



***Berkshire
Orienteers
Newsletter***

July 2019



Lisa Methven



Li Jiao



Ian Hudson



Eric Harper

Summer Park Event
Lower Earley (West)
29 June 2019
It was a **very** hot morning for our first summer urban and park event of 2019. Courses planned by **John and Adam Methven**.

Editorial



The May issue of this Newsletter led to some exchanges in e-mails and some urgent consultations about how to respond. Luckily the matter was resolved and it is not necessary to go into details here.

Readers will though notice that at the bottom of this page is a new statement regarding the responsibility for the content of the Newsletter. In preparing this publication, I often work to tight deadlines so as to try and get copies printed and available for a forthcoming BKO event (so as to reduce postage costs). There is no time to circulate a draft issue to other Committee members. In fact, there are many occasions when I will spot things in a printed issue which I should have corrected when doing a rushed final proof read!

The content of the issue is therefore my responsibility and should not be seen as representing any specific club policy. I am also very grateful to those members who willingly provided articles and news which helps fill the newsletter with interesting items relating to our common interest. As with all club members undertaking roles in the sport, as volunteers we give our time to benefit the sport and to allow orienteers to enjoy the sport and to develop their skills. It can be easy to criticise the efforts when things go wrong but what is needed is recognition that without the volunteers there would be no newsletter, no clubs, no events and no orienteering. .

David Jukes

Chairman's Chat with Stafan Stasiuk

We are now half way through 2019 and BKO members as a team have been very busy with organising, planning, helping as well as enjoying a very good result in the Compass Sport Cup. The focus of orienteering in the summer has switched to urban or multiday events on fantastic terrain. I must recommend taking part in multiday events, even if only for 2-3 days. I always find them very enjoyable, frustrating and addictive with a variety of results from a good clean run on some days to a series of silly mistakes on others. For a first timer on very different terrain from the South of England, it is best to start the week slowly, concentrating on map reading, navigating using the contours, pacing and compass work. If you are attending the Scottish Six days I hope we can manage to organise a BKO get together at a local hostelry on an appropriate evening, something that we have done at recent multi-day events.

David thought that it would be beneficial to write a piece for "know your orienteer" as the new Chairman. I started Orienteering at Brasted Chart in Kent in November 1976, almost 43 years ago at a Saxons come and try it event. I joined Saxons and became hooked on Orienteering within 6 months.

At the Spring Bank Holiday of 1977, I set off with friends for my first 3 day event in Snowdonia only for the car to break down at the start of the M1. We abandoned the car only to arrive at Euston Station after the last train had departed. We decided to wait at the station for the first train; however we had to share it with thousands of Scotland supporters who were using the station as a dormitory prior to the England game at Wembley. We spent an amusing time in their company before jumping on the 3 am Milk train to Crewe which enabled us to arrive in Betws-y-Coed before lunch and the start line on time at around 1.30pm. I thoroughly enjoyed the 2 individual days and relay before returning tired and happy to Sevenoaks not realising the significance of the weekend.

8 months later, I was working in Glasgow, where I meet my wife Linda. I enjoyed orienteering and training on the best terrain in the UK as a member of Clydeside Orienteers. I organised and planned many events including individual days of the 6 day, as planner at Linn of Tummel in

Cover Picture: It was a warm spring day for our Rushall Woods regional league event in May. **Eoin Sharkey** is seen here considering his route on the Blue course.

The contents of the Newsletter are the responsibility of the Editor and should not be regarded as a statement of club policy. Any comments on the content (or to contact the Editor on any matter), please in the first instance e-mail the Editor on newsletter@bko.org.uk

1985 some of you may remember the event from the ladders to the start. I served for 6 years on the Clydeside committee, mostly as Chairman and that has given me an appreciation of the efforts that everyone from BKO has put in for this year's JK. I had many good runs in Scotland and the North of England and was rewarded with selection to the Scottish Team as an M35 for all the internationals from 1986 through to 1989.

In 1990, I left Scotland with Linda and our 3 sons. We all joined BKO and enjoyed orienteering as a family, with trips to the French 5 days a particular highlight when the event was held on the coastal dunes of SW France. Over the years I have enjoyed orienteering as a member of BKO and have managed to compete in a multiday event most years.

Life is a balance and I have not been as involved in the club as much as I was with Clydeside or been able to train in order to compete at the highest level. Now I have scaled down work to 3 days a week I felt that I could offer some more time to BKO. As chairman, I need to understand what you want to see from Berkshire Orienteers. I would like to see the club become stronger with many more people taking up, enjoying the sport and contributing to it. Please do not hesitate to have a chat when you see me at an event or email me on stefanstasiuk@hotmail.com



Club Notes

Keeping you informed about the club and its members

Level A Events

5th May : British Championships (BOC) - Kilnsey North & Arncliffe, South Yorkshire

As the title indicates, this annual event is to determine the British Champions over a traditional long course. Unfortunately attendance this year was limited to just a single BKO member. So, for the record, **Richard Rae** successfully completed the M70 course.

28th May : Midlands Championships - Brown Clee

This year's Midland Championships was incorporated into the Springtime in Shropshire (SINS) weekend. The Championship itself was on the Sunday and made use of Brown Clee Hill, previously used for the British Championships in 2016. There was a better turn out of BKO members on this occasion with 14 being listed in the results.

Our two top performers both achieved third places in their class - **Adam Methven** was 3rd in the M14A class and **Martin Wilson** was 3rd in M70L. Also of note was **Lisa Methven's** run on W50L where she came back in 10th position. On the short class courses, we had one winner and two second places - **James Wilkinson** was 1st in M21S, **Derick Mercer** was 2nd in M55S and **Liz Stradling** was 2nd in W60S.



Richard Rae at the BOC
(Photo: Steve Rush)

Urban Leagues

As we are now well into the summer season, urban events are appearing more frequently and so it is time to report on the BKO performances in both the national UK Urban League (UKUL) and the Southern England Orienteering Urban League (SEOUL).

UK Urban League (UKUL)

For the NUL, there have now been 10 of the 20 listed events for the year. With events spread around the country, it is not surprising that BKO attendance in this League is limited. In fact only one member, **Martin Wilson**, has attended more than one event so far. Martin competed in Shrewsbury, Coventry and Bristol. He is still competing in the M65+ class and the competition had become tougher as younger people move up. Martin is currently lying in 21st position. However with only a person's best 7 events to count, there is still plenty of time for significant changes.

Southern England Orienteering Urban League (SEOUL)

With the rather more local events, the SEOUL sees more BKO results. Current top performer is **Denise Harper** who leads the UVW (65+) class. Denise has attended 5 of the 8 events held so far and she has achieved two second places - at Royston and Canford Heath. Also doing very well is **Nigel Hault** in UVM (65+) who is currently in 2nd position. Nigel has also had 5 events and came 1st at Ringwood and 2nd at Kingston. Of particular note is **Trish Monks'** performance at Frimley where the local girl recorded a win with a lead of nearly 6 minutes. A great result for her at her first SEOUL event! *[See next page for some SEOUL photos]*

The SCOA League 2018-2019

Our event at Rushall Woods in May was the final event in the 2018-19 regional league - the SCOL. This season, the SCOL consisted of just 6 events staged by the clubs in the region. We staged two events (Black Park in October as well as the one in Rushall Woods) with SARUM, SN, TVOC and BADO each staging a single event. Scoring in the League is based on a competitor's time after the winner - the winner gets 100 points and then subsequent runners a reduced number. For this season, the best 3 scores counted to give the final result.

Our best results are shown in the table on the right. Our congratulations to **Robin** and **Tom Inness** and to **Adam Methven** on winning their respective courses.

Course	Name	Class	Position	Score	Events
Yellow	Robin Inness	M12	1	300	4
	Sophia Oqvist	W12	2	100	1
	Elliot Perrin	M10	4	93	1
Orange	Ben Perrin	M16	2=	100	1
Light Green	Tom Inness	M16	1	298	5
Short Green	Denise Harper	W65	3	275	4
	Eric Harper	M65	5	252	3
Green	Adam Methven	M14	1	300	5
	Annicka	W45	3	277	4
	Alan Jones	M50	4	276	5
Brown	Mark Saunders	M40	6	255	3

In addition to the individual league competition, there is also an inter-club competition based on the total scores obtained by club members at an event divided by the number attending (giving a mean score). However, to prevent a club with only a few good members dominating the competition, the individual scores are boosted slightly based on a factor derived from the number of club members attending the event (see the SCOA website for full details). Final results of this competition gave first place to the British Army OC with BKO in 4th place (see table on right).

Club	Score
BAOC	91.98
TVOC	86.81
SN	85.2
BKO	84.83
SOC	84.03
BADO	83.97



Terry Hosking
at Frimley

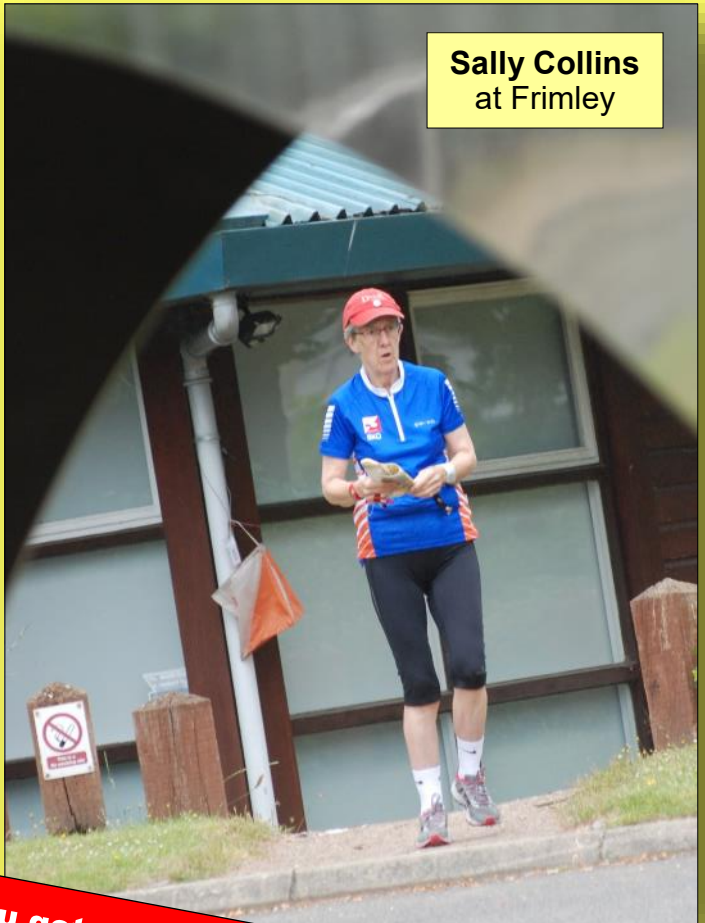


Lynne Moore
at Ringwood

BKO Members at Urban Events
Ringwood: 22 June / Frimley: 7 July
(All photos by Steve Rush)



Trish Monks
at Frimley



Sally Collins
at Frimley

All wearing the new BKO club kit! Have you got yours yet?

Relays - Martin Wilson (Club Captain) reports

Continuing our "Year of the Relay", a number of BKO members ran at the SWOA regional relays held near Wantage on Sunday 7th July. This was an unusual format, using 3 separate courses of 1.5k. Each team of 3 people, each person with an age group handicap, had to complete each course twice, thus each team member ran twice. Teams of two could compete with just 2 runners, with increased handicaps, each running three legs. BKO teams were:

- BKOntented: Pete Inness (M50)/Antje Inness (W50)/ Tom Inness (M16) (+ Robin Inness)
- BKOmposed: John Methven (M45)/ Lisa Methven (W50)/Terry Hosking (M50)
- BKool: Adam Methven (M14)/ Amelia Wing (W14)
- BKOMPact: Alistair Wynne (M14)/ Maddie Woodcock (W14)/ Natalie Wing (W14)

All teams got round correctly, on courses which were quite complex, and harder than expected, so the Compacts did very well just to finish.

But the Cools of Adam & Amelia stormed round to gain 3rd place overall, a fantastic result. Our picture shows them on the 'podium' after the event.

Well done to everyone, all enjoyed a great day out together, it was excellent practice for future relays.



Emit vs SI - Electronic Data Systems

It was in 2003 that clubs in the South Central OA region agreed to adopt the Emit system for use at events. With all the clubs in the region using the same system, competitors would be used to the technology and, also an important issue, clubs in the region would be able to share equipment for large events. Unfortunately most other regions and clubs opted instead for the alternative SI system. Each system has specific advantages and disadvantages so there have been constant arguments ever since with some people being strongly in favour of Emit whilst others will argue that the SI system is preferable.

With recent changes in technology, both Emit and SI have launched 'touch free' versions allowing competitors to swing their dibber close to the control and to record their presence without having to stop to 'dib'. This is particularly valued by top competitors at sprint events but can be used at any orienteering event. Again though there are advantages and disadvantages with both types of 'touch free' system.

The adoption of the new technology has presented

Correction

In the second paragraph of my article on the JK on page 15 of the May 2019 issue of the Newsletter circulated to members, the wording casts doubt on the ability of the EMITag system to 'provide a reliable record of people visiting controls'. I understand now that the system, when used correctly, is reliable. The system is ratified by the IOF of course and works very well in Norway and no doubt other places. The JK had a large number of competitors who had not previously used EMITags and this will certainly have contributed to the larger number of disqualifications than usual. I apologise to EMIT-UK for the poor wording and any distress this may have caused their staff.

David Jukes

clubs in the region with the difficult issue of deciding again between Emit and SI as competitors consider whether to purchase their own versions of the new dibbers required for the 'touch free' systems. The perceived difficulties at the JK is likely to have added to the concern that may be felt by competitors in other regions that the Emit system is inferior.

The club has not reached a decision on how to proceed. However, our neighbouring club in the region, Thames Valley OC (TVOC) has recently decided that they will adopt SI instead of Emit. They are in the process of purchasing new equipment and disposing of their current stock. This means that the regional agreement which has held since 2003 no longer applies. Although having a single national system used by all clubs makes some sense, it would reduce the competition between the two providers and make the sport reliant on a monopoly.

At the last Committee meeting, it seemed likely that TVOC would be switching but that decision had not been taken. Now that it has, the Committee will need to look again at the options and, perhaps in conjunction with the other clubs in the region, decide on how to proceed.

Committee News

The Committee met on the 16th May and these are some of the items discussed:

- *Event Secretary:* Bo Oqvist was welcomed as he was attending his first meeting. Bo had expressed a willingness to consider taking on the role of Event Secretary and the type of work involved was discussed. It was recognised that it is a big task for a single person to undertake but, with support from those who had previously had the role, Bo agreed to take on the job for the club.
- *Post-JK Updates:* Stefan Stasiuk expressed his thanks to all those club members who had taken on roles at the JK. He also noted that, despite the work load, several members had good results and our relay teams had performed well. He expressed his congratulations to all involved. He noted that one landowner at Cold Ash had complained about runners entering his land. Stefan had reassured him that at all future events, his land will be marked as OOB on the map.
- *OCAD:* Possible updated OCAD software has now been costed and Peter Entwistle will discuss with Katy and Eric about the likely club requirements and make recommendations for our future provision.
- *Newsletter:* An item in the May Newsletter had prompted serious disquiet from the Emit staff and the potential for a withdrawal of support to the club. David Jukes, as Editor, explained the situation and the Committee agreed with his suggestion for a resolution to the issue.
- *Southern Championships 2020:* This event is expected to be linked to our Concorde Chase in January 2020. Following the cancellation of this year's event, the location will be Long Valley North. Mark Foxwell will be planning the courses.

The next meeting is about to take place and the subsequent one will be on the 12th September.

Junior News

For UK Juniors, the first opportunity to be selected for additional training and potential future recognition comes with the nationally organised Lagganlia training camp. This is based at the Lagganlia Outdoor Experience Centre near Aviemore in Scotland. It is aimed at M/W14's with about 24 places for athletes on the camp with selection based on results in major events in the previous 12 months. Typically there are places for 2 athletes for each region. This year **Adam Methven** has made the grade and was nominated by SCOA to attend. His nomination was accepted and he will be attending the camp from 20th – 27th July 2019. Congratulations to him.

Later, in September, there is the annual Junior Inter-Regional Championships. Regions take teams of juniors to compete and, for SCOA, Adam will be attending. In addition both **Amelia Wing** and **Imogen Woodcock** (both from the St Andrews' club) will be attending and will provide a good boost to the region's female contingent.

Membership Memo:

There has been only one new member since April, but none the less a very warm welcome to:

- **Jon Vaughan** in Camberley.

Ian Hudson - Membership Secretary

Parkrun Update:

In the last issue, we reported on some members who had been regular attendees at parkrun events. In that report, Martin Wilson was on 99 runs - it can now be reported that he has reached 101 with further runs at Reading and Woodley. Here are a few more to note:

- **Mark Foxwell** has now reached 105 runs, 92 of them at the event based in Didcot. He does however also have one run at Nidda, near Frankfurt.
- Both **Colin Godbold** and **Graham Farhall** are regulars at the Maidenhead parkrun - achieving 146 and 135 runs respectively. Colin's most recent run was as a 'tourist' at Swansea Bay parkrun.
- When not injured, **Simon Moore** often attends either Maidenhead or the Black Park event. However he is currently stuck on 49, just one short of his first milestone and a potential red parkrun T-shirt.

BKO Club Clothing

A quote from a recent schools' event: "I really like your jacket, it's very nice. Are you a member of the British team?"



Club O Top

Modern design, slim cut, summer weight. Cool in summer, also works well with a base layer underneath for all-seasons use. Washes well without shrinkage, retains all the colour fastness. The tiger stripes give a real wow factor, gaining compliments from other clubs.

Summer Jacket

A neat-looking outer jacket, good for warm-up and cover at events. Single layer material, woollen cuffs, blue central zip, good value. Helps other members to recognise you at events!



Winter Jacket

A 3-layer softshell jacket, perfect for all-year round use. The fabric is breathable and abrasion resistant, with a PU membrane to remove perspiration to the exterior. Waterproof and windproof, regular cut with close fit to provide warmth, plus white zip, two side pockets and useful small chest pocket. This is the go-to jacket for regular orienteers, very smart styling, it really suits the club colours and style.



Event Summary

This listing shows a selection of forthcoming events — most of the local events and some of the more important ones from further afield. For a full listing, look at the British Orienteering web site.

Date	Event Name	Level	Club	Venue	Town
Sun 28 July	Day 1	National	MAROC	Auchingarrich	Comrie
Mon 29 July	Day 2 (UKOL)	National	ECKO	Edinchip	Lochearhead
Tue 30 July	Day 3	National	ESOC	Dundurn	St.Fillans
Thu 1 Aug	Day 4	National	CLYDE	Culteuchar & Dron	Forgandenny
Fri 2 Aug	Day 5	National	TAY	Craig a'Barns	Dunkeld
Sat 3 Aug	Day 6 (UKOL)	National	GRAMP	Grandtully	Grandtully
Sat 10 Aug	BKO Summer Parks	Local	BKO	Ashenbury Park	Woodley
Wed 14 Aug	TVOC Summer Series	Local	TVOC	Bradenham	Princes
Sat 24 Aug	White Rose	National	EBOR	Raincliffe Woods	Scarborough
Sat 24 Aug	White Rose Sprint Event	Regional	EBOR		Scarborough
Sun 25 Aug	MV Urban event	National	MV	Epsom	Epsom
Sun 25 Aug	White Rose and YHOA	National	EBOR	Scarborough	Scarborough
Mon 26 Aug	White Rose Relays	Regional	EBOR	Raincliffe Woods	Scarborough
Mon 26 Aug	British Trail O Championships	National	EBOR	Scarborough	Scarborough
Sun 01 Sept	TVOC UKUL Urban Event	Regional	TVOC	Thame	Thame
Sat 07 Sept	SOC Local	Local	SOC	Dibden Inclosure,	Dibden Purlieu
Sat 07 Sept	HH Saturday League	Local	HH	Jersey Farm Open	St Albans
Sat 14 Sept	British Sprint Championships (UKOL)	Major	LEI	Loughborough University	Loughborough
Sun 15 Sept	British Middle Distance	Major	DVO	Chinley Churn	Chapel-en-le-
Fri 20 Sept	LOK City of London Race	Regional	LOK	Kings Cross	King's Cross
Sat 21 Sept	City of London Race	National	SLOW		London
Sun 22 Sept	DFOK City of London Race 3	Regional	DFOK	Greenwich	Greenwich
Sat 28 Sept	Caddihoe Chase Day 1 - SWOA Long Distance Championships	National	DEVON	Burrator	Yelverton
Sun 29 Sept	Caddihoe Chase Day 2 -	National	DEVON	Burrator	Yelverton
Sun 06 Oct	BKO Regional Event SCOL (Bucklebury Common)	Regional	BKO	Bucklebury Common	Thatcham

Got some spare time towards the end of August? There is an interesting set of events taking place in and around Yorkshire under the combined title of '**Race the Castles 2019**'. There are 12 orienteering events in just 9 days from the 17th to the 25th August. For more details, see: <https://racethecastles2019.com/>. Note that the organisers admit that the link to 'castles' is, in some cases, a bit "tenuous". The event series concludes with the White Rose events listed above.

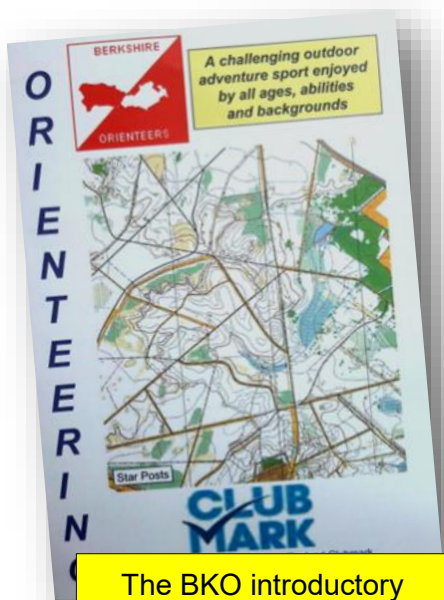
Alan Springett (1950 - 2019)

Alan was a committed orienteering enthusiast who enjoyed the sport and mental challenge it provided. With his wife Catherine, he competed most weekends – sometimes travelling long distances to experience high quality events around the UK and beyond (including the USA).

It was in the late 1980s that Alan discovered the sport and started attending events regularly. Describing this in a newsletter article (May 2011), Catherine described how, when they were first married, she would cook Sunday lunch every week. But then ‘Alan took up orienteering but he got lost so often that lunch was always ruined. So, one Sunday, I went along with him and I’ve never cooked Sunday lunch since.’

Alan and Catherine were initially members of the Kent club DFOK for about 5 years but joined BKO on moving to Reading in 1992. They remained loyal members of BKO when they subsequently moved to Ealing. Despite the move, Alan took on the role of club Membership Secretary

at the AGM in February 2007 and conscientiously fulfilled the role with responses to new members and maintaining the club membership database. He took the lead in producing a promotional leaflet – something which is still in use today. In the spring of 2010, he undertook a survey of club members when the club committee was considering the establishment of regular training nights, presenting the results to the committee in the summer of that year.



The BKO introductory leaflet prepared by Alan as Membership Secretary



At the start of the British Relay Championships at Newborough Woods, on Anglesey in 2001
(Photo by Tim Booth)

When he wasn't orienteering, Alan was employed in administrative roles - particularly managing human resources. The move to Reading was linked to his job at the UK Atomic Energy Authority and then the privatised part (AEA Technology) at Harwell. When the business was subsequently reorganised, he moved again, joining private companies supporting public services.

It was in April 2008 that Alan first became aware of his serious heart condition. Competing at the South Ribble OC (SROC) Hampsfell Regional Event in the Lake District he successfully completed the M55L course. He described what happened next in an article he wrote for CompassSport magazine in June 2009: ‘I collapsed at the feet of my wife, who is extremely competent at screaming for help, and adjacent to a defibrillator-equipped and doggedly determined St John ambulance team at an event where a specialist in resuscitation was also competing. So in the first instance my survival was thanks to Jean Barrett and her team from Ulverston, who would not give up, and to the medical expertise amongst my fellow competitors.’ This was a major heart attack and led quickly to ‘quadruple by-pass surgery’ in May 2008. However more help was needed to try and ensure that his heart performed



Alan, proudly displaying his team bib, at the 2011 British Relay Championships near Sheffield.

normally. In September 2008 he underwent further surgery to have an implanted cardioverter defibrillator installed.

Organisers of the SROC event were Mike and Mary Omerod and they helped support Catherine at the time. Mike recalls that he helped recover their car: "It was the first and only time I'd driven a Subaru Impreza - not too much of an imposition!" They remained friends – as Mike adds: "When you go through a very emotional situation like that you do develop close ties with the people involved and these tend to last. Although we live 200miles apart and opportunities to get together were small, we met at a regional event on Ilkely Moor in September 2008, and helped Alan celebrate his 60th birthday in Horwich, along with members of the St John's team. The last time we saw Alan was when, in March 2011, they came to Clitheroe to help celebrate Mary's birthday."



Mike and Mary Omerod (SROC) and Catherine and Alan Springett (BKO) (Photo by Martin Roome)

For many people, a serious heart problem might have led to the adoption of a less active lifestyle. Not so for Alan! Even before the second operation he was back orienteering – admittedly tackling shorter courses. His first event was an Orange course in June 2008. He was determined to return to fitness and to continue to enjoy attending and competing in events. Looking at the results available on the BOF website (which has results from January 2009), he and Catherine were again travelling the country. Mostly now competing on the M55S (in 2009) or M60S (in 2010 and 2011) courses, his events included:

- 2009: Southern Champs, British Championships (in the SW), JK (in the NE), Northern Championships, Springtime in Shropshire, Scottish 6 Days and Midlands Championships
- 2010: Southern Championships, Midland Championships, JK (in the SW), British Middle Championships, British



Fit-again orienteer is thrilled to meet life-saving heroes

GRATEFUL THANKS: From left, back, Shaun Rigg, Catherine Springett, Alan Springett, Divisional Superintendent Jean Barrett, Andy Lowe and Christine Cameron (with daughter Jasmin, front, who did not take part in rescue but is a St John cadet)

(From the Ulverston Mail, 3 April 2009)

Championships (in the Midlands), British Sprint Championships (in the NW), Lakes5

- 2011: Midland Championships, Southern Championships, British Middle Championships, JK (in Northern Ireland), Springtime in Shropshire, Scottish 6 Days

In fact, there were times when he competed on 4 or 5 successive weekends and some mid-week army events – a committed enthusiast who enjoyed life and the world through his sport.

Unfortunately, his heart let him down again. At the White Rose event at the end of August 2011, he suffered another serious heart attack - this time out in the forest. He survived but, being unable to move his body or to communicate, Alan has since been confined to hospitals and care homes. He died in May.

Thinking of Alan, Robin Smith of SOC/SO has described him as having been ‘a kind calm man’ and added that ‘he encouraged my daughter to take up orienteering when she lived in Newbury, and she briefly joined BKO’. Tim Booth (another former BKO Committee member) recalls a comment from Alan at the Capricorn Long-O in the Lake District in 1999. It was a warm day for the Lakes, and people were all getting worried about how to carry enough water. Alan didn't have any, but he did have a mug to scoop from the nearest beck as he was running past - "I'm a hard man!" he said. Mike Omerod added: "Having known Alan very fit and well, we were very sorry to hear that Alan was unable to recover fully and has since died."

The change in his life – from a very active orienteer to someone needing constant care – had a major impact on Catherine who supported Alan throughout. Her orienteering has inevitably been limited to a very few events for the last 8 years. Our thoughts and sympathy are with Catherine as she now starts a new phase in her life.



Alan after competing in the 2009 JK Relays in Dipton Woods (NEOA) (Photo by Tim Booth)

Newsletter Distribution:

Our thanks to those who have indicated that they will be happy to only have the newsletter as a pdf file sent by e-mail as this does save the club money. If you are willing to only receive the newsletter by e-mail as a pdf file, please let me know and I will add your name to the list. newsletter@bko.org.uk

Berkshire Orienteers is on Facebook !



Your 2019-2020 Committee

Chairman:	Stefan Stasiuk	chairman@bko.org.uk
Secretary:	Derick Mercer	secretary@bko.org.uk
Treasurer:	Peter Entwistle	treasurer@bko.org.uk
Membership Secretary:	Ian Hudson	membership@bko.org.uk
Fixtures Secretary:	Bo Oqvist	fixtures@bko.org.uk
Development Officer:	- - - - Vacant - - - -	

4 Committee Members + 2 co-opted: Fiona Clough, David Jukes, Brian Sewell, Mark Foxwell and Simon Moore

Surrey Hill Races

Nigel Houlton

The Surrey Hill Races are an event organised by South London Orienteers that may be best described as a cross between an orienteering event and a running race: on the one hand, everyone on the same course starts together, but on the other, the route is not marked, and you have to navigate between controls. This means that you are free to choose your own route, although there is a well-established optimum choice. It's a long-running event (excuse the pun!), now in its 40th year, and has been held over the same distances every year since 1981, except that one course was cancelled and the others changed in 2001 because of Foot and Mouth. There are three options:

- The Surrey 6 (about 10k or 6 miles)
- The Leith Hill 10 (about 16k or 10 miles)
- The Three Summits Challenge (about 30k or 18 miles)

It's a small, well-organised event (109 runners across all three races), and gets a few competitors from BKO from time to time.

This year I ran the Leith Hill 10, the same distance as I did in 2006 when I last took part. The race starts just south of Dorking by a school which serves as the event centre, and (as the name suggests) goes to the top of Leith Hill: at 294m the second highest point in south-east England, just beaten by Walbury Hill near Newbury (297m). There are nine controls to visit (the last two being the same as the first two), and SI punching is used. The map (below) is 1:25000 with 15m contours, and as you can see is considerably less detailed than an orienteering map would be.

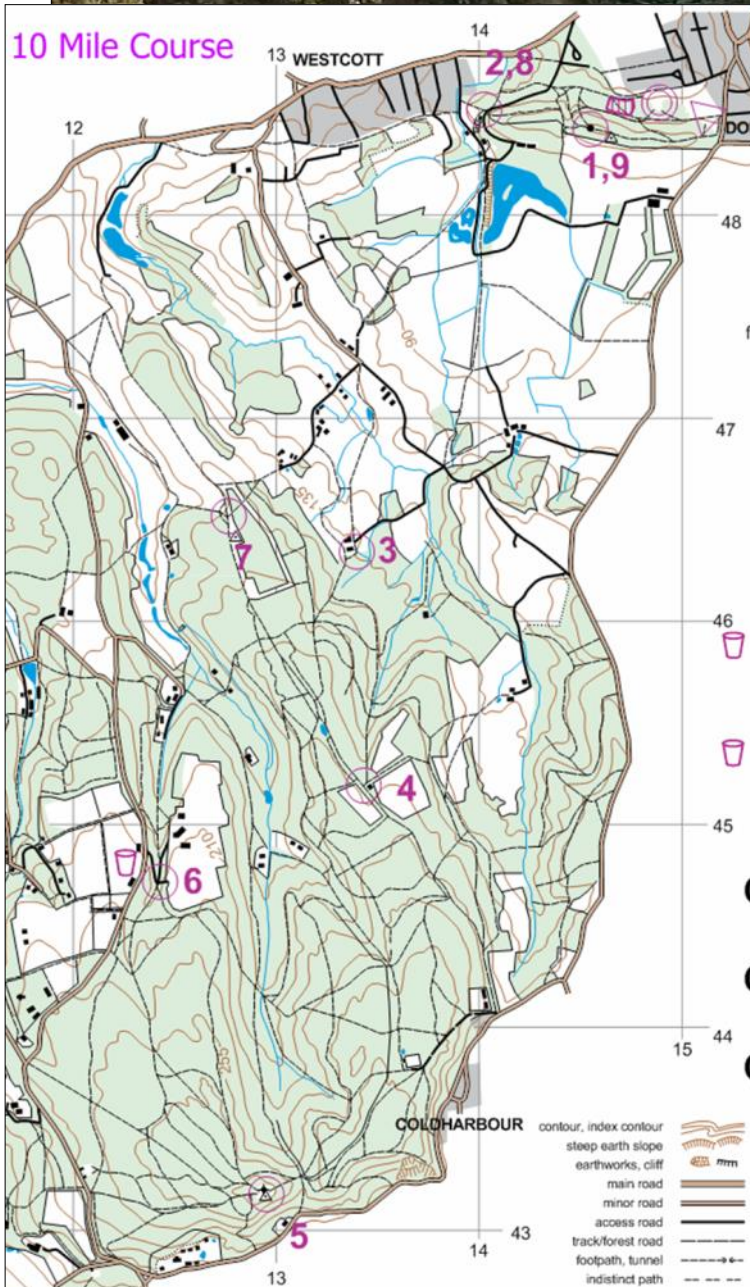
The start is a short sharp climb to the ridge along The Nower, and I set off at a steady pace along with most of the runners on my course going straight up to the ridge; a few took an alternative route but I doubt it offered any improvement other than avoiding any congestion. I was reduced to a walk on the last bit of this climb, but spurred on once I saw the temple at the top come into view, this being our first control.

I then followed some others who seemed to know the way (and I confess I wasn't really sure where I was), until hitting the road which led to the second control. After this, the route-finding was easy and the ground good underfoot, and I made good progress through the next two controls, walking a little of the steeper terrain. From here there was a multitude of alternative paths but I managed to follow the one I'd chosen as far as the first minor summit near Coldharbour. After that, it was a fairly steep descent followed by what seemed like an even steeper climb to the highest point by the tower on Leith Hill, which was packed with other walkers and cyclists. I was quite pleased to make this in just under 46 minutes, as my target for the whole course was 90 minutes and I knew the rest was largely downhill, although a little longer than the way up.

There are many tracks leading down from Leith Hill, and I took some care to make sure I went the right way. Even so, I wasn't confident of how far I'd gone, and branched off left where I didn't need to which cost me a bit of added distance. The next couple of legs weren't too bad, although I had to get past a number of people doing their D of E awards which wasn't that easy on narrow tracks. It was after control 7 (where I was only 21 seconds down on my time from before) that things began to go wrong. The route out of there was very narrow, and although I turned the right way, I left the path too soon and ended up on a wide but slippery track (not shown on the map) – it was at that point that I wished I'd worn



First control on The Nower



trail shoes! However, the view down towards Dorking was quite clear, and I was soon able to get back on course, joining another runner which helped. We carried on essentially together for about a kilometre, at which point I was about to go the wrong way but he called out to me in time – sportsmanship in this event is very good!

Navigation after that was easy, and I managed to keep him in sight and not miss the turning back towards control 8, which I'd almost done the time before. It is here that the route choices multiplied – I guess The Nower is a popular walking area for people from Dorking and there are loads of paths. The other guy turned off the road early, but I'd already decided that it might be hard running that way, and opted to follow the road a bit further, accepting a bit more climb at the end which I assumed would be a wide and heavily-used track. Wrong! There were lots of tracks and no clear route, so I just followed the policy of always heading uphill, and although the last bit was a struggle up a very steep slope, I came out in exactly the right place – at almost the same time as the guy I'd been following! It happened that there was a Mole Valley orienteering event going on at the same time, and I punched at the control for that before realising my mistake. The other guy was about to do the same so I told him – one good turn deserves

another! The last bit should have been straightforward but we both missed the right turning. He headed down a rough slope that I didn't want to risk so I carried on a bit further, taking a somewhat zig-zag route and costing me a couple of minutes. It was a relief to see the finish, and even more to have a drink of water – there had been only one drink station on the course.

We downloaded back at the school. There was a live results display, and I was amazed to see that I was in 4th place, although that dropped to 7th as others who'd taken more time to recover had downloaded. There were amazing trophies for the overall winners – carved oak models of the tower on Leith Hill – but all the prize winners got a choice of various alcoholic refreshments or chocolate as well, so I was pleased to come away with a bottle of cider as first V60. We also got a rather unique wooden medal.

Orienteering at the Berkshire School Games, 2019.

Denise Harper

This year has yet again seen BKO successfully deliver school orienteering competitions throughout the county, culminating with the county final at the Berkshire School Games, held for the third year at Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, near Marlow.

BKO supported qualifying competitions in West Berkshire, (two events, one each for East and West), Bracknell, Slough, and Ascot & Maidenhead. These competitions were held from March through to June, both on school and park sites, and needless to say, involved a great deal of assistance from the BKO volunteer team to run them, as each competition involves running a mini event with 12 team members from each school, running as 6 pairs at one minute intervals.

The first competition for Bracknell was held on a glorious Spring morning in March at South Hill Park. It went off without a hitch, with a clear win for **St Michael's Sandhurst**. After the Easter break, we then had a mad rush of 3 competitions within a week at the end of April. True to form, there are always last minute glitches, and this time was no exception...

For the first competition post Easter, we were once again privileged to enjoy the hospitality of St Andrew's School, Pangbourne, the venue for a West Berks event – they even managed to persuade the rain to stop just in time for us, and a fine competition was won by **Kennet Valley**, Thatcham. However, the next event at Slough did not run according to plan! On arrival, we were greeted by the P.E. staff who told us there was a potential small issue that they needed to show us. Going round to the back of the school we were immediately confronted by a massive fenced off building site from which was emerging a gigantic 3 storey block covering half the old astro turf. Needless to say, this totally wrecked the planned course, blocking the route to the 1st control. Creative thinking was needed, as the maps had all been printed. Having dealt with that as best we could, we got the competition started, only to have to interrupt it half way through, when Eric came rushing over to me at the start to say we had to tell all the remaining competitors to omit control 11. This was located by a tree in the adjoining park, and council workmen there had advised that the children needed to keep well away due to a mass invasion of literally thousands of big hairy caterpillars – they were everywhere, not just on the tree but marching across the paths, clinging to low fences – in fact, all over the place. David Jukes later identified these as being brown-tail moth caterpillars – whatever, they caused us considerable consternation and disruption. We were unable to process results at the school, but after removing the 2 affected legs from results, **Western House** were the winners

A few days later and it was on to Park House School in Newbury for the second W. Berks competition – and yet another crisis. Eric set off to put out the course and discovered a gate which needed to be opened was closed –and not just locked, but nailed shut. As he was



Kedermister Park, Slough: Competitors approaching control 12 and leaping a railing subsequently found to be covered with Brown-tail Moth caterpillars (as shown on the left)

heading off to Reception to get help, the school fire alarm went off and everyone poured outside, so it took some time for Eric to locate the Site Manager, who then said he couldn't help as he was leaving the site shortly. However, he did get Eric a hammer and left him to it! At which point Eric discovered the gate was also screwed shut as well, so he had to go back for a screwdriver. It's amazing that he managed to get it all done in time for the competition to start promptly – but after that all went to plan, and **St Nicolas** was the worthy winner.

Phew! We then had a slight breather before potentially the last qualifying event at Maidenhead, so went on a much needed holiday to Corfu to recover from the school competitions/ JK Relay planning burnout.

There had been much doubt about the likelihood of the Maidenhead event ever happening, as it is always plagued by school access issues, so I was very surprised when we did get the go ahead at short notice for an event at Altwood School. Unfortunately, we still had the same old problems – not knowing where we could and couldn't go until late in the day, sorting out when/ who could lock/unlock the various gates needed for access and having confirmed a wet weather base, still having the arrangements for its use changing right up until the competition itself. With a great sigh of relief, that event was successfully delivered with a win for the 2nd year running for **St Edmund Campion**.

Just 2 weeks later saw us at Bisham Abbey on a beautiful summer's day for the Orienteering final as part of the Berkshire School Games. Yet again, another locked gate issue – but fortunately David J. saved the day by discovering it on a quick stroll round just before the competition was due to start. Eric had only checked the affected control about 30 minutes beforehand but some over-zealous H&S official had since closed it!

The first few controls took the competitors round the lawns with the bucolic backdrop of the magnificent building of Bisham Abbey and the willow lined banks of the River Thames, looking its best in the dappled summer sunlight. Then followed the more testing part of the course, criss-crossing around the golf course. This proved to be quite a navigational challenge for many, especially from those schools with little previous experience. The last few controls were adjacent to the assembly area, giving a good view to spectators who tried to direct their team mates to the various controls, mostly without success!

This year we had entries from all but one of the 8 Berkshire School Sports Partnerships – Windsor being the only one not competing. Unfortunately, yet again, we had another No Show from West Berkshire, with Kennet Valley pulling out at the last moment. The results clearly showed the advantage gained by the schools which had attended preliminary competitions run by BKO – or perhaps it



was divine intervention with the Saints looking down on the winners who were:

- **Maidenhead – St Edmund Champion**
- **Bracknell - St Michael's Sandhurst**
- **West Berks – St Nicolas**

4th was Slough (Western House), 5th was Wokingham (Hawkedon), and 6th was Reading (Caversham Park) which, with no previous experience did find it difficult, but nevertheless enjoyed their experience.

After clearing up, the BKO team then enjoyed a very well earned picnic in the Bisham Abbey grounds, pleased and relieved that we had yet again completed another very successful season of schools competitions...which brings me to the announcement that sadly, I have now decided to step down from organising the School Games orienteering competitions. I have been feeling my age rather more over the last year or so, and after 11 years, and approaching my 70's, this seemed a good time to declare my intention to 'retire'.



The winning team - St Edmund Champion from Maidenhead

My very grateful thanks go to all the magnificent willing volunteers over the years, without whom none of this would be possible, and of course to Eric without whose assistance I would have probably given up long ago.. It has been quite a commitment from helpers to travel across the county, and be out in all weathers and circumstances to ensure that the competition schedule could always go ahead, come what may, and BKO is fortunate to have had a number of such dedicated members available and willing to assist.

BKO first made an appearance showcasing orienteering at County Schools events in 2006 at the inaugural Berkshire School Games at Bradfield College, where we were invited as a demo sport on a Come-and-Try-It basis, and we progressed in 2008 to status as a fully competitive sport at the Berkshire Youth Games at Bulmershe College, Woodley. Since then, BKO has organised orienteering for the School Games in every year except 2011, when the initial funding had ceased. Over all those years, we have provided thousands of school children with a high quality and enjoyable experience of orienteering, and become widely respected for our efficient, well organised and much enjoyed delivery amongst Berkshire schools and sports managers. My hope is that at least some of those children will have taken that positive experience with them and in adult life will be encouraged to take up orienteering or other related outdoor activities.



From our first Berkshire Games in 2006: **Reg Parker, Liz Yeadon** and **Ann Parker** in their volunteers' T shirts



Berkshire Schools' Orienteering

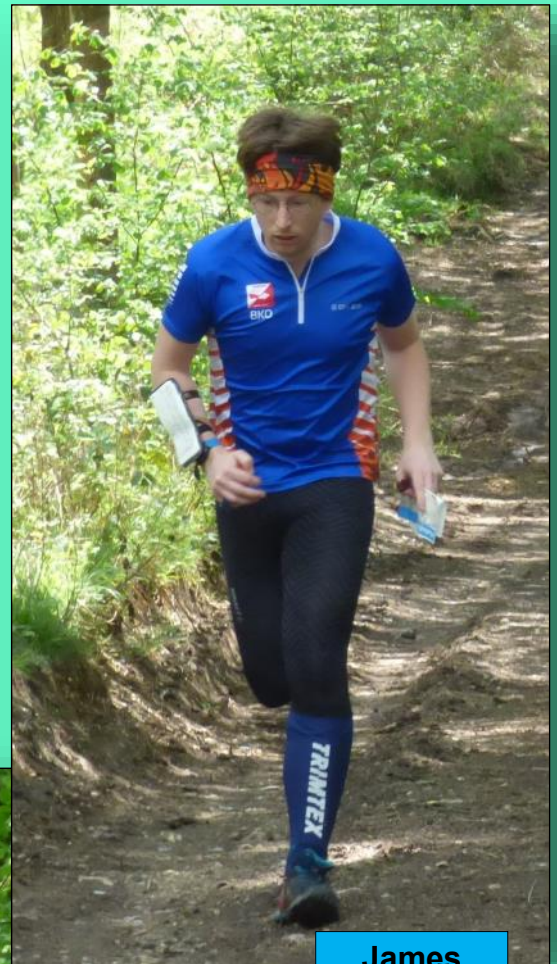
Top 3 photos: West Berkshire Heat, St Andrews' School - 25 April 2019
Bottom 3 photos: Finals, Bisham Abbey - 28 June 2019



Shouting guidance to team members - not always that helpful!



Christine Artus in the bluebells



James Wilkinson



Georgi Gospodinov heads uphill from the start

BKO's SCOA League Event
Rushall Woods
12 May 2019
As well as staging the event, club members were able to enjoy the warm spring sunshine whilst tackling the courses set by **Steve Waite**



Alan Jones