

# Aire Affairs

September 2017



airienteers

## 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 front cover photo shows Jack Cooper leaping the fence on his way towards the finish of Day 2 at the Scottish Six Days on Deeside.

## Edit O – Wendy Carlyle



It's been a manic few months in the Carlyle household which included Tony walking the Tour de Mont Blanc whilst Wendy walked the Yorkshire Wolds Way (!), followed closely by three weeks in Scotland with Tony running a Coaching Course and then the Lagganlia 14s Tour before we headed to the Scottish Six Days on Deeside, phew! More recently we enjoyed our Club's Dales Weekend which showed off our native Yorkshire limestone landscape at its best to orienteers from all over the country. Retirement is indeed busy but with lots of fun stuff!

Lots to read and enjoy in this issue of Aire Affairs with Airienteers reporting on their orienteering exploits (or otherwise!) and their adventures at home and abroad. Tony's Part 2 is a particularly important read for all members and if you have a junior in the household be sure to make note of Lindsey's article on the upcoming Junior Coaching sessions.

As usual, thank you to all contributors. Do please consider penning something, orienteering focused or otherwise, and sending in your photos for the next issue.

Contributions to [wendy.carlyle@btinternet.com](mailto:wendy.carlyle@btinternet.com)

### AA Archives

The September 1992 edition of Aire Affairs was rather thin in content with three of its twelve pages being taken up by the Club League (which Edith Whalley, W60 was leading with 4918 points.) I was in schoolteacher mode when I linguistically slapped the wrists of contributors who had promised and not delivered, oops!

Jeff Mason was approaching the end of his three year term in the Chair and reflected on events during his tenure: the emergence of CLARO and the news that Dave and Joan Chapman had agreed to co-ordinate JK95 being just two.

Pete Livesey was first Airienteer home at the Jack Bloor Race and appeared on a BBC2 programme, 'Tackle Orienteering This Way'.

The social event of the year was the annual prize-giving, Christmas get-together and ceilidh all rolled into one at St Chad's in Headingley at just £2.50 a ticket! There was a small contingent of Airienteers at Croeso92 with the Turpin family juniors picking up several prizes.

Helpers were still needed for the Dales Trophy event at Malham (sound familiar?!)

## Chair Affairs – Tony Thornley

### Part 1: A meander through an increasingly decrepit orienteer's summer.

Major successes (following my own glitches which I drew to your attention in the previous issue):

1. Seeing youngsters enjoying orienteering promoted by the club. Our last two schools' league events were quite well attended, and many children tried out the maze run by Guy Patterson at Malham show (see R).

David Alcock and Simon Martland's O for beginners in Parkinson's Park, Guiseley was also a success. We've decided that, alongside Simon's work in individual schools, we will try to run a maze and/or an easy course as part of local events and shows if we can. It provides a ready stream of participants. Please let me know of any possibilities.



2. A very good entry for the Dales weekend. Many of you have contributed to this event - thanks - so it's nice to see that runners are taking advantage of it. Dales areas involve a lot of work for planners, controllers, mapping, stylists (sic?), SI, organisers, as well as many volunteers on the day. We have a reputation for putting on good events which I hope we can extend through 2017/18 to 'our' BOC in

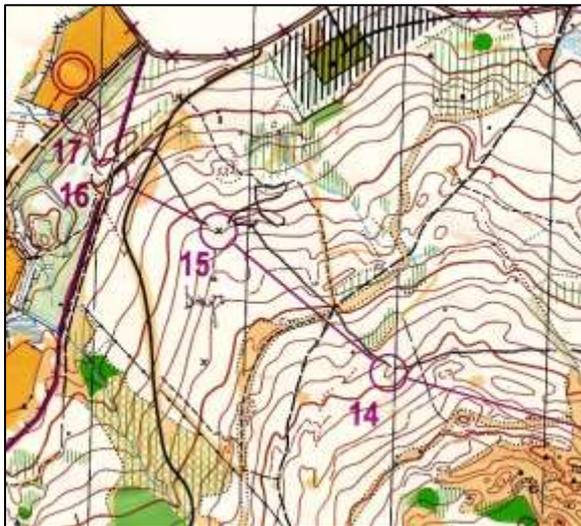
2019. It was a shame, though, to see the thoughtless damage caused by a runner (or several) crossing a wall illegally.

3. I am gradually improving as a mountain bike orienteer, although I've only done score events so far. The challenge in route planning is very different from foot-O. The variations in speed over different terrain are huge, and it's easy to over-estimate how long it will take to cover a few km. And only one bad fall so far.....



4. Good to see many AIRE members at

the Scottish 6 Days. The terrain was about as tough as it gets, but the maps were good and the competition interesting. I did rather better than I expected and only made one serious

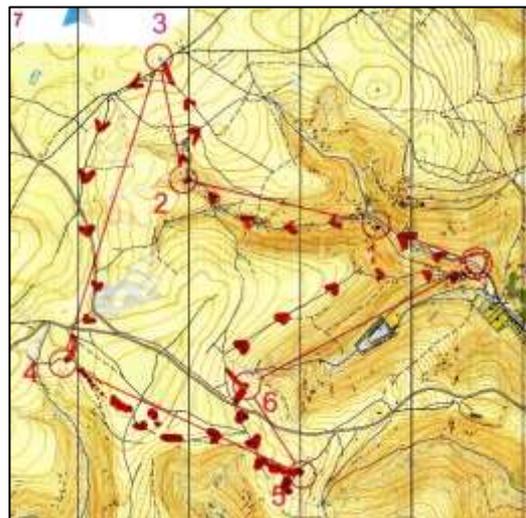


blunder (from an early start) - see L - a classic bingo control hidden behind some branches.

5. Running in a Long-O on the Long Mynd a couple of weeks ago. All uphill, uninspiring planning, but lovely views. And the longest, steepest finish run-in I've met in almost 50 years of orienteering. "1170m from last control to finish, no tapes".

See my (short, 6.2k +300m) course R.

6. We have, thanks to Leon Foster (below in Lister Park) and many of you, a very strong night league - every Weds evening - part 1 from October 18<sup>th</sup> and part 2 from January.



**Part 2: Looking forwards:  
Please read this!!**

If we are to build on our progress as a club this year we need more juniors, more

participation and more volunteers. We are working hard on the first two through Simon Martland and his school sessions.

I've just come back from a trip to Great Tower, checking out the parking for the first event which we've staged outside Yorkshire. The terrain is tough but superb and is the centre for our coaching weekend on November 4/5. This is a brilliant opportunity to train and compete in some of the best terrain in the UK. To my chagrin we had only filled half of the spaces at Great Tower a week ago and will have to offer it to other clubs. The training will benefit everyone, not just novices. Do come!! Contact David Alcock ([secretary@aire.org.uk](mailto:secretary@aire.org.uk)) for details. I will need helpers to run the Sunday event, so even if you only intend to go for the day please let me know. All helpers will get a run I promise!

You, the members, make the club. If everyone offers just a bit of help the workload of the stalwarts - of whom we are fortunate to have quite a few - is less. And they are then more willing to keep doing their bit. But, because of our commitment to running a lot of events, we have some gaps. If you think you could offer a bit of time to help with stiles or money, please send me a mail ([chair@aire.org.uk](mailto:chair@aire.org.uk)) or chat to me at an event. Alternatively, if you can think of someone who might like to help, please ask them to get in touch.

Stile helpers - Guy Patterson is retiring as stile fixer (but will continue to maintain the stock). We would like to develop a large team of stile fixers and carriers to share the load as far as possible. It is likely to involve only a couple of days every other year, and we intend to run a training session for stile fixing.

Club treasurer - Richard Foster intends to step down soon but is willing to help someone learn the ropes. It is not that hard, but is essential to the club's operation.



Finally, we are thinking of ordering some more club kit. If you would like a new top, please contact Jack Cooper ([jcoopes1984@gmail.com](mailto:jcoopes1984@gmail.com)).

I hope you enjoy your orienteering this autumn.

Let me know of anything you think we can do as a club to promote our sport.

And do come to the club AGM at Adel on October 14<sup>th</sup>. This includes an event and some food.

## World Schools Orienteering Championships 2017- Palermo, Sicily – Evie Conway

### Day 1

The journey was very long, as from our Heathrow to Rome flight to the Rome to Palermo flight we had about 2 hours waiting. We got to the hotel eventually though, and we were so amazed at how nice it was- we had sea and sunset views from our balconies. And it was so warm. England had a floor to ourselves in one block. All our balconies were separated by a tiny rail 20cm off the ground so they were basically connected to make one big balcony we could hang out on.

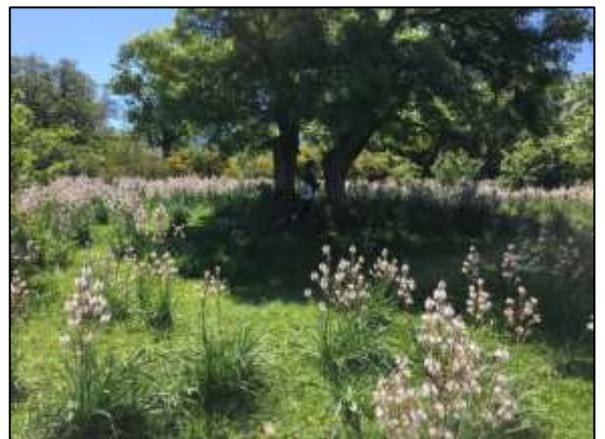
### Day 2

This was the day of the model event, which took two and a half hours to get to, which unfortunately meant we didn't have much free time this day. It was an area right next to the ones we would be using for the long and middle races, and it was so beautiful. But it was really rough in most places in the forest. We thought the race areas might be a bit nicer as me and Rosie ended up walking most of the model event. It was good to take a look at what the areas were like and get used to what the special symbols meant. After we got back we had a while in the sun with the other countries, so I played cards in a pretty big group of Scottish people, and some Italian and New Zealand girls came to join as well and we taught the Italians how to play cheat.

That night we had a parade through Palermo and had the opening ceremony, but I think everyone was a bit too hungry to fully enjoy it.

### Day 3

The long distance day. Once again we spent a lot of time on the coach getting there, but being in a fun team helped. I had a pretty bad run on the long. I spent 10 minutes stuck in gorse and thick bushes on the way to number 1, and it just carried on downhill from there. The forest was really hard to get through but I just didn't learn and ended up a little far right on the way to number 4 but there was nothing to give it away



so I went a long way downhill and struggled to get back up through the gorse next to a stream. Another fun day afterwards though, the radio sponsoring us played some music and we had a bit of a rave and it was so hot. Not hot enough to be grateful for the Latvian pouring water on everyone, though.

#### **Day 4**

In the morning we went on the hotel's slides. It was so nice but annoyingly the one into the sea was closed. We went in the pool after and had such a great morning. The friendship relay was today, around the streets of Palermo. We had a team of 3, with people from different countries. I was with a Belgian girl who luckily spoke fluent English, and an Italian guy who didn't and we found it hard trying to communicate the plan to him, but they gave us an hour to do so and we managed to make a plan we all understood. The relay was great fun, if not a little scary, as there were a lot of people starting at once and quite a few people fell over. Our team did quite well, and it was good to make friends.



#### **Day 5**

This was our rest day. In the morning we had a tour of Palermo and grabbed some ice cream as it was really hot. We went swimming again afterwards. In the evening we had the cultural evening where we walked round visiting each country's stalls and trying things from their country. We also watched a performance from each country. England's was Morris dancing.

#### **Day 6**

This was the day of the middle distance race. I was having a good race until I was distracted by my slightly lost Scottish friend at #6, so I assumed if she'd been looking for ages it wasn't there even though I was right next to it but couldn't see it in the green. I wasn't unhappy with my race though and we enjoyed the sun afterwards. I also swapped my kit with other countries, so I've now got a New Zealand top, a Spain top, a China top and a Poland jacket.

In the evening we travelled to the other hotel for prizegiving and a short-lived farewell party of 20 minutes. It was a shame it didn't start until very late because it's meant to be a highlight.

Thank you to AIRE, YHOA and the Jack Bloor Fund for helping to fund this amazing experience of an international race which made me appreciate the international value of sport.

## Williams Family go Holiday Orienteering near Perth, 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> August

I can already hear you saying well that's two mistakes in getting to the Scottish 6 Day. Turning up late and undershooting Deeside by 60 miles. Well the timing was right and we had actually overshot Deeside by 3,500 miles. We were in another Perth, no not the one down under but Perth Ontario taking part in the Canadian Championships, part of a week-long O fest celebrating both 150 years of Canada's nationhood and 50 years of their Orienteering Federation.

We had already booked a fly drive holiday to take in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and some of the great outdoors in between. I was researching what else we could fit into the holiday to go along with visiting Niagara Falls, trip to the Blue Jays baseball match, Canoeing in Algonquin National Park etc when I thought ... I wonder if there are any local O events on. We were going to be in Ottawa the second weekend. OMG the Canadian Champs is on in Perth one hour away!! Quick chat with Peter and Ross and the unanimous decision was we had to go.

The format was the same as JK here with Urban Sprint, Forest Middle, Long and Relay events. The final number of Entries was just over 400 so the event had the friendly feel of a regional event. The main difference being how far people had travelled to be there. All the Canadian States were represented and as it was just over the border many competitors from the US but again from all over, places such as California & New Mexico. Competitors were there from about 10 different countries including Sweden, Norway, Denmark, France, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Australia. Yorkshire was very well represented as the Chapmans from SYO and Drews from Ebor were also there.



The Sprint was held on Thursday evening in the Historic (that means the town was founded 200 years ago) downtown area of Perth. It was probably the prettiest small town we saw on our trip. The orienteering was typical Urban event with a mix of streets and parkland. The planner in his notes had made great play on everyone knowing the difference between uncrossable and crossable water features and sure enough leg 14 -15 on my course was a classic long way round by the bridges or wet feet wading the river route choice. Well, it wasn't map in the mouth to keep it dry deep - so time to get wet feet! The other innovative bit of planning was finishing in a building, known as the Crystal Palace. It is the town's civic

auditorium and as the name suggests a fully glazed building so the tapes took us for an indoor finish with the spectators still able to see you.

In terms of results Ross was disappointed as he unfortunately had a couple of poor legs and exacerbated a heel injury which would mean he couldn't do the forest events. Peter thoroughly enjoyed the event and was very vocal in his support for me on the run in. As for me the practice/ fine tuning at the Spring and Summer sprint leagues and Fat Rascal had paid



off as I won M55+ by seven secs. Unfortunately not being Canadian, and knowing that not even a trawl of Ancestry.com would change, that I wasn't eligible for the medals.

The Middle and Long events on Saturday and Sunday were to be held in Leeds?? That's 80 minutes away from Ottawa at Foley Mountain State Park Leeds County Ontario. The traditional yellow schoolbus that took us from the car park to the assembly arena confirmed it was the property of Leeds County. The terrain was not quite

like anything we have seen, being mainly open hardwood forest but with clearings where the glacially eroded rock allows no tree cover. Generally underfoot rocky ground, lots of rock features and contour detail, marshes and ponds and very few paths. If pressed I would say it reminded me most of orienteering in Scotland but more open with the woods not being conifers or a larger version of some of the Lake District areas with trees.

After the pride of the Sprint came the fall of the Middle Distance. The courses were planned in the rockiest and most detailed part of the area. Peter found it too much of a technical challenge and retired. While I made two whopper mistakes (as well as some smaller ones) and finished 17<sup>th</sup>. I hadn't been on anything so technically challenging since returning to orienteering. Never mind there was always tomorrow.

That's right because the following day was the Long which used the same finish arena and crossed some of the Middle distance terrain but also took us into some less rocky and less intricate terrain, but still difficult because no handrail features. It also took us to a strange area (controls 7-9 on my course) where it looked like a contour only map / as if someone had forgotten to do the field survey on the base map. It was accurately mapped but the rock detail had evaporated. The only black feature in the area was seen by one of the competitors (although thankfully not me) it was a large Black Bear.

The courses for both the Middle and the Long were really well planned. As I arrived at number 5 another competitor exclaimed loudly have you seen the next leg! It was a stunning 1.6km leg navigating between ponds and marshes before fine navigation through a very detailed area into the control. I remember thinking this is fantastic can I do this every weekend please!

I had a good run just one control on which I lost any real time which I knew from the previous day would mean a better result. I managed to get 3<sup>rd</sup> on M55+.

The organisers did an exemplary job the whole weekend. The terrain was fantastic and the welcome friendly. If you're planning a holiday in Canada any time soon I would definitely recommend looking to see if there are any events on nearby, as I did!

PS For the very adventurous next year's Canadian Championship is in a week long O fest combined with the biannual North American Championships. Pack your pan - it's in Yukon!!

[www.yukonorienteering.ca/naoc2018](http://www.yukonorienteering.ca/naoc2018);

## **Iceland OMM 2017**

### **Will Patterson (& Phil Hardman)**

Having done a few (30ish) UK OMMs over the past few years and with my usual partner doing an Open University degree in Geology then what better than a jolly in the land of the (nearly) midnight sun?

First problem came when he fell ill and decided his fitness wouldn't be up to it, so plan B came with my son being in Iceland for a University field trip. This was for a week but a seven day one, so he wouldn't finish until after the event.



Plan C - recruit someone new, younger and fitter so I could carry less gear. Climber, mountain biker and gullible but a bit apprehensive Phil met the bill and after pressing the 'confirm entry' button we were committed. A week to do some activities in Iceland with Phil, the event, Phil to fly home and then a second week to do more activities with my son Christophe. Great plan.

Having heard of the re-mortgaging-needing prices of the place we added extra hold luggage to take a bigger tent as well as our OMM one, helmets, ropes, crampons - and lots of food.

We flew from Manchester the Sunday before the start and had cloudless blue skies and stunning views of glaciers and volcanoes as we arrived (and passed over the event area too just before landing). Next problem came as we went through airport customs - "What have you got in your boxes?" "Food". "How much?" "About 20kg." "You're only allowed 3kg per person." He could have confiscated the lot and fined us but there was something about our approach and manner he must have liked and with a "We do have food shops in Iceland you

know.”, charged us 100kr (about 80p) per Kg and, after removing two tents, cooking stuff and various other items, underweighed the boxes too. Definitely still a big bargain when we stopped at the first supermarket outside the airport to buy some fresh food. A loaf of bread £3, 10 eggs £4, gas £18 and a small Pringles £2.50 (we didn't buy any of these).

We then lay in some hot streams, did some playing on glaciers, photographing waterfalls and hiking up to the eruption sites of the 2010 eruption (you remember - the easy to pronounce Eyjafjallajökull one) and where we bumped into a Canadian girl also over for the event.

The Event Centre was in a fancy hotel in Grindavik in the Reykjanes peninsular – the very SW corner – with the only vague surprise being no dibber being issued at registration. It would be old fashioned punching and not my 'get somewhere close, wave it about, hear the beep and run on' (and not cheap) one.

Our bus to the start left at 7.45 and I was going light as the forecast was OK, putting in my new 100g waterproof that is smaller than my fist when packed.

As team two we didn't expect any fresh OMM-made trails to follow but had to return to the start almost straight away. After a very quick planning session we had just set off along the track when we heard a huge shout from waiting competitors – the starters had forgotten to give the first few teams their punch cards.

Interesting terrain (see the photos), 290 points and 40km later we arrived at the overnight camp pleased with our performance and hoping to in be in the top 20 (out of about 40 entries in the Long Score). The low cloud meant that navigation skills were required and we hoped

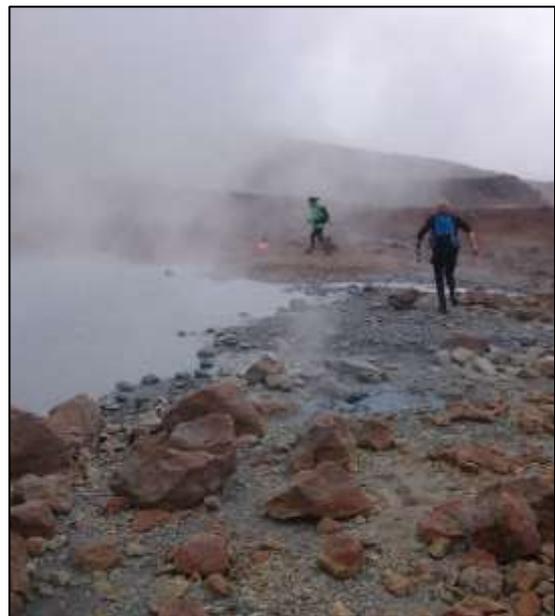


that the young-fit-as-a-butcher's-dog teams would be severely challenged. We were very delighted and surprised to find we were 5<sup>th</sup> when the day one results went up. The Canadian girl running with a national orienteering squad member (and apparently currently training in Norway) had only beaten us by 36 points after being 12 minutes late.



Day 2 the teams set off in reverse order – so a bit of a lie in was expected. Not so, our start time was 6.10.

There was only one map issued (at the start line on day one), some of the furthest east controls were not open on day 2 and you could not score any control twice so we already knew where we were going. Low cloud met us again and our first small error in navigation – going too far along the ridge heading from AO to AS. Heavy rain, a cold wind and some very uneven ground led to a second error when we went too far west going from BG to AB, so we picked up AC instead then resumed our planned route.



30km and 250 points found us as virtually the last finishers - lots had bailed out (13 teams had finished with more than an hour to spare) - so we arrived to find all the veggie food gone and most teams changed into warm dry clothes. Glancing at the displayed score board showed us as 30<sup>th</sup> – what had we done so wrong? I sat down a bit glumly in my very wet gear (the 100g waterproof was not really up to it) then realised our score had not been updated yet so only our day one total was showing. An update happened and we were suddenly 6<sup>th</sup>. (Woo hoo – Ed.)

Very pleased overall but still not sure how the one team (and also male vets) that overtook us and so took that prize, got the score they did. No combination that made sense to us (or the Canadian girl who was in the female winning pair and bumped into us again 150 miles away) seemed to be able to give that score. If you read this do let me know where you went!

So on to week two after one night in a real bed. Lava tube caving, more glacier walks, waterfalls, hiking, plane wreckage spotting, laying in hot streams and puffin hunting (we never saw one). Some storms (only two tents remained standing out of about 25 and yes, one was ours) and rain (with just one stunning blue sky day) later it was back to the UK and marking but beer at least half the price and cheese a quarter of the price. And a re-mortgage.

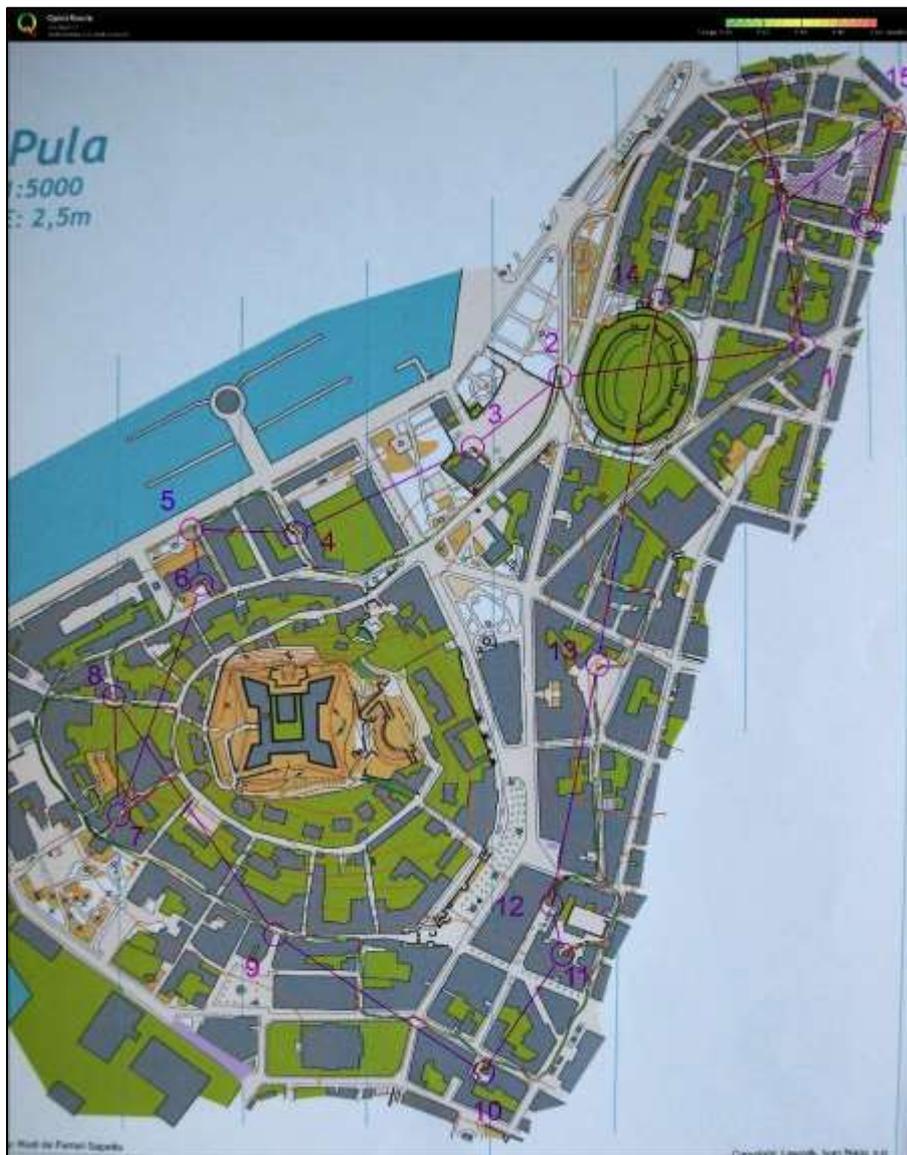
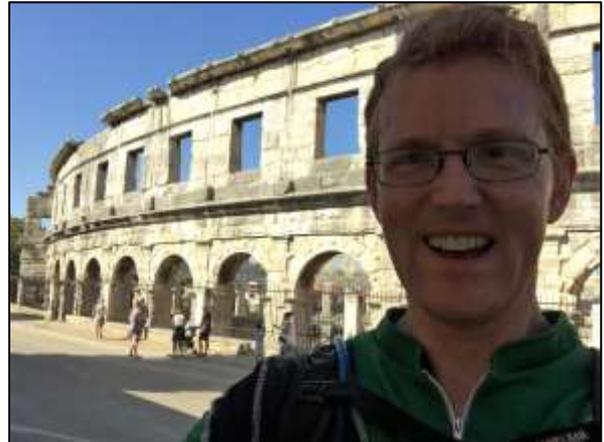


## Pula Sprint, Croatia - David Bowman

Sadly the complicated jigsaw of our summer holidays didn't leave any space for any formal O races. But I got my fix in an informal way on our family trip to Pula, Croatia in August. Before any trip abroad on business or pleasure, I always have a quick look on World of O Maps (<http://omaps.worldofo.com/>) to see if there's an urban or forest map I can print out and run on.

I found this nice sprint course round the old town of Pula and headed off one hot afternoon when the rest of the family were having their siesta.

Even without the control flags, it was a great way to discover new and interesting parts of the town.



Photos:

Pula sprint map

Selfie in front of the huge amphitheatre near no.14

## Caption Competition!



I took several photos of David powering in to the final control at Malham on our Dales Weekend. This one appears to be an optical illusion! Captions please to the Editor on [wendy.carlyle@btinternet.com](mailto:wendy.carlyle@btinternet.com)

## Calling all Juniors! Design Competition!

Would you like to see your creativity on the front page of Aire Affairs? If yes, send your Airienteer-related designs to the Editor at [wendy.carlyle@btinternet.com](mailto:wendy.carlyle@btinternet.com)

Your design needs to be A4 portrait sized, but the rest is up to your imagination!

## YHJS Sweden Tour Report – Matt Hall, M16



This summer was the return of the Yorkshire Junior Squad tour; a week of events, strength and technical training run by both Yorkshire Squad coaches (including AIRE's own Natasha and Neil Conway) and OK Ravinen members, including the infamous Nick Barrable, in the forests around Stockholm, Sweden, between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of August. Around 20 juniors attended the tour; from AIRE,

myself, Evie Conway, and Laura King (joining us on the Monday evening) were the only ones; other juniors attended from SYO, EPOC, HALO and EBOR. The week aimed to help get the juniors become accustomed to the much trickier, more technical Swedish terrain, and so help to improve orienteering skills both back home and in foreign settings - and, of course, to have fun.

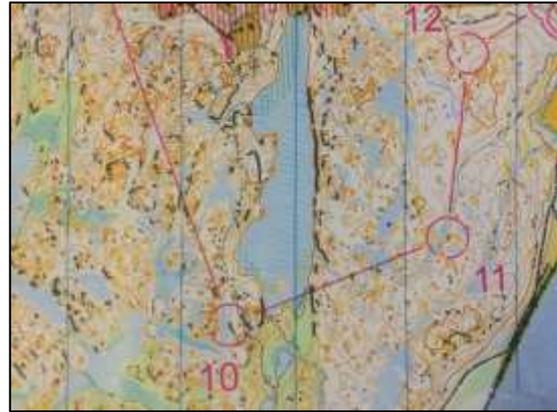
### Day 1

Flying from Manchester to Stockholm Arlanda at 9:20am meant an early start for me - a 4:30 wake up call to ensure that Natasha (both my means of travel and the Yorkshire Squad coordinator) was in Manchester for 6:30, ready to greet and tick everyone off the list. Our accommodation for the first two nights (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>) was the Tullinge SK club hut, south of Stockholm. Despite sleeping on the floor (which, as orienteers, we're used to), the hut was cosy and well equipped for the needs of any runner. Coaches and juniors both settled in quickly, setting up sleeping areas and outside playing the squad game within half an hour of arrival. We were later taken on a walk by Neil and Pete Tryner (SYO) to give us an idea of features and mapping and how it differs from what we're used to, followed by an evening meal and an early night.

### Day 2

Today's event was a long event in Hemfosa - my course was 5.5km, in 1:15000 scale, which I am not used to, and I was competing against 2 other Yorkshire M16s - George van Dam from HALO and Dom Dakin from SYO. On the bus by 7:30 (consistently on time, yet another contrast

compared to back home), then two trains later, and we arrived - to a torrential downpour. On running my course, despite coming 1<sup>st</sup> out of the Yorkshire juniors in a time of 114 minutes (ouch), it wasn't a very good result for any of us - the mapping would take a lot of getting used to (for example, marshes were patches of flat land as opposed to wet boggy stuff) and the overall harder terrain and more intricate technical orienteering gave us a hard time, and gave us an idea of what we would be in for in the rest of the week. The main mistake for me came in an area of intricate contours and craggy features (control 10) which, if not closely followed, becomes very difficult to relocate in. GPS routes were uploaded and analysed with the help of Neil and Pete upon arriving back - this post race analysis I found very helpful as the week went on and am now consistently using it in races back home.



### Day 3

We returned to Hemfosa for the Day 3 event; a middle distance event on the southerly part of the area. Only having 3.5km today was a blessing as my third early morning was already taking its toll on my body. The course proved to be just as technically difficult as the first, with me posting a time of 60 minutes, 45 seconds behind George; this time was mostly due to a catastrophic mistake which lost me over 15 minutes on my third control, in an area of lots of unmarked open and large crags and rock features, as well as accidentally jumping into a waist high stream (after not seeing the stream thicken on the map) between controls 8 and 9, and being mugged of my glasses by a tree at control 10 - not a great day overall. On comparing splits with my Yorkshire teammates it seemed that control 3 was just as much of a problem for them as for me. After the event we returned to the Tullinge hut and cleaned up, then travelled to our accommodation for the rest of the tour - the OK Ravinen hut in Nacka, south of Stockholm - where we joined up with Anika Schwarze from the JROS tour in Stockholm, and James Howlett and Helen Bowes (all EBOR) in the evening. Although our sleeping quarters were fairly basic (in the basement on a concrete floor), the hut itself was very well equipped, with a sauna, and very well located, right next to some great training areas and the bus stop. We quickly settled in and were ready for the next week of training.

### Day 4

Our first day of training began in the area around the Ravinen hut - which meant a nice 8am wakeup call. The area was different to Hemfosa, with the main features contours and marsh; still very technically difficult though. After a shaky start to the 3.5km course, I eventually settled in and posted an alright time - by this point I had begun to embrace and enjoy the Swedish terrain. To relax after training, we took a trip to the lake by the hut - which was perfect for swimming (lots of time was spent here) followed by a sauna, and then onto the

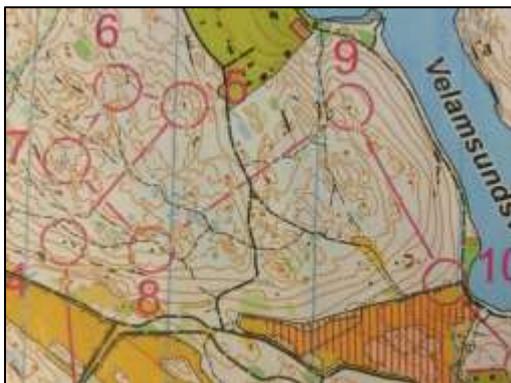
evening training - first a sprint relay in the forest (an older junior paired with a younger one - I was with M14 Euan Tryner from SYO), where for the winner of the first two legs had everything but the contours and rock removed from their maps for the third and fourth legs - Euan and I placed first on the final results. Next came the evening strength training with Ravinen - an intense 1 hour core body strength session led by a Ravinen coach - followed by a Q and A with top UK orienteer Cat Taylor (providing helpful advice about pre-race preparation) which concluded a fun, but exhausting day.

### Day 5

Today began with a Yorkshire squad training in Dammtorp, a few bus stops down the road from the hut. The course was designed to alternate long and short legs, practising both, and done in a staggered pair, meeting after each long-short section to compare routes and struggles. Paired with Dom and shadowed by Pete and Nick, I felt much more confident running this course - Pete's advice on taking the straight route where possible really helped me out and I took that advice into upcoming events. After a swim and sauna, we went into the evening training held at Telegrafberget by Ravinen - a turn up and run style event, where you can run as far as you want and are advised to redo any legs you made mistakes on. Taking the advice from Pete from the morning really helped me, and the number of mistakes I made was greatly reduced. Overall - a successful day of orienteering, as well as finding a very picturesque lake after the Ravinen training, upon which a photo opportunity could not be wasted!



### Day 6



Wednesday was a chance to show what we had learnt in two different events; first, a Luffarligan event, where it seemed every runner had a chair-rucksack, in Granby. Most of the squad ran the longest course, 4.9km in length, and, as an informal event (similar to a level D event), was taken to be a training experience rather than a full on race, and a chance to practise for the evenings regional event. Apart from a few small errors and quite dramatically overshooting my 7<sup>th</sup> control on the 1:7500 map, I had a decent race, and yet again Pete's going straight advice helped here. Another swim/ice cream/sauna later (and with the discovery of a Frozen themed hat), we travelled to Velamsund to run again - this time, the south Stockholm regional finals. All of the Yorkshire 16+ juniors ran the same course (equivalent to W16) separate from the other competitors. The hat was to be given to the

runner with the slowest run-in time to wear the next day, and so, fuelled by the idea of wearing it for a whole day, I finished with my first good result of the week, posting 26:59 for 3km - 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Yorkshire squad rankings (beaten by Alasdair Pedley, M18 and Dom) - with only one stand out error on control 5 (wrong crag).

### Day 7

Thursday brought with it a more pressing matter than orienteering - GCSE results day. I spent most of the morning worrying (turns out I had no need to, as I got the grades I wanted) (Well done Matt! –Ed.), and then got back to a training course with the Yorkshire squad near the Ravinen hut, doing a similar paired-up exercise as Tuesday, on (what I thought was) trickier terrain - although definitely good practice. This was followed by, of course, a celebratory swim, and then the Ravinen terrain intervals training - 3 minute intervals on terrain at race speed, 1 minute off, repeated 5 times for 16s, 6/7 times for 18s and 8 times for anyone older. The training not only highlighted how comparatively unfit I was, but also helped me to understand how the Swedes are all so good at terrain running!

### Day 8

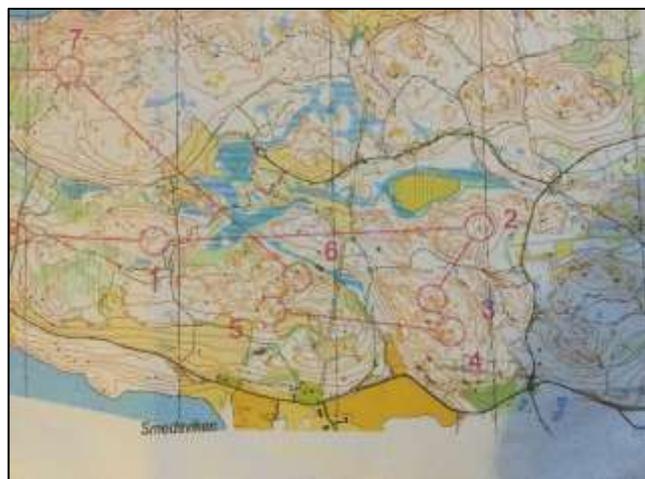
After 6 days of running, we deserved a rest - and Friday brought with it just that. A leisurely 9am wake up, with swimming in the morning, followed by an afternoon looking at the Vasa museum (the Vasa was a failed Swedish ship which sank on launch and was salvaged almost fully in 1961), followed by an evening at Grona Lund theme park. Although coming into it I would have said I wasn't a theme park person, I ended up trying most of the rides that stayed



a sensible distance from the ground (albeit with some persuasion), and had a great time. This was followed by a beautiful sunset boat trip through Stockholm; an amazing end to an amazing day.

### Day 9

Our second last day of running was a chance to prove we had benefitted from the week of training in one of two events in Vaxholm, north-east of Stockholm. My course was 3.8km, which I completed in a disappointing 48 minutes - beaten by both other Yorkshire 16s. Some of the long leg controls I had inaccurate compass



bearings and consistent timewasting in the control circle contributed to this - especially at control 5. I made sure that when we got back to the hut I properly did my post-race analysis to give me as much help as I could for tomorrow's event.

### Day 10

After a less than perfect run yesterday, I was determined to make up for it by having a good run in the last event we had - a 5.8km long course on the same area as the day before. The course was very similar in many ways to the long/short course we ran on Tuesday's training session, and this helped me to complete the course in 49 minutes - placing me 10<sup>th</sup> of 33 and earning myself a prize - a holdall which we discovered fully fitted Euan Tryner inside! Happy to have gotten a good result for the last race of the tour, we returned to the hut for, of course, one last swim, and packed up ready for the flight tomorrow.

Overall the tour was an incredible experience, one I could definitely do again, that seemed to improve my technical orienteering especially, as well as giving me more efficient training ideas and of course, having an amazing time with my Yorkshire squad mates. A huge thankyou from me to all of the coaches who organised us and kept everything running smoothly (extra special thanks to Natasha Conway for organising the tour and ensuring we kept our travel cards safe, and Jacky Dakin for her commendable cooking skills keeping us well-nourished throughout the week), and OK Ravinen for letting us use their hut and making us feel so welcome there throughout the week.



## Junior Coaching Sessions – Lindsey King

Airienteers are offering junior coaching sessions on **Saturday afternoons 2pm to 3.30pm** during the autumn for 5-11 year olds.

No of Children attending	Adult able to help?	Dates NB note dates are not consecutive weeks
0 1 2 3	Yes/no	Sat 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2017 Northcliffe Park Cliffe Wood Ave Shipley BD18 3DB
0 1 2 3	Yes/no	Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2017 Northcliffe Park Cliffe Wood Ave Shipley BD18 3DB
0 1 2 3	Yes/no	Sat 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2017 Northcliffe Park Cliffe Wood Ave Shipley BD18 3DB
0 1 2 3	Yes/no	Sat 11 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2017 Lister Park Emm Lane Bradford BD9 4JJ
0 1 2 3	Yes/no	Sat 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2017 Lister Park Emm Lane Bradford BD9 4JJ

**To book a place** please email: [lindseyking49@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lindseyking49@hotmail.co.uk) **as soon as possible** confirming no. of children coming, which dates you can attend & whether parent can help. (I suggest you edit, copy and paste the table above into your email)

### Details:-

- Each session will start for all at 2pm and finish by 3.30pm
- Bring cagoule, warm layer and footwear for running plus water, whistle and compass (if you have one)
- It will help if some parents are able to stay during the session for safety and monitoring kites & out of bounds.
- The coaching will be aimed at improving children's skills to enable them to do White/Yellow standard courses by themselves.
- Led by myself or another of our qualified level 2 orienteering coaches, following British orienteering policies including O-safe and SportsCoachUK code of practice.
- Currently free of charge
- You will need to complete a Safety/Medical form for your child(ren) –which will be sent to you on booking

### Lindsey King – Airienteers Coach

## London City Race 2017, Barbican

Just eight Airienteers travelled south for the London City Race in early September. Notable performers were Pauls Liepins, 1<sup>st</sup> place in Men's Open, Leon Foster, 4<sup>th</sup> place on the Men's Elite and Steve Webb, 6<sup>th</sup> place on the Super Vets Course. Congratulations to them. Leon and Steve have sent reports of their weekend.

## SLOW CITY OF LONDON RACE 2017 – Steve Webb



I've run the City of London race a few times now; there's always a good atmosphere with plenty of overseas competitors drawn to the capital and it's interesting to visit new areas or get a different perspective on familiar parts. Last year I finished 3<sup>rd</sup> at Rotherhithe, and a few years ago I was 2<sup>nd</sup> at Canary Wharf. None of my rivals who occupied higher spaces on the podium on those occasions were entered this year, so I naturally assumed I would win.....but sadly there are too many variables in orienteering for that logic to hold!

Things began to go awry at Leeds station. I was sat comfortably in the quiet coach on the 08.45 departure for Kings Cross when there was a bit of a commotion. A fellow traveller with a "bad attitude" had apparently upset a member of the train crew and, after a lot of arguing and the appearance of numerous Transport Police, the offender was duly chucked off the train. That all meant we set off half an hour late and ultimately I missed my allocated start time in London.

The event centre was the Barbican complex with its infamous multi-level navigational challenges. As I walked to the event from Moorgate station I noticed quite a few changes from when I ran previously at the Barbican. Redevelopment proceeds pretty well continuously in the City and in particular several of the high level walkways spanning streets between blocks had been removed or were closed temporarily. I also noticed that the Barbican seemed to have entered Britain in Bloom: there was an amazing profusion of flowers in window boxes along the full width of the 6 storey podium blocks of flats; really impressive.

For the race itself I was in the Super Vets category with nominal 6.1k distance. The start was just south of London Wall, and in fact right alongside a preserved section of the original London wall. The course took me initially east and then back south west, past the Bank of England and Royal Exchange. As I headed round one corner I heard a somewhat incongruous skirl of pipes and found myself hurtling past a wedding party just as they were piped out of their ceremony. Then it was through Paternoster Square, the London Exchange and the Old Bailey and onto Holborn Viaduct, where I lost a bit of time by unnecessarily giving up some height early in the leg and having to regain it on the steps up to the viaduct.

At work I have often had to attend case conferences at Landmark Chambers on the corner of Fleet Street and Fetter Lane, and from post event scrutiny of the map I seem to have dashed through some alleys right next to the chambers although I didn't realise it at the time. Then it was a case of scattering the crowds of tourists at St Pauls as I charged through the gardens before losing time as I dithered hopelessly at a complex road junction.

All this had been very high paced stuff but the sting in the tail of the course was our encounter with the Barbican. My first control here involved an escalator-assisted climb to a high level

walkway, the next took me back to ground level in a garden, then a high level route around the perimeter to a control tucked behind the Arts Centre. From the top level it was then back down to ground via a zig zag ramp and off to the Golden Lane estate.

On return to Barbican I was seeking a tree planter on the middle level. I found a really good route to this (actually remembering for once some information relayed in the start lane) but the ascent to the correct level was via a spiral staircase and I'm embarrassed to admit that as I was spat out at the top of the staircase I was basically dizzy and just could not work out what was happening. I lost about a minute to that bit of disorientation. From there you could see the finish across a lake, but to get there it was necessary to initially climb, then descend to lake level, head into the main building to find an ascending zig zag ramp, take a walkway across the lake, and then descend back down to lake level. Excellent fun! Race time was 41:59.

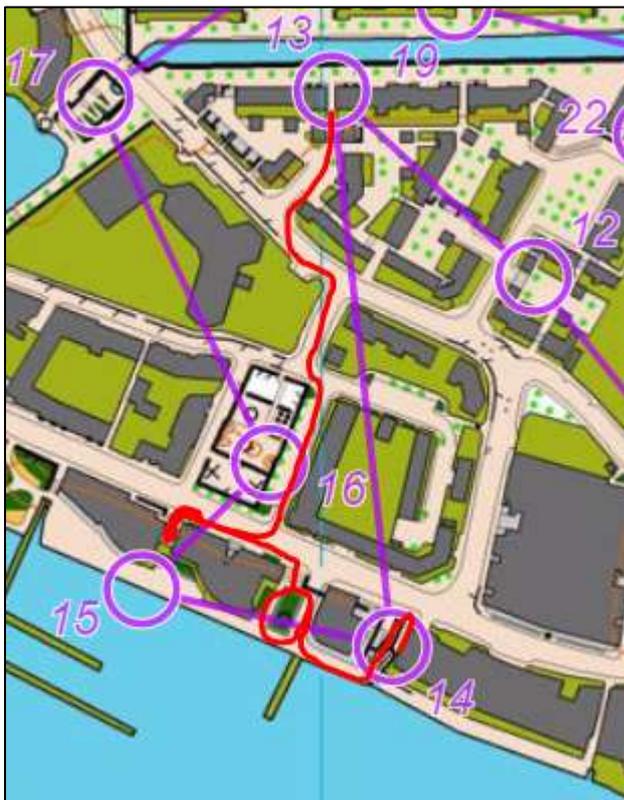
My effort was only good enough for 6<sup>th</sup> place this time out of 102. "Chapeau" to John Embrey who was three minutes faster than me for a well-deserved win (but I did get him back at the Dales weekend!). The AIREs were a bit thin on the ground but Dave Shelley and Gerry Symes were 15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> out of 91 on Ultra Vets, and urban expert Leon Foster was a fantastic 4<sup>th</sup> out of 52 on Men's Elite, with Ben Stevens 15<sup>th</sup> in the same Elite race. Also noticed Martyn Broadest 65<sup>th</sup> out of 119 on Veterans. We had an outright winner on Men's Open with Pauls Liepins heading a field of 99; great stuff and well done Pauls. I think Charlotte Willis was our only lady running on the day; 54<sup>th</sup> out of 67 on Women's Open.

My race was bookended by dodgy experiences with trains. I headed for Great Malvern on Saturday evening and first the tube went no further than Kings Cross due to engineering works, and then my service from Euston was cancelled due to train failure. If only everything in life was as reliable as the excellent organisation of SLOW and the enduring challenge of navigating around Barbican.

(Photo: Steve competing at BOC earlier this year – Ed.)

## London City Race Weekend – Leon Foster

The London City race weekend is always a highlight in the urban calendar, thanks to the opportunity to run round some of the UK's top landmarks, the challenge of the multi-level Barbican, and a well-attended and organised event. This year's edition was no exception.



### Friday– Wapping

The Friday evening event was held to the east of the centre alongside the Thames in Wapping. Start times are centred around dusk, which I think always adds to the atmosphere of the event, running down the Thames path towards Tower Bridge as the sun set was certainly something to remember.

Wapping was an ideal area for a warm up event, a mix of old warehouses, post war housing, and small parks, all interspersed with a small network of waterways with limited crossing points. The planning was good which meant it wasn't easy to plan too far ahead after the first few legs.

I say that because the second leg was long, so this allowed me to plan ahead and avoid the 'trap' of the control under bridge at #4, though I hadn't really worked out #5 was at a higher level and was helped by the presence of other runners. There were then some short sharp legs which I managed to keep on top of, and the first half of my race had gone well. Then came an entry for 'classic errors'...

Control #14 was placed in one of those locations you have to check carefully for, as there were three parallel and adjacent paths it could have been on. This must have distracted me en-route as I made a 180 degree error which effectively ruined my race. I had planned my route down to the road running parallel with the Thames as 3 left right turns to zig zag my way there from the previous control. Then I should have done a left turn but I had forgotten this approaching the T-junction, and a quick glance at my map put me one road further east than I was actually on. So then I turned right, when I should have gone left, and the subsequent first left turn was a dead end rather than into control as expected.



At this point I didn't realise why the control wasn't there, and backtracked to the road. Studied the map more carefully and noticed some steps to the side of the control. Thought I might have missed these at first so went back into the dead end to check. Obviously no luck, but back on the road realised what I had done and where the dead end was, so shot off east to make up lost time. However...I then took the next right and found myself next to the river with no control in sight, even circling a nearby bush to check there. In my rush to make amends I hadn't noticed there was a similar gap before the one where the control was sited. Eventually I found the control, having lost about 90 seconds in total on what should have been a 90 second-ish leg.



By this point I was in full headless chicken mode, and though control #15 was easy, I started off one way to #16, changed my mind and then ended up the wrong side of the fence it was on, before taking a longer route to the right side than was necessary. Then to #17 I set off on a route which would have taken me off the map. Realising this, luckily, I decided to stop, take a breath, and compose myself. This worked, as the rest of the race was uneventful, there were a couple of long legs across the water for which the correct route was clear really as the alternatives were obviously a bit longer.

It was properly dark by the time I finished, 26 minutes after starting, in 9<sup>th</sup> place. This was disappointing as I would have been 3<sup>rd</sup> without my error to #14. But I enjoyed the race immensely, and as only a warm up, I resolved to do better tomorrow.

### **Saturday – City of London and Barbican**

Two things give the London City Race a unique feel for me – the distance, you are usually running for close to an hour, compared to the usual 40-45 minutes, which on the flat terrain of London requires a lot of hard running, and the complex, multi-level structure of the Barbican, where the race visits on alternate years and provides a challenge unlike any other.

Some argue you can't map 3 levels fairly, and I have some sympathy with that view, especially having royally messed up on my two previous visits, despite revision beforehand. But from a challenge perspective it presents something more difficult than your usual urban.

The start this year was just over the road from the Barbican, and there was a real buzz as a large number of competitors awaited their starts. We had a nice long leg first, which was kind of the planner and by the time I had reached #1 I was sorted up until about #6. If you haven't

done the London City Race before, it is worth mentioning that the traffic level is far, far lower than potentially you would think. This surprised me on my first race, but makes sense when most of the financial services are closed. The only really busy bit was around St Pauls Cathedral.

Another issue is every year there seems to be more building work going on, and there was hardly a leg where you didn't have to pass a reduced width pavement or some coned off area! The event used touch free punching which most people are used to now, and was useful in places as you could run straight past the control, or, a bit more controversially, a couple you had to reach to physically punch, but saved a few seconds with contactless.

The challenge for the majority of the race was getting the correct route choice, and there were several legs where the obvious direction to the next control didn't take you on the best route. We had a brief flirtation with the Barbican on legs 8-10 but nothing too tricky, and uniquely my first chance to run down an escalator in an orienteering race!

Approaching the half hour mark things got a bit lonely as we reached the furthest section from the start that most other courses didn't reach, there was a long tricky leg to a control at the foot of Blackfriars Bridge, luckily I kept my eye on the ball and found the best way over the out of bounds road and down to the Thames for the second day running.

My legs were starting to tire now, having being drawn into a battle at Peckham Rye parkrun 2 hours earlier, but having had a fairly clean run so far I was keen to push on, knowing there was greater potential for mistakes ahead as surely a Barbican section was coming. However I also knew tiredness brings mistakes so I tried to hold the same pace as long as possible. My GPS suggests that I managed this, though it is notoriously unreliable in the city due to the number of tall buildings!

We were now approaching the Barbican, but before there was a tricky leg on a balcony at a higher level that there was only, despite appearances, one way into, which I managed to spot, but my legs really struggled with the steps up and turning 180 after the control. It was then over the road into the Barbican itself, but I managed to miss the bridge over and ended up running back past the start towards the next bridge which took you to just past the control. Again there was the chance to use an escalator, this time upwards, but I stuck to conventional steps, they spiralled round several times which left me a bit dazed for a moment!

I stopped then to check the route to the next control in the bowels of the Barbican and this paid off as I had no issues finding it. The second control was actually straightforward and I spotted a route to the third and went for it, there possibly could have been a slightly quicker route but it wasn't worth hanging around to find out. I thought I had planned well onto the next control but was frustrated that what looked like a double ramp up was actually two double ramps on top of each other to reach the upper level where the control was. This led

me to feel, post race, that a different route to the west might be quicker. But I have been told that this too was a double ramp rather than single as mapped.



There were now only 4 controls to go and my legs found another gear, the next one seemed simple enough but I imagine if you tried to drop down too early you would be in trouble, the trouble I had was a group of children in front of the control so I couldn't get close enough to punch.

Next came what on paper was a very tricky leg that you could spend ages pondering over, but previous experience came in handy here, the semi-circular corridor I took was where I spent a long time lost on my last visit and I zipped round to the control. I was slightly hesitant to the penultimate one as the map required some close reading to find the control was up to an

overbridge, but unlike Friday night I kept calm and found my way there safely, then it was a sprint to the simple final control and the finish.

I finished 4<sup>th</sup> which was my highest finishing position in this event, though to be fair there didn't seem to be as strong a foreign contingent as in previous years. Another fine edition of the race.

### **Sunday – Victoria Park microsprint.**

Onto Sunday and the very west end of Victoria Park in East London hosted the ultrasprint, which is held as the Sunday event in alternate years. This was a novel event that was a lot of fun, and I think is something AIRE should consider putting on at some point alongside one of the urban events. You had to forget some things you usually do in orienteering, such as

control codes and descriptions, they didn't exist! Some controllers might have had palpitations at having a control on two different sides of the same tree...

There were two sets of 3 courses, men had to complete courses A,B, and C, women X,Y and Z. There was a 2 hour window to do this, which was plenty of time for everyone, and you queued in a start funnel as directed by a marshall. The map was 1:1250 which took some getting used to, and each course was about 12 or 1300m long. The area was a sort of inverse D shape, with every tree mapped, and most of the controls were sited by those trees. To the north and east there were some shrubs and bushes, and the paths tended to border the area with a further strip of mapped land beyond.



Just in from the start and finish which were on the top left of the map, was a maze built around a large oak tree. Each course varied as to when you tackled the maze. There was an inset on the top right of the map enlarging the maze, I had read this in the final details, but on my final course when the maze was most complex, I stupidly forget this and ended up punching one control twice!

Instead of being DQ'd for a mis-punch, a 30 second penalty was applied to your finishing time. I was hesitant on my first course and still picked up two penalties, leaving me well down the field. The scale certainly took some getting used to, and with no control codes or descriptions there was a certain degree of instinct kicking in, especially when a series of three trees in a

row had 4 controls on! In the end I learnt to count the trees when they were all in a row to ensure I got the right one.

I was amazed to see the leaders were covering each course in under 5 minutes, and any hope of being top 4 in my category and reaching the standalone final were well gone even after my first course. I did improve each time, and had worked my way up to 11<sup>th</sup> for the final course I completed. There was certainly a skill to running hard and staying on top of the navigation, which even though technically simple, with controls coming so fast and so many changes of direction, proved not easy at all. An Ultrasprint indeed!

There was a rest period before the top 4 in each age class and gender took part in their own mass start final, so I went for a jog round the park, which I was surprised to discover was far, far bigger than the area we were using. The park was a hive of activity, with a street market nearby that a lot of competitors used afterwards, a dog fair, which was useful in keeping most dogs out of the race area, roller skaters, and a rowing lake.

People then re-assembled to watch the finals, first up were the four leading men. This was a great spectacle to watch, there were 2 gaffles in operation and then the butterfly loops were done opposite ways round, and two visits into the maze. The first two or three minutes were very close racing, and there were gasps from the crowd when there was a mini sprint to get a control first (all controls were punching today) or any hesitancy was met with ooohs.

As the runners ventured further away over to the other side of the area, it became clear the final races were a bit longer than the heats. The four got a bit more spread out and there was a clear winner but a race on for second which was exciting, and there is a good video of this linked from [cityrace.org](http://cityrace.org)

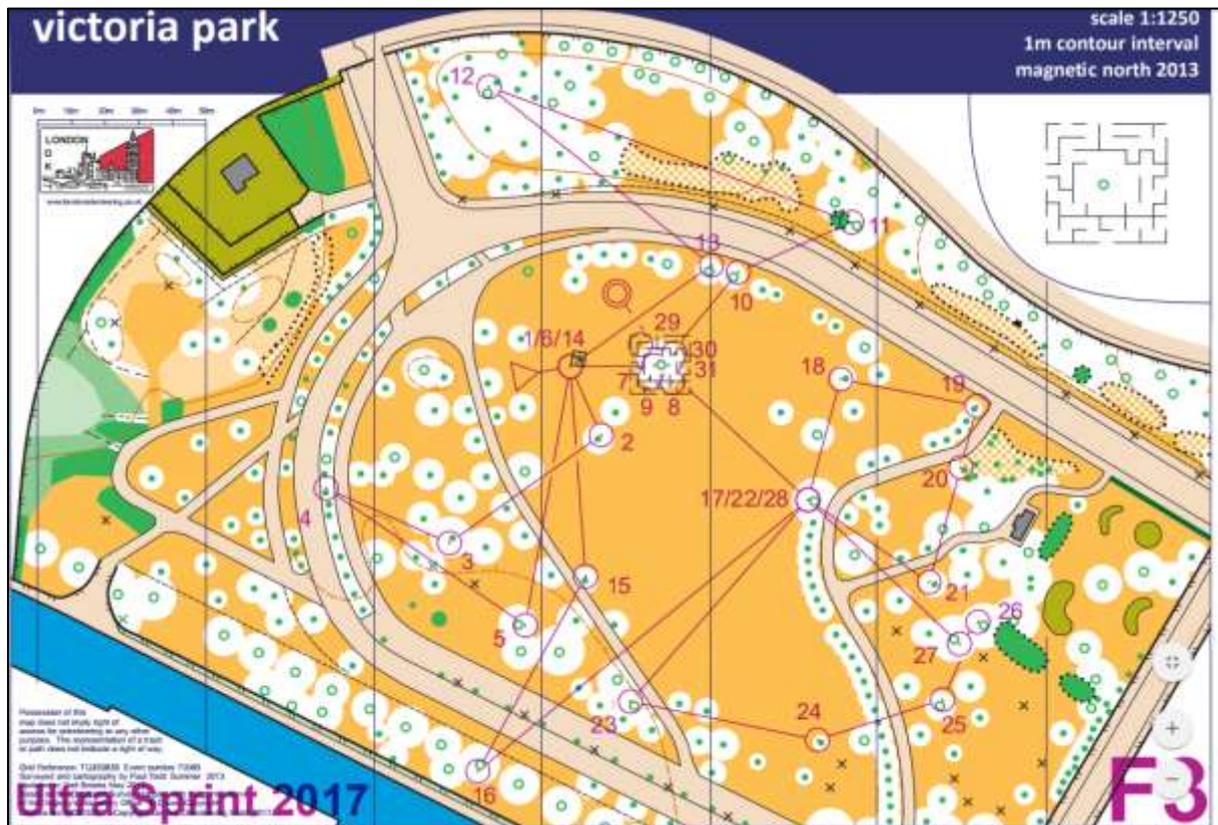
The women and then the Veterans category finals followed and were equally exciting, then it was the turn of the juniors to race off. The organisers were keen for all the juniors to be off the area before the masses started, unfortunately the last two boys really struggled to get round, despite a lot of encouragement from everyone queued up raring to go. Eventually common sense prevailed and we were allowed to start.

There were 4 courses available for the final run – this was purely random depending on which lane you queued up in, which was a bit disappointing as it would have been nice to compete against the same people I had this morning. That said, as noted above, all the courses were almost identical overall anyway.

By now I was used to the format and really enjoyed the final run, felt like I was flowing through the map well and at a good speed, despite the chaos of people everywhere thanks to the 15 second start interval and similar courses. I was baffled to receive 1 x 30s penalty when I downloaded! I strolled off to check where I had gone wrong, (#3 below) and even at walking pace, and with map in hand, it took me a good two minutes to work out the tree I had punched at, and the one I should have punched at! This was my best result, placing second on the

course, in a time that would have been first on all the other courses, even with the 30 second penalty!

All in all, another very enjoyable and well organised event, and if you are in the area I can wholly recommend the Orbit Slide as a way of keeping the adrenalin going that bit longer!



(Title Photo: Leon competing in the Kendal Urban Race, back in 2014 – Ed.)

## **Junior Inter-Regional Championships, Surrey Hills, September**

Four of our junior Airienteers: Evie, Laura, Lucy and Matt joined the Yorkshire and Humberside Junior Squad to travel to the Southern Navigators area of Surrey Hills for JIRCs 2017.

All four did themselves and the Squad proud in the Individual race with Evie placed 2<sup>nd</sup> on W16, Laura and Lucy 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> in W18 and Matt placed 10<sup>th</sup> in M16. In the Relay Event, the team with Evie and Lucy finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place whilst Matt's team was placed 20<sup>th</sup>.

Consistent results by the Squad as a whole meant that they finished in a creditable 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall, just 10 points behind the North West Squad.





**Dales Weekend  
Action!**

## Interviewing Neil Conway, M45

Neil has consistently appeared in the top ten of M45 results this year, finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Midland Champs, 8<sup>th</sup> in the JK Middle Event, 5<sup>th</sup> at the British Long Race and 3<sup>rd</sup> on Day 2 at the Scottish Six Days.

Neil, you are currently in 14<sup>th</sup> position on the BOF rankings for M45, what does it take to reach/maintain that position?

I lost a lot of fitness when I was ill during 2006 to 2014 and I have been working hard since then to regain it. It is taking a long time but I am gradually getting better – not much faster but I can keep going for longer now. I run 3 or 4 times during the week, usually 1 speed session and some steady runs. At weekends it depends – I might be training with the Yorkshire Junior Squad, competing in orienteering events or just running in the hills or around Leeds. I tend to focus on a few big events through the year. With my fitness issues I find it very difficult to compete week after week, and prefer one-off races to multi-day events.



How did you get in to orienteering?

My father started orienteering around 1970. After a while my mother started taking me and my brothers around the wayfarers course. When I was about 8 I started doing courses on my own. I can't remember a time when I didn't do orienteering.

How are your training sessions planned and what do you include?

It is difficult to stick to a rigid training plan, it very much depends on how I feel and on other factors like whether or not I get stuck in a traffic jam on the way home from work. I have a rough idea what sessions I want to include but don't know when I will get to include them. I have started doing a regular "speed and strength" session with a local athletics club, which I started doing because Evie wanted to do it. I have found it surprisingly enjoyable so far, and it might even be doing me some good.

How else do you like to spend your spare time?

Lots of my spare time is taken up with planning training for the Yorkshire Junior Squad. I also like to forget about running and get out for some long walks sometimes – something I started doing when I was ill but I now find it is a good way to experience new places where orienteering doesn't take me. This year I have done a loop of the Black Mountains in Wales and a walk into central London from Chertsey. Last year I walked the length of the Isle of Man and the year before that I did the Welsh 3000s.

Which has been your most satisfying/enjoyable orienteering event to date and why?

I have been to many hundreds of events, home and abroad, big and small. I'll try and remember some highlights.

JK84 day 1 – beautiful area below Snowdon, fantastic weather and I won my course (M15) by 4 minutes with a near-perfect run. I nearly threw the lead away the next day but not quite.

BOC 2002 – another beautiful day on a beautiful area in Northern Ireland. The last time I managed to get near the top end in an elite championship when perhaps I wasn't really expecting to, 6<sup>th</sup> place with a really good run.

O-ringen 2014 – I was still recovering from my last heart operation and struggled round the short course, but we just had a fantastic week. Beautiful weather, swimming every day in lakes or in the Baltic, lovely campsite (apart from the ants) and good company.

Have you ever achieved what might be termed a 'perfect run' and, if yes, could you tell us about it?

I can't claim to have ever had a perfect run. Every course has a few places where I could have taken a better line or where I haven't been exactly sure where the control is going to be.

Who is your class leader and what would you have to do to beat him?!

James Logue. In order to beat him regularly I would have to be as fit as I was in 2006 before my illness troubles started, which I can't see happening. Failing that, he would have to make a huge mistake like he did in BOC last year, or else lose his SI card like he did in the British Middle Champs.

Thank you Neil – Ed. Photo shows Neil approaching the spectator control on Day 4 at this year's JK.

## Five Go Mountain Biking

As part of their preparation for ride-on parts in the new series of Last of the Summer Wine, AIRE's famous five have been on a biking training in Wales.

Here you can see the intrepid team at Conwy Castle. Sadly they had had to leave the dog Timmy and the mechanic Ali at home. The latter had serious consequences.

From L to R: Chris 'Deliveroo' Burden, Peter 'ticker' Jones, Tony 'we're lost again' Thornley, Graham 'splits' Stuart and David 'limbo' Shelley.

### Day 1 - Conwy to Capel Curig

An easy warm-up until Limbo had to show the others how to get under the entire Welsh population's sewage outflow. And then we had to push our bikes all the way round Llyn Cowlyd.





### Day 2 - Capel Curig to Dolgellau

A rare sunny day. We could even see Snowdon. But someone had been out watering our route. Splits shows how to do it.



### Day 3 - Dolgellau to Machynlleth round Cader Idris

Big hills and rough tracks but all still intact.

Limbo faltering on the hills - why could this be?

Accommodation is miles from anywhere to eat. It's the absent mechanic's economy drive which led us here.

But Deliveroo kindly gets our takeaway+wine+ice cream via an extra 5km cycle. Where does he get the energy?



### Day 4 - Machynlleth to Devil's Bridge

Rain. More rain.

Limbo discovers that he's last uphill because his back brake is permanently on. Stand-in mechanic is quick to sort the problem. His reading of Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance was not wasted.

Route round Plynlimon is very rough in places. Enables Splits to demonstrate his flexibility and Limbo his ability to go

faster without his bike than with it.

Accommodation near Devil's Bridge in Fawlty Towers style hotel leaves something to be desired.



Deliveroo's penchant for booking double beds for all does not meet with universal approval.



### Day 5 - Devil's Bridge to Builth Wells

A long, long way.

Some interesting over or under route choice.

Limbo definitely quicker as a result of body pump sessions at the gym. Unfair!

'We're lost again' makes a 1km error

(only!) which leads to his dismissal and formal handing over of the maps of office to the stand-in mechanic.



Some lonely cycling around the Elan Valley permits a shot of Ticker at the head of the team. You can see him if you look hard but he goes near the speed of light, ticker or no ticker.

Party splits at BW as several cannot cope with the intense psychological stresses of the trip.

Remainder daren't return home.





### Day 6 Builth Wells to Abercrave via Brecon

Another very long day, and only the mechanic and the navigator left standing.

Sun returns and Brecon Beacons look superb.

Long bridleway starts well, but gets steeper and wetter as we proceed. No obstacle for the stand-in mechanic cum stand-in navigator. Note the thumb on the map/keep it orientated skills.

### Last day Abercrave to Worm's Head, The Gower

Rain and mist. Must be Wales. Retired navigator blends in with the background.

And journey's end.



You can just make out the Worm's Head.

Total distance about 425km

Total climb about 8000m.

Total Calories about 200 cream doughnuts.

Epic.





Airienteers competing at the Scottish Six Days on Deeside in summer

