

# Aire Affairs



**May 2022**



**Airienteers**

Orienteering in Airedale and Wharfedale

[www.aire.org.uk](http://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](http://www.aire.org.uk) and via e-mail/paper format to all members and interested parties.

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The cover photo shows Airienteers at the CompassSport Cup heat at Duncombe Park in March and includes several of the top scorers at that event.



## Edito – Wendy Carlyle

I am beginning to feel that orienteering is coming back into our lives as we have attended several events since the last issue of Aire Affairs, including some of the major ones. We were helping at the British Night Champs on Ilkley Moor, Tony on the Start and me attempting to take photographs on that beautiful snowy evening. The Church Hall was buzzing afterwards with competitors sharing stories of derring-do and fun and frustration, a great event all round. I must say we were glad to be in the warm of the Ilkley Grammar refectory on registration the following day as the waters poured off the moor. It was a brave orienteer who ventured out that day! I hope none of them were baht 'at.



In March, we were in Helmsley for the CompassSport Cup heat.

There was a good turnout of Airienteers and we were both pleased with our results, Tony achieving 100 points and me scoring for the first time in many years with 96 points.

At the end of the month, it was the British Championships, a long way south! We broke our journey with a couple of days in Oxford with Becky, Rob and Euan. I can't say I enjoyed my course, and I was exhausted by the time I finished the uphill gasp to the assembly field. Tony snapped me in recovery, and it was only later that we spotted the sign above my head which summed it up perfectly. See the photo above.

Much more fun was the JK in South Wales over the Easter Weekend and it was especially good to catch up with folks we had not seen in too long a time. The weather was perfect, the areas testing in different ways and the views just grand. I must mention the excellent commentary provided throughout by Katherine and Holly, particularly as they made a fuss of the juniors in our sport finishing their courses. I hope our members who had intended to compete but were struck down by Covid prior to the weekend, are all now well recovered.

Thank you to all the contributors to this issue.

## Chair Affairs – Liz Carter

I have orienteered for many years now with varying levels of success. It is a sport that can generate such a range of emotions within one event from extreme satisfaction on finding a tricky control to frustration and despair when getting completely lost and having difficulty relocating. It also is a sport that allows everyone to participate at the level they are able to. I have never been a seriously competitive individual but do try to navigate well and getting it right is very satisfying. I do try to move as quickly as possible but nowadays am





more conscious that I cannot move as flexibly or as quickly as I did previously – which I have to say was never really fast. The thing that I think is great about orienteering is that it is a sport for everyone. Those who are really competitive to those who like to go for a thinking run. Those who are just starting out at a young age and those who have more events under their belt than hot dinners.

Many of you reading this newsletter will be longstanding members of the club, some of you are new to us and the sport. It is a very individual sport and at an event there can be a tendency to go, change at the car, go to the start, disappear into the forest/moor and then on return download, go back to the car and disappear. This is particularly true if you are new and don't know anyone. Although I have been a member of AIRE for years, I have only really got to know club members in the last few years since I started helping more. It is a good way to get to know people and put faces to names and it really helps the club to run events. In addition, the Wednesday evening informal events are also a way to meet more people and feel part of the club. We used to have an enquiries tent at events but since Covid struck we don't do that anymore, but hanging around registration or download and swapping navigation stories is a common sight at most events. Always look out for the AIRE flag and tent at "away" events as they are also a gathering place to swap stories and hang out.

We had a great first introductory event in Nunroyd Park in March. The weather was kind and we had around 50 or so runners, mainly young children but some parents and newcomers having a try. Everyone said how much they enjoyed it. Hopefully the next one at Ilkley Riverside on May 14<sup>th</sup> will also be as successful. This may have taken place by the time AIRE Affairs comes out so the next one to look out for is on 18<sup>th</sup> June at Northcliffe Park in Shipley.

Happy orienteering everyone and hope to see you at Buckwood in May and the Relays and Sprints in June. If you want to put a team together for the Relays or want to join a team then contact the club captain Steve Webb on [saraandsteve1@btinternet.com](mailto:saraandsteve1@btinternet.com).

## **BOC Weekend – Roger Lott**

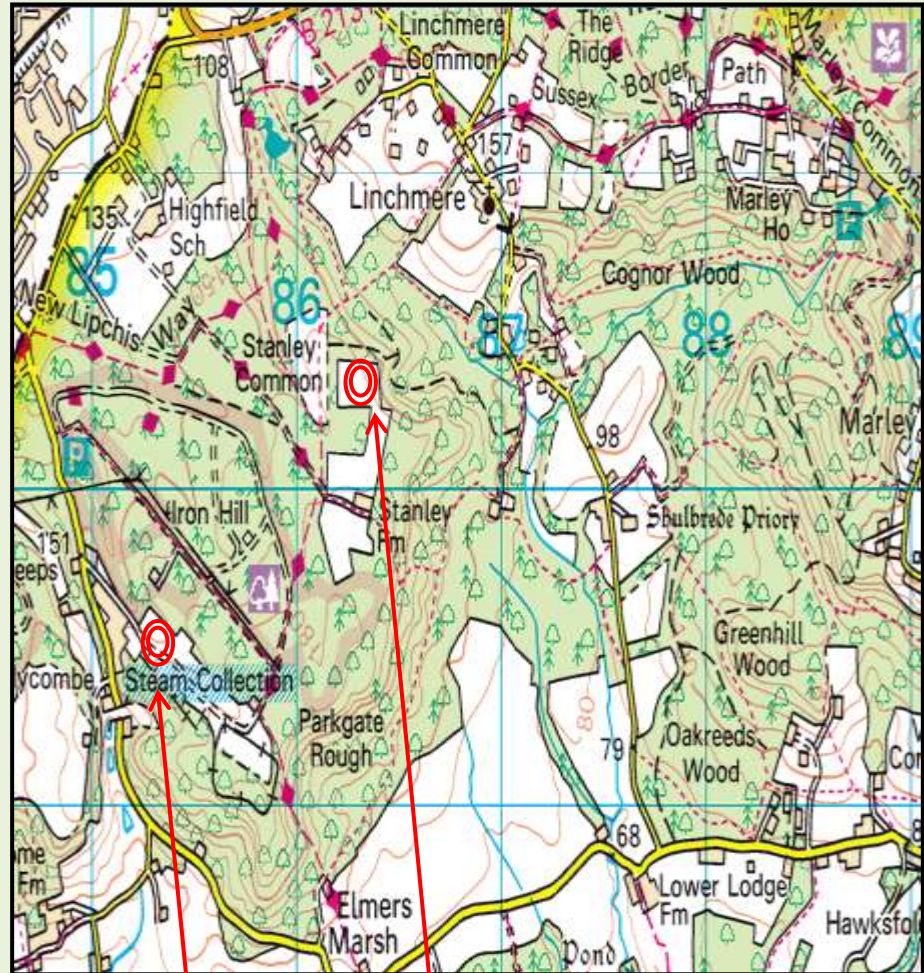
An area in southeast England entirely new to orienteering, in itself that is pretty rare. It is usually an indication that the terrain is not that great, for if it were any good it would almost certainly have been used before. However, without having researched it too closely I was optimistic that the area for the 2020 BOC, just to the east of Liphook may be quite good, possibly on the same geological formation as Winterfold and Leith Hill. Perusal of OS maps and aerial photos suggested a good-sized area of woodland, with potential for some challenging over or round route choice legs. I was looking forward to it. I arranged to stop off in Oxford on the way down to see our elder son and his partner.



By the beginning of March (two years ago, 2020) the SARS-2 epidemic was beginning to grip the country and the staging of the event began to be in doubt. The country (save for those visiting Specsavers in Barnard Castle) went into lock-down in early March. It came as no surprise that the BOC and BRC were cancelled, hopefully to be re-run in March 2021. Three days later Dougal and Ash go down with covid. Had I visited them they would have been asymptomatic but contagious at the time and it is probable I would have caught it and then passed it on to our then pregnant daughter in law Miriam with whom I had been intending to stay over the BOC weekend. A near miss, then, saved by the lockdown bell.

March 2021 comes and goes. The BOC event does not happen. But covid inoculations are well under way, along with celebrations in Downing Street.

March 2022. At the third time of asking we get an event. There were in fact two



<b>Proposed 2020</b>	<b>Actual 2022</b>
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patches of wood. A flat plateau, strangely named Iron Hill, bounded on its eastern side by a reasonably steep 50-metre high escarpment, Parkgate Rough, and a separate block of wood, Cognor Wood, containing a couple of significant hills across the other side of a valley. How the planners were going to get courses between these two blocks of woodland without a lot of dead running was a mystery to me.

The organisers lost their original event centre at the Hollycombe Steam Museum on the southern edge of the area, but managed to arrange an alternative about a mile to the northeast in fields within the woodland.



Driving into the assembly area from the west we pass through flat open mature coniferous forest, typical SE heathland, but with plenty of seriously man-eating patches of bramble along the edges of open areas. Damn it, forgotten about brambles and didn't bring any bramble bashers. Oh well, so be it. But as we get closer to the assembly area, the occurrence of bramble diminishes significantly. I hope our courses are not venturing too far west of the event centre.

It becomes apparent from the event details that the start must be on the west side of fields around Stanley Farm and the last control is on the northeast corner of the assembly area. I don't see how my 6.5km course with 305m climb will get across to Cognor Wood. I envisage a loop around the plateau followed by a traverse of the slope and uphill finish. But how do they get 305m climb onto a 50m slope? This does not bode well. Ugh.

The elite courses have a separate start, but for the rest of us the pre-start is adjacent to the fields with loads of small rhododendron thickets obliterating any view into the forest. We seem to be heading generally southwards from the start. Pick up my control descriptions in the start lane - last control fence corner as expected, penultimate control the head of a shallow reentrant. First control thicket, S side. Hope these thickets are navigable. There is no map display in the start lane - the area has not been used before - so not possible to figure out where the first control might be.

Soon I am on the start line and picking up my map. There is a 60m taped route from start line to start kite. My first leg is just under a km, the first half of which is straight along a very shallow broad re-entrant through 'white' forest. There is a path option to the left which I opt for on the grounds that I don't fancy having to navigate areas of rhodie bushes seen at the pre-start, a completely stupid premise as there are no green splodges on the map. As I reach the pre-start control, I realise there is a third alternative on a forest track to the right - perhaps should have gone for that straight from the start line, too late now. In any case, this way I can pass by my control #8 to suss out the terrain around it. I soon reach the scarp edge and the very open coniferous forest with virtually no undergrowth makes way for a coppiced hillside. It is open between the coppiced trees, but there are variable amounts of coppiced brashings that on the steep slope make the runnability quite difficult for old crocks. Should have taken the track option off to the right! My #8 thicket is quite obvious just down from the top of the slope and contouring from it to #9 along the slope looks straightforward - good. Plough on down the slope towards #1, around the end of a large area of thicket and onto a spur upon which my thicket is in a felled area. The thicket is obvious, reaching it not so due to brashings.

That turned out to be by far the most interesting leg of my course. It turned out that we M70s had the longest course not to cross the valley to Cognor Wood, and that they had kept the area west of the fields for the relays the following day. So the remainder of the course was shoe-horned onto the slope, with a couple of gratuitous climbs after which you just went straight back down again. The route choice was limited to a decision on whether to go diagonally up the slope or along the bottom to a clear attack point and then straight up. Too



many short legs to create a loop to make up the distance for a long course. But I should not complain as it was on the one longer leg back up to the top of the hill that on summiting I just lost the plot and set off at 90 degrees to that which I had intended. On reflection I felt sorry for the constraints imposed on the planner and I am pretty sure that my course would have been better had the original event centre been available. The longer courses that did get across to Cognor Wood generally had two or three long (1km+) legs with route choice, but with these I would have removed some of the controls. It is easy to criticise one course, much more difficult to plan 28 courses without overloading control sites.

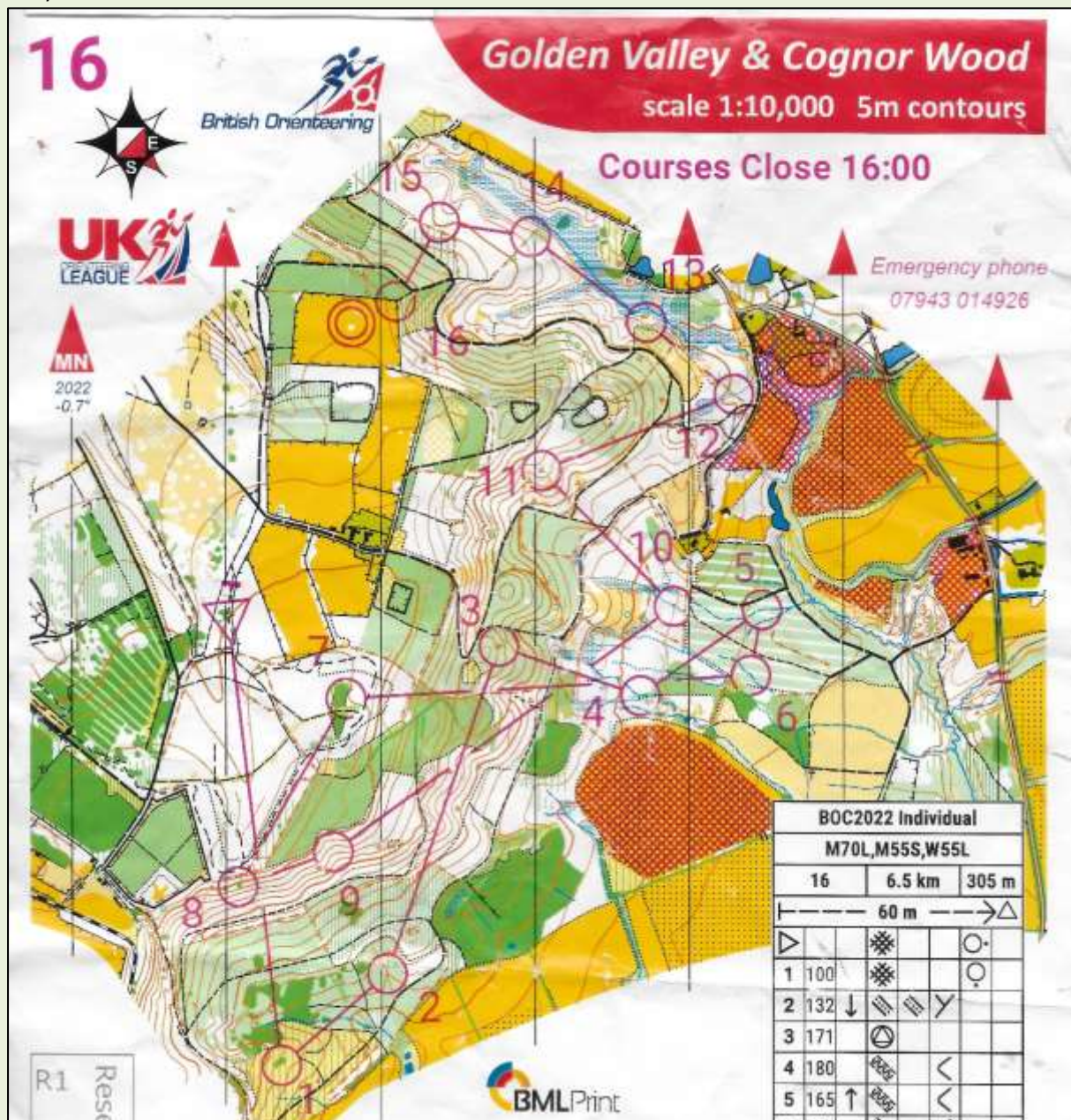
The lack of AIRE entries meant that our honourable club captain had to have a couple of old lags in his M60 relay team. Based on our times from the individual race, Chris Burden and I were going to struggle to beat an hour on our legs. Because the relay courses crossed the access track all had to be in the car park before the first relay start and were unable to leave until after the left-overs mass start. But the weather was nice and it was good to see folks not seen for a couple of years. M60 was the last relay to start. After a couple of hundred metres around the assembly field, Steve had already established a 4m lead on the chasing pack. I told Chris that should he come back in the lead then on leg 2 I would soon put a stop to that. I assume Steve will take about 40 minutes but as a contingency wander into the changeover pen with 30 minutes gone. Then all of a sudden Steve appears, with no other M60 in sight. I did not know it at the time but he came back with a 5-minute lead. Oh dear, I am going to have to try. The course starts out west into areas avoided on the previous day. The terrain is pretty nebulous with controls on mountain-bike tracks the mapping of which looked to me like they had not been updated from two years ago. But because the forest was so open the controls were pretty easy to find. Then a leg through thicket, either straight through on some mid-green rides or out to the left. As I am supposed to keep running I opt to go round to the right. Then onto the eastern slope. I use a couple of controls I had had on the previous day to navigate into my control - I presume they were used on other gaffles. On the way to #7 I am beginning to feel the previous day in my legs. I get forced down lower than I want to go by trying to avoid coppice brashing. Above me I see a couple of competitors who I guess are also running the M60 course. I am surprised I got this far without being swallowed up by the pack. On to #8 retracing steps from the day before - this bit of forest and marsh at the base of the slope is becoming tedious. Then a leg straight up the hill. That completely finishes me off. I contour to the following control, then back down to the bottom of the hill before one last ascent to the finish. That was dire. I cannot keep up with W75s and M80s. I pass a control on a path junction a few tens of metres from the field entrance. Then I realise its code was that of my last control, it is not where it was the day before at the track entrance into the finish field, so in full view of a crowd at the gate into the field I return a few metres to punch. It's uphill to the handover but I try to run. I have probably lost ten places when I hand over to Chris. And I did not quite beat the hour. A more enjoyable course than the day before. Chris gets around in a few minutes longer than me, but then makes an identical mistake as I had



and ignores the control on the track junction before entering the finish field. Except that he did not return, so all that Steve has to show from his brilliant first leg is a team DQ.

So was this new area worth going to? Definitely worth mapping and having events there. A British championships? I am not sure. In my view the shorter individual courses and my M70 in particular were definitely compromised by saving much of the hill top for the relays. But the organisers did a great job in getting access to two areas that had previously proven difficult to use, and presumably to several landowners of the area linking the two woods. I would go there again.

On the Wednesday after the weekend I go down with covid. So I did not avoid it after all. But at least it is relatively mild no doubt thanks to multiple jabs. But no Northern Champs and 2½ weeks later I am still testing positive. So no JK. (We hope you are well recovered now Roger. Ed.)







## Juniares News – Lindsey King

### Mini Relay Stars at JK2022!



Congratulations to Charlie, Penny, Joby and Alfie - AIRE's first mini relay team for a few years!

On Easter Monday the JK2022 relays were held at Caerwent Barracks near Chepstow. Amazingly the sun was still shining when Charlie stood on the start line of the junior mini relay at 10 am – Memories of Joe Woodley and Gemma King racing on the same area 15 years earlier ...



We must have had the youngest team in the race (all well under 10). Many other teams had juniors up to 12 years old. We were also the only team with 2 runners on last leg as Alfie was super keen to compete too!

It was exciting to watch each junior run in into the arena in front of crowds to enthusiastic applause. I am sure it was also a great relief to their parents to see each cross the finish line. Joby's map seemed to have gone missing somewhere along the route but he had used his initiative to team up with an SYO runner and they were happily



running together along the finish funnel!

We may not have achieved a position in the results but let's hope that this will be the first of many more JK relay runs for these enthusiastic young AIRE juniors!



Next year's JK is much more

local in the south Lake District so book the Easter weekend in your diary and come and join in a great festival of orienteering.

### JK2022 -individual results

6 AIRE juniors came to JK2022 over Easter weekend in South Wales. Here are the results- Well done to everyone!



	Jack	Charlotte	Charlie	Alfie	Penny	Joby
Day 1	36 <sup>th</sup> M12	14 <sup>th</sup> W10	-	-	5 <sup>th</sup> W10	5 <sup>th</sup> M10
Day 2	7 <sup>th</sup> M14B	1 <sup>st</sup> W12B	2 <sup>nd</sup> M10B	-	4 <sup>th</sup> W10B	4 <sup>th</sup> M10B
Day 3	4 <sup>th</sup> M14B	1 <sup>st</sup> W12B	1 <sup>st</sup> M10B	5 <sup>th</sup> White	2 <sup>nd</sup> W 10B	2 <sup>nd</sup> M10B
overall	5 <sup>th</sup> M14B	1 <sup>st</sup> W12B	1 <sup>st</sup> M10B	-	3 <sup>rd</sup> W10B	2 <sup>nd</sup> M10B



Charlie setting off in the Mass Start of the Mini Relay

Charlie running in past the cheering crowd to hand over to Faye



Faye waiting at handover



Off she goes!



## Alice Leake - Together for Sport

Together for Sport is a new initiative being coordinated by Zero Waste Leeds to encourage the exchanging of good quality second hand sports kit and equipment.

Kit and equipment can be expensive and, for some people, it's the biggest barrier to taking part in sport. Being active is so good for both our physical and mental wellbeing and, by working with local people to open up a supply of kit, Together for Sport are aiming to help people save waste, save money and feel good. They're also developing a map where you will be able to find out about sport clubs that have joined the Together for Sport community.

Airienteers are supporting the initiative by lending compasses, whistles and dibbers to competitors at our events.



Also, if you have kit and equipment that you no longer need and that is in good condition, please do join the Together for Sport Facebook Page and offer it there - and if you need something, please feel free to ask.

Whether you're motivated by the need to save money or to do your bit for the environment, or perhaps a bit of both, Together for Sport aim to make sharing sport kit as easy as it can be.

## Antwerp Sprint Orienteering Camp – Alice Leake

After a fun few months of training and racing in the UK (including a shock victory in the British Middle Championships!) it was time to focus on sprinting again in April. My goal for the year is to try and get selected for the first sprint only World Championships which is taking place in Denmark at the end of June. As part of that preparation fourteen of us travelled over to Antwerp, Belgium, to take part in the Antwerp Sprint Orienteering Meeting (ASOM).



ASOM offers orienteers a well organised, challenging and exciting orienteering weekend with lots of races and a great elite field, as well as extra training for national team runners. It's also relatively easy to get to, with all of the races accessible by public transport, making it the perfect place for a long weekend of high-quality sprint orienteering.

As well as team GB, there were runners taking part from the Swiss, Finnish, Czech, Polish, Danish and French national teams - making a really good standard of competition to test ourselves against. Plus, orienteers from lots of other clubs across the UK were taking part including DVO, HH, SN and RR.

Friday night started with a 2 person mixed relay – 1 man and 1 woman in each team, both running two x 2km courses each. The added fun being that this took place at night, with headtorches, and that there were 128 teams in the mass start! It was really fun, with competitors of all abilities taking part alongside top elite runners, and world-renowned orienteering commentator Per Forsberg providing the arena commentary. All of this, plus an arena run through, made for such a good atmosphere.

On the Saturday, the elite classes had a full knock out sprint day, whilst the other age classes had two individual sprint races in the afternoon and evening, giving them time for sightseeing and spectating. We started with a qualification race on the morning. There were three heats, so you started at the same time as two other runners, but they were doing a different course.



The top sixteen from each heat qualified for the knock out races. The courses were flat and fast with route choices around big housing blocks and patches of open park. Having been knocked out at this stage once before I made sure to run a bit faster this time (rather than trying to save my energy for the knock out rounds) and qualified in 1<sup>st</sup> place from my heat.



We then went to the Quarter Finals, where there were six heats, each with eight runners. These are mass start with just the first three over the line progressing to the next round, so they are full speed from start to finish. The Quarter Finals had the added orienteering challenge of a “runners’ choice”. This is where, 1 minute before the mass start, each runner is shown part of the course but with three different options. Each runner gets just twenty seconds to decide which of the three different options they will choose, and this forking will be somewhere on the course. You can’t see the choice that any other runner is making so you have to be able to stay calm and decide which forking you think is the shortest / fastest in those twenty seconds, and then make sure that you’re doing your own navigating when the forking starts!

We were shown three map excerpts on the same piece of paper which had controls 4 - 7/8 on them. Which runners’ choice would you have chosen?

I finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in my quarter final and made it through to the semi-finals. These were even tougher with six runners starting together and just the first two over the finish line making it to the final. To split runners, all semi-finals had a butterfly loop on their course, with three runners having option A and three runners having option B. Plus the added pressure of artificial barriers, an arena start with everyone watching you, and a



spectator control! It was such a good opportunity to practise dealing with all of these stressful elements of racing before the big competitions in the summer.

I was really pleased to make it through to the final, which was a normal ungaffled sprint with lots of route choices, and get to experience a full knock out sprint day and all of the mental and physical preparation that comes with having to race four times in the same day - staying fuelled and hydrated, warming up and cooling down without running too many miles or seizing up, and psyching yourself up to focus again and again when you are getting tired. I finished 4<sup>th</sup> out of eight in the final, beating several good national team runners, which I was happy with. (Great result Alice! Ed.)

On the Sunday morning it was time to race again (a pretty intense 48 hours)! This time with a World Ranking Event sprint. Because it was a World Ranking Event we had to be in quarantine for several hours before racing so that we couldn't see the maps, results, arena, or receive any information about the courses in advance. Definitely one of the less exciting parts of elite orienteering! The courses were



again completely flat with some big route choices, and mostly in a big park area in the city centre, requiring very fast orienteering and running. This is the kind of sprint that suits me best so I was really looking forward to seeing how I could do. I enjoyed the course a lot, especially the arena run through and how close and exciting the results were. In the end I finished 2<sup>nd</sup>, just 1 second behind GB team mate Megan, and over 30 seconds ahead of some big names in international orienteering which was very exciting. With Kris also on the podium



it was good to see that GB are right up there and can hopefully challenge for some good results when the big races come around in a few weeks' time.

ASOM is really well organised, with a big event feel, lots of races, and a great atmosphere. I would definitely recommend it to anyone who enjoys sprint orienteering.



(Photo at the top of Alice's report shows her finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> place in Women's Elite at the recent JK Sprint Championships around Swansea University. Ed)

## Jo Buckley BNOC Charity Donation



This is Wendy and another lady who run Bingley Downs Syndrome support, receiving just over £150 and a large tub of coffee and tea from the British Night Champs Cafe. A fabulous local charity.

(Well done for organising/running the BNOC Café, Jo, which was very welcome after a cold night on the snowy moor.)





**Airienteers in action at the JK Middle Race at Clydach Terrace**

