



MDOC NEWS



Newsletter of Manchester and District Orienteering Club

November 2019



International Edition

A shallow re-entrant in a grand location (Photo: Peter Ross)

**Dolomites, Vienna, Limburg &
Sweden
Plus
British Sprint & Middle Champs
World & British TrailO Champs**

Primiero O 2019

Peter Ross

As I understand it chaos theory tells us that a system can produce wildly different outcomes from starting positions that are microscopically similar. So, for example, if we take two identical suitcases, identically labelled and loaded onto the belt at Manchester International Airport within seconds of each other, well, in theory, they could separately pop up anywhere in the world.

This thought occurred to me as I stood waiting at the baggage claim in Venice Marco Polo airport. Previously, due to a freak of fortuitous positioning Jillyan and I, despite sitting in the middle of the plane, were the first couple through passport control and so first to the carousel. (Last onto the first bus, first off it, up the stairs and through the e-passport gates before Marco knew what had happened.)

Almost immediately a suitcase appeared and a Manchester man, behind us in the race to carousel, picked it up. Then, and this is the mystery, no more bags appeared for over half an hour. So this first bag could not possibly have come with us on our flight. Ergo it must have been one of the chaotic 'pop up anywhere in the world' jobbies landing, through chaotic serendipity, at Marco Polo. Amazing!

We drove our hire car across the steamy Italian plain away from Venice and north up into the cooler Dolomites and to the event centre at Fiera Di Primiero in order to pick up our bibs and sign up for Prologue #1 which was due to take place the next day. We felt obliged to take part: the Start and Finish were only 500m from our hotel in the small town of San Martino di Castrozza situated up the valley from the centre.

The walk to the Start required 45 minutes and included a 200m climb through a forest set beneath the colossal white limestone columns and peaks of the Dolomites. The course itself was a delight being mostly downhill - but you knew that - on an excellent map in runnable forest with the odd open grassy meadow full of flowers. Italy can be very Swiss. There were no nettles, heather, bracken or Himalayan balsam. Italy can be very Arcadian too. The last quarter of a mile was through the town for a splash of urban. Perfect.

We then had a day to relax before Stage 1, the first competitive day of the Primiero O meeting. We took the opportunity to get to the top of the Rosetta Pass which is 2,700m in altitude and right in the middle of those fabulous white peaks. Was it difficult? Well the cablecar cost €50 and the last bit was terrifying.

Stage 1 was held at an altitude of 2,200 meters and it could only be reached by chair lift. Once at the top a completely different kind of Orienteering terrain was revealed to us. We were on a huge treeless plateau covered with alpine flowers, orchids, gentians, marshes sprinkled with white cotton grass, boulders, crags, spurs and re-entrants. In other words the whole place was created for virtual controls. Sadly there wasn't a single one to be seen. We had to make do with kites and SIACs and the like.

Nevertheless the sun shone, and the visibility extended to 50km. The queue for the portable toilets had a particularly good view of those white Dolomite peaks that stretched to the horizon and back. There would have been a similar view from inside the loos had there been a small window, something like a porthole, from which to survey the world. Such an arrangement would certainly have given a new meaning to the term "port-able toilet". Ha ha.

Once we began running the mountain air was not only crystal clear, but if I'm honest, a bit thin and lacking oxygen, which added another dimension to the Orienteering experience. The navigational skills required centred around reading contours, recognising rock features and spotting cotton grass. And not getting too puffed out. All in all very enjoyable.



A nicer looking competition area you could not wish for

Travelling back on the chairlift we were able to survey some of the competition area. We were high enough to see both the runners and the controls but to our surprise the spectacle became an emotionally challenging time. We could see minor tragedies unfolding below us: some runners were clearly not on line, another was entering the wrong re-entrant and another running to the wrong boulder. But the Fates,

whilst probably oblivious to the modern mysteries of chaos theory - although sharing the same delight in catastrophic outcomes - had cast their spells and there was nothing that we mortals could do to avert their cruel practical joking. Jillyan and I could only look away.

In cyberspace the results were updated on the Primiero O website in real time so it was possible to see not only who had run but also who was still running. Late that night, long after the chairlift had closed for the day the website was still showing twenty or so competitors yet to download. I wonder where they actually were? I wonder if anybody else wondered. Hey ho.

The next day Stage 2 was held at the same venue. Another glorious day. The assembly area was adjacent to a Refuge which is not to be confused with a bothy. A Refuge is a sophisticated cafe and restaurant, which despite serving excellent meals, coffee and hot chocolate has no apparent means of logistical support. Magic. We liked Stage 2.

Meanwhile San Martino was suffering from a surfeit of Jeeps. Camp Jeep was in town. There were signs saying "Jeep - there is only one." Ha ha. In fact there were several hundred, each with a proud owner. I learnt that the different Jeep models have names associated with the Wild West such as Renegade and Cherokee TrackHawk to give them an (entirely undeserved) impression of toughness and lawlessness. I think some Jeeps could have gone off-road but apart from parking on the pavement they didn't. I think the reason is that Jeeps are quite expensive and so the potential depreciation associated with going through a puddle must have weighed heavy. On the other hand the Jeep fraternity - yes, it was a male dominated Camp - loved driving in convoys. The roads around San Martino are not short of hairpin bends so what you can say about Jeeps is that their turning circle isn't too bad.

Stage 3 was in the forest to be found down the valley from San Martino. The drop in altitude increased the temperature a good 10°C and the oxygen levels returned to normal. The sun shone. The competition arena was a grassy area beside the forest beneath the mountains. The bees buzzed, the butterflies flew and the beetles beetled away. It was ecological, harmonious and very pretty. The PA played some deeply personal mea culpas and disclaimers including a song perfect for the relays. It had the line "I'm only human, don't lay the blame on me". (Ed: maybe a Newsletter competition to find a playlist for a middle distance event?)

The competition area was quite small, steep, forested and with intricate contour details. There were also some confusing out of bounds arrangements. Excellent for an intense middle distance race, which it was, although the run back from the tricky bit to the arena was long and rather sweaty. A classy metallic pastel coloured aluminium water bottle was the prize for finishing. And gratefully received.

And that was it. We had competed in and completed the Primiero O. Three competitive Stages and one of a possible two friendly Prologues. Excellent terrain, planning and organisation (putting the dnfs to one side for the minute) coming together in a very beautiful part of the world. Not a huge meeting: about a thousand competitors, but a gem none-the-less.

Time to drive back up to San Martino and our hotel whilst counting the convoys of Jeeps and singing a Chuck Berry favourite...

"Ten mile stretch on the Indiana Road
Sky blue Jaguar and Thunderbird 4
Jaguar sitting on 99
Trying to beat the Ford to the county line.
Slow down little Jaguar, keep cool big Thunderbird 4."

Now let's talk about Fords. A real motor car manufacturer if ever there was one....

PS My suitcase was the FIRST to appear on the belt at Manchester. What are the chances?



The assembly and finish of stage 3

Vienna O Challenge: Fri 30th Aug – Sun 1st Sep

Julie Laverock

I came across this event by chance. The event website made it look very inviting, a very professionally produced promo video and lots of useful info for travel, sightseeing and the chance of 3 (4 if you included the relay) urban events all in one weekend.

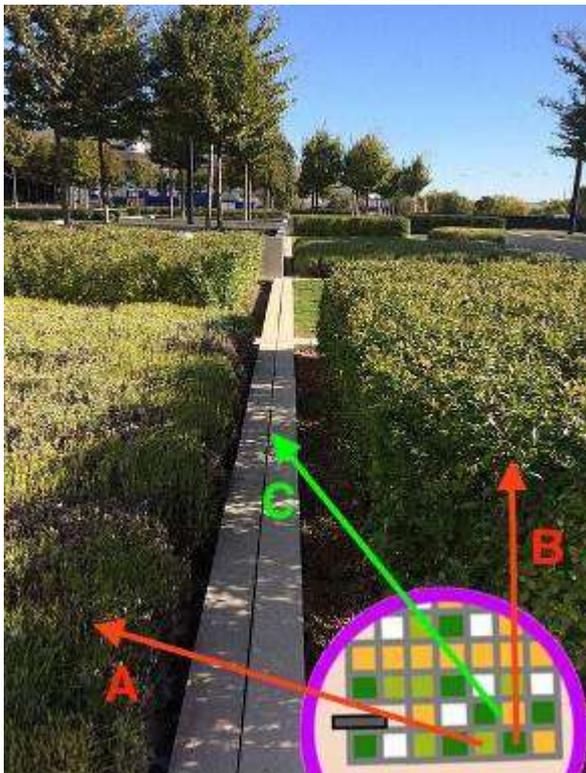
<https://voc.ol-sport.at/>

So, the perfect opportunity to take my dibber on its first overseas trip. I did have a few logistics to overcome, primarily what to do with my 'stuff' while I was competing. Although the event centres were all within the city boundaries, they were going to involve the use of public transport to get to them.

DAY 1

This was at Donau City. An area with skyscrapers and multilevel parts, home to the Vienna International Centre on the New Danube.

It was organised with a punching start and although I was first off on the WO course, other courses were starting earlier giving me a chance to watch the starting procedure. Everything seemed very familiar, start lanes, announcements of name and race number in English, but the one thing missing was a base map to look at in the start lane.



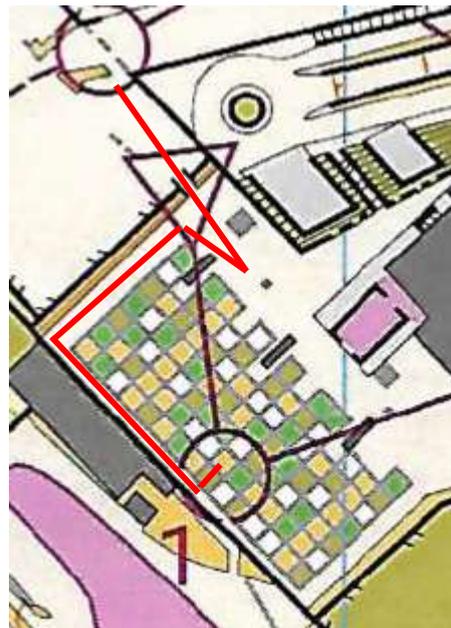
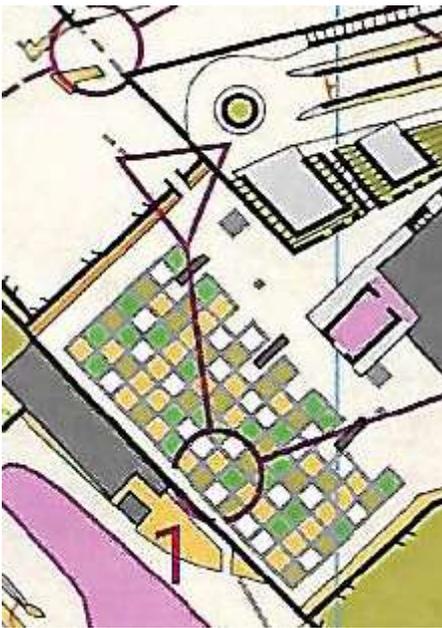
I initially thought that this was putting things up a notch on the difficulty stakes, but then decided that I usually waste most my time looking at the base map trying to frantically work out the location of the start, and that I gain nothing from actually looking at it!

Our pre-event info was very comprehensive and for Day1 included instructions for this area:

Instructions from Organisers

Olive green areas [A] (flower beds) are not to be entered. In the shown map sample it is allowed to run on yellow and white areas and walls [C].

What we couldn't see from the start area was that most courses had their first control in this maze:



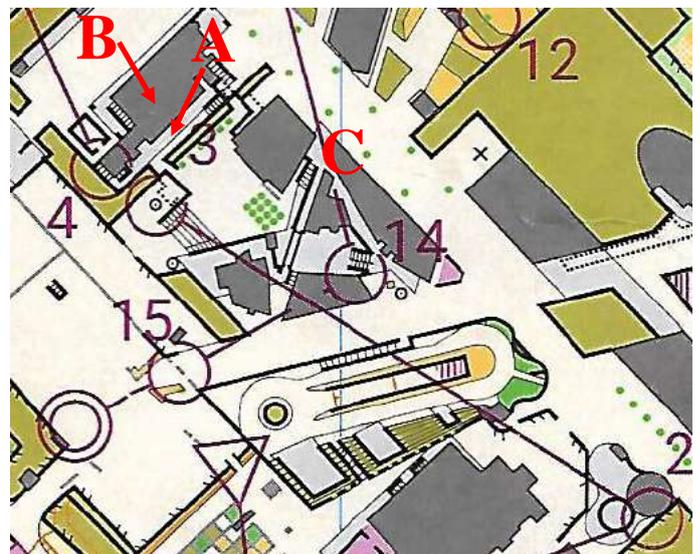
So adrenaline flowing I arrived at the northern edge and then dithered trying to frantically trying to remember which bits I could tread on, it looks easier on the map than it did in reality. I took the soft option in the end and ran around the edge.

#1 -#2-#3 went ok but then came the tricky bit of the map (or at least I thought so given the amount of time I spent going into dead-ends)

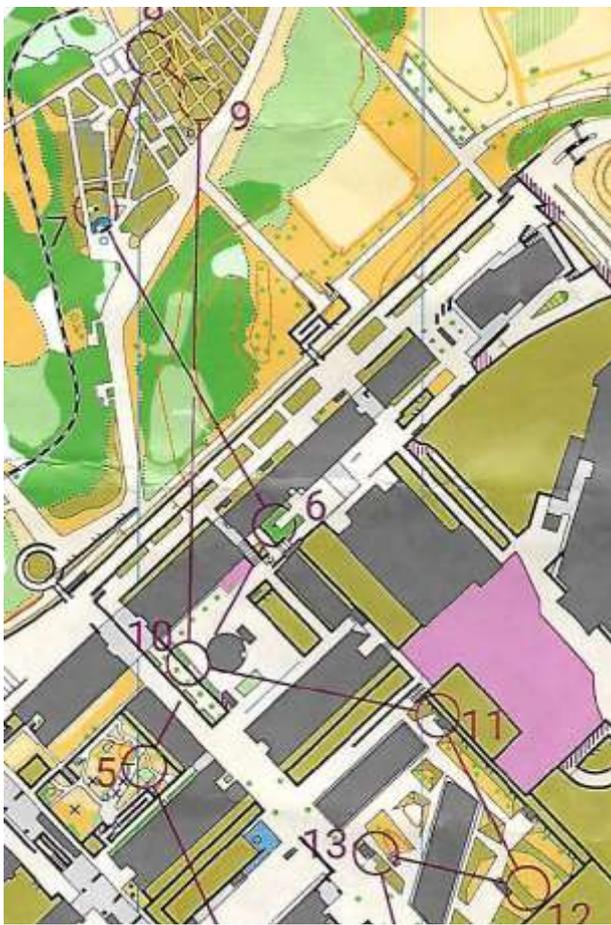
Instructions from Organisers

Multilevel area: Only the main running level is mapped, not the street underpasses under the competition area. Do not open doors during the race, then you might end up on an unmapped level.

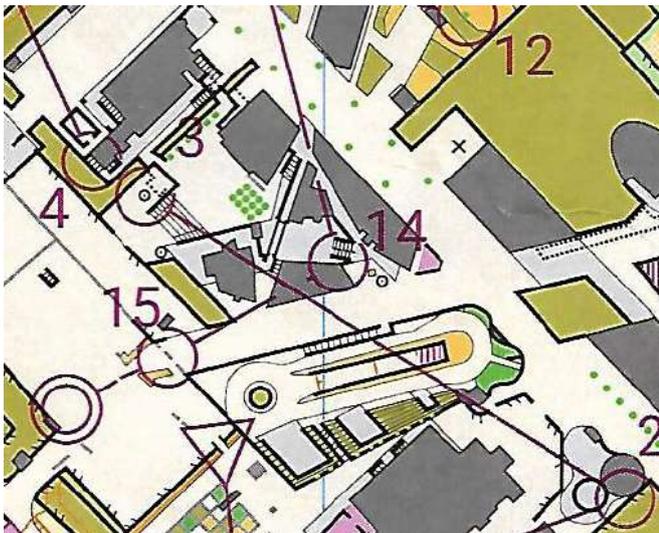
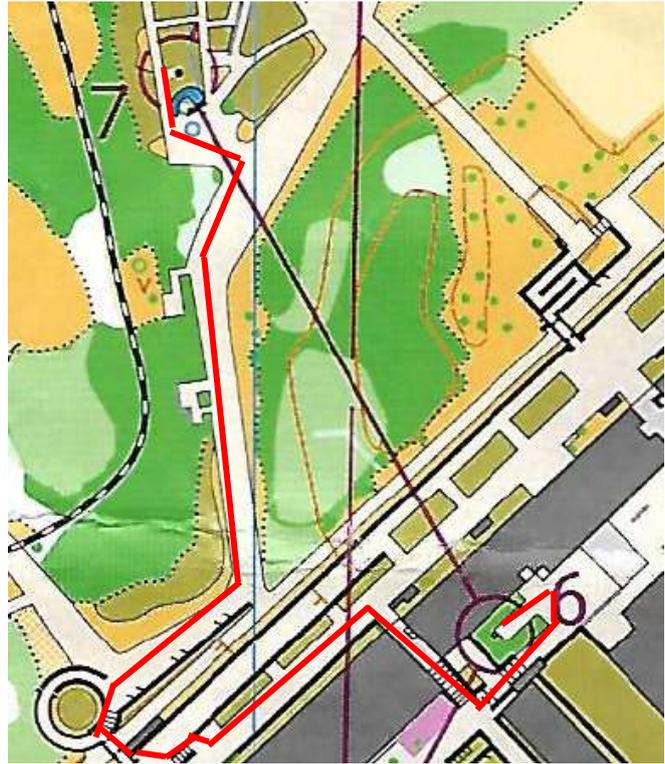
Control 4 was at the top of a set of steps. I'd followed someone out of the control into the 'underpass area' 'A'. It was in actual fact the southeast part of an underground carpark extending under the building 'B'. Lured into the fact that there might be another exit and totally ignoring the map, I continued to follow. It was only when the runner ahead started to open a door that 'oops' (or words to that effect) and the instruction registered.



More dithering, and finally found an exit out the area up the steps at 'C'



#5-#13 was mostly uneventful except for possibly poor route choice from #6-#7.



#14 was tucked well into the corner on the lower level accessed by escalators, up a different set of steps to #15.

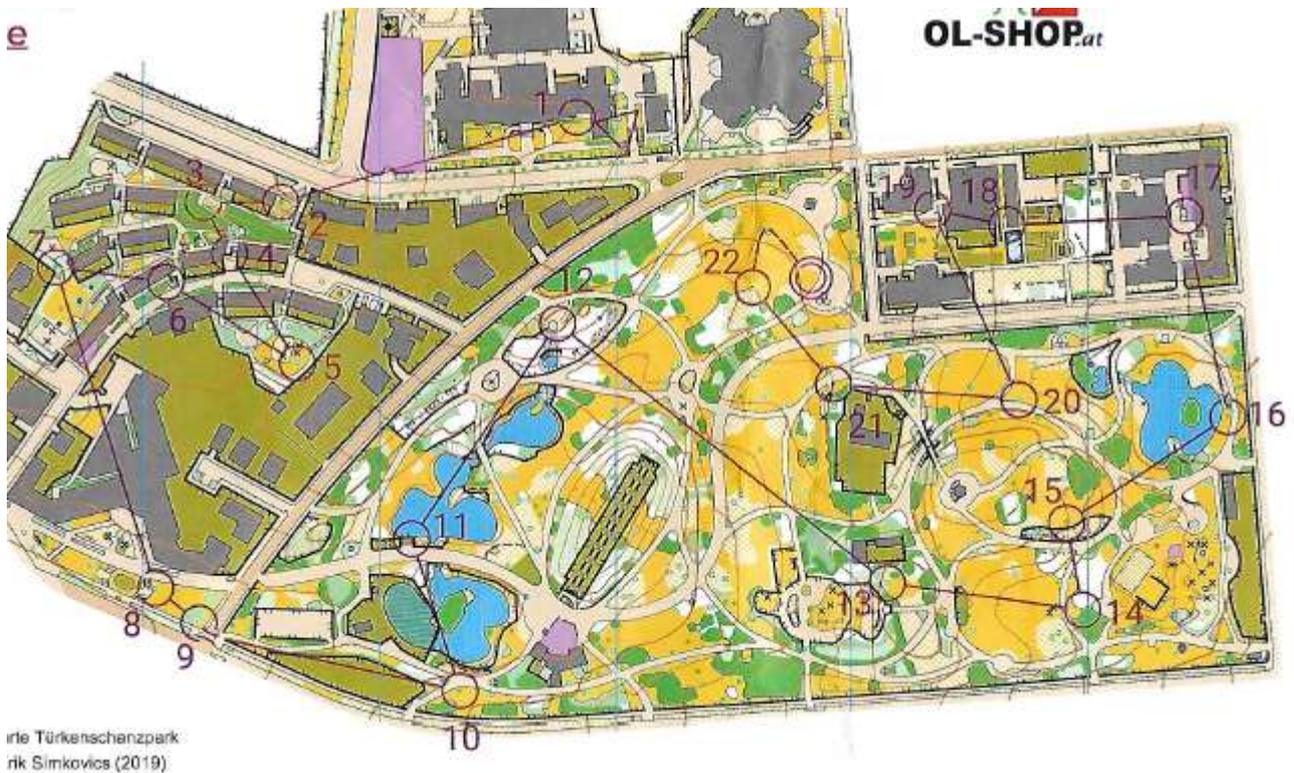
14	43	↓	↗			➤
15	99		↘			○

Probably one of the hardest urbans I done so far, a bit of a steep learning curve with all the different levels, but thoroughly enjoyable. A well-earned ice cream after I finished, it was still 30 degrees at 7pm. I was in 4th place (out of 4).

DAY 2

This was located in a picturesque park on the west side of the City. Named Turkenschanzpark, from the historical Turkish entrenchments found and contains some rare botanical plants.



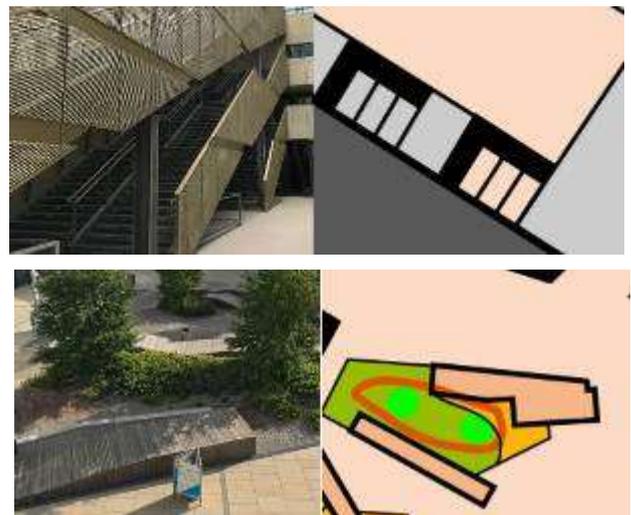


rie Türkenschanzpark
rik Simkovic (2019)

I felt much more comfy with this map. Temperatures were on the high side again, but all went well until leaving the last control, I failed to notice that I needed to almost double-back on myself round the large tree. I'd lost sight of the cones marking the route to the finish and ended up doing a large loop around the group of spectators to get back on track. Despite this I improved by beating one of the ladies from day 1, to close the gap a little. Still in 4th place overall though.

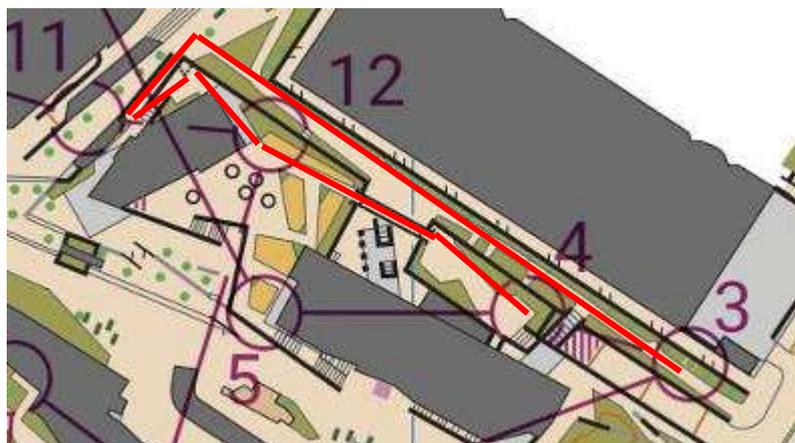
DAY 3

This was located at the campus of the Vienna University of Economics and Business. We were advised that there was an array of building shapes, stairs and rooftops and it was being used for orienteering for the first time.



Having learnt from Day 1 and 2, I made sure I recced the route from the final control which was clearly evident on arrival.

Fully expecting some tricky stuff again, it took to #4 this time. #4 was on a roof-top terrace. There was a low wall around its edge so you could see people up at this level but it took an age (I wasn't the only one) to work out a route up there. I opted for this in the end, but shorter route could have been to use either of the set of steps closer to #5 to get to #4.



The rest of the run went fairly smoothly after this. The computerized results were showing I had a good run compared to the other 3 ladies on the open course completing 3 events.

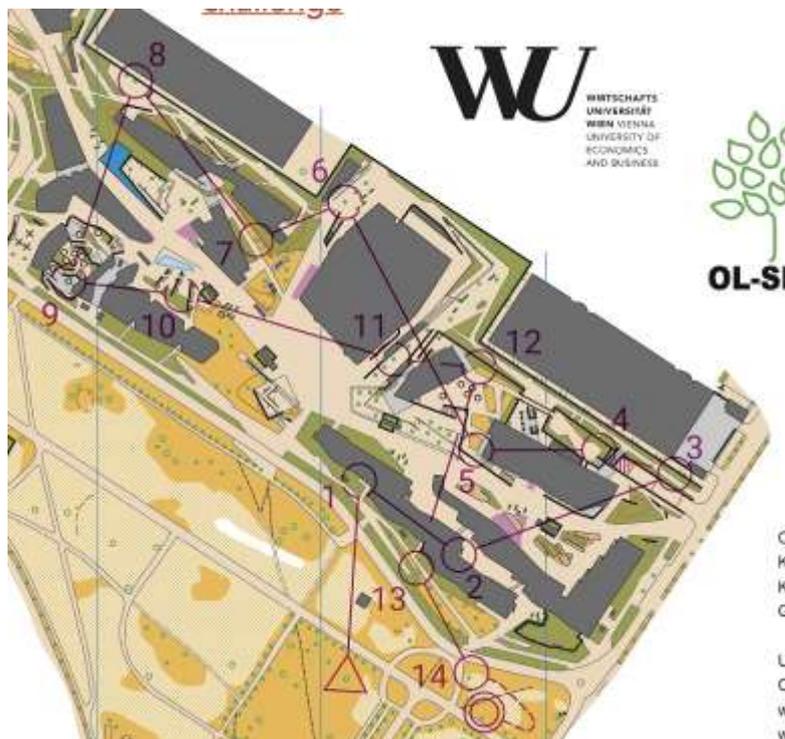
Overall, I finished in 2nd place, just missing out on first by 31 seconds. I had to depart soon after this event so missed out on getting to see the relays.

I would thoroughly recommend this as an event if they hold it again. Vienna is a stunning city, easy to get around on Trams and Buses. I flew with Austrian Airlines and there are daily flights from Manchester. Timings of the events allowed plenty of time for sightseeing too.

The organization was great, I felt well-informed. Everyone was very friendly and welcoming. There seemed to be good spread of elite runners from various countries. Alice Leake (AIRE) won the honours for the Ladies, Charlotte Ward (Halo) in 3rd. In the Mens, this was won by Jakub Glonek from Czech Republic with Murray Strain (INT) finishing 11th as first GBR.

There are links on the events website to all the results and photos taken on the day. They don't appear to have routegadget (or similar), but there are posted photos of some of the route choices.

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Ten things you should be aware of when Orienteering in Belgium

1. You might actually be in the Netherlands. Even though all the events were organised by a Belgian club, half of them were on the other side of the border. I suppose it's a bit like MDOC running an event in the Lake District (but a lot closer and more convenient). So why were there so few Dutch competitors there? Don't know - it's a mystery.
2. You will have to travel to the event on roads where the cyclist is king. They will come at you from all angles and however major the highway, they know they have priority and will treat you with the disdain you deserve. None of them will wear helmets or lycra or look like proper cyclists but approach each junction with trepidation; they're out to get you.
3. You will have to pay 2 euros a day for the pleasure of using emit and faff around attaching individual bits of paper to prove you've been where you think you have been. You will learn to be fearful of using the wrong technique when fitting your jig-saw piece into the punch, since there's no beep (probably a good thing), no flash (definitely a bad thing) and people you know have been disqualified, (one for having an insufficiently large confirmatory dimple on his piece of paper). I developed a two-handed technique followed by a little jump to put all my weight on to the apparatus. This may seem like overkill but there was no way I was going to fall in to the "insufficiently large dimples" trap. Other people did little dances as they approached the control which involved waving their emit arm in a serpentine manner, in a desperate attempt to anticipate the orientation of the jig-saw template. Inevitably queues developed at the single "Finish" punch.
4. You will have the opportunity to get really lost. If you enter a standard course you will only get lost for a while, the maps are excellent and the 2.5m contours turn molehills into mountains, though that doesn't always help. No, if you are a real glutton for punishment you enter one of the Oro-Hydro Cup courses - take a bow Nick and Jane Campbell. These courses are run on contour-only maps with the odd water feature, no paths, no colours - not even darkest green. Every so often you would see some poor soul fighting their way out of some impossible vegetation block and you would know it was a misguided Oro-Hydro competitor trying vainly to follow their compass bearing and blissfully unaware that they could easily have run around.
5. When you have finished you are unlikely to be able to get the vegetarian chilli that you are used to or even the odd flapjack. The only thing you can guarantee is that there will be beer on tap and plenty of takers, this is Belgium (or Holland?) after all.
6. Each event centre has lots of chairs (and tables) but there is very little chance that you will be able to sit down because every one of them will be occupied by large bags and items of sweaty clothing. You gradually realise that you have two choices, you either join the unseemly rush from the car park to reserve your own plastic chair with the heaviest bag you can find, in the manner of Germans and towels, or you maintain your dignity. I continued to stand - perhaps this is what separates us from our euro-neighbours. Or maybe they just needed a chair for when they had drunk all that beer.

7. The events attract sponsorship so, as you finish, in addition to a beautifully served glass of water, you are issued with a tube of cola-flavoured Dextrasol. I must admit that this flavour was new to me but I have grown to like it; I'm not sure how they do it but it definitely has a slight fizz.

8. You will find that 100m isn't how far you expect it to be. All start kites are signed as exactly 100m from the start box but in some cases you will cover this distance in lightning speed and on other occasions you will run for ages before you spy the flag. Don't worry, all the other 100m on the course turn out to be pretty standard.

9. There are lots of other nationalities there but very few Scandinavians. This gives you a live chance of a podium place and a medal. Except you don't get a medal, or even a tastefully decorated coaster, you get a towel or in the case of the winner, a complete set of towels. As you stand there in the pouring rain this may seem quite a handy and appropriate gift but when you come to view your Ryanair luggage, which could hardly fit an extra face-cloth, the attractions of a coaster become more apparent.

10. Overall we enjoyed the 4 day event. The host club (OMEGA) were very welcoming and the areas were technical, forested sand-dunes, without being too physical. We have brought back many happy memories but have we grown to love emit? - No!

Jillyan



Jillyan with a collection of towels for winning the 4 Days of Limburg Event (Photo: Peter Ross)

British Middle Distance Championships

Badge standard achievements are given in brackets, well done to Jonny Malley our only competitor who achieved the Championship time, and also to Cecilia Fenerty who achieved the Gold standard.

M10:

10th – Blake Edwards – 12:32 (Silver)

M14:

16th – Dominic Wathey – 21:42 (Silver)

M16:

24th – Benjamin Kyd – 39:24 (Bronze)

M21:

11th – Jonny Malley – 37:18 (Championship)

21st – Sam Drinkwater – 44:08 (Silver)

28th – Chris Embrey – 50:10 (Bronze)

35th – Alex Bedwell – 55:30 (Bronze)

M35:

19th – Ian Farrell – 79:46

M40:

15th – David Gray – 63:38 (Bronze)

18th – Paul Turnock – 82:17

M45:

20th – Liam Corner – 50:04 (Silver)

24th – Jim Edwards – 53:04 (Bronze)

26th – Andrew Smith – 53:18 (Bronze)

38th – Alain Kyd – 84:20

M55:

42nd – Stephen Fellbaum – 65:41

M60:

41st – Peter Heyes – 87:56

M65:

42nd – Ian Gilliver – 92:43

M70:

13th – Peter Ross – 52:43 (Silver)

14th – Chris Rostron – 53:47 (Silver)

20th – Chris Kirkham – 60:43 (Bronze)

24th – Trevor Roberts – 65:39 (Bronze)

M75:

15th – David Walker – 100:55

W12:

12th – Ariane Edwards – 26:36

W21:

15th – Cerys Manning – 47:12 (Silver)

19th – Anna Mackenzie – 52:48 (Bronze)

27th – Alison Fryer – 73:45

31st – Elizabeth Embrey – 97:43

W55:

15th – Cecilia Fenerty – 40:55 (Gold)

W65:

9th – Jillyan Dobby – 53:03 (Silver)

W70:

18th – Jan Ellis – 43:31 (Bronze)

22nd – Alison Doyle – 54:22

W80:

2nd – Sue Birkinshaw – 67:11 (Bronze)



Runners navigate the Chinley hillside (This photo and many more are available at www.petercull.com/orienteering)



Jan Ellis had to contend with the worst of the visibility (Photo: Peter Cull)



The newsletter editor showing off the MDOC colours (Photo: Peter Cull)



Ian Gilliver excogitates his strategy (Photo: Peter Cull)

British Sprint Championships

Well done to everyone who competed in the heats and finals, especially to Cecilia, Dave, Sue and Liam for top 5 performances in the A classes. Here are the MDOC results from the finals.

MOPENB:

1st – Tom Fellbaum – 14:41

7th – Jonny Malley – 16:00

M45A:

=4th – Liam Corner – 12:20

M65B:

18th – Ian Gilliver – 21:35

M75A:

5th – Dave Mawdsley – 21:47

M14B:

2nd - Dominic Wathey – 14:34

M16B:

3rd – Benjamin Kyd – 14:24

W55A:

5th – Cecilia Fenerty – 13:32

W70A:

8th – Jan Ellis – 27:04

W80A:

2nd – Sue Birkinshaw – 39:32

O-Ringen 2019

Cecilia Fenerty with translation by Ulrika Hellstrom

Many of our experienced MDOC members are seasoned O-Ringen participants, but 2019 was the first experience for the Wathey/Fenerty household, and so much of this event was new and novel for us, we thought it was worth describing for those who have never been. Dominic had been pestering us to go to the O-Ringen for the last 6 years or so after being enthused by Dave Mawdsley's descriptions of the event, but I think we all felt we needed to get a bit more orienteering experience under our belts before we could tackle such a major competition, and orienteer in another country - so this was the year.

For those who have never experienced the O-Ringen, it is the biggest orienteering event in the world, held annually in Sweden, with this year around 25,000 participants from across the globe making their way to the area around Norrköping. Just out of town the 'O-Ringen City' was based around a sports arena and park which provided a large camp site area to accommodate around 10,000 people, and on-site facilities of food outlets, sports shops, entertainment and the O-Ringen office.

We had a free day before the first race and spent some time at the O-Ringen City picking up our race numbers and looking round the shops and display areas. This mammoth event takes an unbelievable amount of organisation, so preparations start over three years ahead and three adjacent stands showcased the areas in preparation for subsequent years, with descriptions and picture of the terrain and sample map areas. As you can imagine, Dominic immediately started planning ahead again!

Other stands were occupied by the commercial sponsors of the event and they have an important role in not just providing financial support for the event, but in assisting competitors way-find their starting area and their finish lane on competition days. So each competitor class is allocated one of the sponsors, and their logo is printed on the race number bib. There is a start area for each one of the sponsors (which then of course corresponds to the start of the allocated class) and so on the route to the start competitors just need to look out for their sponsors logo on sign posts. The finish of the course is separated into lanes each labelled again with the logos of each of the sponsors so that with many competitors all finishing at the same time, a frantic scramble for the finish control is avoided by everyone heading for the lane corresponding to their sponsor.

Later that evening the O-Ringen officially started with the opening ceremony. There were cheers from the crowd as the spot light swept round the stand focussing on each of the local orienteering clubs who had helped organise the event, whilst the compere announced their names, and then there were various music acts with accompanying light shows. Of particular note was the newly composed O-Ringen Song sung by Marcus Fyrberg. This was a catchy number, with a definite hint of the Eurovision Song Contest about it, which was reinforced by his supporting dancers who were in metallic silver glam-rock attire! Full of glitz and glamour and staged to get everyone excited and ready to compete, it felt like we were at the opening of the Orienteering Olympic Games!



Performers at the grand opening ceremony

The next 6 days were spent orienteering, and as expected the forests of Sweden were beautiful, very runnable (if you knew which direction to go!) and technically difficult. On the first day, at Loreberg, the courses required very little climb and the only thing that was steep was the learning curve! Gently undulating contours softened by the low-lying undergrowth meant that I found it very difficult to find sufficient contour detail on the ground to confidently relate it to the map. I decided after a bit of a disastrous first control to use the long sweeping areas of marsh on the map as navigational aids as I have often found them quite useful in areas in the Lake District. That proved not to be such an easy option either, as all of these marshes were dry and there was (to the untrained eye) only subtle changes in vegetation to demarcate them. Other strategies were needed!

Day two in Finspang was perhaps similar terrain, but here there were more paths and I shamelessly used them whenever I could both for speed, but also to regain a bit of orienteering confidence!

That evening we were invited by our new MDOC members from Sweden, the Hellstrom family, to join them for an evening party and barbeque. They were staying with family close to the event and also participating in the O-Ringen with their Swedish Club Attunda. It was lovely to see Ulrika and Jonas on their home turf and we had a wonderful evening with their family and friends in beautiful forested surroundings and watched the sun set over a tranquil lake while all the children had a swim.

The next day was a rest day so what to do? Well there was plenty! An indoor orienteering event (mandatory for our family – we are hooked!); get the washing done at the free launderette; do some shopping for more O-kit; take part in the dual labyrinth competition where two competitors fight it out in adjoining maze courses which are mirror images of each other; take a dip in the free outdoor swimming pool; take in the local park or look round the town. The O-Ringen city and surrounds provided everything.

Day 3, at Kville, I felt like I was getting the hang of this Swedish terrain, but there were many more boulders in this area and it took me a while to realise that it was only the larger ones that were mapped – no one metre stones here – that would never do as a feature!

Day 4 and day 5 at Jursla gammelskog and Ageljobergen provided terrain with much more climb and plenty of crag – and so eventually I was beginning to feel like I was on more familiar ground, just in time to head back to the UK for similar terrain in the Scottish 6 days – what a great training week we had had!!

So what are the memories of note from our first O-Ringen: The remarkable organisation so everything was made so easy for competitors: line after line of bus transportation from the O-Ringen City to each event and back; the dibber check in small walk-through marquees on the way to the start with big screen display 'Welcome Cecilia Fenerty form MDOC UK'; ample portable toilets even dotting along the start route with very little queuing; drinks stations on the courses and not just for the elites!; free water, lemon and ginger refreshments at the finish; the free communal open-air showers; the facilities of the O-Ringen City; the fabulous orienteering terrain; the wonderful company of the Hellstrom family...and of course that opening ceremony with its signature Swedish song to get you in the mood!

Let's go to the O-Ringen, Oh yeah, oh yeah
Come as a guest to the Orienteering fest
Let's go to the O-Ringen, Oh yeah, Oh yeah,
We will meet again, at the summer O-Ringen...

Who's up for the O-Ringen next year in Uppsala?



Fenerty and family in front of the finish funnels

British TrailO Championships 2019

The British TrailO Championships 2019 was held in Scarborough on Monday 26th August as part of the White Rose weekend. It consisted of an Elite competition to decide the British Champion, as well as a standard event for all comers. The Elite course had 20 controls, plus 1 timed control station with two tasks. It was set in South Cliff Gardens, a complex maze of paths and gardens/forest with some ornamental gardens and in places steeply sloping ground. Overall in the Elite class there were 3 MDOC competitors in the top 8 and 4 in the top 14 (3rd, 6th, 8th, 14th) making us one of the most dominant teams in the competition.



Scorching weather in Scarborough (Photo: Steve Whitehead EBOR)

Firstly massive congratulations to River Edis-Smith who won the Junior Elite competition and was crowned JUNIOR BRITISH CHAMPION, a phenomenal achievement! Second place in the Junior Elite also went to MDOC thanks to Dominic Wathey, who had the best Time Control score (by some margin) across the whole of the Elite field with 19s (joint 2nd fastest was MDOC's John Kewley with 31s) and had it not been for one control being voided he would have beaten River. Of course like FootO, TrailO is all about "what-ifs" and his day will come.



Control sites in the gardens (Photo: Steve Whitehead)

In the senior Elite, John Kewley lived up to his GB squad reputation and took home the bronze medal thanks to 17/20 on the standard controls, but importantly a perfect 2/2 on the Time Controls, beating fourth place by just 8 seconds – exciting stuff!

MDOC performance of the day was probably David Wathey who matched JK and many other top competitors on the standard controls with 17/20 and was only pushed off the podium due to one mistake on the Time Controls. He beat GB team regulars Nick Barrable and Ian Ditchfield and finished 8th overall and 7th in Senior Elite.

Cecilia Fenerty finished 25th on Senior Elite and Elizabeth Hamer-Davies finished 3rd on the non-elite course to round off a great competition for MDOC. Congratulations to Tom Dobra of BOK who became the new British Champion. Next years British Trail-O Championships will be held on 21st/22nd March in the South-East.



Controls high above the path (Photo: Steve Whitehead)

Bronze for JK at World Trail Orienteering Championships

This year's World TrailO Championships (WTOC) were in Portugal in late July and MDOC's John Kewley (JK) was once again representing GBR.

As well as a 2 day warm up in nearby Penamacor (a good chance to get to grips with the Portuguese mapping, especially the rock features) there was a full programme of PreO (two events, each with a model event on the preceding day), TempO (a Qualifier and Final on a single day, with a model the day before) and of course the TrailO Relay. The latter being the best hope for medals for the British team (who had won a European Bronze in this discipline in 2018). PreO as usual had separate categories for Para and Open.



Bronze Medal & Diploma

The GBR team comprised 7 team members for the different events with JK one of two competing in both PreO and TempO (the other being Tom Dobra). With no Para team and only 3 spots available in the Relay team, good performances in the 2 preceding PreO days would be required.

The two day PreO event came first with JK finishing 25th and 32nd on the two days to finish 28th overall in the Open category. Top Brit in Open was Tom Dobra in 19th with Charles Bromley Gardner in 48th. Colin Duckworth ended up 15th in Para with Dick Keighley in 21st. The Relay team was then announced for the following day as JK, Tom and Charles; i.e. the same team that won the European Bronze in 2018. The order was also kept the same with JK on anchor leg.

The TrailO Relay has been going for a couple of years now and the rules permit some flexibility in the logistics of the event. This year each team had a total of 30 PreO controls that between them had to be answered with the first leg choosing which 10 they answer; the second leg selecting 10 of the remaining 20; and the final "anchor" leg having to answer the 10 that are left. There was a 3 hour time limit for the total team time. After the PreO section, each leg also had to do a single TempO station with 5 tasks. Results were then calculated by adding together the answer time for the TempO part, plus 30s for each wrong TempO answer plus 60s for each wrong PreO control with the lowest time the winners. Note that although the first two legs did their TempO stations straight after finishing their PreO (after handing over), the final leg runners had to return to quarantine to wait for intermediate results to be calculated so they could be called up in reverse order with current leaders last [see other article for some more info on what goes on in a World Champs TrailO quarantine].

Charles Bromley Gardner was first away and came back with 10/10 for his PreO in significantly less than his share of the max team time and then answered his 5 TempO problems in 60s with only 1 error. This put GBR in 6th place with 90s total; Spain were in the lead with 42s, just edging Finland, the favourites.

Tom also managed to get all his PreO controls correct (for some time one was given as an error but the organisers had misplaced one control so it was voided, hence he scored 9/9) and with a time of 49s and only 1 mistake on the TempO ended up 5th on his leg and moved GBR up to 3rd (although this was displayed at the time as 4th as the previously mention control hadn't yet been voided).

Importantly for JK this left him with more than 1/3 of the total time remaining so he knew he wouldn't have time pressure on the course so he started his leg in a relaxed frame of mind. Of course, he also had no idea about how the team were doing since those inside quarantine only know the elapsed time, not how well their team were doing (he was actually setting off 2s behind Silver and 2s ahead of 4th!). He also managed 10/10 on the PreO (as at ETOC 2018, only FIN and GBR had a full score in the PreO) and returned to quarantine for a long wait as once all the final legs had finished, they had to wait to be called up one at a time in reverse order. JK managed to get all correct in the TempO, albeit in a comparatively slow time, earning GBR the Bronze medal - GBR's best ever performance in the World Champs Open class.

The final event was the TempO and GBR had 4 entered with Ian Ditchfield and Pete Huzan joining JK and Tom. JK and Tom were in the "Green" heat with Ian and Pete in the "Red". In recent years it has been quite common for JK to be quite close to the "line" and this year was no exception as although he was 8.5 seconds behind the world champion, he was 10s below the line and failed to qualify for the final for the first time since 2016. Tom made it as 16th out of the 18 to go through and neither Brit qualified from the other heat. The final was very tough and Tom ended up 35th.

JK would like to thank MDOC and NWOA for their help towards this year's event.



John with his teammates on the podium

Some thoughts from the quarantine tent

John Kewley

I thought I'd share some of my thoughts of what it is like and what goes on in a TrailO quarantine. The basic idea of a quarantine is to keep those who have finished their course apart from those who haven't yet competed. Knowing the answers to some controls before you start could give you a major advantage - far more than knowing aspects of a FootO course. In the Relay this is even more important as any information passed would benefit the whole team. Another conflicting idea is the requirement to try and make things interesting for the spectators; indeed at WTOC there are the Team Managers watching, along with the rest of the squad who didn't make the Relay team.

The main way to give some interest to spectators is to provide intermediate results and also to ensure that the TempO stations are public - so all can see which ones the competitors are getting right and wrong. Of course if you want to insist on no information been given to the final competitors then this has to be done in reasonable silence and certainly out of sight of the competitors still in quarantine.

So, what are the rules for quarantine and how does it differ to a FootO quarantine. The biggest difference is that we are not allowed to take any electronic equipment in with us. As well as the obvious communication devices like mobile phones, it also includes devices such as mp3 players, iPods, DVD players, gameboys, laptops, tablets, cameras. This year we weren't even allowed a pencil in quarantine so it was a serious place...

Lighter moments for the final leg runners included:

- We were all told to turn our chairs and look away from the arena and admire the nature so no information could be passed from our team-mates. This meant that every time one of us took a comfort break or went for water we were walking backwards or with a cap over our faces. To onlookers we looked like a group of naughty schoolchildren being told to face the wall.
- One of the organisers' children came into the tent and rushed in front of us all, also looking out at the same view. She then said something in a questioning tone to her father who translated for us that she wanted to see what was so interesting that we were all staring at.
- The tent was very hot - about 38C so we were regularly pouring water over our heads, down our backs and over each other. We got through a lot of water.
- Although there wasn't much wind, when it blew it was very strong and for short bursts. When this happened there was a sort of disorganised Mexican wave as we all stood up and lifted our arms to get maximum cooling effect.

After the first 2 legs' PreO and TempO are complete, and the final leg's PreO is finished, the final legs go back into quarantine till all are finished and an intermediate result is produced. The spectators get full information but are not allowed to tell the final legs what the time differences are - all they are allowed to know is their ranking position. In previous years this has been announced all in one go to those waiting in Quarantine, but this year we only found out our position, one at a time, as we were called forward - so this never-ending wait lasted for well over an hour. This was torture - whenever the speaker announced that X from country X was about to do his TempO, they announced that the next person should get ready - while we all sat there hoping our name wouldn't be called just yet. In Lithuania a few years back I think I was in quarantine for something like 7 hours, this time it was probably still over 4.

MDOC: FIXTURES POLICY, 2019-2020 (Summary)

OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of this MDOC Fixtures Policy is to provide an annual fixtures programme which gives orienteering opportunities for experienced and inexperienced participants, for adults and for juniors, and in a variety of formats to cater for the preferences of club members.

CONSTRAINTS

A programme of events must take into account the following potential constraints:

1. The number of volunteers available to plan and organise the events
2. The availability of suitable areas, and the willingness of landowners, agents etc to permit orienteering in those locations, and at the proposed dates and times
3. The cost of land access, which in some cases may mean a proposed event would make a financial loss
4. The availability of sufficiently accurate maps of the proposed areas.

HENCE THE POLICY:

1. Some events shall be provided with the aim of encouraging newcomers, in particular schoolchildren and families.
2. Some events shall be provided once/month or more frequently if possible, with the aim of providing orienteering in a social atmosphere that may be enjoyed by adults.
3. Summer evening events shall be provided, co-ordinated with DEE's corresponding programme, to provide forest/moorland orienteering opportunities across the range of experience and abilities.
4. One or more Regional events shall be staged every year on Sundays in forest/moorland, subject to the **Constraints** listed above.
5. One or more Urban/Sprint events shall be staged each year (*again subject to Constraints*), for which inclusion in the UKUL may be sought if appropriate.
6. MDOC will organise and plan an annual Night event as our club's contribution to the North West Night League.
7. A programme of MapRun events will be introduced, including some Night Street League events.
8. MDOC will aim to stage a 2-day event, formerly known as 'Twin Peak', at least every 2 years.
9. MDOC will consider contributing to the staging of Regional and National Championship events as opportunities arise.
10. The Fixtures sub-group will review the types of event put on by other clubs in order to identify whether additional/alternative formats might usefully be introduced into the MDOC fixtures programme.

Caption Competition



Last editions winner...



'Don't worry officer; I've rounded up everyone who crossed the red line!' – Anon

Fixtures

Autumn Series:

23rd November – Boggart Hole Clough

14th December – Brabyns Park

Offering a score course, a technical score and a yellow course for young beginners.

Twin Peak 2019:

9th November – Goyt Valley National Event

10th November – Stockport Regional Urban Event

This will be our busiest weekend of the year, so we will need as many on-the-day volunteers as possible – please save the dates!

Night Street League:

12th November – Heaviley (with MapRun app)

28th November – Macclesfield (Town Centre & East)

10th December – Sale West

14th January – Handforth

30th January – Withington/Didsbury

Wednesday Runs:

6th November – Lomas – Hazel Grove

13th November – Birkinshaw – Hale

20th November – Wagg – Didsbury

27th November – Rostron – High Lane

4th December – Wathey/Fenerty - Timperley

North West Night League:

16th November – Arnside Knott (SROC)

7th December – Darwen Moor (PFO)

18th January – Dale Park (LOC)

8th February – Delamere East (DEE)

15th February – Philips Park (MDOC)

More Photos



Chinley Churn (Photo: Peter Cull)



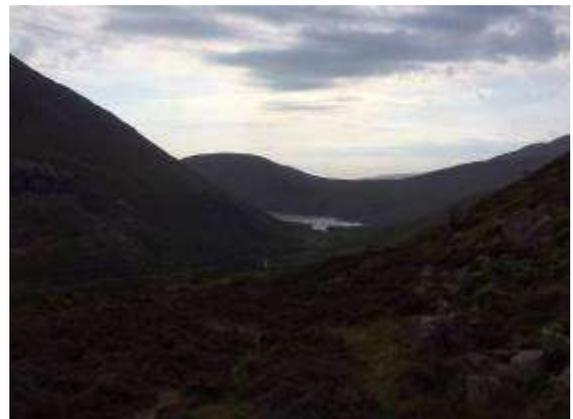
Chris Rostron's finish sprint (Photo: Sam Drinkwater)



Spot the tired MDOCer (Photo: Sam Drinkwater)



The editor in the Mourne mountains (Photo: Anna Mackenzie)



The view down the Silent valley (Photo: Sam Drinkwater)

Please send your suggestions, news, photos and other articles to the editor at samdrinkwater.sd@googlemail.com for inclusion in future editions.