



Aire Affairs



April 2026



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AIRE AFFAIRS is the Club's official magazine and is available on our website www.aire.org.uk and via e-mail/paper format on request.

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Cover: Henry Stitson at CLARO's Brimham Rocks event – picture by Wendy Carlyle
All pictures are Wendy's except where credited to someone else or not known.



Waiting to start at the British Championships



EditO – Peter Jones

My thanks to Cathy, Lindsey, Steve and David for their contributions.

Congratulations to the AIRE members who survived Storm Dave and some very challenging courses at the JK up in Perthshire.

While they were battling snow and car-park queues at JK Relay on Easter Monday, along with my daughter* I ran the [Halifax Urban Trail](#) race). I know AIRE members run all sorts of races and trail runs, but this was the first of its kind in the UK, in that we ran through many of Halifax's most well-known buildings.

So, starting at Shibden Park (home of 'Gentleman Jack' and has been used of orienteering), the route wound its way up and over to the town, into the Minster (the organist was playing 'Chariots of Fire' when I went through), Piece Hall, indoor market, Town Hall and Dean Clough Mills, then back up to Shibden Park. In orienteering terms about 10k/300m climb, and definitely more my sort of thing to be in a race where people were stopping to taking selfies next to a large statue of a sheep, rather than trying for a PB on a flat 10k road course.



[well, quite a way further back - picture of me about to finish by Mary Jones]*

Congratulations to Caroline and John Blatherwick, proud parents of Connor who was born on March 19th. Hoping to see you all at an AIRE event soon!



Chair Affairs – Cathy Dawson

Joint Event with Wetherby & District Scouts

Towards the end of 2025 we were approached by one of the leaders of Wetherby and District Scouts to see if Aire could help facilitate an event for them. We thought this was a great opportunity to promote orienteering, so we expanded the planned Saturday Intro event at Roundhay Park on Saturday 14th March, and held the usual intro event (with 50 runs – some done in groups) and more than 200 scouts as well. Ken Patterson was our expert organiser, but with so many absolute novices, the day only worked with the input from a team of experienced Aire volunteers – thank you to all involved.

Apparently, there is a scout orienteering badge, and to qualify they would have to do another 2

events so we may see some coming along to run again hopefully. The sun was out, no one got completely lost and I learnt a valuable lesson in how long it takes to get controls out when they all need to be gripped.



Saturday Intro Events – opportunity to try your hand at planning

Simon Martland was, until recently, our Junior Development Officer. We have combined this role with the development officer role to make a ‘Club Development Lead’ which remains vacant. If anyone is interested, then please get in touch.

Part of this role is organising the Saturday Introductory events. This year, Joseph Dawson has planned and organised a lot as part of his Duke of Edinburgh volunteering work. Are there any teenagers in need of a volunteering opportunity? These events also work well for someone new to planning events – they are straightforward courses aimed at newcomers to the sport. It’s a great opportunity to have a play around on the Purple Pen software. I think it’s important we keep these running after September so get in touch - chairATAire.org.uk - if you think you would like a try. Help & guidance is at hand.



AIRE juniors - Lindsey King (AIRE Juniors Coordinator)

British Championships weekend

This major event was held down near Swansea at the end of February. Not surprisingly, only the very keen orienteering families travelled that far and back for the weekend during term time.

I arranged an online session beforehand to look at the maps and share hints and tips before the races which I hope members found helpful.

The individual event on Saturday was held on high exposed limestone moorland. We were lulled into a false sense of spring in the arena only for many of us to be caught in a violent hail shower during our races. Putting coats on during the race slowed us down. It also contributed to a few runners retiring as they became cold quite quickly. Despite this we had 3 British junior champions!



M10:
Sebastian -
1st

M12A: Alfie– retired, M12B Joby – 1st

W14A: Alethea - 9th, Penny – retired

M14A: Charlie – 13th

W16A: Bethan -1st, M16A Sam -9th

W18E: Katie -1st

On Sunday the relay area Margam Park near Port Talbot was a landscaped park with a variety of terrain. The main challenge there was the mud in the finish arena. The club tent took a bit of cleaning afterwards! Our 2 junior teams both had fantastic races:

W18 – Katie, Alethea & Bethan – silver medals -2nd

Junior ad Hoc – Charlie, Sebastian & Sam – gold medals - 1st





JK

The first day sprint races in Perth saw 2 superb races from Ewen and Katie in the 18 elite classes. Ewen was 1st and Katie 3rd winning gold and bronze medals respectively – although Katie appears to have her eyes on someone else!

This is the M18E course at JK Sprint in Perth city centre, which Ewen ran in 15m36s. It was also M20E and M21E and he was only 43s behind the course winner.





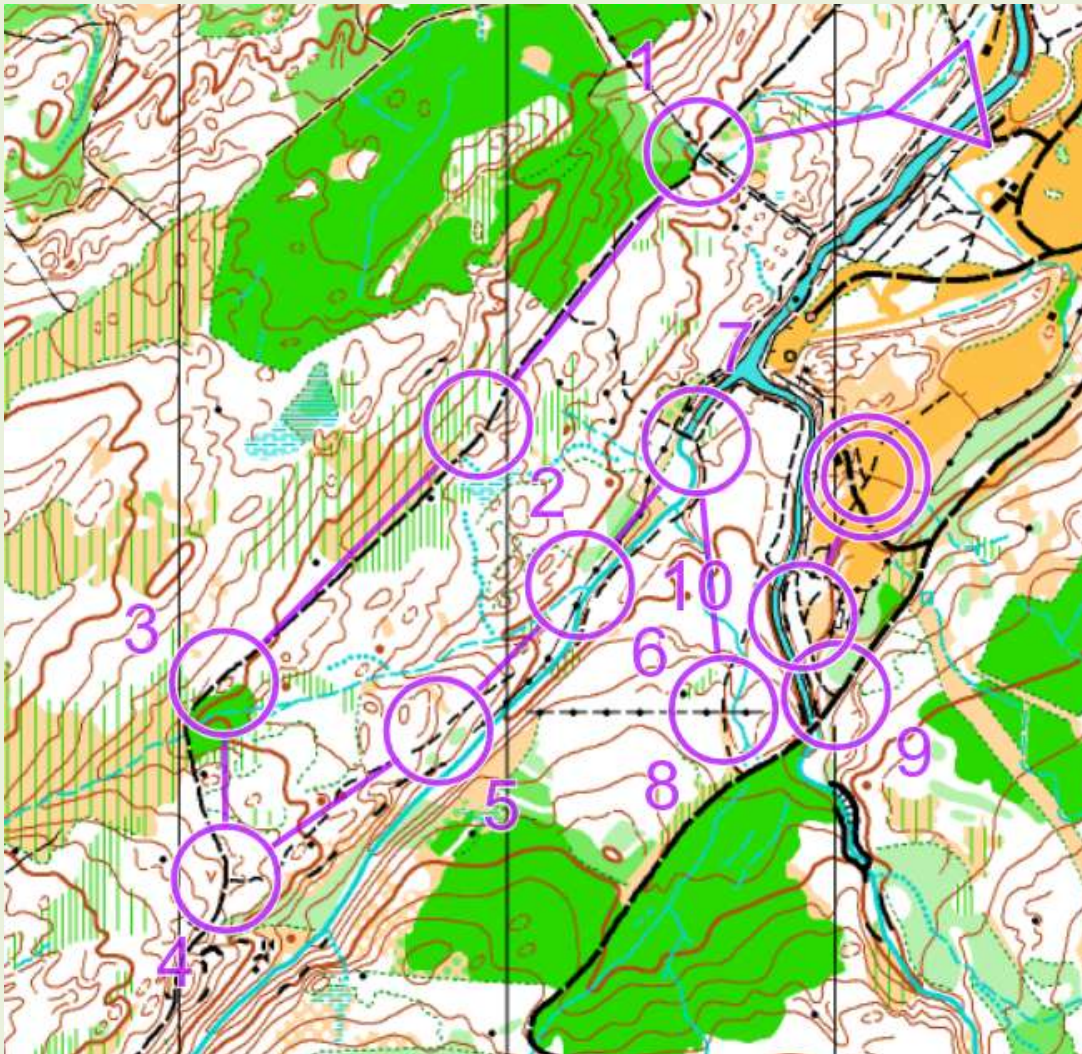
The middle and long races were in Rannoch, a rough and complex forest which many of us found hard. The weather threw rain, snow and wind at us, so it was an achievement to finish a course.

There were some other outstanding results overall (combined middle and long results) with Sebastian M10A 2nd and sister Alethea W14A 5th. Bethan W16A was 4th overall and 1st on Middle.



My vote for AIRE junior of the weekend goes to Oscar Branney who competed in his first big event in some of UK's toughest terrain without being shadowed. He completed all his M10 courses successfully, achieving 9th and bronze standard in the M10 sprint. He then completed both middle and long M10A courses and was 11th overall.

This is Oscar's course from JK Long, also run by Sebastian, Alfie and Isobel.





To top it all, Oscar was allocated first leg in AIRE's mini relay team Paddington bAIREs. He took it steady and carefully all the way around to complete the course in 9th place.

Alfie Alcock ran 2nd leg and successfully completed his leg (4th on leg) bringing us up to 7th. This left Joby, as anchor leg, to chase the rest of the teams. He had a storming run (1st on leg) bringing the team back 4th overall!

Other individual results:

Joby M12A 13th overall, Penny W14A 22nd Middle, Charlie M14A 39th Middle, Sam 22nd M16A Middle, Ewen M18E 13th overall, Henry M18E 34th overall, Katie W18E 19th overall.

Relays:

Mini – Oscar, Alfie and Joby -4th

M/W40- George, Sebastian & Penny – 10th

W48- Bethan, Alethea (3rd) & Katie (2nd) - mispunch

M48- Ewen (1st), Charlie & Sam - 4th with Sam's sprint finish we very nearly had the bronze medal!

Ad Hoc - Isobel W10 ran with the Black bAIREs adults Liz and Peter and they came 29th.

Well done everyone. I hope you enjoyed another AIRE adventure in the wilds of Scotland.

Join the Airienteers' brand

We have new stock of AIRE tops in various sizes so if anyone would like one please contact me at lindseyking49ATicloud.com or message me on 07908 747528. I will bring the stock with me to most events I go to allowing you to try before you buy.

Here is our Chair Cathy in action modelling the AIRE top at Brimham Rocks.

The cost of the adult size tops is £42.32 and the junior size top is £33.85. The club has a loan scheme for junior members who participate regularly.

We also have club jackets available to buy in this design and our older style.

NB if a junior is no longer using their 'loan' top please return it to me or contact me to arrange to pay for it so you can keep it, thanks.





AIRE Instructors Course – BOOK NOW!

We already have a tutor, one participant & possible dates.

- Like to share your orienteering skills with others?
- Do you enjoy learning together with others?
- Want to be more useful while your children are competing/training?

Train as an orienteering instructor and learn how to:

- Teach orienteering skills to Orange standard through games and exercises
- Create a safe training environment and follow key requirements
- Make it fun and exciting.

The training will involve:

- Online modules - 3 or 4 hours
- 10 -12 hours practical sessions over 1 weekend with a tutor
- Continuous assessment during the course - certificate

To be licenced as an instructor you will need, if you don't have already:

- First aid training
- Safeguarding training

We need 4-12 participants – Contact me now! – at lindseyking49ATicloud.com or 07908 747528





Club Captain's Reports – Steve Webb

CompassSport Cup heat

A really big thank you to everybody who responded to my call to action and turned out to represent the club in our Compass Sport Cup match against SYO and CLOK at Lazenby Bank and Eston Moor.

The timing of the event was a bit unfortunate as we had several unavoidable absentees due variously to half term holidays, junior squad weekend and the attraction of warm weather races in Spain. However, all three clubs in the Cup match were affected in that regard. We had 43 competitive entries with decent coverage across all the classes and as Captain I am really grateful for your interest and support for the team.

We put up a tremendous challenge against defending champions SYO and the final scores were:

SYO 2,437 AIRE 2,427 CLOK 2,327

We were so close to causing a really big upset!

In the Trophy competition for smaller clubs NN and CLARO were qualifiers from the pool of six clubs involved.

The match was very well organised by CLOK on a bright but windy day. After a long, muddy and hilly walk to the start high on Lazenby Bank we could all draw breath and enjoy fine views of Teesside and what remains of the chemical industry there.

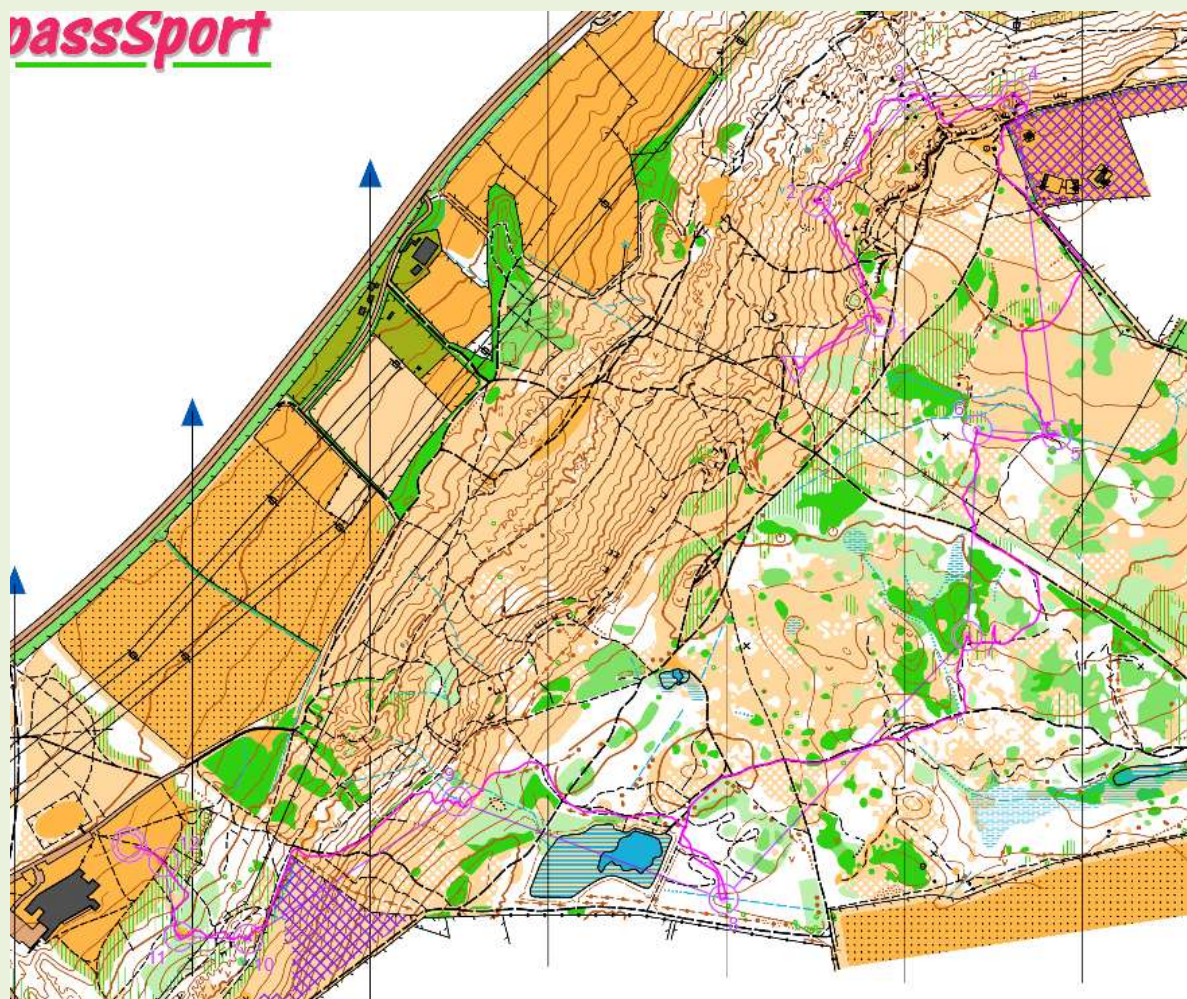
This is the list of our 25 top performers on the day. Congratulations in particular to Anne M, Sam C and Alethea C who won their courses outright (Sam had an extraordinary winning margin of 15 minutes!) and to Anne W who also secured 100 points in the match.

100 points	Anne Murgatroyd Anne Wilson Sam Crook Alethea Carr	Course 5 Course 8 Course 9 Course 10
99 points	Andrew Stemp-Walsh David Alcock Alice Leake Tony Carlyle	Course 1 Course 2 Course 3 Course 7
98 points	Rolf Crook Fay Stemp-Walsh Steve Webb Peter Jones Wendy Carlyle	Course 2 Course 3 Course 4 Course 6 Course 8
97 points	Julia Crook Peter Jones (Ed) Tony Thornley	Course 5 Course 6 Course 7



96 points	Dave Murgatroyd Rob King Lindsey King Liz Carter	Course 1 Course 6 Course 7 Course 8
95 points	Cathy Kelly	Course 7
94 points	Brian Hanley Ruth Jones	Course 2 Course 7
92 points	Dave Shelley Sebastian Carr	Course 6 Course 10

This is Course 5, with Anne Murgatroyd's winning route



This year another tweak in the rules means that despite being defeated in the qualifier we do still progress to the final as we came second to the defending champions.

The 2026 final is due to be staged by the Mole Valley club on Sunday 18 October, so do please try to hold the date. The venue is Pippingford Park in East Sussex, which was the venue for JK Relay in 2017. It's a long way to go, but as Claro have also qualified there might be an opportunity for shared coach travel; something for the committee to consider. Talking of the committee, on behalf of all competitors I would really like to thank the club for paying the entry fees for all AIRE entrants.



British Relays

Well, what can I say, we had some great performances in South Wales. Many thanks and well done to everyone who represented AIRE in the British Relay Champs at Margam Country Park near Port Talbot. It was a long way to travel so early in the year for a championship weekend but we were able to turn out 7 teams to tackle terrain which started out extremely sticky and turned rapidly into a complete quagmire. Our teams won 2 gold and 2 silver medals, a tremendous strike rate! Results are as follows:

M50	Julius CaesAIRE	David Alcock Rolf Crook David Bowman	2/10 Silver!
W50	MinAIREva	Joyce Marshall Julia Crook Jo Buckley	5/12
M60	LegionnAIRE	Steve Webb Rob King Ian Marshall	11/23
M/W70	PrAIREtorian Guard	Tony Carlyle Sue Stevens Peter Haines	1/8 Gold!
W18	CleopAIREtra	Bethan Buckley Alethea Carr Katie Buckley	2/5 Silver!
Mixed Ad-Hoc	SpAIREtacus	Lindsey King Helen Alcock Scott Carr	8/29
Junior Ad-Hoc	HerculAIREneum	Charlie Alcock Sebastian Carr Sam Crook	1/10 Gold!

A quick note on the team names. In January archaeologists using ground penetrating radar announced the discovery of a large Roman villa underneath Margam Country Park; the remains are believed to be in good condition given the historical lack of ploughing in that location. This find may be the reason for the event arena being relocated and the courses partly replanned at a very late stage. Anyway, to acknowledge this significant cultural discovery I decided to adopt a Roman theme for our team names on this occasion.

The M/W70 PrAIREtorian Guard team again showed everyone how it should be done. The team was unchanged from last year and ensured AIRE won the trophy for the 4th year in a row. Tony Carlyle and Sue Stevens ran into 2nd place after the first two legs and unleashed Peter Haines who duly took the lead and even had time for a bit of showboating down the finish funnel. Can they extend the run to 5 years on home terrain at Danefield in 2027?



At the other end of the age spectrum a very young (M14, M10, M16) team of Charlie Alcock, Sebastian Carr and Sam Crook running as HerculAIREneum all ran brilliantly to win the Junior Ad Hoc class. Again, our final leg runner was sent out in 2nd place and blew the opposition away; Sam was an amazing 3 minutes faster than anyone else on the TD5 leg.

For those two teams it was a clear case of “veni, vidi, vici”!

There was another fantastic AIRE silver medal for Bethan, Alethea and Katie running this time in W18 as CleopAIREtra after they teamed up in Junior Ad-Hoc in 2025. Hopefully that team will again be able to run together in W48- at the JK so the opposition had better watch out.

Our M50 men all ran very similar times at the individual race on the Saturday, and I had high hopes for Julius CaesAIRE if they could repeat that consistency against very strong opposition. They put in a great team performance. David Alcock and Rolf Crook were able to send David Bowman out in 2nd place for a really tense final leg. David B was able to overhaul the leader from SOC but the notoriously rapid Nick Barrable of SYO came through to take the win. It was a really well-deserved silver medal for the M50s.

As usual I was on the lookout for some strong individual results amid the team races: Sebby and Sam had fastest times on the Junior Ad Hoc on legs 2 and 3 respectively, Bethan had the fastest leg 1 time on W18, Peter had fastest leg 3 time on M/W70, Jo had fastest leg 3 time on W50 and Rolf had fastest leg 2 time on M50. Well done all.



It wouldn't be a relay championship without last minute juggling of resources to fill gaps that open up in the teams. So, my thanks go to Ian Marshall for stepping up to run in the M60 team, to Peter Jones for stepping up as a substitute for Ian, and to Scott Carr for stepping up as a substitute when Peter was injured at the individual race. The screenplay went something like this (with apologies to the Hollywood epic and Monty Python):

“Who’s leg 3 SpAIREtacus?”

Ian M: “I’m SpAIREtacus!”

Peter J: “No I’m SpAIREtacus!”

Scott C: “No, I’m SpAIREtacus!”

On behalf of all our competitors thank you to the club for paying the entry fees of the AIRE entrants for the British and JK relays. I’d also like to thank fellow selectors Lindsey King and David Alcock for their input and for Lindsey’s online race preparation session.

JK Relays

Thanks, and well done to everyone who answered my call to represent AIRE in the JK relay races on Easter Monday at Tullochruisk. It was a great event on lovely terrain, so nice to be able to run with freedom after two days of stumbling and bashing through Rannoch Forest!

Results are as follows:

Women’s Short	Brown bAIREs	Helen Alcock, Lindsey King, Julia Crook	18/28
Senior Men (120+)	Polar bAIREs	David Alcock, Henry Stitson, Rolf Crook	12/20
Veteran Men (165+)	Grizzly bAIREs	Robert King, Peter Carter, Ian Marshall	31/38
Ultra Veterans (M/W210+)	Spectacled bAIREs	Peter Haines, Sue Stevens, Steve Webb	Mp
Ultra Veterans (M/W210+)	Panda bAIREs	Tony Carlyle, Joyce Marshall, Jo Buckley	Mp
Intermediate Men (48-)	Sun bAIREs	Ewen Wilkinson, Charlie Alcock, Sam Crook	4/17
Intermediate Women (48-)	Koala bAIREs	Bethan Buckley, Alethea Carr, Katie Buckley	Mp
Junior Relay (M/W40-)	Pudsey bAIRE	George Ricketts, Sebastian Carr, Penny Pinker-Hull	10/17
Mini Relay (M/W12-)	Paddington bAIRE	Oscar Branney, Alfie Alcock, Joby Pinker-Hull	4/11
Mixed Ad-Hoc	Black bAIREs	Liz Potterton (Claro), Isobel Ricketts, Peter Branney	29/45



Club kit to the fore at JK Relay

So, on this occasion we didn't have any medal winning teams, but it was close. The Sun bAIREs team of Ewen, Charlie and Sam missed out on the podium by just one second and were only 8 seconds away from a silver medal. In the frenzy of head-to-head racing in fast terrain with lots of controls there was quite a lot of mispunching and we suffered a bit from this. The Koala bAIREs would have been in 2nd place but for a mispunch and sadly both of our very competitive Ultra Veterans teams failed to complete the courses. I have to put my hand up here as I was having a great run on leg 3 when I suffered brain fade and turned too early for the final couple of controls, inexplicably failing to visit No. 12. A schoolboy error, maybe I should tender my resignation as Captain?

I'd like to highlight some excellent individual runs, especially Ewen Wilkinson and Peter Haines returning in 1st place from their mass starts and Joby Pinker-Hull came storming home with fastest time on leg 3 of the Mini relay. Katie and Jo Buckley were both 2nd fastest on last leg for their teams.

It was also good to see some of our Mini relay runners moving up to the Junior relay and running well.



If anyone needs to be reunited with their JK relay map then please let me know. Finally many thanks to the club for paying all relay entry fees and David A and Lindsey for help with team selections.

British Mixed Sprint Relay Champs

Your next chance to represent the club is at the [British Sprints weekend](#) at the end of June.

The mixed sprint relay will be on Saturday 27 June at Bristol University students village in north Bristol, and the individual races on Sunday 28 June at the University of the West of England campus at Filton, north Bristol.

Please sign up for a relay run ASAP so I can organise teams.

It should be a good weekend; I did all my secondary schooling in Bristol and there's lots to see and do in the area.

YHOA Schools Championships – David Alcock

The **2026 YHOA Schools Championships** will be held at Temple Newsam, Leeds, on the **afternoon** of Sunday 7th June. Start times will be from 1-3pm.

Details of the event are available here: [YHOA Schools Championships - Airtenters](#)

How to enter

- If schools will be entering juniors from more than one family, then they should email the organiser, David Alcock - secretary@Aire.org.uk - by Thursday 21st May - to get a bulk entry form.
- If families would prefer to enter juniors separately then they will be able to do so using Fabian4, following the instructions on the webpage above.

The event is open to seniors too, so why not have a go? You could make a day of it and visit the grounds (just the golf course will be out of bounds), the house, and farm. Courses range from short white to green. Finally, if you'd like to help out on the day, then please do let me know.



JK Relay ... in 1981 - Editor

Looking through the reports and pictures from JK Relay has reminded me of the first JK Relay I ran, back in 1981.*

I ran 3rd leg for Aberystwyth University, here at Bishop's Wood in Staffordshire in the JK Trophy (Men's Open). I don't have a copy of the results, so most of this is from memory.



- We didn't have orienteering software, or even personal computers. Courses were usually over-printed onto blank maps individually, which looks to have been the case here, or even drawn onto the maps before they were printed. Pictorial control descriptions** were written/drawn by hand for each course, duplicated, and attached to maps. All in all, a time-consuming process***, which needed a lot of checking.

- Judging from my route the forest was quite slow, and paths and tracks were the best option. I haven't found any recent results from Bishop's Wood, likely to be a bramble-patch now.



- There would have been over 100 3-man teams, and I think we finished in the middle somewhere. JK Relay was a Big Thing, even for a small club like us who were nowhere near the top. Leg times were longer, more like low 40mins for the winner.

- Men's Open was won by Bristol OK, and Women's Open by INTERlopers – I know this thanks to Simon Errington's excellent [Maprunner](#) website.

- The only open club in mid-Wales at that time was Sarn Helen ORC, based in Lampeter. They were much quicker than us but may have been hampered on the day because their 2nd leg runner (Wish Gdula) ran round wearing a dress over his O-kit.

[I won't regularly be dipping into my map archive, I promise]*

*[** I'd only see these at major events and would need a refresher on what they meant]*

*[*** Apologies if I've remembered some of this wrong; I wasn't involved in a major event until 1986]*

At least it didn't snow, unlike this year ...





AIRE Achievements

Congratulations to :-

Emily Gibbins on selection to run for GB at World Cup Round 2 at the end of May, and the World University Championships at the end of July.

All AIRE members who ran for the club in our Compass Sport Cup heat, as in Steve's report

British Night Championships – Burnham Beeches, Feb 7th

Peter Haines – 3rd on M70L

British Championships – Carreg Goch, Upper Swansea Valley, Feb 28th

1st	Bethan Buckley Katie Buckley Joyce Marshall Seb Carr	W16 W18E W65 M10
3rd	Jo Buckley Peter Haines	W50 M70

Also: Fay Stemp-Walsh – **Welsh Champion**, and 10th on W21E

British Relays – Margam Park near Port Talbot, March 1st

All AIRE members who ran for the club, as in Steve's report

JK Sprint

Top 10

1st	Bethan Buckley Ewen Wilkinson	W16 M18E (and 13th on Course 1)
2nd	Joyce Marshall Scott Carr	W65 Novice Adult
3rd	Katie Buckley Jo Buckley Seb Carr David Alcock	W18E W50 M10 M50
7th	Sam Crook Steve Webb Tony Carlyle	M16 M60 M75
8th	Alethea Carr Helen Alcock	W14 W40
9th	Oscar Branney Joby Pinker-Hull	M10 M12



JK Individual

Top 10 (Middle & Long Overall)

1 st	Peter Haines	M70L (& 1 st at Day 1 – Long)
2 nd	Seb Carr Joyce Marshall	M10A (& 1 st at Day 2 -Middle) W65L
4 th	Bethan Buckley Jo Buckley	W16A (& 1 st at Day 2 – Middle) W50L
5 th	Alethea Carr	W14A
6 th	Tony Carlyle	M75L

Also (in a large class) –

Lindsey King 17th on W60L

Ewen Wilkinson 13th on M18E

David Alcock 15th on M50L

Richard Wilson 11th on M70L

JK Relay

All AIRE members who ran for the club, as in Steve's report

AIRE Winter Night Score League

Class winners –

- Lucy Needham
- Nicola Parkinson
- Dave Murgatroyd
- Steve Mead



Airienteers in Action

Brimham Rocks







British Championships

Pictures of Andrew and Fay Stemp-Walsh by Rob Lines





Picture of an unidentified Airienteer by Google Gemini AI (free version) in Thinking Mode.

I prompted Gemini AI to create 'an image of a woman about 35 - 40 years old running at this event on Carreg Goch, approaching a control and wearing this orienteering top',

I'd uploaded a picture of my AIRE top, and it knew what 'this event' was referring to as I'd previously uploaded a map, with a course, from this year's British Championships and had a 'conversation' with Gemini AI about it.

Despite some extra prompting, it doesn't quite understand the set-up for a control, and I don't think there are sinkholes at Carreg Goch as big as those in the background!



British Relays







JK Middle & Long





JK Relay



