

WESSEX EXTRA

THE NEWSLETTER OF WESSEX ORIENTEERS

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Jason Falconer at the start of the Lakes 5 Days



El Capricho de Gaudi,
In Comillas, Spain

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Chairman's Ponderings

I can't believe the summer has passed so quickly, although with the current weather you could argue that it isn't really over yet! Long may it continue.

But as Autumn approaches, it's time for looking ahead to the coming orienteering season, and there's certainly lots on offer – especially if you do the full range including urban/city races and night events.

If you've never tried a Night-O, I would urge you to come along to **Kings Park** on **October 6th** – the first of the **Wessex Night League** events – as it's an easy area to try night-orienteering on, with only a couple of small patches of wood which you could avoid if you didn't fancy going in them! We've got club head torches to lend if you haven't already got one. So come along and give it a go – you may enjoy it! Details of all the Night League events can be found on our website.

In November, SOC will be holding their **November Classic** on **Nov.2nd** at **Kings Garn Gutter** in the New Forest. As you know (or may not, if you're a new member!) this is the event where our **Club Championships** are decided. In order to qualify, you must enter the correct colour course for your age class. And this year, you have a great opportunity to win either the Men's or Lady's Championship as the current holders (Gavin Clegg and myself) and strong contenders (Ian and Kay Sayer) will be competing in the Barcelona City race!

And on the previous day, there's the **Winchester Urban** – which should be a great event, run by BAOC.

Both events can now be entered on Fabian4.

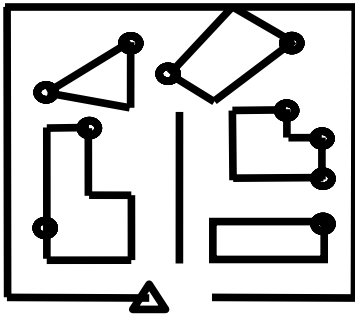
On a different note: as we now, as a club, put on so many more informal events in a year than we used to in the past, it would be great if more members came forward to organize some of them. It really isn't as daunting as you might think, and there will always be a "mentor" to help you if needed. We don't have any in the near future that require organizers, but in May, July and October next year we will certainly need them. And if you're feeling ambitious, we will be requiring an organizer for our Galoppen in March 2015. I have produced a "step by step" Organiser's Manual and would be more than happy to mentor someone if they were willing to take on this event. So please put some thought to it – I guarantee you will get a lot of pleasure out of doing it!

Julie Astin

“Join-In Festival” Poole Park

For the last two years Poole Borough Council has organised this multi sport “Come and try it” style event to get children to try some activities that they normally do not consider. We offered to organise a taster event to showcase Orienteering, the attraction from our point of view was the large number of prospective contacts, the event had attracted over a thousand in the previous year which is a better audience than the usual 20 to 30 attendees at a typical park CATI. So, what to offer? We considered cone map orientation and mazes together with offering the POC as an option. Mazes seemed attractive especially if electronic timing was provided since most kids love this competitive aspect.

So I consulted Doctor Google and found a few mazes from other clubs. I was particularly taken with one design that used “island” barriers of various shapes since this reduced the ability to lean over a barrier and cheat. This was the result with 10 controls and SI timing.



The day started slowly but people soon started to pour in, some entire families became very competitive with Mum or Dad attempting to beat the kids times. Some children became addicted running the course several times and remembering the sequence without a map, not quite the right idea but they seemed to enjoy it. We ended the day with 144 runs and around 80 to 100 non-club competitors. We were able to hand out lots of “O” information and have hopefully advertised the existence of the local POCs to many more people.

The entire Poole Borough Council event proved very popular with lots of sport choices including water sports on the lake. Everyone agreed that it was well worth the effort.

Alan Hooper

COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN LONDON

Kay asked me to provide a short article about my new work here in Hackney and blimey where do I start? Well here is a light hearted look but in some places factual account of what is 'appening to me in 'ackney, aaaaaaaaaaaaaaargh I am losing my H's already.

The London Borough of Hackney is the most ethnically diverse borough in the greater London area and one of the original London boroughs. Over 100 languages are spoken within its boundary and one third of the Olympic Park area is also within Hackney. There are large communities from Africa, Turkey, Portugal, to name a few and a very large orthodox Jewish community exists in the borough as well.

What have I been involved in since I have been here some 5 months now? Assaults, arrests, dog fights, joint agency operations, drunk and disorderly persons, gang tensions, property fires, high profile patrols after stabbings, reconnaissance and other issues. From that to the mundane littering offences and owners of dogs not picking up after them. A lot of entries into my pocket note book and statements of course. I can't go into detail as some cases are yet to be progressed through the courts or persons even charged for any offence.

It has been a drastic change and to think that in some places like the US and Mexico all of these things are on an unimaginable scale in a comparable sized city to London. Drug taking is extremely high when compared to my former work place and the evidence of this is found on the emergency stairs of tower blocks around the borough. I do not live far from a main artery, the A10, which runs through the borough and sirens are heard every hour, predominantly ambulance, police and to a lesser degree the fire service.

It is lucky there is no such thing as smelly vision for EastEnders. The show would have never lasted so long with prolonged filming in an East End market. It is not a place I would buy a vegetable from let alone something that was formerly alive.

The beard has made a comeback which is somewhat odd! I initially thought I had walked into a ZZ top reunion gig taking place and spilling out of the Hackney Empire but it turned out to be the phenomenon I now know is called 'The Shoreditch Beard'. Worn by many men who either idolise the many different looks of the brand 'Beckham' or just cannot be bothered to shave. Some of the face fuzz looks inhabited by little creepy crawlies and I wonder if they have had their flea treatment recently.

If one would like to reminisce about the past, Hackney is also that place, if you stay here long enough! You can catch your old favourite look alike Bowies, Grace Jones (of which there are plenty), Iggy Pop, Punk Rockers, Heavy Metal stars etc. It takes me back to the days I did not give a damn because I did not have a clue and it is quite obvious those who are looking like their idols don't give a damn either.

Boys look like girls and girls look like boys in Hackney, so you might not get what you are looking for on a night out. Thankfully I am never likely to be mistaken for a girl because you can see I don't shave my legs when wearing stockings.....oops edit that bit out.

Anyway I look forward to saying hello to everyone who might remember me and for the new members I am Gavin, but not the one who comes first at everything because the other Gavin nicked the inches from my legs that would have given me the speed.

That is my excuse anyway. 😊

All the best to you all

Gavin Avey-Hebditch

Gavin's role now is as a community support officer. (Ed)

Lakes 5 Days of Orienteering 2014

Every year in Britain there's a European International event that brings lots of the Scandinavians over to race in Orienteering, their national sport. Every 4 years Wales and the Lakes get their chance to host competitions with over a thousand Orienteers each day.

Since becoming an aficionado in 2007 I've been doing a yearly big competition. This has included the Swedish 'O-ringen' 5 days events, 3 Scottish 6 days, the night Finnish 'Jukola' and that leaves the craziest 'Tio Mila' (Ten Miler) night relay event to do. The Lakeland and Welsh events fit in with the Scottish Calendar, which hosts the Scottish 6 days every 2 years, the backbone of the British International Orienteering schedule.

Next year 2015 there's the World Orienteering champs in Scotland, the same time as the 6 days, which will be a massive televised festival based in Inverness. Can't wait to compete in that. All the local clubs in the area get involved with planning, organising and running the week, which takes months of preparation. As with the New Forest locally, there's huge pressure on these recreation areas which means careful management. Last week there was also a funny Warrior event at same time, which really should have been called weekend warrior event where city folk were being shouted at by military types to complete a run in the hills; but I digress. This week was co-ordinated by the clubs of the North West Orienteering Association, well done to them for great co-ordination.

You may have seen my last blog about the C2C (coast to coast cycling). Well this week was to be based at a friend who lives in Rusland, where author of 'Swallows and Amazons' Arthur Ransome is buried, and also the home of Carol McNeill one of the most long term and committed international U.K Orienteers, who also won this year's **W65 competition**. I had ridden there from Ravenglass over 2 days, a trip with some moments worth recalling of a biblical rain type nature, but then this is the

English Lakes - they have to keep them full somehow... I was to cycle two days: 2,3,5 and take a car ride to days 1 and 4 - the mountain days in Pike O Blisco and Swindale. On the bike these were the smallish distances that gave me a rest from cycle touring! There were around 1, 500 competitors a day for this event, my own age class of M40 one of only 3 that were able to run the longest of the 17 courses available. Not sure why but it was M21, M35, M40 on Course 1 all week, me being at the upper end of that age group at 43. There were 128 of us entered in total. Some stats first, if you don't like stats skip to the race reports - Including the walks to starts my courses, without any extra distance due to errors, were in Km: 14, 6.6, 7.7, 12, 12 that's 52 Km or 31 miles and the course climbs in the hills of the Lakes were 510, 195, 375, 800, 525 total 2, 405 metres. Mountain country.

The Races:- Day 1 Swindale. A fearsome 10 K distance , pulses of rain, in the squally soaking terrain on a high plateau alongside Shap Fell. A mapping style of 2 colours:- white open and blue bog which didn't entirely match the areas of contour locality. Difficult 5 metres on spot features that challenged me to the limit, alongside the incessant serious weather conditions. Happy to get down off the hill but happier to have finished even if I was turning hypothermic after 4 hours outside.

Day 2. Simpson Ground . Superb earth features and lot of deep bog surrounding the central reservoir were the character of this day 2. Some satisfying control picking either side of treacherous bog trotting which cost me time again. Better conditions, although wet from the start among the hidden overhanging mixture of white runnable and green 'fight' forest.

Day 3 . Grizedale Forest. Heaven of a day, sunshine and spectacular views from above the centre of Lakeland Mountain

Biking. Passing the hire centre where 150 bikes make up the hire fleet that explore the forest fire trails daily. My best day so far with only one major error in the middle of one section. Again an overhanging indiscernible variety of forest; I was crawling through on hands and knees most of the time. First day of the 5 where there were trail route choice options that I made the most of, but no let up, with a chunky 375 climb through a looping course using the whole map area. Fantastic event, really hard in a really hard area of the Grizedale forest.

Day 4. Pike O'Blisco. The daddy of the week, a huge valley start with that daunting feel that only true Mountain country can give. 400 meters climb to get to the start which would have challenged the average walker to the hilt. Then we ran. We faced a map entirely comprised of white open screen, black crag, moraine and rock features. Less bog than day 1 but deep streams and superb valley sights below. Army jets were training in the valleys, the same size as the Red Arrows, banking and turning below our crazy control-finding game on the plateau above. Rewarding to be lucky enough to be there, yet again my right ankle, taped as always, collapses in the tussocky surface... I struggle along until the pain subsides, then after some lovely moments in flow - my favourite type of moment when you can spot a distant feature with a huge space between you and it and RUN to it. I go over again, just after dishing a control. Now comes the real pain –and emotion flooding over me, stupid, but this is serious terrain. Determinedly, I hobble along more reserved until day 4 is complete. Blagging an ice pack from the first aid tent I'm advised to 'stick it int' beck' which gives me a little lift at the end of a hard day.

Day 5. Hampsfell. A week in Lakeland hills completed by today in limestone pavement terrain, a superbly technical mix of open fell and white open forest map. Tactically I took an early start due to weather; I loved the open interspersed with grey rock slabs. I was making the pace

up at the time of a deluge in the trees, in some of the most complex terrain I've ever seen. Concerted effort not to fall over again, I persevere until the end. Again not fast, but I finished the entire week of 112 controls located accurately for my rewards.

Week Results:-I was 26/37 over all 5 events; bottom quarter of the field, but only 12 of the higher placed runners also completed all 5 days without mis-punching or error. Great week. **Bring on Scotland 6 days 2015.**

Jason Falconer



Pike O Stickle

Assembly area at
Langdale



WESSEX ORIENTEERS JUNIOR SQUAD PAGE

HELLO ALL OUR WOJ SQUAD JUNIORS!

I hope you all had a great summer, and are now ready to go with your orienteering.

The autumn orienteering season is upon us, and there are lots of suitable events coming up for you—see the list opposite.

So, look at the list of WOJ events opposite, and show the list to your parents so that they can make sure you are able to attend as many events as possible.

We have ordered some T-shirts for you all, and we hope that they will be ready by the next WOJ Squad event, which is the Dorset Schools League at Gore Heath. So I hope you will be there on 28th September to get your T-shirts.

On the next page, is the list of events which are suitable for the Squad to attend. There will be coaches at all of these events to help you with your courses.

So, ask your parents to look at the WOJ Squad List and put the dates in your diaries!! See you there!!

2014 list

1. 28th September: Dorset Schools League, Gore Heath.
2. 5th October: Sarum Galoppen, Bulford.
3. 12th October: Wessex Dorset Delight, Burley.
4. 18th October: Dorset Schools League, Hyde & Gorley.
5. 2nd November: **NOVEMBER CLASSIC**, New Forest
6. 22nd November: Dorset Schools League, Golden Cap.
7. 7th December: Southampton Event, Fritham

2015 list

8. 11th January: Wimborne Galoppen, Moors Valley.
9. 14th February: Wessex Informal, Holton Lee
10. 15th March: **COMPASS SPORT CUP HEAT.**
11. 22nd March: Wessex Galoppen, Rushmore (tbc)

FORTHCOMING ORIENTEERING EVENTS

www.wessex-oc.org

SEPTEMBER 2014

- Sat 20** **GUILDFORD CITY RACE. ** Date changed from August.**
- Sun 21** **LONDON CITY RACE. See SLOW website for full details.**
- Thurs 25 **WESSEX AGM & QUIZ, Twin Sails Warf, Poole.**
- Sun 28** **WIM Galoppen, Gore Heath. Flyer on Wimborne Web site.**

OCTOBER 2014

- Sat 4/Sun 5** **DARTMOOR DOUBLE LONG-0 EVENT, See Devon website for details.**
- Sun 5** **SARUM GALOPPEN, & Dorset Schools League, Everleigh, Wiltshire.**
- Mon 6** **WESSEX/WIM Club Night, Kings Park/Littledown.**
- Sun 12** **WESSEX DORSET DELIGHT, Bisterne Close, Burley.**
- Sat 18** **WIMBORNE DORSET SCHOOLS & INFORMAL, Hyde/ Gorley.**
- Sun 19** **DEVON GALOPPEN, Virtuous Lady, nr. Plymouth.**
- SAT 25** **SARUM DORSET SCHOOLS and informal, Bulford Ridge.**

NOVEMBER 2014

- Sat 1** **SARUM SALISBURY CITY RACE,**
- Sun 2** **SOC NOVEMBER CLASSIC – New Forest. This event is our Championship event.**
- Mon 3** **WIM/WSX Night League Event, Sherborne.**
- Sat 22 Wim Event at Golden Cap

DECEMBER 2014

- Mon 1 **WSX/WIM Night League, Broadstone Rec.**
- Sun 7 SOC Event at Fritham

Fri 26

BOXING DAY CANTER, Ringwood Forest North.

JANUARY 2015

Mon 5

WSX/WIM Night League, Poole Town

Sun 11

WIM Galoppen Moors Valley.

Details of all future events can be found on the British Orienteering website: www.britishorienteering.org.uk

Other useful local websites:

Wimborne Orienteers: www.wimborne-orienteers.org.uk

Southampton Orienteers: www.Southampton-orienteers.org.uk

Sarum Orienteers: www.sarumo.org.uk

North Gloucester Orienteers: www.ngocweb.com

Bristol Orienteers: www.bristolorienteering.org.uk

FOR UP TO DATE DETAILS OF THE WEDNESDAY ARMY EVENTS, GO TO THEIR WEBSITE: www.baoc.info

**** We try to put on a local event for newcomers and improvers most months during the year. For further details, please see our website: www.wessex-oc.org**

****Coaching will be available at all our events, including informals, for all abilities.**

The forthcoming events list is compiled from British Orienteering and other clubs' websites. For further details of events, log on to the **BRITISH ORIENTEERING** website or the relevant Club's website. **Please check before setting out, as some events have been known to change at short notice.** If you would like to share transport, contact a committee member who will put you in touch with someone who can help, or send a message through the Wessex Yahoo Group.

TIME TRAVEL ORIENTEERING

I invite you to a special kind of time travel. One of the orienteering kind. Some of you will know that I came back to Orienteering after a 20+ years break. I will not bore you with the reasons of my stopping (allergy) or re-entry (finding running by itself for weight management boring), instead, I'll share a few of my thoughts as I am learning to adjust.

Indeed, my adjustment is two-fold: I have to adjust not only to the advances in Orienteering as a whole, but also the language used: when I used to compete I was living in Hungary, hence all the Orienteering terminology I knew was in Hungarian. (Anyone needing a lesson, let me know).

It is not just doubly difficult: initially, when I saw an event flyer, I would not know whether "score event" meant a kind that I never partook in, or one I am very familiar with but has its special name in English, it was, of course, the former.

But in some cases it is genuine confusion: although I have been living in England for over 7 years and heavily using English for work purposes well over 10, the use of language did not really extend to the specialist terminology of Orienteering. Until now.

So what has changed? Well, I have to conclude that the biggest changes were brought by the advances of technology. Nowadays, the electronic punching systems have caused something similar to how we look at music: today's youth mostly do not understand why we were messing around with cassette tapes. They probably often have no idea why electronic punching is called "punching". For me, that is before this June, Orienteering races were synonymous with cardboard race cards. These (as I suspect many more experienced readers will remember) had a number of fields to fill in - one's name, category, start time, etc. - and also had a number of empty boxes numbered at the top. You then had to punch these in order - each control had punchers that punched a different pattern of holes in the cardboard.

Once finished, you had to hand these in, a finish time was written on the cardboard, and the controller verified that your punches were all matching the expected template before your time was hand calculated and written on the cardboard. A portion of the card was then torn away and hung on a piece of string - all cardboards in order of the finish time for each category. There was something special about this ceremony that I miss. Although getting your finish time immediately with your splits has immense advantages (you never knew your splits before the electronic systems), especially when comparing with other competitors, seeing your cardboard hanging at the front of the line (if you had a good run) somehow added an extra feeling of pride that looking at an electronic result list just doesn't do. Mind you: I am working in the IT industry so surely you can't excuse me of negative bias there!

Talking about punching - in fact, at the time, and in Hungary, actual punching was only used in the larger events. In most competitions, we used a simpler system: crayons. We had the same cardboard, but each control had a different colour of crayon hanging off of them, and you had to mark the relevant box with that colour.

Electronic punching has not only changed the way a competition is run, or results are calculated. It enabled a whole host of changes as well. At the time I stopped, at least in Hungary, we did only have "Classic" races, and very rarely some night races - even those were always held in the forests. There were no sprint races, score events, MTB-Orienteering, or urban races. I have read with interest an article by a premier mapper and orienteer (incidentally, Hungarian), about the "recent" development of mapping standards for urban events to make it possible to host these kind of events. Despite my 10 years of experience running in O-Races, this lead to some embarrassing moments for me already, not having had the experience with urban maps and multi-level races: spending over a minute near Bournemouth University in the Sprint Championships confused because I was convinced that a yellow patch must mean a

clearing (except THAT yellow means concrete). Or, in the Bath Sprint race, getting annoyed as I am completely sure that I am in the right place in the corner of the building, certainly the control MUST be here but not seeing it - until I raised my eyes to see the control hanging... 2 levels above me...

But I digress. I was talking about what the electronic punching enabled. Besides sprint events (yes, it has been enabled by electronic punching: we never would have had enough space to punch that many holes in the control card!), it also enabled score events. I can not imagine any controller wanting to work out from the many colour crayon combinations the points a runner could have collected in a 60 minute score...! If I am mistaken and these did happen before, I tip my hat to those controllers with a shake of my head in disbelief (sic Ed.) thrown in.

The Internet also enabled organisers. I can see a lot more events being accessible by people just by searching for events in the vicinity. In my time previously (again: NO INTERNET! Imagine that), one had to really look through a club's folder that held all the invites and enter events through the club's administrator. Not much scope for a smaller event there. Attending all these nearby events just helps us all to note again the friendliness of all Orienteers - or is it just my imagination? A virtual community is also there - tools like RouteGadget are helpful after the event: as compared to a few of clubmates sitting together at the bus, and trying to hand-draw on the map our routes to compare, we can do this online and in a wider circle (although I have to confess I am not yet satisfied with the accuracy of my GPS tracks so far - it may just be lack of experience of adjusting them).

With all the differences noted, there are some things that don't change.

With great amusement I have seen that the quintessential Orienteering equipment is still around and still only used by Orienteers. I am, of course, talking about the hybrid of the folding chair and backpack. I used to own one back in the day - of course we did not have any orienteering shops, and there being no Internet, I have sourced mine from a Finnish fellow who came to race to Hungary. Bringing O-stuff to sell was a well established trade for any westerner coming to a competition in Hungary, and I was using my backpack for years even after I stopped Orienteering. I have never seen them since, that is, until I turned up in one of the recent events

to notice every second orienteer using almost exactly the same construction, making me smile.

I also note with satisfaction that the ranking system did not change much - still as complicated to calculate, but as fair as can be: having competed in sailing, DanceSport and been involved in a number of other sports, I have always found Orienteering to have had the fairest way of calculating ranking. Its complexity may also have helped develop my mathematics brain that eventually got me to work with computers all my professional life.

And talking about things staying the same, alas, as my run in the British Sprint Championships final clearly shows, being 4 minutes off the winners pace despite a clear run, you still have to run fast in order to achieve results.

Drat.

Peter Suba



**PHOTO TAKEN AT THE START OF THE BRITISH
SPRINT CHAHMPIONSHIPS**

O5dias, Cervera de Pisuerga, Northern Spain

At the beginning of the year Gavin asked me where I would like to go for a holiday this year? Either to Switzerland, Slovenia and Croatia, Canada or Spain...? Would I like to choose which country to go to? Now, I have to tread lightly here as there is bound to be a particular reason for these choices! This sort of approach usually means that Gavin has already made his selection. I love France and have been to southern Spain many years ago when my children were small. They are now 42 and 39 years old and have their own children!

The conversation progressed - and I decide that I would prefer Spain with a drive down through western France. "Wouldn't you prefer Croatia or Slovenia" see!!! Why ask when he has already made up his mind. And - would you believe that Gavin has a free entry for the Slovenian 5 days! However the drive down to Croatia doesn't really fit in with work so we finally make a decision and low and behold it's France and Spain.....result!

Living in Hamworthy, getting to the Ferry Terminal is about 5minutes, so no problem there. So it's the Cherbourg route. It does make it so much easier on the return. So on a bright sunny morning, everything is locked up securely and off we go. Not long to wait at the terminal before we are on the move but not very far. We are pulled over for a search to check for any 'dodgey' items. The young lady who pulled us over says she wants to be kind to her colleague who is doing the searches as its only a two seater. I think it's to do with the driver, but let's not dwell on that. They were kind enough to ask if the car was ok to go over the metal ramps - quite a steep ramp and very low car! Yes it's ok. We then get stopped by the guy loading us on up the ramp. "My colleague told me to look out for red Saab and see it safely over the ramps". Gavin keeps quiet for a change. I will explain the difference to the guy later. The rest of the Ferry staff were efficient and helpful, thanks guys and girls.

Away we go. Gavin snoozes, so I have a go at the telegraph crossword. It was a smooth crossing and it wasn't long before we were back into the car and on our way to Andrew Beldowski's place in Perret in Brittany. We arrived at 6.00pm. The next day we helped Andrew in the garden as much as we could as his rockery was a sea of brambles. So we worked for our supper and had a lovely BBQ afterwards, which included some neighbours Andrew had invited over. One small problem was that the car had developed a glitch and wouldn't lock!!

Thursday 31st July/Friday 1st August

We were up early as we had a four hour drive to La Rochelle and then onto La Chaumeuniere our B&B. It was a beautiful place, lovely rooms, beautiful gardens a new pool and pleasant hosts.

La Rochelle was a lovely place to walk around, very old maritime history. We went onto a

very old rigged ship on the harbour, a large old sailing vessel. When we came back to the car park there were four lads about 17 and a younger lad about 10years old. When we approached they said “nice car”. Gavin let the young lad sit in it with the roof down while his older friends took his photo. If you can make someone happy - why not!

Saturday 2nd August.

Another fairly early start for our journey to the nearest Porsche garage at Bordeaux re: getting the central locking to work on the car. But it's a Saturday so only salesmen, no engineers!

Sunday 3rd

Up and ready to carry on south into Spain and San Sebastian, a 290km drive and our next B&B at Usurbil about 15 minutes drive further on. Aginaga Hotela was interesting. Very modern accommodation, balcony and great views. The evening meal was in the building next door. This turned out to be akin to a huge village hall with the ends of 7 huge vats built into one wall. Most of the seating was communal but as we were the first to arrive at eight o'clock we had our own small table – most people have their evening meal between 9 and 10. The purpose of the vats become apparent when the waitress took us to them and proceeded to get us to sample them all. Each vat was a different cider. Not the sparkling stuff you get over here, but proper still cider. Once you decided which one you preferred you then helped yourself. The drinks were included in the price of the meal and you were expected to go and help yourself to as much as you wanted from any vat, throughout the evening. Now as Gavin was bought up in Somerset he thought he had died and gone to heaven!

Monday 4th August...

A detour from the schedule with a visit to Pamplona – not for the Bulls but one of the few Porsche outlets in Spain. They were incredibly helpful and efficient and after an hour had discovered the fault and what replacement part was required. The bad news was that the part didn't exist in Spain and would have to be shipped from Stuttgart which would take a week. As we weren't coming back this way we said we would wait till we got back to the UK. Nothing else for it but to put everyone on trust. So throughout all our time in France and Spain the car was totally unlocked and we never had any problem at all. Onwards and we arrived at the event centre in Cervera de Pisuerga in time for Gavin to register for the O5dias. Then on to Posada Molina La Vega at Reinosilla about 30 minutes drive from the event centre. Posada Molina La Vega was a lovely converted mill, with a restaurant downstairs and 5 bedrooms upstairs. Set in the middle of the countryside with views of the mountains. Our hostess Sonia made us very welcome. That evening we ate in the restaurant and got talking to a couple from Switzerland, who were the only other guests. Although we were some distance from the event centre they were also Orienteers. They had been to the Scottish six days a few times. And on one occasion were sharing a B&B with an older orienteer, who was the President of a club on the South Coast – yes it was Richard!!!

Tuesday 5th ...

The first race; classic distance at Villaescusa de las Torres. A lovely technical area

according to Gavin. Plenty of bare rock, indistinct vegetation and very runnable. Gavin made 5 minutes of mistakes ending up 4th, so some work to do, but not too disappointed as he hadn't done any model races to acclimatise to the terrain or altitude. I stayed at the Assembly area found a coffee and a place to read my book until his return.

Wednesday 6th

Middle distance, similar area to yesterday with the assembly and finish taking over the whole of a tiny village who must have wondered what was going on! Managed to find some coffee but not much to eat. Gavin had a better day, coming first. He must be getting the hang of things!

Thursday 7th

The sprint distance race. Now this is what Gavin is good at, although this was forest sprint and Gavin prefers Urban sprint. So he is disappointed at coming 2nd being beaten by over 2 minutes. As the whole competition is based on points this seriously dents his chances of an overall win. Can the day get any worse – yes! In the evening there is a 'fun' microsprint at the local football club. Barriers and posts set out and mapped. The format is for the heats to race round the microsprint course then a final with the winners of the heats. Due to the numbers there is about 30 on each heat and three different courses set out. So once the whistle goes, its complete mayhem. You may not believe this but Gavin can be a tad competitive at times! Head down, reading the map at speed and he tries to share the same time/space continuum as this stocky guy coming in the opposite direction. Long story short, but the Spanish Health system is very efficient and a broken rib and a large packet of Ibuprofen later we are ready to enjoy the rest day on Friday!

Rest Day!!

So off to Santillana Del Mer a lovely tourist village, then on to Comillas and a tour round the El Capricho de Gaudi.

Saturday 9th.

Day four of the competition. Classic distance again. Area not so rocky, very fast and a premium on navigation. Good run by Gavin, 1st. The ibuprofen is obviously doing its job, even though he says the only time it doesn't hurt is when he stops breathing. I refrain from making the obvious comment! Some points clawed back. It now all rests on the final race. On our return Sonia greeted us by saying she had a "leettle, leettle problem" with Gavins washing! She was very apologetic. Sonia showed us the washing and Gavins red O knickers had some white patches on where they had been in contact with bleach. They were only an old pair for O so it wasn't any problem at all. Sonia insisted on not charging for that days washing though!

Sunday 10th. Last race of the event and a similar area to yesterday, same finish, but from a different direction. Middle distance race with 13 controls. When Gavin gets back he says he messed up the first 5 controls! It seems like his competitors made even more mistakes, as only the Swedes, Anders Bjorklund, can get within five and a half minutes of Gavin's time. Enough of a margin to ensure an overall win. We had to leave before the prize giving but

they have just caught up with us: Bottle of wine, packet of biscuits, a packet of chocolate biscuits that apparently got eaten on their way over to us and a cuddly toy Orca! After the race off to Château de Léognan just south of Bordeaux.

Monday 11th

A Chateau de la Motte at Usseau for a couple of nights. Home Wednesday 13th after an excellent excursion. Apparently, so I'm told, we are going to Sweden next year – I wonder why that is???

Lady Lycra



Day 1 map



Day 4 map



Assembly area, Spain.

CADDIHOE CHASE – FOREST OF DEAN

Over the weekend of September 13/14 several Wessex members travelled to the lovely Forest of Dean to compete in the Caddihoe Chase. This area always provides excellent orienteering as it is a good mix of technical and physical terrain and the courses certainly provided plenty of both.

The Saturday was based at Blakeney Hill with plenty of rough going underfoot. Unfortunately this resulted in both Gavin and Jason having to retire with injuries. Indeed one unfortunate lady appeared to have broken her arm (tough sport this orienteering!). But fortunately nothing as drastic for our members.

There were mixed fortunes during the first day with the outstanding result being Richard Arman beating his age group compatriots by an impressive 14 minutes. The rest of us generally finished somewhere between half way and two thirds of the way down the field.

Most of us met up with friends from Wimborne and Sarum for an Italian meal in the evening to celebrate Carolyn's birthday which was on the Sunday.

Sunday was another pleasant day based at Mallards Pike East with some high cloud and not too warm, at least to start with. Start times were quite late to allow for the Veteran's Home International Relays to take place beforehand. With an excellent run-in arena there were plenty of cheering orienteers which obviously spurred on England as we won both the Individual Event on the Saturday and the Relay on the Sunday.

Again Wessex members had mixed fortunes on the Sunday. I managed to finish slightly higher up the field which dragged me up from 25th to 12th overall. As the prize giving got under way we were looking out for Richard (as well as one or two others) who had been out for nearly 2 hours. The prize giving came and went but just as we were starting to get worried all the missing competitors appeared and, although Richard had been beaten that day by just over 2 minutes his lead from Saturday ensured that he was Caddihoe Chase winner, as well as South West Champion from his Saturday's result.

All in all an excellent weekend with good weather, good courses, good organisation (did I mention the computer screen at the Chasing Start which showed when each competitor was due to start?), good company and at least one good result.

Ian Sayer

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REGULAR CLUB EVENINGS/TRAINING

Training every Tuesday at Bournemouth University, Talbot Campus, 5.45pm for 6.00pm start.

Joint Club Evenings with Wimborne Orienteers are on the first Monday of every month. See the website for more details.



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