

Editorial

Welcome to the June edition of The Platform. In this edition you will find articles on our first ever street O event, the FCC final, what our juniors have been up to and Jamie's global O trip. Hope you enjoy the read.

It is always good to see some depth amongst our Juniors. Kate's report on our juniors is very encouraging.

A small band of SWOC members travelled to Scotland in late April for the British Championships. Whilst the weather was wet in South Wales, the sun shone in in Scotland. On the individual day, the SWOC highlights included Rhodri leading the M20 Elite until the last few controls in the dark green stuff (he eventually finished 3rd) and Jill Manning finishing second on the W55L.

We only had one team in the relays, a 'men's' short team, whilst the low visibility bits caught out Rhodri, again, and myself, Jill, an honorary man for the day, had another great run and showed us real men how it should have been done. Our only medallist in the relays was Lauren, running for a team of first year girls from Sheffield University, she pulled her team from 6th to 3rd on the final leg of the women's short. To say the girls were excited, is a slight understatement.

We have had a number of new members join this year. Hopefully this trend will continue. We have included a few brief words, introducing the Harrigan family on the next page.

During the next couple of months, the summer festival events will be upon us, including Croeso and the completion of our summer evening series. We will undoubtedly be looking for volunteers for our day at Croeso. You have been warned.

Feel free to send me any articles or photos of events for future editions. More likely, I will need to volunteer you all to contribute occasionally. Thanks to you all who have helped with this edition.

Nigel Ferrand nigel.ferrand@virgin.net



Lauren looking pleased with her medal at the British relays

News

Coaching

A number of SWOC members have expressed interest in coaching. If anyone else would like to attend a coaching course can you let me know.

If any member would like to receive some coaching let me know and I will try and organise.

Schools co-ordinator

Ian Kennett has volunteered to act as our schools co-ordinator. With orienteering now on the curriculum this is an important role within the club. I am sure that he will need the support of members over the coming months.

Schools mapping Pete Colbert has been co-ordinating the mapping of a number of schools in south Wales. If anyone would like to get some experience of mapping it's a good place to start. Shout if you are interested in helping Pete.

Cardiff Blackweir time trials

If you want to test your fitness on a Saturday morning why not do one of the 5km time trials. They are free to enter and start at 9.00 am (bit early) from the Taff Trail near Tesco. You must register in advance. Full details on this link http://www.parkrun.com/cbtt_home.aspx

Winter Street League

Following the success of our first Street O event in Penarth, the Committee thought it would be a good idea to try and organise a winter street league.

We therefore need a few volunteers to organise. The beauty of these events is that they are very simple to organise and there are no controls to be put out and collected. Details of how Frank organised his event is set out on the next page. The event can either be held on an evening or a weekend. It is up to the organiser. Any volunteers, please let me know.

CROESO

As most of you will be aware Croeso is taking place for 6 days this summer in South Wales between the 3rd and 9th of August. SWOC is responsible for the last day on a new area, Clydach Terrace. Kevin Bush is planning and Nigel is day organiser. If any one has not volunteered to help yet, you may be politely volunteered to help for a few hours on the day. If you do help you will get free run on the day, or a refund if you have already entered.

Video treat

This video is worth watching if you want to learn about the basics. Think it was put together by a young junior.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZOI9kKuA4I>

SWOC KIT

Peter Ribbons is thinking of placing another order for SWOC tops. Anyone who would be interested in a new SWOC top let Peter know. ribbo2@btopenworld.com

❖ More News

FCC finals

Two of our elder juniors made it through to the FCC finals in Yorkshire in early May.

In the M20 elite, Rhodri made up for a disappointing first day with a storming run in the classic to win the day and finish in second place in the overall series. On the strength of this and other great performances this year Rhodri has been selected to run in the Junior World Orienteering Championships 'JWOC' in Sweden from 30 June to 6 July. You can follow his progress on this website. <http://www.gmok.nu/jwoc2008/index.php>.

Lauren, running W20 elite was more than happy with her two strong runs to finish as the 8th W20 on the weekend and 9th in the overall series. She has written about her middle distance run elsewhere in this edition.

Next year the finals will form part of the Triple O Severn weekend in the Forest of Dean.

Summer evening Events

Due to the Forestry Commission felling large areas of forest at Draethen, we have had to change the location of our summer evening event on the 3 July. The event will now be a street race starting at Roath Park. Details on our web site.

BOK Trot rumour

There was a rumour circulating in the car park at the BOK Trot event on 11 May that Judith Powell had seen a family of wild boar happily feeding on vegetation (not orienteers) near to the finish. Think this is a first.

Welcome to our newest members, the Harrigan Family – words by Iestyn

Hello to everyone and welcome to the Harrigan family. I am Iestyn (36) my wife Joanne (33) and three sons Ben (9), Keelan (7) and Morgan (20 months) from Abertridwr in Caerphilly. A few weeks ago I was surfing the internet for information on navigation courses when I came across orienteering. Knowing very little about the sport I decided to read on. Many hours later I found myself eyeing up the Welsh Orienteering Association (W.O.A) and the South Wales Orienteering Club (S.W.O.C) websites. I was immediately hooked; orienteering appeared to have everything that I was interested in. It's about navigation, climbing, mountaineering, outdoor fun, meeting people and it's something the children could get involved in. Our first attempt at a short course was at Gilwern Common on 18th May organised by Stuart and Sarah from P.O.W. It went really well and we managed to finish the course without too much trouble, although it was a bit of a trek from Caerphilly to Gilwern Hill Common (approx 140 mile round trip) but we thoroughly enjoyed it and look forward to our next course hopefully closer to home. Any tips or pointers would be warmly welcomed especially with map reading.

Penarth Street Event

comments by the organiser and planner, Frank Ince (and shortened a bit to fit on the page by the editor)

Nigel asked me for an article on the event, so here it is.

I first wanted to put on a street event in Penarth as part of the summer evening series last year but decided against it, as I would have to draw a map, ask for permissions to use any non street areas and I was concerned about the risks involved with people running through traffic with their heads stuck in a map.

I decided to go ahead this year regardless. For those of you who didn't attend, I used a portion of the 1:25,000 OS map enlarged to a scale of 1:10,000 and added the controls with Paint Shop Pro. From the feedback I have had, this map seemed to be adequate apart from some difficulty reading the alleyways and footpaths. The controls were mainly yellow hydrant plates and competitors had to carry a pen and write down the numbers from the plate. A few paper "H plates" tied to posts etc were also used. – for example on the pier. (I did plan to have one under the pier until I realised the day before that the tide would not be far enough out to allow me to put it out in time – good job I left printing the maps until the last minute!) I did use one "treasure hunt" type clue, however, as I wanted a control along the foreshore between the pier and Cardiff Bay Barrage.

The main effort involved, apart from the map, was in finding the hydrant plates. I found them by a mixture of running, cycling and driving around Penarth. The planning was much like any score event – how to spread the controls to be fair for all age classes? In addition to this, I tried to add some other challenges – the climb involved at Penarth Head (contours are on the map, but very indistinct), the dead-end streets, the control on the ex-railway track which you couldn't see from the road (in hindsight, it should have been further from the bridge). With regard to the reservations I had last year, I didn't bother with permissions for the gardens and pier and I didn't use O flags and punches in these areas (which I planned to do last year).

The feedback has been extremely positive. There was a gaggle of competitors near the finish animatedly discussing route choice, dead ends or something - which I took to be a good thing. Comments I have received range from ***"difficult to see some of the alleyways"***, ***"kept going down dead ends"***, ***"it was impossible to know where there were gates in fences unless a path led directly to them"***, ***"main problem was getting out of the Kymin".....to "even the passage-ways were easy to spot"*** and ***"route choice was brilliant - all those dead end streets with no short cuts through and the need to concentrate especially for bits like the cycle track control!"*** (Thanks, Caroline!)

Yes, the map was definitely lacking in some areas and I apologise if you were affected by this. It definitely needed correcting to show that you **can** get out of the Kymin! But no-one actually complained as I think everyone entered into the spirit of it being a bit of fun. Comments such as ***"its 30 years since we moved to Cardiff, but I visited lots of Penarth which I'd never seen before"*** and ***"great fun, thoroughly enjoyed it....visited area I wouldn't normally run in.... although I knew area vaguely- found some new features such as cycle track"*** made it worthwhile as that was what I was trying to achieve. But, most importantly, everyone I've spoken to thought it was fun.

I was pleased to use Penarth as it has a variety of "terrain", but I know that many South Wales urban areas would offer equally interesting and different possibilities.

General comments I have received are –

"Definitely very enjoyable. Well worth repeating, possibly as a night event".

"Great fun, thoroughly enjoyed it - think we should have more of them!"

"Very good event recommend repeating".

"Great fun and a different type of race - we need to experiment with a few slightly different map formats and see what works best."

"Have to select future areas very carefully to ensure that there is no danger due to fast moving traffic."

So there we are – if you live in, or know of, an interesting urban area why not put on your very own event?

FCC Final Middle Race

thoughts by Lauren Ferrand

As usual on the morning of a race, I was running late, frantically searching my room for compass and, then, room key. 10 minutes after my targeted leaving time, I eventually got in my car and headed off to pick up the other two members of my girly car trip. After picking up Rach and Lucy (fellow ShUOC girls) and filling up with petrol (and realising just how expensive petrol is these days) we finally headed out of Sheffield towards the village of Gilling on the edge of the North Yorks moors. 2 hours later, after a trip of gossiping and singing along to the radio, we reached our destination.

My first task was pick up my hired dibber, as I'd managed to lose mine on day 2 of the JK (never a clever idea), whilst the other girls went to buy brownies to fuel up with energy. After a quick change and a couple of attempts at leaving (forgot lace tape and then compass), we set off to the start. When we arrived it seemed half of our course were already doing their, very intensive, pre-race preparations. I always find you seem to need an extra 10 minutes just to put on your bib number.

After what seemed like an age, my start time came, and I was off. For once the first control went fairly well with no big mistakes or even little fuffs. Coming out of number one was a bit tough under foot, although this was probably due to bad route choice but generally, apart from a little mess up in the control circle, again a fairly good leg. I was feeling confident for the rest of the course, until, that is, I realised the next few controls were in parts of the forest filled with pits, knolls and streams; my worst nightmare. I was determined to try and keep focused and block out any distractions. Was this where it was all about to go wrong? Apparently not; before I knew it I'd found all the controls in this area, with no major mistakes, and was out of the technical area, heading up a path towards the next part of the course.

Controls 9-11, although surrounded by thick bushes, were much more my forté, with paths and fences I could use for obvious attack points. Soon I was back on a main path heading towards the last section of the course and although I was starting to tire, I was still feeling fairly good. Unfortunately, soon after this I made my first, and luckily on this course, my last major mistake. It turns out that 13 really is my unlucky number. As usual when I get towards the end of the course I was starting to feel tired and so was losing concentration, coming out of number 12 I headed slightly off my bearing, and managed to get distracted by someone on my course heading out of number 13.

I stupidly followed, thinking they were heading into it, but, luckily only a few moments later, I realised my error and headed back the opposite way to finally find my control. *(Ed- cost Lauren about 1 minute looking at splits)* After my error I realised I would have to try and run fast with as few mistakes as possible, to catch up any time I had lost, and so I put my blunder behind me and willed myself to concentrate for the rest of the course. Thankfully, this seemed to work, and besides a slightly off bearing on number 16, the rest of the course went pretty well. For the first time I came into the finish straight to the sound of my name on the loud speakers apparently in first place! Although I knew it wouldn't be the case for long, it still put me in a good mood. Due to the way the final is organised (finalists with the least points in the qualifying rounds go off first, and those with the most points go off last) the faster runners were soon coming in, and although I was a tad upset to see them beat my time, I was only 6 minutes behind the winner which for me is quite a feat, and so I was extremely pleased with my run. I ended up the 8th W20 on the day .

As we had plenty of time to spare after our runs, we stayed around to watch the faster runners finishing, and saw some rather exciting sprint finishes. We were amazed by, and slightly jealous of, some of the boys who managed to hurdle the final stile with seeming ease, whereas we had attempted to scramble over in a most unflattering manner. Of course, it was not long before we had to go and buy the obligatory after-race Willf's brownie, and after a couple of hours of sun, we decided to head off to our night's accommodation. All in all it had been a good day and a confidence booster that showed me what can be done if you keep concentrating!

Editor's note- the Future Champion Cup ('FCC') finals are used as the selection races for the Junior World Orienteering Championships. Only the top 15 juniors in M/W 18 and 20s qualify for the finals. Two SWOC juniors qualified this year, Rhodri and Lauren. Lauren's route can be seen on the next page or on <http://www.ebor.routegadget.co.uk/cgi-bin/reitti.cgi?act=map&id=13&kieli=>

SWOC Juniors — report by Kate Balmond, Welsh Junior Squad manager

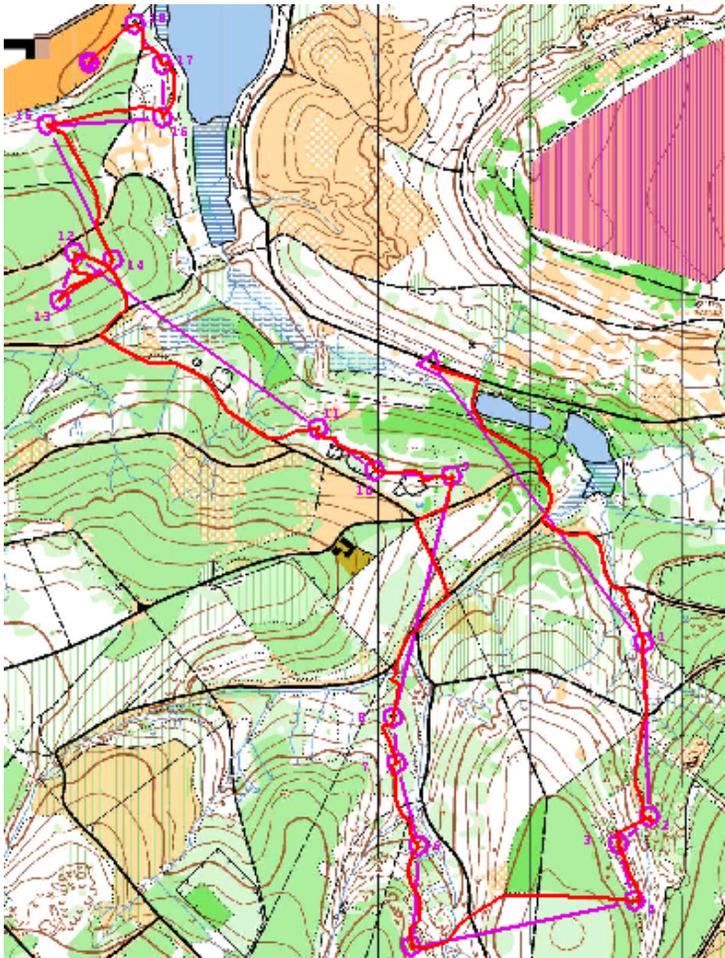
Hi everybody,

I thought that you may like to hear how our SWOC Juniors are developing within orienteering.

W18 Holly Bryant and W16 Lizzie Clemence have always reliably supported the squad and have also helped to make the younger ones feel at home. W14 Morven Graham and Emily Lewis are both relatively new to the Junior Squad, Morven ran for Wales last year and attended the post JK tour this year. We now look forward to them both taking a more active role in Junior Inter Regional Competition in June.

Rhona Graham W12, also attended her first JK tour this year. W14 Bethan Stone came along to her first Squad training last month and may well be selected to run at JIRCS. W12 Ellie Clemence is yet to make her debut- hopefully it will be in the autumn trainings as she shows excellent potential and would be a useful member of the squad. W12 Emily Griffiths again is a new comer to our trainings- attending her first one last month with Bethan. Again showing promise. M12 Stuart Lewis and W10 Jenny Lewis have attended a few trainings and are coming along very nicely and we look forward to seeing them in action as soon as possible.

As a Team Manager, those of you who know me will agree, that I always get excited when I see new families appear on the SWOC membership list. So to my delight we have Benjamin M10 and Keelan M8 Harrigan who will start to join us in training very shortly along with Isaac M10, Cornell M8 and Addie W6 Parr. Quinlan M8 and Jasmine W6 Silk, have both been seen with dad Nick at events but are yet to join us for a training.



Lauren's FCC Middle Final route.

As you can see, we have for the first time, a good depth of juniors within the club; this helps to support both the Welsh Junior Squad and the interclub competition- The Compass Sport Cup. The squad trains once a month at various locations from September to June. We usually go away for a weekend and often link in to an event. We stay in village Halls and provide food, practical and theory training for all levels.

Parents are encouraged to join us if they wish and are essential to support our fund raising efforts. It is sometimes difficult for our juniors to attend full weekends due to other commitments, like orchestra, however we still would welcome partial attendance wherever possible. We try and share transport and costs are kept to a minimum. Our Coaches are Mark Saunders and Alice Bedwell. Apologies if I have missed anybody out.

For more information please ring me or drop me a line on Tel 01495 791454 or rhodri@buffett.freeserve.co.uk Looking forward to seeing you all soon.

Orienteering around the world by Jamie Sutherland

We had long been planning to visit all our friends in various places on a round the world ticket and we realised our dream just before Easter this year. Well we had to get it in now, particularly as we are expecting our first child in August. The plan was to try and orienteer on three continents in three successive weekends.

So the first continent was of course Europe, in which I competed in the Welsh Champs at Cefn Bryn on the Gower. A great day on a really nice area (which was my first time running on Cefn Bryn) which was blessed by the splendid March weather. I'm sure you've all read the reports elsewhere, so I won't bore you here.

So a few days later we were off on our travels - our route being San Francisco, Adelaide, Perth and Singapore in two weeks - yes I know my carbon footprint is equivalent to a small coal-fired power station, but that's the problem when your friends decide to live on the other side of the world.

My first overseas event was a Bay Area Orienteering Club event in San Francisco on March 9th in the very nicely named Emerald Hills (sounding like something from Wizard of Oz). This was a Score Event with Western Massachusetts rules (presumably because it came from New England) - which I found incredibly good fun and really got me thinking about good route choice. So what are Massachusetts rules I hear you ask? Basically you are given your map at the start with 26 controls marked on and you can either attempt 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25 controls and thus decide after looking at the map how many controls you want to tackle. You didn't need to decide which category you are in until you finish but there were no bonuses for visiting more controls than you need i.e. 19 controls still puts you in the 15 control category. The results for each category are based on time.

After looking at all the contours I briefly thought about doing five controls but eventually went for the 25! It was also an exceptionally warm 24°C (it should have been 14°C in early March) which made those hills even more severe. The "controls" were in the form of utility (telegraph to you and me) poles, sign post numbers, "what's in this person's yard?" etc, etc. and each was a multiple choice response. I was having a good run despite the hills and the heat until I got to Control 10 - which was supposed to be a telegraph pole on a bend but I found out later had been marked on the wrong bend by the planner - oops! I wasted about five minutes looking for it and finally gave up. This of course threw my route planning way off course as I had to now visit another control to make up for it. All in all, I was out for 2 hours and 3 minutes and estimated I must have run about 18-20k and goodness knows how many metres of ascent (too many contours to count). I did have one embarrassing moment just after control 5. I completely forgot I was wearing standard running shoes with next to no grip and launched myself down a hill through a dusty piece of oak forest and ended up flat on my back - the joys of orienteering!

My third continent was Australia and when we arrived in Adelaide on the 11th March (incidentally we lost the 10th March to the International Date Line, which I was most annoyed about) it was in the middle of the longest heat wave ever experienced by an Australian city - and this was autumn?? According to ABC, this was an unprecedented one in 3000 year event! Just my luck.

This meant that the Badge Event I had planned to do in the Narrinyeri Hills to the south west of the city was well and truly cancelled, firstly because it would have been ridiculous running in 42 degree heat and second because the State Fire Department had declared the fire risk to be extreme and so all "bush" was off-limits. Thankfully, OASA was able to put on a low key CAT1 event on 15th March in Elder Park in Adelaide city.

Unfortunately for the organisers, the forecast 38 degrees meant that this very public area ended up being very quiet, with only 18 entries and probably all were hardened club members. The organisers even arranged an 8am start for those keen (or mad) enough to want to come out and have a run. This event was in the form of a Sprint "O" 4.7 km around the Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide Oval cricket ground (which is a bit like the area around Sophia Gardens) and the University. Due to the heat, the event was sadly declared non-competitive, so no times were recorded.

So I achieved my goal of orienteering around the globe. If you're ever travelling anywhere on holiday, it's always worth doing a Google search on the local "O" club and trying an event overseas even if it is a local low key event. It always amazes me how similar orienteers are wherever you go in the World.



Selection of events, both local and far

Date	Club	Event	Location	Comment
12-Jun	SWOC	Local summer evening	Cosmeton	Always a good blow out.
15-Jun	BOK	Local and school's league	Purdown	easy access just by the M32
19-Jun	SWOC	Local summer evening	Wenallt	
20-Jun	SBOC	Local	Llanelli	Day 1 of summer on the 'Gower'
21-Jun	SBOC	Welsh League	Pembrey, Llanelli	Day 2 of summer on the 'Gower'
22-Jun	SBOC	2x2 relays	Pembrey, Llanelli	Day 3 of summer on the 'Gower'
26-Jun	SWOC	Local summer evening	Caldicot	On the site of the historic castle
02-Jul	SBOC	Local summer evening	Margam	Part of Swansea's summer series
03-Jul	SWOC	Local summer evening	Cardiff- Roath Park Note change of venue	Good pubs nearby
03-Aug	WOA	Croeso	South Wales	The week long orienteering festival on some of our best areas.
23-Aug	EBOR	White Rose weekend	North Yorkshire	One option for this holiday weekend
23-Aug	Nopesport	Purple Thistle	Oban, Scotland	A long way but should be quality oreienteering
07-Sep	Aire	Peter Palmer relays	Leeds	Can we get a Junior team together this year.
20-Sep		Junior Home Int'l's	Mersyside	Big weekend for the juniors
20-Sep	Sarum	Cadihoe weekend	Nomansland	The traditional chasing start on Sunday.
21-Sep	HOC	District Event	Croft Castle, Ludlow	
29-Sep	SWOC	Welsh League	Storey Arm's, Merthyr	A new area for a Welsh League fixture
04-Oct	NIOA	Veteran Home Int'l's	Northern Ireland	
19-Oct	OD	Compass Sport Final	Sutton Park	We need a strong turnout for this event
26-Oct	SOA	Senior Home Int'l's	Scotland	
23-Nov	HOC	Regional event	Postensplain	

Links to all clubs can found here - <http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/findaclub.php>