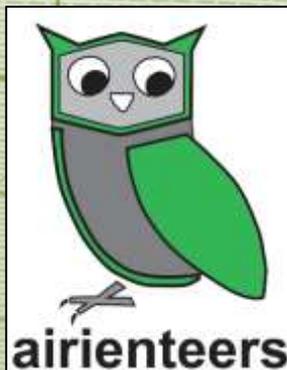




Aire Affairs



January 2021



Airiunteers

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.

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The cover photo shows the Yorkshire and Humberside Junior Squad at the Junior Inter-Regional Championships in 1996.



Edit O – Wendy Carlyle

In a spirit of optimism I have signed us up for the Scottish Six Days this summer. I booked the accommodation days after our return from the event in 2019, so everything is crossed that it will go ahead.



Orienteering tales of derring-do have been, understandably, thin on the ground since the last issue of Aire Affairs in August, but I did learn that two of our young Airienteers, Jake Powell M16 and Emily Gibbins W16 have been invited to join the Yorkshire and Humberside Junior Orienteering Squad, congratulations to them! That gave me the idea to turn this into something of an 'Airienteers in the Junior Squad' Issue. Out walking on Harden Moor, Tony and I wracked our brains for the names of past Squaddies (and then had to remember the list when we returned home!) It has been most enjoyable for us reading the replies to the e-mail I sent out far and wide and I hope you too enjoy catching up with the 'youngsters' (some of whom have children of their own in junior squads now....and beyond!)

In other news, Tony and I had a wonderful seven week visit from Becky, Rob and grandson Euan (now 16 months). They managed to get flights from the US, quarantined in a holiday cottage for two weeks, had tests and then joined us as our bubble. It was very special to have them here and we hope we may be able to see them again later in 2021.

Thank you to the contributors to this issue. Ex-Squaddies apart, Lindsey updates us on coaching (and invites you to an online social event). Graeme brings us news about permanent courses in Leeds West. Fell Runner Dave Middlemass writes about discovering Maprun, and Joe about the UK Elite League. Ever creative, the Powells describe their Christmas family Night-0 competition on Ilkley Moor.

If you have been receiving Aire Affairs in paper form, please read David's note about future issues and respond if necessary.

Keep safe everyone.

Chair Affairs – David Williams

Maybe this is what bears feel like every year? It certainly feels as if our sport and our club have been put into an enforced hibernation. While when it was first announced I probably thought we could look forward to emerging into an extremely active late spring season. I am now wondering whether the Scottish 6 days is likely to be going ahead. The most certain major event in the Calendar seems to be the Compass Sport Cup final on October 17th for which we qualified for by virtue of last year's





qualifier the weekend before Lockdown 1 in March last year. At least the final venue is moving closer - Chatsworth.

When restrictions are eased we will be looking to put on our local series events and if travel to and available number of regional events is still restricted through the tiering system we will look to put on some local events on Sundays as well as the more usual Wednesday evening locals.

In the meantime please remember that all our previously organised Maprun Events remain open on the system. Details on the new webpage

<https://www.aire.org.uk/info/maprun/maprun-previous-courses>

With over 30 courses available and 10 of the Urban's allowing "Start Anywhere", I would hope that some of the options will be "local" to you.

Many thanks to Graeme Tiffany who is doing a superb job creating three permanent courses at Bramley Fall, Bramley Park and Armley/Gotts Park , coordinating the project installation having obtained funding for scheme through his work with the local youth groups. (See Graeme's report below. Ed.)

Thanks also to the two teams of volunteers who assisted with post installation during the Christmas New Year break. We hope that the work will be completed when Lockdown allows and the courses can be launched.

We have also received some grant funding from Leeds City Council for a new Roundhay Park permanent course and are working with the Friends of Roundhay Park to obtain further funding for this project.

New Permanent Orienteering Courses in West Leeds: an update – Graeme Tiffany

The work to create two new and one refurbished Permanent Orienteering Courses (POCs) in West Leeds has progressed slowly but surely. It's certainly been challenging at times.

The idea for these was conceived as an element of a wider social action project I have been running as part of Leeds City Council's 'Our Place' initiative. Some of the funds for this have gone to purchase posts and control markers. Thanks go to my one of my fell-running pals, Simon Beverley, who is the gaffer at FARMAC in Pudsey. He did me a 'very good deal'; a top man who has helped many charities over the years. I'm hoping we can pay him back to some degree with map-reading training, as his nav. is shocking.



I want to thank everyone from Aorienteers who has helped so far, with a special mention of Chris Burden, Tony Thornley and Richard Foster who have produced the maps, which are all super.

All the new posts are in at Gotts Park / Armley Park, which leaves a few markers to be attached to fences etc. Likewise, all the posts are in at Bramley Fall Woods, and the majority of the old ones have been removed (if you fancy being destructive and digging / cutting out the remainder please let me know and I can direct you to those left). At both these sites the actual control markers need attaching to the posts, and I have volunteers from the local community lined up to do this - as is the case with the third site, Bramley Park. Many of these helpers will be young people, COVID guidance on youth work activities permitting.

A further element of the plan is to map and create a course in the grounds of West Leeds Activity Centre (also known as the Laser Centre), who have said we can use their facilities as a base for events, including training (and especially for young people), in the future. This site is adjacent to the western end of Gotts Park, which also creates the potential to link the two maps together (just like Nell Bank and Middleton Woods in Ilkley).

I look forward to a grand opening soon, and very much like the idea of a 'long O' combining all these maps. Let me say again, I want to thank everyone who has helped so far. And if you have a couple of hours to help me finish off please drop me a line.

Aire Junior Coaching – Lindsey King



Just before the November lockdown we managed a club coaching session at the end of October. Thirteen juniors, three coaches and Jack the dad (what a brilliant helper!) enjoyed a very muddy session in the woods. Dave Alcock planned three levels of exercises from yellow to green standard and some mini courses at the end, using our new training SI kit for the first time to record race times.

We started with a map walk and then did a couple of exercises to develop skills at finding controls off line and orienteering across terrain using bearings. Some juniors found their map reading skills had become a little rusty due to lack of practice during the year. Concentration was required to recall map symbols and how to set the map accurately. However, by the end everyone had a great race on their course we were just a bit late back to parents patiently waiting in the car park.. sorry!

I asked some of the juniors to give some feedback for us:



What was most fun?

Edward: making new friends!

Megan: I most enjoyed getting out orienteering after lockdown.

James: The bit when we went off to do cloverleaves by compass bearing.

What did you learn?

Edward: I learnt to look behind you every now and again to make sure you haven't missed an important feature.

Megan: I improved working with bearings.

James: the coaching reminded me how to take a bearing, and how to follow it.

Was there anything we could do better next time?

Edward: Do more varied but shorter exercises then a race at the end.

Megan: I wouldn't change anything.

James: Do it for slightly longer, as we felt a little bit stretched for time.

What would you like to learn next time?

Edward: Gauging distance better.

Megan: Identifying map symbols more quickly.

James: Orienteering without a compass (doing it by features)

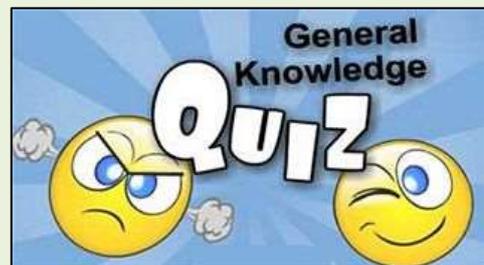
They are great suggestions we can use to plan another session as soon as Covid restrictions allow. Thanks to Dave for planning and coaching and Graham for coaching on the day.

Since then we have received excellent news that two Aire juniors have been accepted as full members of the Yorkshire and Humberside Junior Orienteering Squad. Congratulations to Jake Powell M16 and Emily Gibbins W16!

Also well done to Anna Faulkner W14 who has used Orienteering and map reading as her physical activity for The Duke of Edinburgh bronze award. She completed three months of map runs, events and coaching ending with a light green course at the wild and wet Harden Moor event.

Do you love preparing and presenting quizzes ?

As we are stuck with Covid restrictions for a while longer, Aire would like to offer a virtual social event online. We are looking for someone able and willing to plan a general knowledge quiz. Maybe you have one you prepared earlier? If so, please contact chair@aire.org.uk





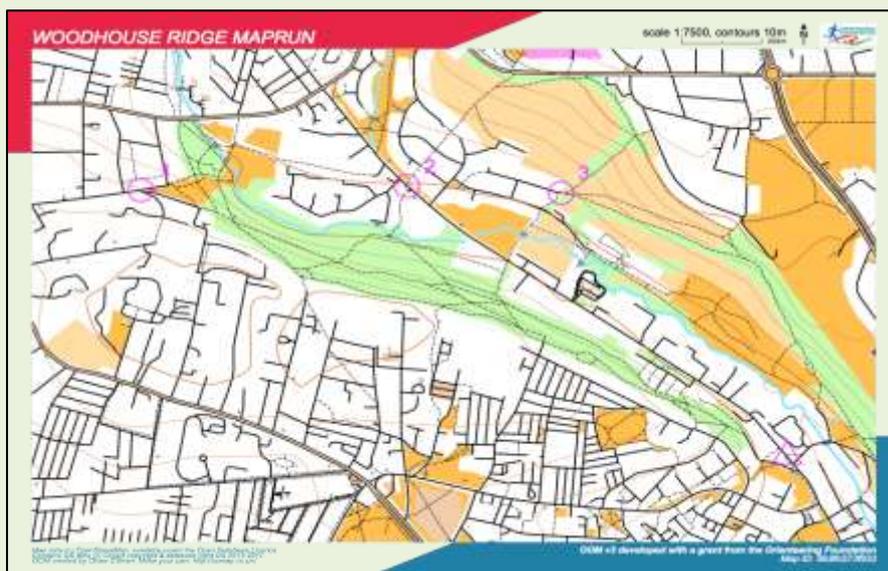
Discovering Maprun – Dave Middlemass

I just wanted to say a thanks to Airienteers for all the local Maprun events they've uploaded to the app. I'm a fellrunner who normally does lots of fell races, but with the fell racing calendar suspended I've been looking for virtual alternatives. Maprun has been a great discovery over the last few months.

I started out with the virtual Harriers v Cyclists race, organised by Bingley Harriers with the help of AIRE. Normally, runners and riders race together on a varied off-road circuit through the woods of Shipley Glen and over Baildon Moor. In 2020, we had the whole of November to do it in our own time, with the course marked out by 12 Maprun controls. I gave it a few tries, which helped me get to grips with the app while getting increasingly familiar with the course.

This encouraged me to give the permanent courses on Danefield and Ilkley Moor a try. Both are on great running terrain, and I didn't mind that Maprun didn't work too well on the thickly wooded slopes of Danefield – it was still fun just to run round the posts. As with Virtual HvC, running a permanent course allows you to come back and make slight improvements to your route.

A couple of nice things about Maprun are that i. it's free and ii. it automatically generates a leaderboard. Having shared my initial good impression with club-mates at Valley Striders AC, I thought about designing our own courses. With the help of AIRE, there is now a test event on the app – a simple 4km circuit of Woodhouse Ridge, with a Start/Finish on Meanwood Road + 3 controls. This seems to work well and opens up the opportunity of designing more complex courses in future. Why not give it a try during lockdown if you're local? It's on the



app at Aire Valley > Valley Striders > Woodhouse Ridge Maprun, or more details on my blog.

<https://meanwoodrambler.com/2020/12/06/woodhouse-ridge-maprun/>.



More recently I've tried out the AIRE events in Chapel Allerton and Colton, and although I'm not a big fan of running on tarmac, it's been good fun plotting the best routes between the controls.

Just to make some broader reflections from this. I mentioned that I'm in the habit of giving courses more than one try. I know that this contrasts with many orienteering events.... but in fell racing local knowledge and recce-ing the course are very much part of the game. It's been interesting to find in Maprun a kind-of "halfway house" between fell racing and orienteering.

Also, during 2020 the Fell Runners Association (FRA) has clarified that using GPS to fix your location during FRA-licensed races is now banned. The FRA's intention is to encourage runners to use map & compass and preserve the unique character of the sport. This may mean that fell races start looking a bit more like orienteering events..... saying that, it could go the other way, with Race Organisers nervous of banning an obvious safety mechanism choosing not to license their races with FRA. In which case it may be that FRA races end up being ones where map & compass isn't really going to help you, such as short, flagged races, or ones over very complex terrain. All this assuming a return to "normal" racing, of course.

Indeed, while Maprun obviously has some potential to provide a virtual alternative to fell racing (it already has in parts of the Lakes and Wales), how far it's worth pursuing this rather depends on COVID. I feel COVID has hit fell racing relatively hard, as social contact is such a big part of races - at registration, mass starts, bunching at stiles, finish-line refreshments, prizegiving... and with many taking place at village shows/fetes. Writing this during January lockdown, the return of racing feels very distant. I wouldn't be surprised if we end up doing a virtual Harriers v Cyclists in 2021 as well as 2020.

Powells' Christmas O Fix – Judith Powell

Christmas for the Powell family has always involved Orienteering, and the various clubs we have belonged to, plus neighbouring clubs, have normally provided more than one fix for the festive season. 2020 therefore left a big hole which we had to fill ourselves, but happily we now belong to AIRE so were able to take advantage of the map run permanent courses. We've always been keen night owls so we used the permanent course on Ilkley Moor to organise a 1 hour night score event. The map has 26 controls A to Z so the scoring system was 20 points if the letter was in my name (JUDITHPOWELL) and 10 points for everything else. There was a 10 points penalty for every minute late. We had Covid staggered starts and headed off onto the generally well frozen moor. The winner was Al with 320 points. Jake, for his last M16 run, got 290 but came in three minutes late which took his score down to 260. Ifor (In his support bubble with us for Christmas) had 270 and came in five minutes early. Sophie walked and had 180 points for her last W45 race, I walked and had 120 (140 – 20 penalty points). Ifor summed it up for all of us I think with the comment on his training log, "GOOD FUN".



IMPORTANT NOTE

We are looking at the costs of printing and sending out paper copies of Aire Affairs. For the remaining few dozen members who choose to receive their copies this way, it costs the club about £400 a year.

Whilst we are happy to send copies to those who would like to receive theirs in paper format, we would like to cut down on unnecessary expenditure by reducing the numbers posted to those members who are equally happy to read it on a screen. If you **would** like to keep doing receiving Aire Affairs on paper, please '**opt in**' by emailing me: secretary@aire.org.uk, or texting me 07989 563588 or posting a note to me at 74 Oxford Av, Guiseley, Leeds, LS20 9BX, by the end of March. Please include the best address to use if you do so. If I don't hear from you, we will remove your name from the posting list.

Thank you, David Alcock - Secretary

UK Elite O-league – high quality racing in October and November 2020 – Joe Woodley

With the cancellation of all major events in 2020, my orienteering season ended as swiftly as it had begun. I had enjoyed racing for England at the Interland international competition held at Burnham Beeches and Egypt Woods on the 1st of March. Incidentally, this was my first senior race for England, despite previous selections I had never been able to make it to the SHI's or Interland. I was pleased with my performance and as specific preparation for several key races which would be held in the South this was perfect. Those races were the British Championships and British University Championships (BUCs) and they were selection races for my main goal, the World University Champs (WUOC). I have always backed my ability in our tough northern forests but to perform at my best in the fast but often vague southern forests I needed as much time in similar terrain as possible. A fortnight later I turned up at EPOC's Fixby and Bradley Woods CSC qualifier, unaware that this would be the last event I would run until the 3rd of October, some six months later.

Many people were disappointed that the season was over. Personally, it was a shame to miss the chance at a second trip to WUOC and an opportunity to perform better than my first time. (My last AA article detailed a particularly painful parallel error I made in the Finnish forests at WUOC 2018). Perhaps the greatest shame was missing the opportunity to defend AIRE's British Relay title with Dane and Ali. Do not worry the Guinness trophy is safe and sound and we look forward to defending it, whenever the chance arises! Despite all this, I was more than happy to train without the pressure that racing brings. After spending lockdown in Guiseley with my parents I returned to Sheffield at the end of May. For the rest of the summer, I enjoyed regular trips to the Lakes to visit my girlfriend who is conveniently situated close to the hills. We also snuck in a trip to the Polish and Slovakian Tatras for some hut to hut running



at the start of September. Whilst the Polish side can be very busy with tourists, the Slovakian side is wild and unspoiled, I would recommend a trip to everyone! When I returned to the UK, I heard the first rumours of an elite only South Lakes Weekend.

The UK Elite O-League (UKEOL) spearheaded by ex-local lad Duncan Birtwistle (albeit from the wrong side of the Wharf and into CLARO territory) had collaborated with some eager members of Warrior OC to organize what promised to be a brilliant weekend. Taking advantage of the small field of mostly elites and local volunteers, we could park close to the best bit of each area and there was no need to find a suitable path network for junior courses. On Saturday we raced at Rusland Beeches, perhaps one of the most challenging areas in the UK. The courses were planned by Martin Bagness who told me after that he just wanted to make the hardest course possible. The prospect of running on such a complex map after several months without orienteering was terrifying! It was awesome to be back in a wet Lakeland field surrounded by equally apprehensive but excited friends.

On the very first control I had a slight panic, briefly losing contact with the map but thankfully I did not waste too much time. After feeling out of control as I hit the second leg, I paused for a moment to refocus and calm down. Thereafter I had a great race and kept it clean for the majority of the physically and technically demanding course. After such a long time off, I opted for the safest route choices where possible and invested a little more time checking and double checking the map whenever I felt my concentration slide. When I finished I was elated, 35 minutes of pure orienteering joy. I had forgotten just how much I love orienteering, especially on an area as good as Rusland. I never had a moment to think about how fast I was running, where I would finish in the results, about work or even the corona virus. Complete bliss!

Where Are They Now? – Wendy Carlyle

Our involvement with the Junior Squad began when Becky was invited to join by the, then Manager, David Jenkins. We think that was in 1995 when she would have been twelve. This issue's cover photo of the Junior Squad was taken in 1996 at the Junior Inter-Regional Championships in the East Midlands areas of Longshaw and Martinshaw, when the Squad was placed third. As well as Becky, there are Matt Burden, Lizzie Hardy and Tom Van Rossum. There is also a young Hensman and Liz Day on the photo. Was this pre-Claro? Another question I am hoping will be answered for the next issue.

The Junior Squad has had an excellent performance record at JIRCs, winning nine times since its inception in 1989 and finishing in second place twice, with third placings thirteen times. The stand out individual performance, by an Airienteer, was from Hector Haines in M18 at the 2007 JIRCs.



So let's find out about some of those Squaddies. I begin with Jake and Emily, who are its newest members from AIRE. Two years ago, Emily saw a poster about an orienteering competition on Ilkley Moor when she was volunteering at athletics. She had a go at the orange course and was hooked! She enjoys the combination of the physical challenge of running with the mental agility of map reading in beautiful places. Her preference is for terrain that she can run fast on, 'as long as it's not in the wrong direction.' Emily keeps fit by playing a lot of hockey, cross-country running and horse riding. She is really pleased to be invited to join the Squad and is looking forward to developing her skills.



Orienteering has been in the Powell family for fifty years so it is no surprise that Jake was introduced to it by his grandparents. His focus has been on Mountain Bike Orienteering to date, enjoying the mix of cycling and map reading, but recently he has become more involved in foot orienteering as a competitive sport, having increased his confidence in running and attended night events with his Dad.

Jake enjoys the extra excitement of map reading in addition to running and, 'the night events are an experience that you don't find anywhere else.' The supportive orienteering community is also another plus. His favourite areas are Scandinavia and the Lake District. 'Having taken a trip to Norway in the summer holidays, I was lucky to get the opportunity to run on a lot of this terrain, which was a great way to train some really challenging navigation.'

Distance running, road and mountain biking ensure Jake keeps fit in the summer, whilst in the winter his focus shifts to competing in night events which are his favourite aspects of orienteering.

Jake believes that joining the Squad will open up further opportunities for him and enable him to attend bigger races and improve his orienteering through the structured coaching. He is hoping that when we emerge from Covid, being a member of the Squad will give him a goal to focus on and, 'the opportunity to enjoy the competitive aspect of the sport again.'

(Have fun Emily and Jake! Ed.)



Jake
orienteering in
Norway.

Ex-Squaddies have roamed far and wide since their days as AIRE juniors. Some have families of their own, others no longer orienteer having found other interests. It has been a great pleasure for us to catch up with some of them, particularly as Tony managed the Squad for several years. Our personal memories are of Squad weekends: sleeping on hall floors; huge vats of spag bol; stripey socks; mini-bus songs; painted faces; waiting in the rain in assembly fields; energetic Ceilidhs; finding banana skins and smelly socks in the back of the car; triumphs and disappointments.

Sue Bett

I apologise to Sue Bett (nee Allen) for pointing out that she is the oldest of the ex-Squaddies who have been in touch. We have had the pleasure of Sue's two daughters at Lagganlia so we know that her family continues to regularly orienteer at the highest level. Sue was in the Yorkshire Squad from 1980-1985. She now lives in Fleet in Hampshire and is a member of Southern Navigators. Sue works for a local authority, training staff who work in Adult Social Care. Despite Covid, she manages to orienteer once a week, benefitting from a keen local planner who has been leaving tapes out in the woods for orienteers to find. Prior to Covid, Sue was, 'doing a fair amount of tourist O,' travelling to 3-4 Euro City Races each year. She had an entry for last year's O-Ringen, so here's hoping it will take place this year instead. Her stand out memories from being in the Squad were, 'a training session on Formby Sands, followed by a dip in the sea...and a trip to Alton Towers where someone bought a huge pack of donuts just before we went on the Corkscrew Ride.' (I imagine that went well! Ed.)

Emma Harrison

Our next ex-Squaddie, and ex-Airienteer (now in EPOC) from another well-known, long standing orienteering dynasty, is Emma Harrison, daughter of Gill and Fred Ross. I have a memory of running along a path at an event in Honley Woods, following a very young Emma and sister Charlotte, trying and failing to keep up with them. Emma is living in Wakefield, returning after university and a first year of work. She now works in the NHS as a Children's



Occupational Therapist, specialising in working with children with complex physical and/or learning disabilities. I find it hard to believe that Emma has two grown up children, but then they did both go through Lagganlia. Where do those years go? Both girls have also been members of the Yorkshire and Humberside Junior Squad. Emma did a long stint as editor of Epocian for just over ten years and she is now Club Chairman, so very much involved in both sides of the sport.

Emma orienteers regularly, having a lull when the girls were young, but training more in recent years. This was helped by supporting Squad training as a parent and helping particularly with the younger juniors which she says, 're-focussed my brain to correct some of my navigational weaknesses.' Emma has steadily improved in her age class and has represented England at both VHI and Interland competitions on seven occasions over the last five years. She has achieved a number of British Championship medals from all four disciplines: Classic, Night, Sprint and Middle but a JK medal still eludes her. A sound piece of advice from Emma, 'I wasn't brilliant as a junior so it goes to show that orienteering really is a lifelong sport and there is always chance to improve!'

Emma was in the Junior Squad from 1985 to 1990 and she has many good memories, but receiving her squad kit and YHJS winning the first ever JIRCs in 1989 are her favourites.

Charlotte Ross

Having left Wakefield in 1992 to travel and attend both Coventry and Nottingham universities, Charlotte now lives in Reading with her husband two children, aged nine and seven. She currently works for Vodafone programming fixed line telephony systems. She has been a member of Southern Navigators for a number of years but is well known for turning up to one or two events a year when her family attend. There are lots of orienteers in her family!

Charlotte thinks she was a member of the Squad from 1987 – 1992 as a W13/15/17 as the age classes were then. She has lots of fun memories of Squad weekends: minibuses; hall floors; youth hostels; games; training; friends and lots of fun. (Good to hear from you Charlotte! Ed.)

Tom Van Rossum

Tom was a member of the Junior Squad for what he describes as the 'golden years', roughly 1994-2000. He is now back in Leeds, living close to Headingley with his wife. 'It's a great location for access to some trails for running and the Dales on my bike.'

Tom now lectures in Primary Education at Leeds Beckett University after completing a Phd in Physical Education and School Sport. His lecturer role allows him to continue his research in this field and it gives him the opportunity to work on exciting projects supporting children to be more physically active.



Having recovered from some long standing running related injuries in his early twenties, Tom went into road cycling and from there to triathlons. He raced at the Ironman World Championships in Kona in 2018 and has qualified to return this year, Covid allowing. As a young orienteer, Tom didn't always enjoy the training aspect of orienteering, preferring to just race, but his mindset changed and he now averages 15-20 hours a week of mixed training (swim, bike, run) throughout the year.

Sadly, (for us! Ed.), Tom hasn't picked up a map and compass in over fifteen years. However, he and his wife have just had their first child (many congratulations, Ed.) and they plan on introducing him to some string courses when he's ready.

Like all our ex-Squaddies, Tom has great memories of the training weekends with the Squad, 'Every month we'd be driven to a different part of the country and get to train in some of the best terrain (and some not so good!) with a great bunch of mates. It's hard to pick out just one favourite but I do always remember John Golton's adept handling of the mini-bus! Orienteering wise, there was a small woods we used to go to a lot in the Lakes, I can't remember it's name but it was an open woodland, similar to Scandi forests. I really liked that one. And I think I could write a book on Village Halls across the UK!'

Alison Parker

Alison joined the Junior Squad during the 1990's. After school she went on to study Earth Sciences at Oxford University and then a Phd in Hydrogeology at Leeds University. She now works as a Senior Lecturer in International Water and Sanitation at Cranfield University in Bedford.

Alison has occasionally orienteered since leaving Leeds but she has remained very active spending her leisure time mountain biking, climbing and sea kayaking. During the present pandemic she has worked remotely whilst staying with friends in north Cumbria.

George Stevens

Orienteers really are an interesting bunch of folks and the Stevens' family are no exception. We heard from all three siblings in response to my e-mail about the Junior Squad, and begin with George who tells me he was a member from roughly 2000-2009. George has been living in Montpellier in the South of France for three years with his partner and they are expecting their first child in a couple of months (More congratulations. Ed!) They enjoy the lifestyle of their adopted home with its relaxed atmosphere, good food, wine and climate. The surrounding countryside is also reasonably good with hills and 'light-weight' mountains not far off. They enjoy driving further afield to the Pyrenees for walking and running.

George runs a small online marketing agency which he describes as, 'an efficient/practical way to earn some money as I can work when I want and manage things from anywhere.' He has not done a great deal of orienteering in recent years, but he enjoys a multiday event in



Summer with his family and it is always ‘a good reminder of old times’. When back in the UK he likes going to local events, ‘while being careful to remember the dangers of allowing the mind to wander too far in a north-easterly direction when checking for event fixtures.’

Thinking back to his time in the Squad, George enjoyed the training weekends in the Lake District. These often tied in with an event on the Sunday and a memory which sticks in George’s mind is, ‘always looking forward to Jack Wood coming back from his course....well overdue and looking really tired and fed up, his careful training on Saturday having failed to deliver.’ (I look forward to Jack’s riposte! Ed.) George also had kind words for the folks behind the scenes, ‘images of Tony and Nev in particular come to mind and the excellent job they must have been doing organising things for us. So an extra thanks to them for these experiences/memories which haven’t gone forgotten.’

(I am glad to report that Nev is making an excellent recovery from his bout of Covid and is now a grandfather. Ed.)

Hector Haines

Another ex-Squaddie who mentioned Nev and Tony, this time their, ‘calm and relaxed leadership’, is Hector, a member from 2002 -2007. Hector is presently living in Are, Sweden and working full time as an engineer, but also training hard for the World Championships in Orienteering, Trailrunning and Skyrunning! He averages 3-5 training sessions a week since moving to Sweden and manages to fit in skiing too.



Hector has many fond memories of, ‘freezing cold training weekends in the Lakes, with three training sessions every day, soggy sandwiches and great company. Sleeping on hard floors, we learned grit and resilience, as well as socialising with friends. There were lots of laughs.’

Victoria Stevens

From snowy Sweden we switch to sunny South Africa and catch up with Victoria, a member of the Squad from 2003 – 2009. She is currently on holiday in the country, having just recently finished a three year post doc at the University of Cape Town where she was researching earthquakes. In a few months Victoria will take up a research position in Singapore. When the opportunities arise, Victoria still orienteers. She has attended several of the local Cape Town Club (PENOC) events which are held every month or so. She also travelled to the Big 5 O last Christmas which she very much enjoyed. Like George, Victoria has managed to go to a



couple of multi day European events. Victoria's stand out memory was of being in the Squad when it won the Junior Inter-Regional Championships three years in a row! (2005-2007. Ed.)



Ben Stevens

To complete the reunion with the Stevens' siblings, we have Ben's memories of his time in the Squad. Ben was a member in, 'something like 2001-2005'. He is still living in Cambridge, working as a software developer for an education project called Cambridge Mathematics, part of Cambridge Assessment.

Ben continues to be an active orienteer, despite his location. He attends all the major UK events and one or two multi-day events like the SSD or OOCup and will travel to good terrain events in the Lakes, often with DrongO (the ex-Cambridge Orienteering Club).

His outstanding memory? 'I remember Yorkshire won the Junior Inter-Regionals, I think it was in my last year in 2005. Previously I think it was the North West who had seemed unbeatable.'

(NWOA were fourth in 2005 having, as Ben correctly points out, taking the title in the preceding six years since the previous Yorkshire and Humberside win in 1997).

Chloe Haines

A member of the Junior Squad from 2005-2009, Chloe is currently living and working in Edinburgh as a Transit Data Analyst. In the last couple of years she has done what she describes as, 'bits of orienteering', attending JKs and local club events when she was based in Cambridge, but more recently she has enjoyed orienteering holidays to the OO Cup and Jukola.

As it seems with all ex-Squaddies, Chloe has some great memories from Squad weekends. 'I used to look forward to them for weeks. I remember doing distraction training and Tony hid up a tree. After one training day in Kilnsey in the summer I broke Alistair Wood's car window



on the way home because it was so hot. All the Lake District training weekends felt like a huge adventure, I remember one where we had races up the hill during lunch break. My main memories are just of having loads of fun, like always finishing a day's training with some kind of relay or fun race.' Chloe also recalled the trip to O-Ringen. 'It was such a great trip with training, swimming, competing. It was like an extended squad weekend and I loved it!'

Joe Woodley



We always enjoy catching up with ex-Squaddies at events and Joe is one we still see (or did until Covid!) pretty regularly as he is in his sixth year of study at Sheffield University, currently studying a Phd in 3D Cell Culture.

Orienteering continues to play a major role in Joe's life outside of work and, prior to lockdown, he enjoyed two South Lakes weekends. His goal for 2020 was to run in the World University Championships, unfortunately cancelled along with all other orienteering events, so he is wondering what opportunities 2021 will bring.

Joe was a long serving member of the Junior Squad, from 2007-2016 and has many great memories, 'every single weekend away with the squad was amazing fun! Our 2008 trip to the O-Ringen was a highlight, as was our JIRCS victory in 2007. I'm so grateful for all the time given up by Tony, Nev and Wendy during my squad days.'



Beth Woodley

It has been far too long since we last saw Beth so it was particularly good to hear from her. Beth is living with her partner in Plymouth, having moved from Yorkshire in 2019. She works as an Occupational Therapist in the NHS.

Beth followed in Dad Bruce's footsteps and joined DevonOC when she moved down south and was getting back in to orienteering prior to the lockdown. She has also encouraged her partner to get involved so that they can go to events together.

Beth was in the Squad between approximately 2007-11 and has too many memories of the Squad to choose from, but she's had a go, 'I'm definitely more of a social orienteer, rather than an elite competitor, so it'd have to be all the 'après orienteering': swimming in a lake and collecting berries in the woods at the Swedish O-Ringen; amazing communal meals cooked up in youth hostel kitchens by parent helpers; games nights; chatting and singing along on long journeys; the fights over who would get a lift with Nev after a cold and wet



training session because his car had heated seats... Most of all though it was the camaraderie and sharing fun times with a great bunch of people!' (So that's why everyone wanted to go with Nev! Ed.)

Florence Haines

It's no great surprise to discover that the Haines' women (apart from Mum Sarah) are all now living in Edinburgh after studying at the University. Is it something to do with the terrain?

Florence has recently completed her Masters degree and she has been working for a property company whilst looking for the right opportunity in a sports organisation. She hasn't done a great deal of orienteering in recent years but managed to get along to a few events last year when she enjoyed racing sisters Chloe and Lucy. The Edinburgh University O Club also staged informal evening night events in different areas with different formats, which Florence attended.

Doing the maths, Florence thinks she left the Junior Squad in 2012. 'I have so many fantastic memories of being involved with the squad. I loved all the weekends away and being able to see friends and travel to different areas of the UK. The trip to Oringen in 2008 was definitely a highlight - exciting racing, swimming in the lake, ski lifts to the start and all of us gathered around one laptop watching the British WOC team win the relay! Also have to mention the back to back JIRCS titles, what a time to have been part of the squad! Thanks to everyone involved in the squad for helping create all the wonderful memories over so many years. I look forward to seeing other responses in Aire Affairs.'



Lucy Haines



As sister Florence left the Squad, Lucy arrived to spend six years as a member. We know she is in Edinburgh with Chloe and Florence, but what is she up to? Lucy is studying Human Geography and living with three other orienteers, 'who are so lovely and always up for some fun!'

At present Lucy is recovering from fatigue so taking it carefully with her orienteering and training. (Best wishes

Lucy. Ed.) Unsurprisingly, she has many memories of times in the Squad (we won't mention climbing through the window at Lagganlia!! Ed.)

'Where to start! I have so many memories that make me smile. Here are a few:



- Miles Gilleard's reaction when he found out he beat Ruaridh Mon-Williams at JIRCS. As Ruaridh mispunched ('Yorkshire Squaddies never mispunch!' Tony), Miles only had to get round, which is what he did, even if he took over two hours and led to him visiting several of his controls twice to ensure he had punched them properly.
- Walking into a rock shop selling willy-shaped rock lollies on a YHOA weekend in Scarborough. I believe we were around 12 (?) and being asked to leave.
- The warm-up circle where we would each take turn to share a stretch, including the 'dibber finger' before starting our technical training sessions.
- Trainings where Josh Beech was there! He always provided entertainment.
- Any event with Miles swinging his compass round and round.
- One of the training weekends in the Lake District where I brought my friend Jemima along to try orienteering!
- Entering the JIRCS carpark in the Val mobile with Yorkshire flags flying out the car windows.
- Sleeping in sleeping bags on the usual village hall floor, all together like a big happy family.
- Any training or event with Miles, Laura King and Yasmin Field was always a laugh!



Matt Hall

In common with Joe, Matt is presently studying at Sheffield University, General Engineering, staying involved with ShuOC during lockdown and managing to run, 'a fair bit.' He's looking forward to getting back to competing at local events and accompanying the ShuOC trips to the bigger events when car sharing is back to being a viable option.

Matt orienteered with the Squad from 2013-2019 and recalls, 'a lot of amazing adventures I have been on with the squad, traversing the UK and on tour to Sweden, but I always remember the yearly Christmas gathering at Hathersage where everyone got together and ate nice food and played games - always a lot of fun!'

And last, but not least, our most recent ex-Squaddie to let us know how she is getting on –

Evie Conway

Evie officially joined the Squad in 2015 although she can remember attending some training days from 2013. She is also studying at the University of Edinburgh (presently all online!) Her subject is Geography. Sadly, she describes orienteering currently as 'quite mythical. I can't remember the last time I did any. Summer maybe.' Prior to the lockdown Evie really enjoyed



participating in the summer races and training camps. Her reply to my question about Squad memories, 'The squad tours to Stockholm were definitely fun, but some of my favourite memories come from the early days. There was one weekend in the Lakes in summer when I was very young where I just remember thinking this is the absolute pinnacle of life- just running round the top of a hill or chucking a tennis ball about in the sun all day long.'

So, Emily and Jake, I hope those memories have whet your appetite as you join the Squad. It may not be quite the same experience just now, but hopefully in the not too distant future you will be recording similar memories that will stay with you.



Picking off ticks after training!



Squaddies up a tree



If there are other ex-Junior Squad members who would like to share their memories in the next issue of Aire Affairs, please do contact me on wendy.carlyle@btinternet.com

Hopefully we will all be visiting a control such as this in the not too distant future.....



Yorkshire Squaddie Quiz

Can you identify these Airienteers, all previously members of the Yorkshire Junior Squad? Answers below.

From top left: Scott, Sam, Ruaridh, Miles, Matt, Lucy, Laura, Joe, Helen, Florence, Evie, Emily and Beth