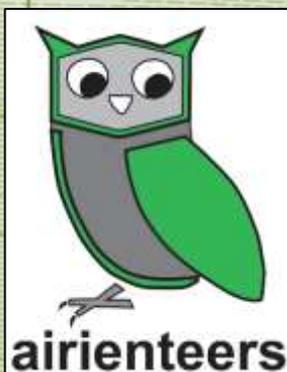




Aire Affairs



August 2020



Airianteers

Orienteering in Airedale and Wharfedale

www.aire.org.uk



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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 to all members and interested parties.

CONTACTS

CHAIR	David Williams	chair@aire.org.uk	
SECRETARY	David Alcock	secretary@aire.org.uk	07989 563588
TREASURER	Peter Jones	treasurer@aire.org.uk	
FIXTURES	Chris Burden	chris.burdenATbtinternet.com	01274 583853
MEMBERSHIP	Ian Marshall	membership@aire.org.uk	01943 862997

The cover photo shows novice orienteer Nicole enjoying AIRE’s first event out of lockdown at Roundhay.



Edit O – Wendy Carlyle

As I left our socially distanced car at Skipwith I said to Tony, ‘Can I remember how to do this?’ The answer afterwards, just about, but it didn’t prevent me having a great time out there. There were the usual distractions; a disturbed hare keeping pace with me through the woodland; several changed decisions which sent me in to the rough and my own unique route choices but what the heck, wasn’t it good to be doing it again?!



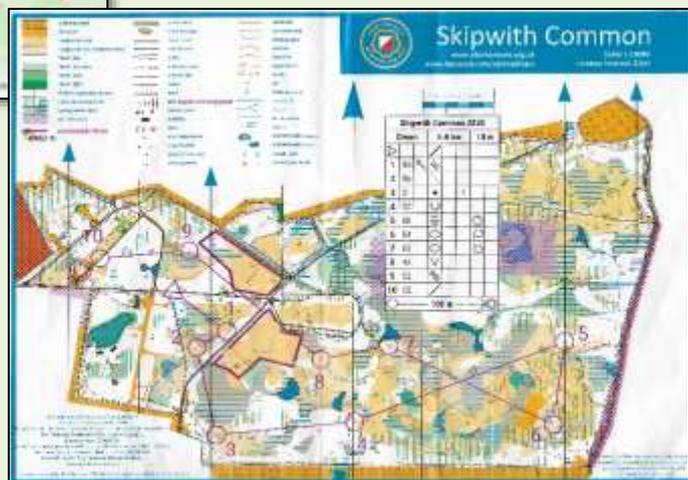
We were conscious not to linger socially but it didn’t stop us greeting ‘old friends’ and re making those connections. I timed my arrival at the start to avoid hanging around too long and enjoyed the few minutes before the well organised off catching up with Barrie and Jill, then I was into the woodland and nothing had changed. Once on my course the only time I had to think about Covid was when giving a family out for a walk a wider berth than usual and I actually didn’t think about the virus, I just automatically went further out, now conditioned in to a different way of doing things.

It was smashing out there: the usual problems to solve – is that marsh or just rough terrain? Do I go around the path or cut across? Why have I ended up at no.6 before no.5? What are those creatures crashing around in the head high bracken a few feet away (I never did find out!) Where is that pit?! See my Strava trace for the headless chicken moments.



Thank you to all the contributors to this ‘emergent’ issue. Hopefully, the next one will be back to bursting with event reports and tales of orienteering derring-do, meanwhile be safe out there!

The photo shows Tony and I ‘modelling’ our virtual Lagganlia O tops (and our lockdown hairdos!) We obviously weren’t in Scotland with the Juniors this year, so they had three days of virtual coaching instead.





Chair Affairs – David Williams

Well, we got our first resumption event last Wednesday at Roundhay Park - but the organiser didn't organise the bloody weather!!

Great support for this post lockdown oversight though with comments including; "I've forgotten how much I enjoy getting wet and muddy," & "Just enough rain to keep you cool".

It was great to see 75 people out despite the conditions. We had to make a number of adjustments in line with British Orienteering guidance to run the event and think we more or less manged. Overall, the guidance in practice will mean future events will need a bit more volunteer time and missing a few luxuries like loose control descriptions and splits print out. However, I don't think it will severely hinder events up to regional size where a reasonable start window can be made available.

On the upside, complying with guidance has immediately brought forward a couple of useful improvements for future events, with a club online entry form/system and contactless payment at the event. (Thanks Leon)

We are obviously going to try and bring forward other events and return to something like our normal event programme. However, this may not be as straightforward as we would hope. Most of the areas we use are Leeds / Bradford Council owned and both have made it clear that permissions need to be re-applied for events that were put forward originally on the annual programme. If we had chosen a Bradford venue for the restart event it would not have gone ahead. Leeds were extremely helpful in getting the Roundhay Park event off the ground. However, it was clear that we were one of the first organisations pursuing an event and the written permission did not actually arrive until 1030 on the morning.

In practice this will probably mean that we will need to continue with a mix of MapRun events and smaller events at carefully chosen venues.

I believe the Maprun series has been a great success. The technology has its faults and issues as no doubt the articles Wendy will include in this issue will outline (including my own). However, it has allowed us to put together a programme where we have been able to go Orienteering. When there are many sports have not been able to continue/resume e.g. Parkrun. It has been a success because we have had plenty of newcomers undertaking the courses, including a good number of juniors. We have also seen some lapsed members make use of Lockdown time to make a comeback.





I would particularly like to thank Tony Thornley, Chris Burden, Richard Foster and both Peter Jones' for their great contribution to the MapRun Programme over the summer. They have planned, mapped, georeferenced and redrawn existing maps from scratch to get the events on and build up a portfolio/legacy.

We now have 10 Maprun permanent courses (8 urban 60 minute score courses and the Ilkley and Danefield permanent courses Maprun enabled). We have had seven lockdown series events. If you didn't manage to get to any/all of the Lockdown Series and want to catch up, then they do remain on the MapRun system in the folder: UK > Aire Valley > Lockdown Series 1> event name

To get the events information and print out the map go to the Aire website results page for that event. Look for where it says "reveal" beside pre event information. Press that and all the pre-event information will become visible and accessible.

The next Maprun event is live (to make the results) from 29th August to 6 September on Baildon Moor. The three courses planned by Peter Jones are proper terrain orienteering and I believe it could be the best MapRun event of the summer.

In Lockdown – Chris Burden

I'm lucky enough to be writing this in Berlin, where we are indulging ourselves in playing at Grandparenting, having previously had to abandon our planned cycle tour along the German Baltic Coast. We're instead going off with the family to the Mecklenburg Lakes area and walking and cycling from a settled base. It feels like a window of opportunity that may well close on us again before long. (Hope I'm being unduly pessimistic – although as I write I hear of further restrictions in Bradford)

It was a bit of a shock to learn that I was, at 72, vulnerable and should stay indoors, as well as socially distance. It didn't take long (about half a day) to conclude that staying indoors was not a reasonable option; very quickly Helen and I were on regular 4 or 5 hours rambles or bike rides, and I relearned the joys of running around Heaton and Northcliffe with the added bonus that for weeks the local golf course was there to be used. Helen's even done a few runs – but I can't claim she finds it enjoyable. She can't wait to get back in the gym.

All this was particularly enjoyable early on, as we found we had the high places virtually to ourselves. Even places like St Ives were devoid of people.

In the first month some pre-survey mapping was done, but the daily torrent of orienteering related emails almost totally dried up. After that I had a good month or more of no



orienteering activity and thoroughly enjoyed it – and then along came Maprun. This has necessitated the learning of a lot of new tricks in preparing maps and courses. But almost perversely, the closing down of orienteering has given me the opportunity to exercise far more than previously with less time spent huddled over a computer.

Activity has gradually become more normal; meetings with Matt and his family in the Peak District initially and later in our respective homes, cycling with the usual cycling group, extending our rambles ever further away from base, even a drink outside a pub, Helen off walking with her friends. The one thing that has changed is that instead of running at night, doubtless the legacy of pre-retirement days, I have enjoyed running during the day and will probably continue with that.

(I understand that Chris and Helen had an interesting return from Berlin via the Netherlands and look forward to hearing about that particular adventure in the next issue! Meanwhile, two AIRE Davids give us their thoughts on Maprun. Ed.)

“Get your Legs Out!” My Maprun Experiences –

David Bowman

The Covid-19 pandemic has clearly turned our lives upside down in the last five months. My heart goes out to those who have lost loved ones or are living with the long-term effects of the virus. Lockdown has imposed great isolation on some and has been incredibly tough for others dealing with home schooling, home working or job loss. In spite of all this and the cancellation of all organised orienteering races for so long, I have found that lockdown brought some unexpected benefits: the instruction to exercise for an hour a day got me out running more than ever, enjoying the lovely weather in April & May and (re)discovering all the footpaths in my local area. And then I was delighted when Airienteers published the superb series of MapRun score races. I’ve done nine so far, usually on a Sunday (old habits die hard...), and have loved each one. The maps are excellent, the courses are very well planned, and I have found them a wonderful way to explore new villages and districts. Thank you to the mappers & planners!

I always use a printed map, but I deliberately don’t look at the course before I start, as I enjoy the challenge of planning the route “on the hoof”. This has led to a few races where I’ve missed out a control and have to double back to get it before the 60 minutes are up. The app is brilliant, the “beep” at each control recreates some of the thrill of our sport, and I have enjoyed reviewing the tracks of other competitors on the results. But it does feel lonely at the finish and I do miss the pleasure of huddling around a map, comparing routes with others.



Each race has brought its own contrasts and surprises. Here are a couple that stick in my mind:

- **Headingley** – definitely a map of two halves. The western part took me through the tightly-packed terraced streets of student-land, in the shadow of Headingley stadium, back alleys strewn with rubbish and broken furniture left behind by the last tenants. Cross over Otley Road to the eastern part and suddenly I was in another world of quiet leafy lanes with Victorian villas and secret ginnels.
- **Idle & Thackley** – I made the mistake of doing this on a warm Saturday evening and wearing short running shorts. At one point I found myself fighting through nettles and squeezing through a barbed wire fence as a couple of horses galloped towards me across a field (unintended OOB?). Then to get back to the finish I had to run through Idle village, past several busy pubs. As I passed one establishment, a group of women emerged onto the street, tottering on their high heels after a few too many drinks. One of them spotted me in the half dark and started up a group chant: “Get your legs out, get your legs out, get your legs out for the girls!”. Now that’s an experience you don’t get at a forest or moorland race!





Maprun: Don't Take the Tracks too Literally –

David Williams

Being the Club's MapRun Coordinator, I have had the pleasure during the summer of being judge and jury on the results and particularly on reinstating "mis punches" by reviewing the GPS tracks.

The technology, while good, certainly is not faultless and every week has brought its own new lessons to learn about the system and idiosyncrasies to deal with.

For instance I could believe that a group of trees at Lister Park got up and walked about 40 m between Chris and I checking the event and most people running it but amazingly on one day they seem to have moved back again, only to re-migrate for the rest of the event.



It was apparent from the outset that you couldn't take the GPS tracks too literally.

Or should we!!

If so I believe we have some fantastic free runners in our midst.

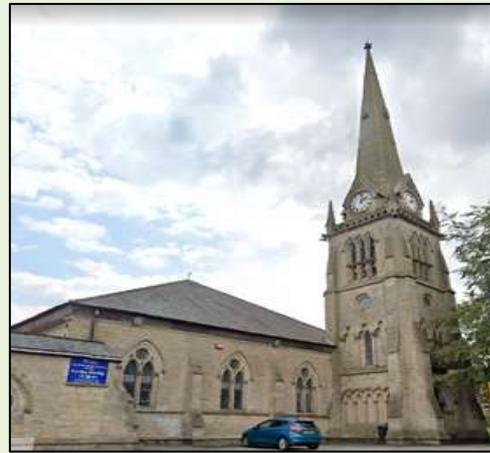
Quentin Harding set the fastest time at Holt Park but was this in part due to his run along the roof ridge tops at number seven?



Techniques differ though, Jo Thornley seems to have gone for the ground level route through the houses and gardens around number nine.



Charlotte Ward set the fastest time at Bramley with International level free running. Taking in Bramley Church on her way to that week's number seven using the north western corner to avoid unnecessary height gain over the spire.



The tracks show us that open water swimming was also a key part of the events. Rob King took to Lister lake.

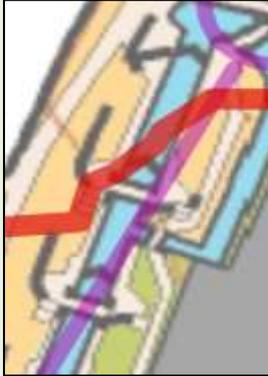


Ian Furlong went for a dip in the Aire going back into Myrtle Park obviously dismissing the bridge, but did that route choice cost him 16 seconds and the win?





Also at Bingley Dave Murgatroyd decided to solve that mystery - how deep are canal locks?



I was expecting to be able to finish this piece with an example of Lemmings going over the Cow and Calf. Unfortunately, a combination of good local GPS and TT's georeferencing mean I can't. The majority of the time Maprun does work very well. And when it doesn't it is normally easy to spot and correct errors.



Compass Sport Cup Update – Steve Webb

Steve has received the following information from the CSC Co-ordinator:

To the Club Captains of all Compass Sport Cup Finalists:
The Compass Sport Cup Final was due to be held in Sutton Park on Sunday 18 October 2020.

The organisers, Octavian Droobers advise that: "Due to restrictions on the use of Sutton Park during the virus crisis the Final will not be taking place there in October."

Sutton Park are not permitting any public events and like many outdoor venues have a higher degree of use."

Alternative options (dates and/or venues) are being explored by the CSC committee."



Owl Series – David Alcock

After a great VIRTU-OWL Race Series Great Owl Running is going actual!

In 2020 We have all been faced with uncertainty and I'm sure most of you reading this have had races cancelled this year (including our very own Holly Hustle Race). It's fairly unlikely we will see anything close to normal for a wee while so this is our chance to try something a bit different, to adapt our racing into a 2020 format.

All you'll need is a pair of shoes and a Watch or smartphone with an app capable of reading GPX files (many are available, I recommend OS Maps). If that's not your bag you can plan your route in advance and print a map or follow the route descriptions provided. Remember, you have a big window to log your run on these courses so you could always do a recce beforehand!

The 2020 GPX GP Races...

- #01 The Roundhay Rumble - short trail, opens 1 August
- #02 The Dick Double - medium fell, opens 15 August
- #03 The Billing - medium trail, opens 29 August
- #04 We Need To Talk About Chevin - medium fell, opens 12 Sept
- #05 Wild West Park - short trail, opens 26 Sept
- #06 The Wykebeck Way - medium road, opens 3 Oct
- #07 The North Leeds Trail Marathon - long trail, opens 3 Oct
- #08 Bramley Fall - short trail, opens 17 Oct
- #09 The Holly Hustle - medium trail, opens 31 Oct
- #10 The Wee Hustle -short trail, opens 31 Oct
- #11 The Harewood Heist - long trail, opens 31 Oct
- #12 No Fly Zone - medium trail, opens 14 Nov

You'll be pleased to know these are not 'virtual' races. These races take place on an actual course that will be 'opened' at intervals and throughout the rest of 2020 and you can run them whenever you want, submit your time online and score points on our leaderboard!

Interested? more info [here](#)



Altra Virtual West Highland Way Race – Jonathan Gelston

As I am sure most people have seen, many events that were organised for this Summer have been cancelled. However, a number of these were re-vamped to be 'virtual'. That is, you still run the event, with everybody else, however, you sort out your own route and schedule to complete it. That was the case with the Altra West Highland Way 2020. Normally, a 95 mile (153km), 14 000 feet, Ultra event from Milngavie Railway Station to the Nevis Centre in Fort William, with a time limit of 35 hours.

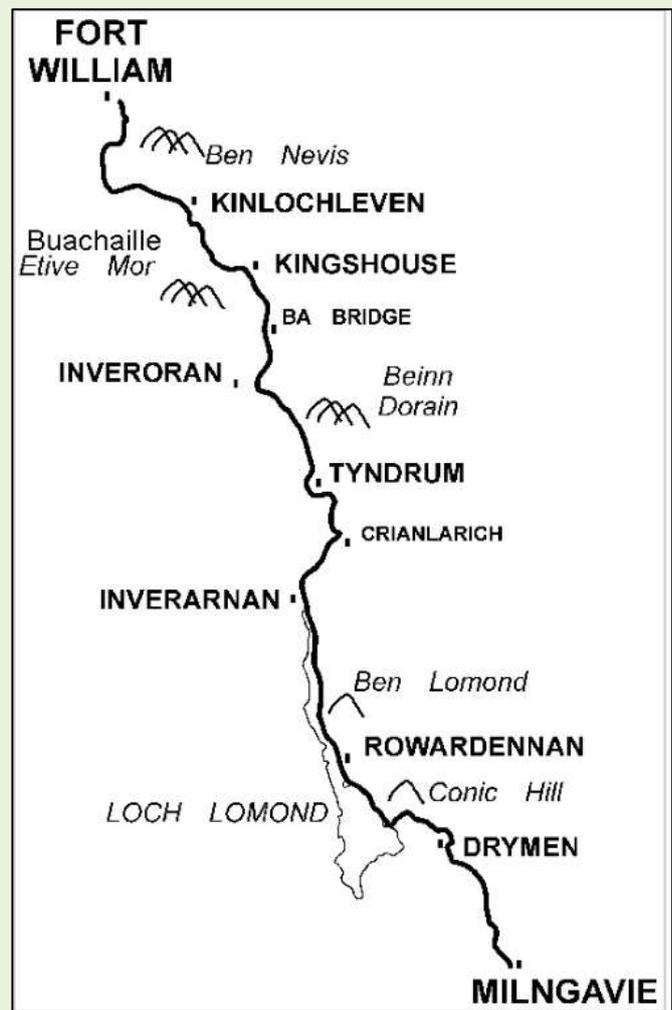
In the Virtual event of 2020, the time limit was 9.5 days, starting Midnight Thursday, 11th June and finishing Midday Sunday, 21st June. No longer a single stage Ultra event, it still proved a considerable effort to squeeze all of the miles around work and busy schedules alike.

I began with 15.8km on Friday, followed by 21.2km on Saturday (first Half-marathon in a long time, and also the only one during my attempt), topping off the Saturday with an extra 3.4km after dinner. Sunday was made up of a pre-breakfast 5km and an afternoon 10km.

The plan was to run these 5km runs each day to help break up the distance, however there was one critical oversight. The abrupt increase in average weekly miles is sure to cause injury, and it did!

Monday morning 5km completed the first leg of the race (58km) in 5 hours and 7 minutes, but the success was short lived as the planned 10km run in the afternoon was cut short at 6.1km as my right Achilles could not handle the distance and pace.

Resting up for the remainder of the day led to a very short 1km 'feeler' run on Tuesday to see how the ankle was: not good. No running today.





Choosing not to run one day was the best decision, health before success! But it had the consequence of leading to more miles for other days! Almost a Catch 22, can't run but now I need to run more! Undeterred, the only solution: walk.

Not ideal when you want to stay ahead of your friends whom you roped into running the event too as a relay (I couldn't persuade them to do solo entries). Walking isn't a strange sight during the average Ultra event, one piece of advice I was given in the past was, "only a madman runs uphill!"

Finding an ankle strap on Wednesday I felt confident to march on, literally. Breaking each day into multiple 5km

walks, three on Wednesday, two on Thursday, with a 10km walk in the afternoon and a final 7.5km walk in the evening to tie it all together, the completion of the Second Leg of the race (43.5km) in 6 hours and 32 minutes.

Friday morning was the day to remove the ankle strap. An unsupported (in other words: normal) 10km walk in the afternoon led to the belief that the ankle was well on its way to full health, or at least enough health to try for a run. Saturday morning, pre-breakfast 5km run with the strap. A 5:42 min/km pace to be pleased about considering the pace of recovery. Another 10km walk in the afternoon inspired hopes of running later, and it was confirmed with a 5km run at 4:48 min/km pace. Comfortable. For those keeping count, this marks 139.9km completed so far. Sunday morning. 13.1km to finish by midday. No ankle support. A single 13.2km run at 5:07 min/km to finish the Third and Final Leg (50.7km) in 5 hours and 46 minutes.

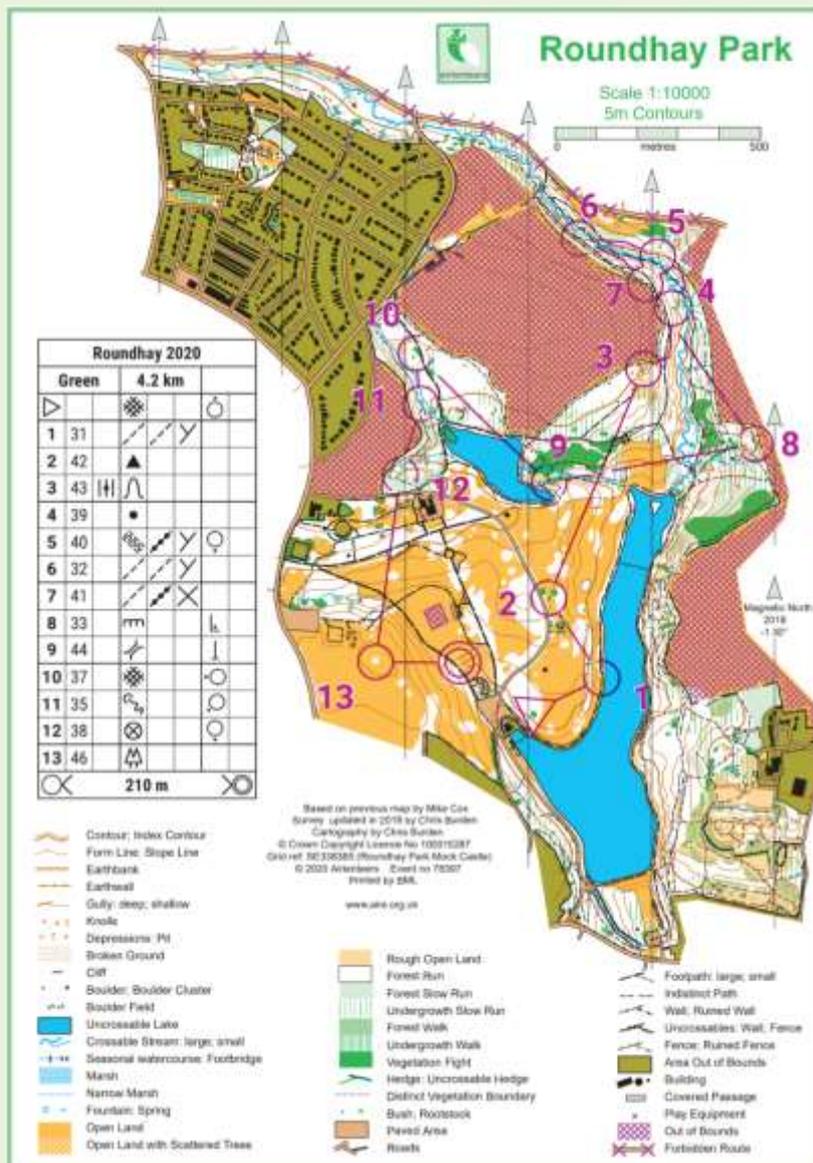
A grand total of 153.1 kilometres in 17 hours and 25 minutes. Far and away from my predicted finish time, but my own fault as I hadn't prepared and got injured. Shame. Still, very pleased with the efforts, and especially with the relay team that accompanied me virtually, updating each other with our runs. For a group that had never run the long distance before, a very respectable combined time of 13 hours and 29 minutes. Hopefully, one day I'll get to enter the real thing!



Planning Roundhay – Ian Furlong

It was great to see so many runners enjoying the three courses at Roundhay at the first 'normal' event since lockdown began. Following the British Orienteering guidelines presented a few minor challenges with the course planning, but nothing that impacted on the ability to set a varied and challenging course. We had to organise two start sections, so runners could be well spaced throughout the start window and I had to be careful to avoid runners passing by each other too much. In addition, I tried to avoid the more popular areas of the park, hence why I opted to avoid the main lake and take runners on many of the smaller trails to the North of the park.

The Green and Short Green Courses



These both shared a common central section, but the full-length green added a bit more distance and height to the start and finish sections. Both included an early route choice (2-3), stay high but run a little longer, or take the hillier option. It looks like most runners opted for the high route past the small lake. I wanted to place the initial control (2) a bit lower down the slope to make the hilly route more appealing, but I failed to find a suitable control placement that didn't require significant updates to the map.

Once in the woods, some runners were caught out, even those with significant experience. There was very poor light in the woods, especially for later runners.

Then came the 'gorge' crossings. I hope that opting to use the steep sides was not too much of a problem for runners



physically. I did my best to set up attack points that gave reasonably comfortable descents, although the significant rain in the days before the event didn't help!

I quite liked the three main choices of how to attack CP9. When I was watching runners arrive at this control (with Burt the dog on the lookout) it looks like people approached (and exited) this from all directions.



The Orange Course

This course was basically designed for Nicole (find out about her experience below). Relatively straight forward controls to find if you stay on the main paths, and rewarding for those prepared to cut a few corners (if they didn't get lost)!

Well done to all those who took part. Hopefully, we'll all get another chance in the not too distant future.



Roundhay, from the perspective of a novice – Nicole Milloy

The 2020 Aire 'comeback' orienteering event at Roundhay Park was held on a beautiful summer's evening, with the sun gently setting and the birdsong happily chirping away in the background. I am of course joking, as, in typical English August weather, it was instead pelting it down with rain.



As an orienteering novice in my 30s (albeit with a few practise attempts) with a joint disease which means I can't run, I felt a little apprehensive as I drove up to the event.

However, I needn't have worried as I was warmly welcomed at the registration desk.

With waterproofs donned, I set off on the orange route at my allocated time into the decidedly damp park. The route was well planned, with just enough sneaky control hiding to leave even a seasoned Roundhay Park visitor like myself scratching their head. Most excitingly for me was the addition of a borrowed electronic dibber to my kit - note to self: must purchase own one asap.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself at the event and I felt warmly welcomed and included, even as a non-runner (and equally when my leisurely non-running time was revealed at the download tent). In these unusual Covid-19 times, the organisation of the event was excellent and very carefully planned to make everyone feel safe with the socially distanced, staggered start times. I'm looking forward to getting back out there again at the next event, hopefully with slightly less rain and with my new fancy dibber.



(And finally, a Polish election booth looking strangely like a huge orienteering kite.....Ed.)