motorbikes) found ourselves in Valderrobres, Aragon on a sunny Sunday in mid-October.



We had planned a first day route with less technical looking navigation and plenty of early escape routes in case our distance estimate turned out to be wildly optimistic. Our second day involved more difficult nav and a committing big early loop skirting around some trackless mountains.

At the pre-event dinner on Monday, Austin revealed that it was a public holiday and the nearby town of Beceite should be avoided as the main street was closed for a festival. Unluckily, both of our days started in Beceite, but only the second day's route could be amended to bypass the town. Some hasty plan modification ensued, and we agreed to swap our days.

Day 1 began by pushing our bikes quietly through the beautiful old part of Valderrobres just before 8am and out over the medieval bridge (which was not supposed to be driven or ridden over, although the locals treated this rule with a cheerful irreverence). Once clear, we rode the short distance to the start, to be told that Austin had seen the first bike away a few minutes ago and had retired to the hotel. Not a standard orienteering start!



*Team Dubious Bearings*

We quickly found ourselves in an intricate network of trails running through olive groves. One or two wrong turns later (olive farmers like to make new trails!), we found our first control - a small metal plate with a code stamped into it, screwed discreetly to the leg of a farm sign. The rest of the day passed quite uneventfully, with beautiful views, friendly mushroom pickers and controls in all manner of places but mostly attached to the lintels of the many ruined farmhouses in the area.

Things began to go wrong about 5pm, we made a 180 error after a petrol stop and spent 20 mins scratching our heads half a km down a trail on what turned out to be the wrong side of the road, trying to make the tracks we could see fit the map.

Our next two controls were in olive groves. The first was fairly straightforward, but then we got lost in a maze of mountain bike trails and the second took a lot of finding. We were hot and bothered and, with our last planned couple of controls also in olive groves, we decided to call it a day and finished an hour early. Much to our surprise, we were 3rd of 30 or so teams at dinner that night. Although I'm not sure that all 30 were taking it terribly seriously.

The next day, the early starters were a bit thinner on the ground. We rode through a sleeping Beceite and made good progress on our 'easier nav' day. Again brain-fade set in during the afternoon. We rode 5km up a steep mountain trail chasing after a juicy 4-pointer, but convinced ourselves we'd overshot our junction and were in the wrong set of hairpins. We weren't, and had to go back up again. We then had a really satisfying couple of hours of smooth nav, beautiful trails and quite a decent point accumulation too. We were checking the clock before committing to each of these controls - each one might take an hour to get to. On the way back with an hour left on the clock and only 20km to ride by road, Rik suggested we go for one more control. In an olive grove.

This grove proved as tricky as the others, with unmarked trails everywhere. 'I hate olive groves' I wailed. We agreed - 5 more minutes, then we'd give it up and skedaddle for the finish. Found it! We got home with 20 mins to spare to find with pleasure that we'd retained our position on the bottom step of the podium (not that there was one).



*Stunning views over Aragon*

After the event, we stayed on for a few more days. Several controls which we hadn't collected because they were low value or miles away from any others had descriptions which suggested that they really needed to be visited, such as a 'ruined 16th century mega-convent' and a mountain viewpoint hand-annotated on the master map simply as 'epic view' (it was too).

It was a really fun event - the principles were the same as foot orienteering but the sheer size of the map (we covered >200km each day) and the added complexity of controlling a motorbike on rough ground (occasionally with an adjacent precipice to focus the mind) made it a bit different and an excellent mini-adventure. It was a very satisfying week away!

# Future Coaches for MDOC

*Cecilia Fenerty*

Peter Hayes, David Wathey and I have recently embarked on training to become Level 2 Coaches. Peter has been doing lots of work in schools to encourage young children to develop and master basic orienteering skills, so becoming a L2 licenced coach was an obvious next step to take.

David and I were encouraged to do the course through a different route. Dominic Wathey, our son, has been a member of the North West Junior Squad (NWJS) for some years, and it is usual for the parents of the juniors to assist during coaching sessions or to participate by trying out some of the exercises. It was during these sessions that we were both approached to see if we would consider becoming coaches to be able to help out in a more formal way. With the prospect of Dom having several more years in the squad, doing a coaching course seemed like a good way to give something back, and we were also mindful that MDOC would benefit from more coaches too.

As with so many aspects of our lives, Covid then got in the way, and Coaching Courses were stopped until a few months ago, so our training has only just begun - a full 2 years since we had originally contemplated the idea! We still have several exercises to complete before becoming fully licenced coaches and this could take several months, by which time Dom will likely have only another year in the squad before he moves on to University. However, we hope this training will still be of benefit, and, in time, other MDOC juniors will join the squad and we will be able to support them with their development. We also hope that we may be able to support adult MDOC members, in particular newcomers and less experienced orienteers, or maybe even those members who orienteer well, but want the opportunity to be able to practise certain skills and techniques outside of formal competition events to improve their performance.

Our L2 Coaching programme is being delivered by Pat Mee and there are 6 other participants on the course from SROC and LOC. The training started with Pat emailing several documents and some tasks to complete before the first classroom session. These tasks included viewing a YouTube video of a coaching session and critically appraising it. The principles of good coaching are common to all sports, so it wasn't an issue that this was not video of orienteering, but I now know much more about spatial awareness in football than I did before!



*L2 coaching trainees discuss their practical sessions (Photo: Cecilia Fenerty)*

So far we have completed 3 full-day in-person sessions at Astley Hall and Park near Chorley. The first two days were held in September with glorious sunshine, and although we had some classroom teaching we also had plenty of opportunity to get outside when we paired up with other members of the group to deliver basic technical skills lessons to each other. Planning, delivering the lessons and receiving feedback gave us plenty of opportunity to interact with all of the group and get to know each other, whilst also practising our coaching techniques and skills.

After this weekend, we had several weeks to complete a series of written tasks in our portfolio, each requiring us to study the coaching handbook and BOF policy documents or researching online and expressing our own outlook and opinions on various aspects of coaching. Whilst the tasks were clearly designed to increase our knowledge through a problem-based learning technique, it was also enlightening to discover that there is a wealth of well-developed BOF resources to support the delivery of our coaching sessions. Most of the trainee coaches are still working fulltime and the written tasks were all far more detailed and time consuming than any of us anticipated, so we were all relieved to discover that most of us were in the same boat and had submitted our completed tasks to the absolute deadline!

In addition to the written tasks, we were all given a subject of a session we would deliver at the third in-person training day. This time we were going it alone – planning, making course maps, performing a risk assessment, writing a sessional plan (detailed enough that someone else could deliver it for us if necessary), delivering the session, receiving feedback from participants, self-assessing the session and being observed and appraised by an assessor. On the day, we were not the only ones being assessed, as the delivery of our training course was being evaluated by an independent observer from 1st4Sport, the organisation that awards the L2 Coaching qualification co-badged with BOF.



*Astley Hall, Chorley (Photo: Cecilia Fenerty)*

This third training day brought with it a change in the weather. First thing in the morning the sun was shining and we set out the controls for the exercises we had planned and came back, not just warmed up, but positively over-heating! An hour or so later, the sky had become overcast and the temperature had dropped. David was able to deliver his coaching session before the worst of the weather set in, so it was easy for him to keep everything dry.

Meanwhile Peter, in true teacher style, laminated everything for his session (including record cards for us to use for pin-punching) so the few drops of rain that fell during his session didn't bother him. I was the last of all the group to deliver my session, by which time the wind had got up and the rain was almost horizontal. So when everyone was back from running one planned loop of my exercise I decided that we should call it day rather than do any more.

Having returned to the class room, I discovered all my paperwork was now papier mache , including the maps in plastic bags and all the assessment documents, so my first note to self (on a new dry self-assessment sheet!!) was to always use waterproof maps or laminate if possible (Can I borrow your laminator Peter?!). However my first piece of feedback from the assessor was that it was a "good call to foreshorten the coaching session on account of the weather, and a difficult decision to make especially whilst being assessed!" - well, I think I'll take that!

So what next?

Now David, Peter and I need to deliver 4 linked sessions to a group (and demonstrate progression), and one further physical coaching session, before our final assessment. Peter is planning on delivering his linked coaching sessions in a school setting; a very important opportunity to encourage local young children in the sport and hopefully this will be a good strategy to recruit long lasting membership within the club, and future NWJS members.

David and I are hoping to deliver coaching sessions to other members of the club and we would welcome your feedback. A questionnaire will be emailed out via MDOC simple lists, which we hope you may respond to, but we have replicated this below:

- Would you like to join a series of four linked coaching sessions to be held immediately prior to the 3 MDOC Spring Series local events 2022 + 1 stand alone session in the Manchester area?
- What is your current level of skill or experience with orienteering?
- What aspects of orienteering skills would you like included in the sessions?

We hope some of you will support us to complete our training by 'volunteering' to be coached by us. Hopefully we can support you in return by delivering coaching on aspects that you have requested, and we will be able to support the club and other members on an ongoing basis when we become fully licenced. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Please respond to [editor@mdoc.org.uk](mailto:editor@mdoc.org.uk)

Cecilia and David

# MDOC Interviews: Tony Wagg

## **How did you get into orienteering?**

I was always fascinated by maps and led walking groups at school and university. A friend and I led attacks on Pendle Hill from opposite sides in the snow. Needless to say, there was a great snowball fight for command of the summit. The other leader is a current POTO W75! I began O in 1977 when Dave Hanstock (currently BOK, then MDOC) joined me at work. My first event was a score at Dove Stones. Could I do the last 2km in 8 mins? I did end with a positive score but it was a near thing.

## **Do you prefer urban, forest or open moorland? Any specific favourite areas?**

It has to be scenic, soft underfoot and technically interesting. That rules out urban for me and most MDOC areas outside the Lakes! My favourite areas are High Dam, much of Scotland and Halden (Norway) though I've only run there once. I've been to many World Vets which has led to some good O terrain but also visits to countries I might not otherwise have gone to. These include all of Scandinavia except Sweden, and the Baltic states. My least favourite trips have been Austria and Hungary – far too hot – while I repeatedly vow never to orienteer in the North York Moors. I love them for walking, birdwatching and the coast, but the forests are steep, strewn with brambles and lack other redeeming features.

## **What has been the most memorable event you have competed in and why?**

Six months into my O career I ran at Darnaway, a world champs forest, and had the last start on the longest course (about 9km I imagine). The forest seemed strangely quiet towards the end but I did reach the finish before it was dismantled. Was I disconcerted? No. I was used to spending 10 hours in the Scottish hills so I wondered what you were supposed to do for the rest of the day. The most memorable start sign was in Minnesota. 'There are 9 wolves and 5 bears living in this forest – avoid contact'. Good job Karen (Parker) was not there. She is nervous of anything with 4 legs, except possibly the breakfast table! (Hi Karen). I did think the sign could have offered more specific advice (let the bear punch first, do not feed the wolves??).

## **You seem to do a lot of volunteering on event days, particularly control collecting. What do you enjoy about helping at events?**

What gave you that idea? I'm just bad at saying no. But I am getting better – Sue and others please note. When control collecting you can wander round an area paying great attention to the map. The yellow stakes are now much less faff to carry. You can also stay in bed longer if you only come to collect controls. A very memorable occasion was collecting after the British at High Dam in 2017. I was over the Rusland side, in light birch woods carpeted with bluebells, in bright sun and with no one around but for me, the birds and the odd squirrel. I sat down to admire the world, thinking this is my vision of paradise.

## **How does this compare with being club secretary?**

I've never been a great fan of meetings but on the whole most people stick to the issue in hand and do not throw the furniture around. Compare this with long ago when 3 of us neutrals were appointed to keep the peace between vigorously warring factions in an opera company. I learnt what it must feel like to be Speaker of the House of Commons or the ref in England v Argentina.

## **Outside of orienteering what are your interests or hobbies?**

How long have you got? Current interests: foreign languages (Italian and German at present), choral singing (mainly 1-day workshops), a specialist human rights organisation, walking and (pre-covid) the theatre. I am also an unofficial roadie and bouncer for a female choir. In a former life I was a track sprinter (relays and 400m), footballer (mainly 5-a-side in later years), skier and rock climber. My attitude to climbing followed that of the Duke of Plaza Toro (who? – The Gondoliers). He led his regiment from behind. He found it less exciting. I was a very experienced second on the crags. I also worked as a ghostly apparition in Verdi's Macbeth for the Royal Opera (not my main day job). Think I got £5 a show.

## **What advice would you give to new orienteers & those trying to improve their skills?**

My dentist said the secret of good teeth is to choose your parents carefully. Ditto orienteering. Keen and capable parents can teach you from a young age and take you to lots of events. Then with luck, there is a regional squad, tours, good coaching and lots of friends from all over. If you have missed this bus, first remember that your feet generally work faster than your brain. Go to lots of events including difficult terrain, have post mortems with the good guys and take whatever coaching is available. I have consistently neglected most of this advice.

# MDOC Interviews: Alison Fryer

## **What is your favourite thing about orienteering?**

The nostalgic part of me wants to say Wilf's "chilli and both" followed by a chocolate brownie! A more serious answer would be learning to navigate, it's given me the freedom and confidence to explore.

## **Do you prefer urban, forest or open moorland? Any specific favourite areas?**

No preference – I think there are quality examples of all terrains and good planning can make a course. Forest - I like places like Great Tower/Blakeholme/Haverthwaite (when the undergrowth is down!). Open moorland – I like fells like Stickle Pike with tricky detail, and can I squeeze sand dunes in here too? Roanhead, which is down the road from my parent's house, is fab! For urban it takes a lot to beat Edinburgh, lots of intricate ginnels and lovely surrounding scenery.

## **What has been the most memorable event you have competed in and why?**

Ah there's an easy answer – I'll never forget starting at a Midnattssolgaloppen event near Tromsø at 11:30pm and being blinded by the sun going up a hill...very strange!

I can also remember seeing the bright lights of Greater Manchester for the first time – competing in my first British Night Champs in 2005 as a W14. I used Dad's pre-historic headlamp with 6 heavy U2 batteries in a rucsac to navigate round Watergrove Moor. Somehow I won, despite the equipment, but I also remember enjoying a lovely mug of soup from Jen Britton!

## **How did you get into orienteering?**

My Dad. He's been a member of WCOC/LOC since he was young, so I was doing string courses as soon as I could walk and did my first event on my own around the age of 7. I was fortunate LOC had plenty of juniors (mostly from UVHS although I didn't attend there), and I joined NWJS around the age of 14 which was great for making orienteering friends and improving my skills. I did make it to one of the BOF tours in Lagganlia and if you ask I'll bore you with my ankle story which I blame for ending my orienteering "career" ...!

## **Outside of orienteering what are your interests or hobbies?**

Work takes up a lot of my time and orienteering is my main hobby but I also enjoy climbing the Lake District fells – I finally completed the Wainwrights earlier this year. I've done the odd OMM, and Dad and I did our first Saunders this year (much nicer weather!). I fit in a few parkruns, but I'm a long way behind Anna! The other sport our family is involved with is motorsport, and I really enjoy marshalling at forest rallies in the Lakes, timekeeping on starts and finishes. You can't beat the sound and smell of rally cars in Grizedale forest. At quieter moments I find playing the flute or piano is good for relaxing and I get to a few folk gigs.

## **What is your favourite piece of orienteering kit?**

Probably my Norwegian club top from the NWJS tours – they bring back happy memories of running in the most amazing forests, swimming in tarns half way round courses, lovely accommodation, and playing marsh football.



*Alison sporting the lesser-seen Manchester University top (Photo: Jo Cleary)*

Knitting has once again been growing in popularity in the UK, particularly during the lockdowns when it became the latest trend to sweep the country, with some retailers reporting up to a 400% increase in search requests for knitting on their websites! As always our club was ahead of the times and a former member has submitted this article from a late 1970's(?) MDOC newsletter. I am reliably informed that many club members knitted their own club sweater at the time, including: Kath Rose, the Crawshaws, Jane Anthony, Margaret Gregory and Sue Birkinshaw; although not everyone else was a fan of the fashion! So if you're one of the 4.5 million Brits who knit, here is your winter challenge! Hopefully we'll see lots of homemade MDOC kit on show at next years spring series...

## WOT A KNIT! by Irene "Mastermind" Crawshaw

After numerous requests and a lot of head-scratching, I have worked out the pattern for the sweaters I knitted at Christmas. I hope those of you keen enough to knit one (or two) can follow the instructions. They are really very easy and quick to knit in stocking stitch. I used Hayfield Grampian chunky and 1 pair each of sizes 3 (6½mm) and 5 (5½mm) needles. The largest size was a 40" chest and that took 6x50g balls of colour A, 6 balls of colour C, and 1 ball of colour B. The smallest size 32" took 4 balls of colour A, 4 balls of colour C, and 1 ball of colour B. (This is just a guide - you may use more or less.)

The instructions are for size 32(34,36,38,40)" chest. 42

### BACK

Using size 5 needles and colour A, cast on 60(64,68,72,74)sts. and work 14 rows of k1,p1,rib. 36

Change to size 3 needles and work in stocking stitch (1 row knit,1row purl) until work measures 14½(14½,14½,16,16) inches ending with a purl row.

Join in colour B and work in pattern from chart for 6 rows, stranding the colour not in use over not more than 3 stitches, loosely across back of work.

Break off colour A and join in colour C.

Work 2 more rows of pattern (rows 7&8).

Shape armholes.

Keeping pattern correct cast off 4 sts. at the beginning of the next 2 rows (rows 9 & 10).

Decrease 1 st. at each end of the next two rows. (rows 11 & 12).

Break off colour B.

Decrease 1 st. at each end of next 3(4,6,4,5) rows. 42(44,44,52,52)sts.

Continue without shaping until armholes measure 7½(7½,7½,9,9)inches ending with a purl row.

Shape shoulders.

Cast off 6(6,6,7,7)sts. at beginning of next two rows.

Cast off 6(7,7,8,8)sts. at beginning of next two rows.

Leave remaining 18(18,18,22,22)sts. on a stitch holder or safety pin.

### FRONT

Work as for back until armhole measures 4(4,4,5½,5½)inches ending with a purl row.

Shape neck.

Knit 16(17,17,20,20)sts. turn.

Purl 1 row on these stitches.

work 4(4,4,5,5) rows decreasing 1 stitch at neck edge only on every row. 12(13,13,15,15)sts.

Work without shaping until armhole measures 7½(7½,7½,9,9)inches ending with a purl row.

Shape shoulder.

Cast off 6(6,6,7,7)sts. knit to end.

Purl 1 row.

Cast off remaining 6(7,7,8,8)sts.

With right side facing, slip the first 10(10,10,12,12)sts. on to a stitch holder.

Re-join wool to remaining 16(17,17,20,20)sts. knit to end.

Purl 1 row.

Work 4(4,4,5,5) rows decreasing 1 st. at neck edge only on every row. 12(13,13,15,15)sts.

Continue without shaping until armhole measures 7½(7½,7½,9,9)inches ending with a knit row.



*Irene modelling the original sweater, still going strong roughly 40 years after it was first knitted!*



P.T.O.



Shape shoulder.  
 Cast off 6(6,6,7,7,)sts.purlwise. Purl to end.  
 Knit 1 row.  
 Cast off remaining 6(7,7,8,8)sts. purlwise.  
 Sew up right shoulder seam.

THE NECKBAND

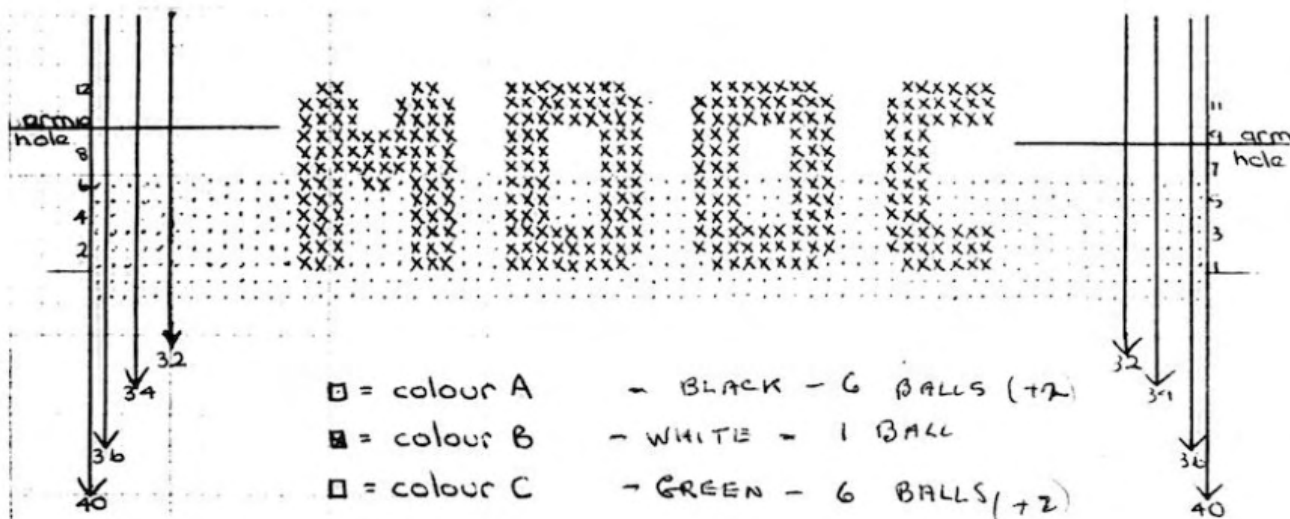
With right side facing, using colour C and size 5 needles, starting at the top of left shoulder, pick up and knit 15 stitches evenly along left side of neck, knit across 10(10,10,12,12) sts. from holder at front of neck, pick up and knit 15 sts. evenly along right side of neck and knit across 18(18,18,22,22) sts. from holder at back of neck. 58(58,58,64,64)sts. Work 13 rows k1,p1, rib. Cast off loosely in rib.

SLEEVES (both alike)

Using size 5 needles and colour C cast on 29(29,29,35,37)sts. Work 18 rows k1,p1, rib, beginning 2nd. row k2. Change to size 3 needles and work in stocking stitch. Increase 1 st. at each end of 9th.(7th.7th.7th.) row and every following 10th.(8th.8th.8th.8th.) row to 35(39,39,41,49)sts. then every following 8th.(6th.6th.6th.6th.) row to 41(43,43,51,51)sts. Continue without shaping until work measures 15(15,15,17½,17½)ins. ending with a purl row. Change to colour B and work 4 rows. Work 2 rows in colour C. Work 4 rows in colour B. Break off colour B. Work 2 rows in colour C. Shape top. Cast off 1 stitch at the beginning of the next 24(22,22,26,26) rows. Cast off 2 sts. at the beginning of the next 2(4,4,4,4) rows. Cast off remaining 13(13,13,17,17) sts.

TO MAKE UP

Follow pressing instructions given with wool.  
 Using over stitch for ribbing and back stitch for the rest, sew up left shoulder seam and neckband seam.  
 Sew up side and sleeve seams being careful to match colours correctly.  
 Sew in sleeves.  
 Fold neckband in half onto wrong side and sew loosely in position.



*Black top white letter - male.  
 white top black letter - female  
 Green Body.*

A separate copy of the instructions can be obtained by emailing editor@mdoc.org.uk and if you do succeed in knitting one, or if against all odds you also have a surviving sweater (or any other vintage MDOC kit) do send the photos to editor@mdoc.org.uk for posterity!

# British Schools Championship

Stop the press! Results are just in from the BSOA championships which took place on November 21st at Stowe Park, Buckinghamshire. Three North West schools have been using the MDOC autumn series as practice and they all competed at the championship, with lots of success. It's a nice reminder that putting on local events has a huge positive impact on young orienteers. Congratulations to everyone who took part!

## **Fallibroome:**

Yr7 Girls team - Gold  
Yr9 Boys team - Bronze  
Yr10 Girls team - Silver  
Yr13 Boys team - Gold  
Yr13 Girls team - Gold

Milly Collins Yr13 Individual - Bronze

And the school was tied for second place in the 'large secondary school' competition, so the whole team took home a silver medal. Well done to all, especially the year 7's in their first championship.

## **Cheadle Hulme:**

Yr7 Boys team - Bronze  
Yr13 Boys team - Silver

*"It was great to see schools from the North West travelling down to this National competition, and that is only possible because students are able to gain practice and experience on a range of terrain at local club events.*

*It was great for my Year 7 boys to come away with a medal at their first championship, but this was only possible because of the event at Chorlton Water park and a crash course in navigation using the excellent "Getting going" videos and courses set out at Wythenshawe Park and MapRun course at Reddish Vale which we were able to use in the weekends leading up.*

*A big thank you to the MDOC members who produced the training videos and I thought I should feed back that they were invaluable to our success this weekend."*

Simon Fletcher - Cheadle Hulme School

**Birkenhead** also did very well (2nd place - small secondary school) and also benefitted from the recent MDOC events for which they are very grateful. It is great to see them at the British schools championship.

# Caption Competition



Send in your best captions to [editor@mdoc.org.uk](mailto:editor@mdoc.org.uk)

Last editions winner:



'Now I've conquered the ballet, it's on to the tightrope!' - Julia H.

## **Fixtures**

4th December - MDOC Autumn Series - Bruntwood Park

5th December - PFO Regional - Nick o'Pendle

11th December - SELOC Local - Daisy Nook Park Oldham

23rd January - DEE Regional - Thurstaston Common

13th February - CompassSport Cup Heat - Hawse End

## **Night Street League Series 10 (Provisional)**

More information coming soon via MDOC website

7th December - Marple (Norfolk Arms Pub) - MapRun Event

11th January - Poynton

27th January - Wilmslow (Coach & Four Pub) - MapRun Event

8th February - Congleton - MapRun Event

24th February - Cheadle Hulme

8th March - Chapel-en-le-Frith/Whaley Bridge - Cup Final Event

## **MDOC Spring Series (Provisional)**

Check MDOC website for latest information

22nd January - Brabyns Park

12th February - Woodbank Park

19th March - Wythenshawe Park