

Aire Affairs



May 2024



Airienteers

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 on request.

CONTACTS

CHAIR	Liz Carter	chairATAire.org.uk	
SECRETARY	David Alcock	secretaryATAire.org.uk	07989 563588
TREASURER	Chris Penny	treasurerATAire.org.uk	
FIXTURES	Leon Foster	leonfosterATgmail.com	
MEMBERSHIP	Ian Marshall	membershipATAire.org.uk	01943 862997

(All email address have @ replaced by AT)

Cover photo: AIRE juniors on the podium at the British Championships, after receiving their medals from Steve Cram.



In the boulders at Danefield.

Pictures by Wendy Carlyle



EditO – Peter Jones

A warm welcome to new members (or welcome back if re-joining after a few years) :-

- Zejun and Ivy Yao
- John and Sarah Hayes
- Ethan Nicholson
- George Oakland
- Jack Walton
- Oliver James

My thanks to Liz, Lindsey, Steve, Rob, Chris and Peter for their contributions.

I'm intending to produce the next issue in July, soon after our Leeds Summer in the City weekend and the British Sprint Championships weekend. If anyone wants to run the Mixed Sprint Relay, please sign up on the online spreadsheet – evening of Saturday 22nd June at Birmingham University, followed by the British Sprint Championships at Warwick University on the Sunday. If you haven't run a Mixed Sprint Relay, it's quite a sociable event and not just for the elites - fast, sharp courses with a good spectator element.



Since the last issue there have been a series of major events which means we have a bumper set of AIRE Achievements and, thanks to Wendy, pictures of Airienteers in Action. I managed to run the long distance day at the JK (quite long enough and muddy enough for me), and the British Middle and Northern Championships here in Yorkshire (both much more enjoyable).

I can only echo what Liz says about how we held the British Middle Championships at Danefield - everything I've seen (or overheard on the day after) has been very complimentary about the event, organisation, courses, map, view across the Wharfe Valley. And, we've now put on all six British Championships and the British Schools Championships in the last five years, which no other club has done.

In the last issue I made a comment about the change in age profile in orienteering. It occurred to me afterwards that people who have come into the sport in the last 5 to 10 years might think it's always been the case that lots of competitors, event officials and people on orienteering committees have been from an 'older generation'. But that wasn't so, and it certainly isn't what many of us want. So, I've looked at the age profile at the first event I went to in Mulgrave Woods in March 1988 (a National Event, which was a similar level to the Northern Championships except there used to be more of them), and compared it with this year's British Championships in Mulgrave Woods and Northern Championships at Kilnsey.

Spoiler alert – yes, we really did look different back then.



Chair Affairs – Liz Carter

I have just read again the last Aire Affairs and am reminded of what a variety of experiences and places we visit doing it. Judith and David's trip to Madeira was inspiring. I have been to Italy orienteering a few times and loved it but have not gone to other countries. A European orienteering tour is on my mind – probably as a W70 I need to think about doing it sooner rather than later!

Well – what a weekend that was! After all the hours mapping, planning, controlling and organising with the help of a great bunch of volunteers we had a fantastic Middle Distance Championship event at Danefield. The weather was kind after all the rain we have had, the assembly site worked really well and we had many, many positive comments about the courses, the map and the whole thing. The club put on a great event and the committee wants to acknowledge and thank those club members who put hours into it, particularly the planner David Williams and the organiser Chris Burden.



The day of the Northern Championships did not dawn well with rain lashing our window but by the time we arrived at the assembly it had lessened and by the time we finished our course the sun was shining ☺. CLARO also put on a great event so the whole weekend showcased Yorkshire orienteering. The entries for both events were over 900 – we attracted orienteers from across the UK and gave them a great experience.

We cannot survive as a club without the input of volunteers and we are really pleased that we now have a volunteer coordinator – Peter Haines. I will let him introduce himself and what he hopes to achieve later in this newsletter. He is keen to develop the talent we have and ensure we have training and mentoring available for those of you who perhaps would volunteer for roles such as planners, controllers, organisers but perhaps don't feel that you have sufficient skills. We are a club with many skilled people of a certain age who want to develop the talent in our younger members so that the club continues to thrive. Look out for emails/phone calls from Peter as he begins developing this important area.

Lastly not to forget the contribution some of our younger members give to the club, planning and helping out at events. We want to encourage our "Volunteens" (thanks Julie for the name) – more on this in future.

Liz.



Coaching – Lindsey King

TUES 21st May 2024 - COACHING SESSION for AIRE members

Great response so far - come and join us:

- 21st May 2024 - 6.30pm to 8.30pm
- Danefield, Chevin Forest Park, East Chevin Road Otley (carpark opposite café)
- Open to all : standard orange up to brown level – age 11 upwards.
- Contact lindseyking49A@hotmail.co.uk (change AT to @) to book a place and for final details.

2 trainee coaches will be completing their final assessments and we need runners at green/blue/brown course level to receive coaching from them.

Learn more skills to improve your performance!

Juniors – Lindsey King

YHOA Junior Squad

Sam Crook M14 has been invited to regional squad sessions and attended Hardcastle Crag in March. Ross Carson & Joseph Mason have also been invited.

Alethea Carr W12 will shortly join them which she is really looking forward to. Alethea has been orienteering for around 3 years and is developing her skills and fitness in great strides. Being older than her school friends in the club she had to move up to TD3 Orange courses some time before them. She found JK2024 and British Long competitions challenging and then excelled at Kilnsey coming 3rd overall on the course and was Northern Champion.

The other YHOA junior squad members from AIRE are Katie Buckley, Ewen Wilkinson and Henry Stitson, and associate members: Bethan Buckley, Joseph Dawson and Jack & Charlotte Beavers.

2024 Summer Tours

3 AIRE juniors have been successful in gaining selection for summer camps and competitions this summer.

- Katie Buckley W16 has been selected for European Youth Orienteering Championships in Poland in July and the JROS Czech summer camp
- Ewen Wilkinson M16 is selected for the JROS Czech summer camp and



- Bethan Buckley W14 for the JROS Lagganlia summer camp near Aviemore

Congratulations to all 3 - the selections are well deserved after your results this spring!

It has been a very busy couple of months for all our juniors travelling around the country competing in the qualifying races at JK, British Long, British Middle races and Sprint races. We have had up to 20 AIRE Juniors competing in these national & international competitions including relay races. You have all been amazing and shown great support for each other.

This picture of Emily W20 on the finish line at JK shows the relief of finishing a race and the friendship between close rivals!



Resilience through sport

The definition of resilience on Google is:

- a person's capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties = toughness.
- an object's ability to spring back into shape = elasticity.

We need resilience to manage day to day life. If we don't have it we can struggle to deal with events through life. Giving ourselves challenges seems a bit scary. However, if we work out how to tackle them and do our best to achieve them then we learn from them and become stronger as a result. These experiences make us tougher and enable us to cope when hard things happen – we gain more confidence that we will find a way through them.

Learning to participate and compete in a sport of any sort helps to develop mental and physical resilience. In orienteering we can all develop our resilience in various ways:

Physical resilience is improved by: -

- persevering to the end of the course even if longer than expected,
- driving yourself up hills or over rough terrain
- pushing yourself to overtake a competitor.

Mental resilience comes from:

- working out where you are when 'lost' or disorientated
- completing a course despite making mistakes
- pushing yourself to run/walk faster even when tired
- recovering confidence after a 'bad' run and entering the next race



During this spring 2024 I have seen many AIRE juniors and seniors developing resilience through competing in races that will help them through many challenges in life.

Younger juniors may get upset when they lose their way out on a tricky white or yellow course. It can feel quite scary to be 'lost' after turning the wrong way at a path junction and not being able to find their next control. Mis-punching is common at a young age too. However, once safely back at the finish youngsters spring back to positivity after a snack and a hug from a parent. They quickly meet up with their friends and start playing football or chasing each other around. They are so elastic that catching them for some post-race feedback can be tricky!

Older juniors and adults are understandably much more self-analytical and can be very frustrated after a run that they are not happy with. This is heightened when more is hanging on the run such as a selection or in a team race such as a relay.

Discussing your course with friends and club members afterwards can be invaluable. It helps to work out where things went wrong for you, how you could have done things differently and put things in some perspective. You may find that others found things as tough as you or you did better in some aspects of the race than them. You can offer each other feedback. Sometimes having a laugh or a chat about something completely different is the best way to cheer yourself up.

Coaches may also be on hand to share your post-race thoughts and help you work out techniques to improve on. When at home, you can use online tools such as Routegadget to retrace your run head-to-head with others on your course to see where they had the edge on you and which routes may have gained more advantage in the race. All these options can help you to regain a positive attitude and prepare mentally for the next race.

Physical resilience is gained in most cases following a regular training plan and being motivated to keep yourself fit and improving your strength and endurance in running over distance and terrain. The intensity and manner in which you do this will depend on your age, your other commitments and your physical condition.

Suffering with physical injuries can be a demoralising time. You are unable to compete in the sport you enjoy with friends. Learning how to maintain your motivation while resting or doing physio exercises and recovering fitness are valuable lessons in becoming a mentally and physically stronger person that will be useful in other areas of life.

A quote I shared with AIRE juniors and parents recently will hopefully encourage all of us:

"True champions aren't always the ones that win, but those with the most guts"

Mia Hamm - American soccer player



Club Captain's Report – Steve Webb

A big thank you to everybody who represented AIRE at the JK and British relays this year. We had nine teams across a range of classes at both events which was a really good turnout. Team results are summarised here, and in AIRE Achievements.

Don't forget to sign up immediately if you would like to be in a team for the British Mixed Sprint Relay at Birmingham University on the afternoon and evening of Saturday 22 June. Ideal if you are travelling to the individual sprint at Warwick the following day.

JK Relay

The JK relay on Easter Monday at a wet and misty Stanton Moor in the Peak District was staged in very different terrain from the mud fest of the previous days at Beaudesert. From the very compact arena with densely packed club tents the courses headed into old quarries before traversing moorland and a mix of light woodland and semi open. Most courses had a spectator control before returning to the quarries and a slippery run in.

Our best placing was 4th from the Paddington bAIRE team of Penny, Alethea and Charlie. There's plenty of sibling rivalry in the Mini Relay and the Pudsey bAIRE team of Joby, Sebastian and Alfie were 7th. Great running from the Mini Relayers. It was really good that we could field a M48- team this year with Henry, Samuel and James in a solid 10th place. I was delighted that our international AIRE Laura was able to run for us again this year in a Womens Trophy team with new club member Mary and "veteran but keen to run trophy class" Jo. Laura had a really good run in the lead pack and the team got an excellent 8th place.

There is an inevitable degree of juggling involved as captain to try and match people's preferences to the resources available and the different class combinations and to create competitive teams. At times events conspire to require a bit of last minute flexibility and this year was no exception. Scott and Kotomi Carr turned up to the relay to cheer on Alethea and Sebastian but ended up being issued with dibbers and numbered bibs and sent out into the fray. I'm really grateful to both of them for being such good sports and enabling their team mates in the M165+ and W165+ classes to get the baton round.

British Relays

The arena for the British Relay Champs at Hutton Mulgrave had superb airy views across to Whitby and the North Sea. Only when speaking to Andrew and Fay after running did I realise that their elite courses the day before had actually started with a tour of Hutton Mulgrave before heading across to the main part of Mulgrave Woods. A useful preview for them, but when I saw their individual elite course maps I did not envy the course length (or the map scale)!

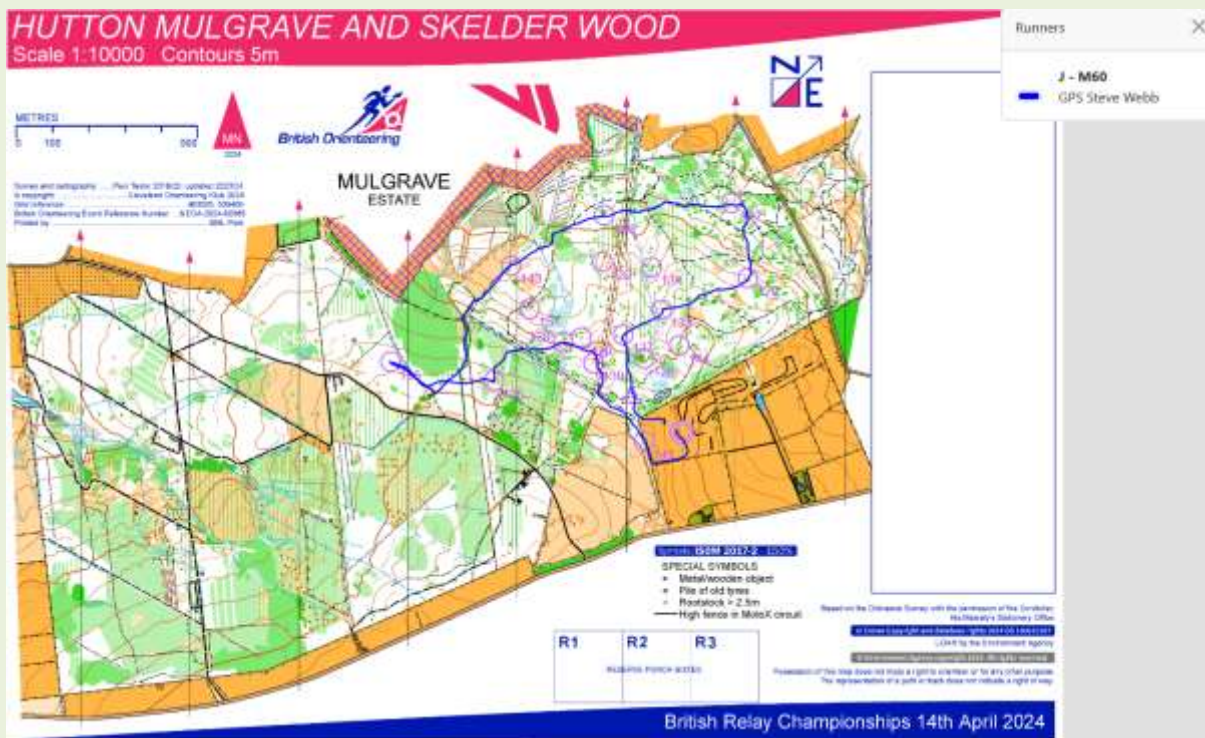
We had some excellent relay performances on the day and top of the list were the Kodiak bAIREs retaining the gold medal from last year in the M/W70 class. Three good consistent runs from Tony C,



Sue and Tony T saw them to a winning margin of almost 5 minutes and vindicated the mild arm twisting I deployed to persuade Tony T to run!

Three of our teams finished just off the podium in 4th place including Fay, Mary and Tamsin in Womens Open; a very impressive performance. The Paddington bAIRE team (same combination as at the JK) again finished in 4th place, and must surely get in the medals next year. For our other team in 4th place it looks as though avoiding just one costly control would have seen the team collecting medals. Nevertheless well done to Henry, Bethan and Katie on Junior Ad-Hoc. The same applies to Jo, Joyce and Anne on W40: one control effectively knocked them off the podium.

After an indifferent run at the individual I managed to have one of my best ever races on relay day. Running leg 1 on M60 I was in a mass start with W40, M18 and Mens Short so it was all rather frenetic as we plunged into the forest. Thankfully I hit the correct first control and converged on number 3 with M60 rivals Jon Emberton and Tim Tett. Managed to get just ahead at number 4, took a safe route around a block of green to 7 and tried to keep running hard thereafter to the finish. My worst mistake was probably forgetting the finish control was contactless and fumbling to dib before handing over in first with 2.5 minute lead. Exhilarating!





British Orienteering membership - NEW MEMBER offer

See link below for a British Orienteering offer for new members. Join for the rest of 2024 at a discounted price: Ideal opportunity for:

- parents of juniors to come and try the sport and get to know other members by helping at events and
- encouraging friends into the sport as they can join cheaply as a trial.

For the benefits of membership and prices follow -> <https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/join>

British Middle Championships – Chris Burden

A big thank you to all the Aire members (and non-members) who made this event the success it was. We just about had enough of you. You'd be surprised how many volunteers it takes to run an event of this size successfully. If you are able to attend never fail to offer your services. You'll have a great time and will contribute to the club immeasurably. We've had no end of compliments for both the courses and the organisation.

The choice of areas seems to go back a long way; certainly several years before Covid disrupted the events schedule.

The original area we thought of using for the Middles was discovered while a few of us were on a mountain bike ride deeper in the Dales. Danefield was originally only the fallback if the Dales area didn't prove viable, which it didn't. Danefield proved far the better area. The Dales area was not, as a result pursued, but a new neighbouring area, Moughton and Sulber, which we have been considering for years now, has proved excellent, and will be used for a Dales Weekend Classic Distance event in 2025.

Danefield is owned by Leeds City Council and access is managed through their Events in Park team who are always very supportive of orienteering.

David Williams, the planner, identified a possible field for the arena, which we had never used previously; the field just to the south of the one we eventually used. This



allowed him to use the best of the area. He structured the courses Jan -March 23 at the same time coordinating with Tony Thornley who produced the completely revised map using LIDAR data. This allowed the courses to be reviewed a year early in the correct seasonal conditions. Having had input



during April 23 from David Bowman assistant planner and Mark Garside (WCH) controller, the courses were more or less fully agreed by the end of April 2023. Subsequently the courses and map were given minor amendments and updates to take account of the storms, wet conditions and middle distance rule changes, which appeared in January 2024.

The parking field has become a regular for us over the past 15 years, when we hold Regional events at Danefield. We knew it was well drained. It has coped admirably with the cars for all previous events. We've checked it regularly throughout this very wet winter, and never had any doubts about it coping, despite having to accommodate 3 times the number of vehicles we have previously. It meant quite a long walk to the arena, but we knew it was 100% reliable.

Last year by March the original assembly field was in prime condition. This year we did a final check 3 weeks before the event, just before the map proofs were ready to be printed. There was a strong chance the field would never drain sufficiently to take vehicles and 900+ pairs of feet. The field had been too damp to roll, which was something that in 2023 was successfully done before the end of March.

This was when our brilliant hosts, Sue and Howard Cliff really came into their own. They suggested we use the paddock and agreed to build us the bridge across the ditch leading to it. It proved the best of arenas. The grass didn't cut up, and it was more compact than the original field which doubtless helped create the splendid atmosphere of the event.

The change of assembly field resulted in a few slight last-minute adjustments to the map, but did not affect the planning of the courses apart from the run-in.

We were able to pull the event off just using Aire members, which made recruitment and organising a good deal simpler than is often the case for a Major event. From what I saw and heard on the day, all the teams did a pretty seamless job.

At Danefield we were delighted to hear so many compliments about the courses and the organisation. The rain held off, although a little more sunshine



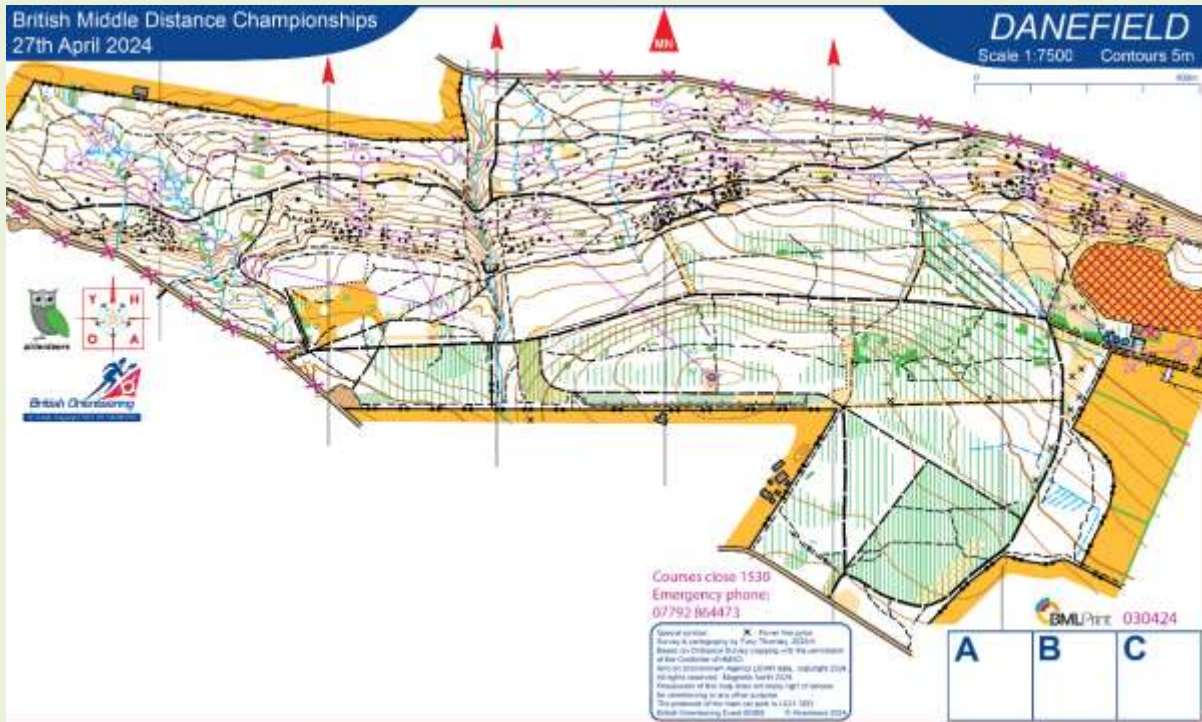
and a warm wind from the south would have been appreciated. I guess you can't have everything.

We were pleased to see that both Rob and Lindsey King's String Course and Maze were well used.

Our next large-scale events are the Sprint and Urban events in Leeds on 6th/7th July 2024, and the Dales Weekend in the Malham area on 14th/15th September.



Course 2 (W21) – 4.5k – run by Fay Walsh, Mary Fleming and Amicia Lee



Course 17 (W12 & M12) – 2.4k – run by Penny Pinker-Hull, Alethea Carr, Kate Parkinson and Charlie Alcock





AIRE Achievements

Congratulations to :-

All juniors mentioned in Lindsey's coaching reports

Katie Buckley on selection to run for Great Britain at the European Youth Orienteering Championships in Poland

Bethan Buckley on winning W14 at Interland, a superb result in her first international race

AIRE Club League 2023 winners

Young Juniors M/W 14-: Charlie Alcock & Alethea Carr

Older Juniors M/W 16/18/20: Henry Stitson & Bethan Buckley

Open M/W 21/35: Andrew Hobson & Alice Leake

Veterans M/W 40/45/50: David Alcock & Jo Buckley

Super Vets M/W 55/60: Steve Webb & Joyce Marshall

Ultra/Hyper Vets M/W 65+: Tony Thornley & Judith Powell

Best Senior and Junior Newcomer: Catherine Dawson & Joseph Dawson

Top 3 at the Northern Night Championships

2nd – Ian Furlong (Veteran Men, M40/45/50)

2nd – Howard Sawyer (Ultra Veteran Men, M65/70)

3rd – David Alcock (Veteran Men, M40/45/50)

JK Sprint

Top 4 or Top 10 in a large class –

2 nd	Bethan Buckley (W14) David Alcock (M45) Steve Webb (M60)
3 rd	Susan Stevens (W70)
4 th	Alethea Carr (W12) Emily Gibbins (W20E) Tony Thornley (M75)
7 th	Jo Buckley (W45) Joyce Marshall (W60)
8 th	Laura King (W21E)



JK Overall (Middle and Long combined)

Top 4 or Top 10 in a large class -

1 st	Bethan Buckley (W14A) Joby Pinker-Hull (M10B)
2 nd	Sebastian Carr (M10B)
3 rd	Tony Thornley (M75L) Alfie Alcock (M10B) Lee Beavers (M45S)
4 th	Katie Buckley (W16A) Susan Stevens (W70L) Charlie Alcock (M12A) Charlotte Beavers (W14B)
5 th	Steve Webb (M60L)
6 th	Emily Gibbins (W20E) Laura King (W21E) Jo Buckley (W45L)
7 th	David Alcock (M45L)
10 th	Tony Carlyle (M70L)

JK Relay

4th - Mini-relay (M/W12-) : Penny Pinker-Hull, Alethea Carr, Charlie Alcock (Paddington bAIRE)

7th - Mini-relay (M/W12-) : Joby Pinker-Hull, Sebastian Carr, Alfie Alcock (Pudsey bAIRE)

8th - Women's Trophy : Laura King, Mary Fleming, Jo Buckley (Koala bAIREs)

9th – Senior Men (M120+) : Dave Murgatroyd, Rob King, David Alcock (Brown bAIREs)

10th – Intermediate Men (M48-) : Henry Stitson, Samuel Crook, James Woodham (Yogi bAIRE)

12th – Veteran Women (W165+) : Joyce Marshall, Lindsey King, Kotomi Carr (Polar bAIREs)

12th – Ultraveterans (M/W210+) : Tony Carlyle, Susan Stevens, Steve Webb (Panda bAIREs)

British Championships

Top 4 or Top 10 in a large class -

1 st	Joby Pinker-Hull (M10B)
2 nd	Bethan Buckley (W14A) Charlie Alcock (M12A) Charlotte Beavers (W14B) Sebastian Carr (M10B)



	Lee Beavers (M45S)
3 rd	Katie Buckley (W16A) Susan Stevens (W70L)
4 th	Jo Buckley (W45L)
5 th	Tony Carlyle (M70L)
6 th	David Alcock (M45L)
7 th	Joyce Marshall (W60L) Tony Thornley (M75L)
8 th	David Bowman (M50L)
10 th	Tamsin Moran (W21E) Shirley Wood (W65L)

British Relays

1st- M/W70 : Tony Carlyle,
Susan Stevens, Tony Thornley
(Kodiak bAIREs)



4th - Women’s Premier : Fay Walsh, Mary Fleming, Tamsin Moran (Koala bAIREs)

4th - M/W12 : Penny Pinker-Hull, Alethea Carr, Charlie Alcock (Paddington bAIRE)

4th - Junior Ad-hoc : Henry Stitson, Bethan Buckley, Katie Buckley (Brown bAIREs)

6th – W40 : Jo Buckley, Joyce Marshall, Anne Murgatroyd (Sun bAIREs)

6th – M60 : Steve Webb, David Williams, Rob King (Grizzly bAIREs)

9th – M/W70 : Lindsey King, Judith Powell, Chris Burden (Spectacled bAIREs)

15th – Men’s Premier : Dave Murgatroyd, Andrew Stemp, David Alcock (Polar bAIREs)

Mp – M/W12 : Joby Pinker-Hull, Sebastian Carr, Alfie Alcock (Pudsey bAIRE)



British Middle Distance Championships

All AIRE helpers, in particular –

Organiser – Chris Burden

Planner – David Williams

Mapper – Tony Thornley

Class winners -

1st – Bethan Buckley (W14)

1st – Emily Gibbins (W20)

[picture by Chris Gibbins]

1st – Dave Murgatroyd (M35)





Top 4 or top 10 in a large class

3 rd	Joby Pinker-Hull (M10) Jo Buckley (W45) Tony Carlyle (M70)
4 th	Anne Murgatroyd (W40) Tim Patterson (M40)
5 th	Katie Buckley (W16)
8 th	Catherine Dawson (W45) Chris Gibbins (M50)
9 th	Ewen Wilkinson (M16)
10 th	Joyce Marshall (W60)

Top 3 at the Northern Championships

1st – Alethea Carr (W12)

1st – Bethan Buckley (W14)

2nd – Andrew Stemp (M21E – having run this course in 102 minutes)

2nd – Joyce Marshall (W60)

3rd – Steve Webb (M60)





Introduction to the volunteer co-ordinator's role – Peter Haines

Dear Aire members,

The club has recently been suffering from a deficit of volunteers to help stage our extensive program of events, and has decided to create a role of volunteer co-ordinator. I have initially volunteered to set things up.

Firstly some background.

Airienteers is one of the larger orienteering clubs in Britain, loosely covering Leeds, Bradford and the Aire and Wharfe valleys. We typically have over 120 registered members.

What is the purpose of the club?

Well we exist essentially to promote the sport and provide opportunities for all our members to go orienteering.

We don't have a clubhouse or central base, but our sport is essentially practiced in the great variety of towns, parks, woodlands and open spaces that make up our area, and those of our neighbours and further afield.

In order to provide members the opportunity to orienteer regularly, we put on about 40 to 45 events throughout the year.

These are typically about 10 regional events held at weekends, 22 Wednesday low key evening events, and about 10 Saturday introductory events aimed largely at beginners. Also the occasional national championship event.

Orienteering, (as opposed to map reading), is a competitive sport where participants are timed, (although I do accept that not everyone is interested their time, and just like the combination of mental and physical challenge the sport offers.)

It is a labour intensive sport to put on, with the requirements of a special map, and volunteers to plan courses, put out and collect controls and oversee the safe running of the event.

You can see that for us all to enjoy participating in the sport, it requires each of us to help promote it by volunteering occasionally.

So, why should I volunteer to help out?

Well the main reason is that by doing so, you are helping promote a sport which you enjoy and want to participate in, presumably why you joined the club.

An added benefit is that it gives you more opportunity to meet other members, socialise and generate your own wellbeing by contributing to something worthwhile.

The more you put in, the more you get out.

We now want to give newer members the opportunity to help the club out.

Over the next few weeks, I will be emailing you to find out if you are willing to help as a volunteer, and if so how you would like to help.



We have requirements both for the mid-week and weekend events, in roles from general help in organising, computer skills, planning courses and controlling (advising and checking). Please don't be daunted by the opportunities. We have extensive guidance notes, and mentoring and appropriate training will be offered.

I look forward to engaging with you to help our great sport thrive.

EPOC Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd sprints

This was part of the 'War of the Roses' weekend along with PFO's urban event in Burnley. The PFO event was a standard urban event, well-organized but perhaps most notable as the first time I've orienteered around the side of a Premiership** football ground.

The EPOC event had a few innovations. There were short sprint stages in Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd with timed-out transition stages in between. So Medium-1, which I ran, was made up of a transition to Hebden Bridge (jogging/walking or by train), a sprint in Hebden Bridge, a transition back, then a sprint in Mytholmroyd South. The long course also had a sprint in Mytholmroyd North. I thought this worked well, and is something we could do, though maybe the sprints could have been a bit longer.

Also, there were uncrossable 'virtual barriers' on the map, as at elite sprints (eg: 1->2->3 at Mytholmroyd). As it was a local event these weren't marshalled or marked on the ground, but



(almost) everyone I saw observed them. Maybe I'll include these at one of our evening sprints sometime.

** at time of writing



Yes, we really did look different back then

Not us older people in AIRE obviously – we’ve hardly aged a bit (cough..) – I mean orienteers in general and how we look to everyone else.

To look at how orienteering has changed, I’ve compared the entry at a National Event in Mulgrave Woods in 1988 with those at this year’s British Championships in Mulgrave Woods and Northern Championships at Kilnsey. There are all sorts of reasons why this isn’t statistically valid but I think it’s a useful snapshot.

There were 970 on age-class courses in 1988, 999 at British Champs 2024, and 740 at the Northern Champs in 2024, as here :-

	Nat Event 1988	Br Ch 2024	Nth Ch 2024
Women	32%	42%	40%
Men	68%	58%	60%

At this rate it will be 50/50 sometime in the 2050s.

Age	Nat Event 1988	Br Ch 2024	Nth Ch 2024
Under 19	22%	22%	20%
19 – 39	45%	15%	11%
40 – 59	31%	29%	29%
60 and over	2%	33%	40%

I’ll leave it to others to look at any implications for how we hold events and promote AIRE and the sport of orienteering, and just add some observations.

The % in junior classes is the same. I was surprised at this (I’d expected there to be fewer juniors now) so I also looked at the results of the British Championships in May 1988. There, 21% of the 2,540 runners were under 19, so it does look to be typical.

But, the change in age profile in adults is so big it’s visible from outer space. This isn’t an original observation - many clubs are aware of the lack of younger adults in the sport. And, as I write this, Andy Thornton (MDOC’s SPunch man) has been posting on this and related subjects on the Orienteering UK Facebook group; starting line ‘Orienteering in the UK – have we lost our way?’

Most of the top M/W21s run at a British Championships, so I think the number of M/W21s at the Northern Championships is more representative.

Non-elite M/W21 classes used to be very competitive, but at this year’s British Champs there were a total of 28 runners across the non-elite M/W21 classes - which really can’t be good.

In the 40s and 50s classes at this year’s British Champs there were more in the older age-groups – 99 across M/W55 against 42 across M/W40.



The oldest age class in 1988 was M/W65. Whereas, at the British Champs in 2024 there were 36 people 80 and over, including 2 over 90 (no, I don't know how they do it).

In many ways it's a fantastic thing that so many over 60s, even over 80s, can go to the British Championships in a sport, and I don't think any of us expect to get back to having over 2,500 at a British Championships or having two-thirds of runners under 40. But, to the general public, we must look very different now.

Stiles for Dales Weekend – Chris Burden

We were lucky for Kilnsey, in that only 4 stiles were required, and these could be and (almost) were dropped off adjacent to their setting up position, so no carrying was necessary. The "almost" refers to 1 one stile being dropped off 900m and 110m climb short of the intended gate. Heroically, once we had found it, this was carried up Mastiles Lane by M60 Steve Webb single handedly faster than I (M75) could catch up with him empty handed.

As a result, we were able to stand down all the other folks who volunteered to carry stiles, all of whom, with one noble exception, were aged 60 and over, despite the appeal being directed at our younger membership.

Although the extent of the Malham task is yet to be known, it will almost certainly involve more stiles that will need carrying further from their dropping off point. So the appeal goes out again to the under 60s to get involved in this task. Not that we are excluding the over 60s either.

The events are on 14th/15th September. As a result, we want to be fixing the stiles in place by Monday 9th September. I'm happy to do the fixing but require an assistant.

Can anyone willing to move the stiles into position, please let Chris Burden chris.burden@btinternet.com know their availability in the weeks preceding 9th September. It's always best to have teams of at least 2 working together, for safety reasons if nothing else.

I would hope that we can disassemble the stiles on the day of each event. I will not be around on either day of the event, so need other folks to take on this task, or, alternatively, to join me on Monday 16th to do this.

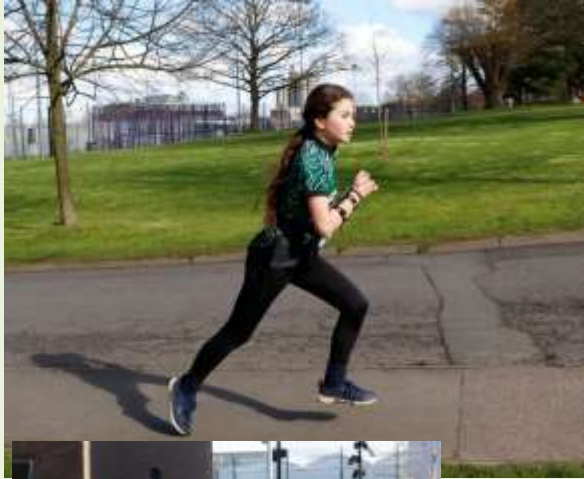
Here's looking forward to hearing from you so we can start the process of planning this task.



Airienteers in Action

All pictures by Wendy Carlyle

JK – Sprint, Middle and Relay









British Relay Championships





British Middle Distance Championships





Northern Championships





The Jack Bloor Fund – A Brief Update – Rob King

Airienteers has had a very, very long association with the Jack Bloor Races and Fund.

For those not in the know, the annual Jack Bloor Races are held on Ilkley Moor on the second Tuesday evening in May. They comprise a series of junior races followed by the classic senior race, an 8.4km navigational course taking in many of the iconic features of this famous moor. Some of the best fell runners in the country can be found at the sharp end of this FRA-affiliated race (Fell Runners Association). Just as importantly, the main body of runners include those of all ages with many locals 'giving it a go'. If you get your shoes on quick ... you might just make the 2024 race ... Tuesday 14th May.

Jack Bloor was an accomplished Yorkshire athlete who excelled at and helped develop many outdoor adventure sports. Tragically, Jack's life was cut short in 1984. Jack's greatest contribution was his encouragement of younger generations to engage in outdoor adventure sports and it was to this end that the Jack Bloor Memorial Fund was set up. Over the decades the Fund has awarded many grants to young Yorkshire people wishing to develop their technical &/or physical skills in any outdoor adventure sport. Awards have supported training camps, international competitions, technical courses and independent expeditions. Sports have ranged from mountaineering to kayaking and cycling to, of course, orienteering. The Fund itself is financed by donations along with monies raised through the annual races.



As former Airienteers, the Bloor family hailed from Cookridge in Leeds. Jack's offspring are still very much involved, with Robert now Chair and Hilary administering grant applications. Grandsons, Max and Alistair have joined as Trustees and another grandson, New Zealand-based William, has just redesigned the Jack Bloor website. We invite you to take a look and read more about Jack's life and the inspiring stories from those who have put his memory to apt use.

www.jackbloor.co.uk

Along with Jack's Gritstone Club, Airienteers has been instrumental in supporting Jack's legacy through the annual races and the Fund. This has included; designing the course, organising the race, serving as treasurer, being a trustee, marshalling, first-aiding, cake-baking ... through to running the race itself ... and winning it! On many occasions, too!! Jack Wood took the men's title for five consecutive years and the 2007 men's record of 38:04 is still held by our own Greg Hull. Many young Airienteers have benefitted too, from grants helping them to participate in the wonderful JROS (Junior Regional Orienteering Squads) summer training camps or to compete in international competitions at the highest level.



I have been the Organiser of the Jack Bloor Races since 2012 and would now like to pass on the role, possibly through a shared/transition for the 2025 races. The FRA requires a named individual as Race Organiser, however, many parts of the role could be shared amongst a small group. We will, of course, be looking at the fell-running community to step-up, however, in view of orienteering's significant association, the opportunity is open to all. Let's keep this show on the road.

Rob King & the Jack Bloor Memorial Fund Trustees



Are you under 26?

- Want to improve your skills in outdoor adventure sports?
- Training for a competition?
- Embarking on an expedition?
- Doing an outdoor skills course?
- Selected for an international event?

The Jack Bloor Fund may be able to help

The Jack Bloor Fund is available to individual applications from

- Young people under 26 years
- Who live or are based in Yorkshire
- And are members of a Yorkshire Sports Club, OR a National Sport Governing Body (NSGB), OR a Yorkshire Scout, Guide, Explorer Group

What can you apply for?

Grants to improve your physical and/or technical skills in any recognised outdoor adventure sport (ie has a NSGB)

What support can you receive and when should you apply?

Up to 50% of the total cost is available – with a maximum grant of £400

These are some of the outdoor adventure activities we have supported

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| • Fell running | • Orienteering | • Climbing |
| • Cycling | • Athletics | • Duathlon |
| • Mountaineering | • Sailing | • Life saving |
| • Outdoor First Aid (16hr) | • Biathlon | • Triathlon |
| • Independent Expeditions | • Canoeing / Kayaking | • Courses / Qualifications |

How to apply?

Please see the Fund page of www.jackbloor.co.uk to make an application online. Applications are welcome from individuals all year round

Money for the Jack Bloor Fund is raised through donations and the annual Jack Bloor Races

Held on Ilkley Moor each May, this classic fell race commemorates Jack's life