



SAXALERT



SAX NOTICES

SIMON GREENWOOD

It is with great sadness and regret that we announce the death of our Club President, Simon Greenwood, on 12th December. Please see Chairman's Chat and p.6 for more information.

CONTENTS

Editorial	3	'A Matter of Mapping Style'	25
Chairman's Chat	5	LIDAR	27
News	6	The Wonder of LIDAR	29
British Orienteering Performance Awards	7	Mapping History	30
Future Events / Events Further Afield	7 / 10	Mapping History—Footnote (printed on Tyvek)	32
Welcome to New Members	11	Saxons 21st Anniversary Photos	34
SEOA Badges	14	Letter From Yorkshire	36
Permanent Orienteering Courses	15	Leagues	37
Find Your Way	15	Saxons Out & About	43
Coach's Corner	16	Credits	56
Licence to Roam	22	Club Committee & Officers	57

Cover photo: Start flag at Hindleap—Saxons' 50th Anniversary Event in November
Credit: Sean Cronin

EDITORIAL



Simon Greenwood in action—CompassSport Cup Final, Scotland, 16th October 2022

Credit: Graham Thomas

As many or all of you will know by now, our Club President Simon Greenwood sadly passed away on 12th December. He was a hugely positive figure in Southeast regional orienteering, his near-constant presence at Saxons and SEOA events always enthusiastic, friendly and encouraging. As Jean has said in her email to us, he will be greatly missed.

Simon's passing casts a shadow over what has been a most satisfactory 50th anniversary year for Saxons. Rather than dwell on Simon's death, let us recap what we have achieved this year, so that we can look forward to similar or greater successes in 2023. I'd like to think it's what he would want.

We put on a large set of events in 2022 and had plenty of successes in many others. Since our traditional New Year's Day event, we have finished the KNC and KOL series for 2021-22 and started their 2022-23 seasons, plus a Summer series of 4 events. We ran a SE League event at Enchanted Place in January, a SEOUL Urban event in Whitstable in February, a local event at Ightham in May, our own anniversary party and event at the newly

-mapped Mardens Hill in September, and, to put the icing on the 50th anniversary cake, another anniversary, national-level, event at Hindleap in November (is that getting greedy now?!)

On top of this individual Saxons have attended a wide range of large events. A brief resume of the year shows that we are enjoying plenty of success when we venture further afield:

In March, we qualified at Balcombe for the CompassSport Trophy final in Scotland in October. The same month, at the British Relay Championships, our Mixed Ad Hoc team came 3rd out of 39, and the M50 team were placed in the top half of a very competitive race. March was also a good month for SaxAlert, winning the CompassSport award for Best Cover for issue 188.



50th Anniversary biscuits at Hindleap

Credit: Sean Cronin

A number of Saxons went to the JK in South Wales at Easter, then achieved a notable string of podium places at the Sunny Sussex weekend in May - Sarah Howes 2nd W55-60, Jeremy Oldershaw 2nd M80+, Mark Glaisher 2nd M65-70.

July found Sarah, Mark, Simon Blanchflower and Jean Fitzgerald abroad at the 3 Days of Belgium, held in the High Fens in the east of the country, where they found time for a spot of sightseeing as well as orienteering. August brought more glory for Saxons at both the SE Sprint Championships in Guildford, where Beryl Pring and Sarah Howes each won their class, and at the Lakes 5 Days in the Lake District. Here, our younger runners proved their mettle, with Holly Howe coming 2nd on W12B, Ben Cronin 1st on M16B, and Ffion Bricknell 1st on W18S, accompanied by Alison Howe 3rd on M50L. As summer turned to autumn, 15 Saxons took part in the London City Race in September, with success again for the Howe/Pring family - Austin Howe 3rd M16-, Alison Howe 2nd W40+, Beryl Pring 1st W75.

October saw a small team of Saxons make the long journey north to the CompassSport Cup & Trophy Final in Scotland. Although we came last of 15 teams in the Trophy, it should be pointed out that we had a considerably smaller team than any of our competitors. In fact, our average points per scorer was the same as 14th-placed BKO, who fielded 12 runners to our 7, and not far below 13th-placed NOR's average with 13 runners.

Finally, in November, a number of Saxons sallied forth to the continent again, to take part in the North Sea Trophy on the Belgian coast. A popular event attracting 670 participants, once more we enjoyed success, with Sarah Howes 1st in W60, Mark Glaisher 2nd in M70 and Alison Howe 3rd in W50.

Clearly our half-century year has been busy and shows that we are as strong a club as ever. Here's to the next five decades of orienteering success!

To wrap up, I'd also like to thank all the contributors to this issue. After the bumper anniversary edition earlier in the year, I thought this one might be a bit thin on the ground for contributions. However not only have you proved me wrong, but a broad theme around mapping has emerged, largely by coincidence, which is very interesting.

Finally, I'd like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year, and may 2023 bring you all plenty of fun and success in orienteering.

Graham Denney



CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Jean Fitzgerald



I expect by now you will have all heard the sad news of the death of Simon Greenwood, our President, on 12 December. Simon had been active in Saxons as an enthusiastic competitor, a planner of major events (including the Harvester Relays at Eridge in 2010 and the Peter Palmer Junior relays at Hindleap in 2019), Vice Chairman of the club and, since 2009, as our President. He also served orienteering regionally, being Chairman of SEOA for over 20 years, and in that role was often asked to present prizes at big events held in the SE.

All of you who knew him will remember his friendly and enthusiastic, sometimes boisterous, presence at orienteering events. It is difficult to imagine attending big events such as the JK without Simon. He will be missed.

We aim to prepare a fuller memorial to Simon for our next SaxAlert and for CompassSport. If any of you have particular memories you would like to share please get in touch. Simon's family are planning a memorial service on 23 March. I will forward details via Mailchimp closer to the event.

As you will know 2022 was Saxons 50th anniversary year. One of the highlights was our club event at the recently remapped Mardens Hill, which was planned by Richard Field. On a hot and sticky Saturday 37 current and retired Saxons took part. As Alison Howe said in her write-up, 'Members new and old turned up to compete on score and line courses from yellow to blue standard, and fun was had by all, even if the finish was all up hill!!!' The event was followed by a birthday garden party hosted by Richard and Victoria. Volunteers erected three gazebos and decorated them with lights and plant material and as the evening progressed to a brilliant sunset the atmosphere when cutting the cake was amazing. If you were not there read Alison's report [and see the images here](#). We also held our successful level B and SE league event at a very wet Hindleap on 27 November where the planner and controller had to arrange a rope to help competitors across a flooded stream. At download everyone was issued with not only their split times but a celebratory biscuit



Sarah Howes cuts the cake at the 50th Anniversary Party / Credit: Alison Howe

wrapped in the anniversary logo.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy and enjoyable year of orienteering in 2023.

Jean

NEWS

Simon Greenwood

As Jean mentioned above, we are sad to report the untimely death of Simon Greenwood, our club President, on 12th December 2022. We hope to run a more detailed obituary in celebration of Simon's life and contribution to orienteering in the next issue.

AGM News

The Club Annual General Meeting was held on 18th November on Zoom, continuing the trend of recent years.

Alison Howe's Development Report showed that Saxons have undertaken a number of initiatives during the year, aimed at increasing participation, grow membership, and engage members. Successful initiatives include the Find Your Way Maprun project (see Alison's article later in this issue), greater school and Scout engagement, increased digital marketing activities, and more coaching for members.

The only change to the Committee was that Graham Thomas has taken over from Fiona Wilson as Membership Officer.



“You will become like us...” - controls awaiting deployment at Hindleap /

Credit: David Kingdon

BRITISH ORIENTEERING PERFORMANCE AWARDS

Well done to the following:

Holly Howe	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★★	06/12/2022
Andrea Pauling	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★★	06/12/2022
Andrea Pauling	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	06/12/2022
Ron Huggett	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★	06/12/2022
Ron Huggett	Navigation Challenge	★★★★	06/12/2022
Nicky Bedford	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	18/12/2022
John Cross	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	18/12/2022

If you are missing these awards make sure you put your BOF number on your registration form, especially if you are hiring a dibber.

The number of stars indicate the technical difficulty- 2*=Yellow, 3* = Orange,4* = Light Green, 5* = Short Green – Black. You get a Gold racing award if your time is less than the course length x 12.5 mins, Silver x 15mins and Bronze x 20 mins.

FUTURE EVENTS

A brief selection of forthcoming events run by Saxons and neighbouring clubs through to the end of March:

Thu 05 Jan	KNC 11	Abinger Roughs (MV)
Sat 07 Jan	SO SOG A7	Washington Common, Sussex (SO)
Tue 10 Jan	London Street O	Inns of Justice, London (SLOW)
Thu 12 Jan	KNC 12	Tilgate Golf Course, Crawley (SO)

Sat 14 Jan	SN Local event	Wellesley Woods, Aldershot
Sat 14 Jan	KOL 5	Buckmore Park Scout Camp, Chatham (DFOK)
Thu 19 Jan	KNC 13	Trosley Country Park, Vigo (SAX)
Sun 22 Jan	SE Long Champs & SE League	Chelwood (DFOK)
Tue 24 Jan	Night O	Esher Common (SLOW)
Thu 26 Jan	KNC 14	Scotney Castle (SAX)
Sat 28 Jan	SO SOG A8	Ditchling Common, Burgess Hill (SO)
Sun 29 Jan	Concorde Chase 2023	Star Post, Bracknell (BKO)
Thu 02 Feb	KNC 15	Venue tbc (DFOK)
Sat 04 Feb	KOL 6	Trosley Country Park, Vigo (SAX)
Sun 05 Feb	Waggoners Wells National SEL	Waggoners Wells, Haslemere (GO)
Tue 07 Feb	Street O	Highgate, London (LOK)
Thu 09 Feb	KNC 16	Perry Wood, Faversham (SAX)
Sat 11 Feb	SN Local event	Frensham Heights School, Farnham (SN)
Thu 16 Feb	KNC 17	Sittingbourne & Milton Creek (SAX)
Sat 18 Feb	British Night Champs (UKOL)	Moors Valley Country Park, Ringwood (WIM)
Sun 19 Feb	SE League event	Holmbury, Dorking (LOK)
Tue 21 Feb	MV Winter Series	Epsom (MV)
Thu 23 Feb	KNC 18	Haysden Country Park, Tonbridge (SAX)

Sat 25 Feb	CHIG Regional & SWELL event	Wormley Woods, Broxbourne (CHIG)
Sun 26 Feb	TVOC Chiltern Challenge National Event	Whiteleaf & Great Hampden, Princes Risborough (TVOC)
Tue 28 Feb	Night O	Wimbledon Common, London (SLOW)
Thu 02 Mar	KNC 19	Broadstone Warren (SO)
Sat 04 Mar	KOL 7	Lullingstone Country Park, Eynsford (DFOK)
Sun 05 Mar	HH National Event	Burnham & Egypt Woods, Slough (HH)
Thu 09 Mar	KNC 20	Venue tbc (DFOK)
Sun 12 Mar	CompassSport Cup Heat	Gravetye Estate, East Grinstead (SO)
Tue 14 Mar	MV Winter Series	Leatherhead (MV)
Tue 14 Mar	London Street O	Notting Hill, London (SLOW)
Thu 16 Mar	KNC 21	Seal Chart, Borough Green (SAX)
Sat 18 Mar	SN Local event	Hogmoor, Bordon (SN)
Sun 19 Mar	Sarum Saunter	Great Ridge, Salisbury (SARUM)
Sun 19 Mar	MV SE League event	Balcombe, Crawley (MV)
Tue 21 Mar	Night O	Richmond Park, London (SLOW)

Sat 25 Mar	British Orienteering Champs & Southern Champs (UKOL)	Cold Ash, Newbury (BKO)
Sun 26 Mar	British Relay Champs	Hambledon, Henley-on-Thames (TVOC)

You can find out what orienteering events are coming up locally and throughout the country by app, Web or email:



- Use Neil Bricknell's **Event-O app** ([Google Play](#) or Apple App Store)



- Visit the [Saxons website events page](#)
- Visit [oevents.info](#) and use their online events calendars
- Use the [British Orienteering Event Finder](#)



- Subscribe [here](#) to oevents.info's weekly events list email

Icons courtesy of [Online Web Fonts](#)

Events Further Afield:

Sat 04—Sun 05 Mar Interland Lommel, Belgium

World Orienteering Day:

World Orienteering Day 2023 will take place between 17th and 23rd May. Any activity held between these dates can be registered as a World Orienteering Day event. Register an event/activity or find out more here: <https://worldorienteeringday.com>



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Since our last issue, plenty of new members have joined Saxons—all Seniors this time round:

Senior: Andrea Pauling; Simon Weatherley; John Scharf; Rick Bayne; Peter Lilja; John Cross, Jonny Wells, Catherine Catchpole and Timothy Veysey-Smith.

Welcome back also to two former members who have recently rejoined the club:

Senior: Jim McAlpin and James Ford

Welcome to the club! We hope to see you at local events very soon. Please make yourselves known to the organisers and the 'Can I help you?' volunteers at our events. Also our Junior Coordinators look forward to meeting new Juniors.

John Cross, Jonny Wells, Peter Lilja, Simon Weatherley, James Ford and Catherine Catchpole have all told us about how they became involved with orienteering:

John Cross: “As a schoolboy long distance cross-country runner, I was introduced to Orienteering at the age of 12 by our teacher/coach, Ted Norrish, who was also the founder of the long established Octavian Droobers club in Coventry. We went to the Kielder Forest on the Scottish borders, for a few days, where the main navigation was counting our way through the seemingly endless forest rides. I still have the map.



John Cross

I've been heavily involved in a mainstream sport in Kent in recent years, but having reduced that commitment, I thought I'd have another 'go' at Orienteering, as it would involve visiting a variety of interesting locations, and enable me to exercise - hopefully with a few sneaky breaks in the middle of a running session!

It's said it takes 10,000 hours to master a particular skill, so by taking part in a few recent events, mugging up the map symbols, and by attending the excellent Saxons coaching session with Brendon and Jean, I'm well on the way... maybe...”

Jonny Wells: “I first went orienteering with my dad when I was about 11, we would go once a month on a Sunday morning in the wilds of South Yorkshire

and I loved it! Unfortunately teenage years happened, followed by life.

In my thirties I got into running to get fit and over the past 15 years I have readdressed my running goals whether it be faster, further, longer, shorter, road or trail.

Through my then running club, orienteering came back on to my radar with an event at Kings Wood, unfortunately cancelled due to a lockdown I was still very interested. In December last year I attended my first event at Trosley country Park and I was hooked. The night runs I did later were challenging and exciting and I look forward to improving now I'm a member of the club."



Peter Lilja

Peter Lilja: ".....I have never been a member of a British club before, but I am not new to orienteering. I started orienteering back in 1970 in Stockholm Sweden where I grew up. I have not competed regularly for nearly 40 years, apart for an annual orienteering weekend, where a group of old friends get together in Sweden to run orienteering and have fun, this year my brother and I organised it. I also participated in the o-ringen 5-day event in July this year, which took place in Uppsala Sweden and I really enjoyed it so much I have decided to make orienteering a more regular part of my life again.

I have been a resident in the the UK for 30 years and now live in Battle East Sussex....."

Simon Weatherley: "I first started orienteering about 9 years ago when I was an army cadet instructor. We used it as a way of teaching the cadets map reading and navigation. Unfortunately, when I left the army, I stopped the orienteering as well.

I then met my wife and developed other interests, the main one being vehicle restoration. I have a 40 year old porsche 924 which is currently on axle stands awaiting an engine overhaul. I love doing anything practical, and especially enjoy DIY and building plastic models when time permits.



Simon Weatherley

Most of my career has been spent in healthcare, firstly as a paramedic and then as a theatre nurse. I timed things perfectly and got out of clinical practice 2 months before covid became a thing. I now still work in the NHS but as an IT software developer. This is a hobby as well as a job and I still find it difficult to

believe that someone is willing to pay me to play with computers all day. It's the perfect job.

Since the death of my wife, I decided I needed to get out of the house and get fit. So I decided to get back into orienteering. So far I have done 2 events, Brockhill on a yellow and Ightham on an orange. Having not done it for so many years, I was amazed at how easily the map reading skills came back again. I'm sure I've got much to learn but I plan to do as many events as I can. I'm very competitive so watch out at the top :-)"



James Ford

James Ford: "It's a pleasure to re-join Saxons! I started orienteering back when I was at primary school when Heather Brown and Tony Connellan introduced it as a new after-school club. I've always been a sporty and competitive person, so the idea of navigating across unfamiliar land locating a series of controls in the fastest time possible appealed to me. I have plenty of highlights from my early orienteering years. Competing at the British Schools Orienteering Championships was enjoyable, even with the added pressure! I also remember being so determined to beat another junior that I resorted to running half the short course in one shoe after it got sucked off in ankle-deep mud. Needless to say, I didn't beat said junior!"

I continued orienteering alongside my older sister, progressing up to the blue course until I started my degree at Loughborough, where I shifted my focus to longer distances, most notably the marathon. The mental challenge that orienteering brings, deciding the fastest possible route to a control has undoubtedly been a big help over an endurance event like the marathon. Having finished my degree, I aim to get back into orienteering to break up the monotony that marathon training can sometimes involve.

I look forward to returning to some Kent orienteering league events and trying my hand at some night orienteering."

Catherine Catchpole: "Well I've always loved a map. As a child I'd navigate my mum down the back roads of rural Derbyshire using an OS map, and it wasn't a good day out unless if taken her down at least one road with grass



Catherine Catchpole

growing up the centre. I loved seeing the map come to life. So I'd liked the idea of orienteering but I've never been a runner (which seemed necessary). All that changed about 5 years ago when I started running as part of regaining my fitness whilst recovering from a car accident. I'd not thought about orienteering though until I saw an advert for Saxons on Facebook for the Mote Park event in the summer of 2022. I talked a fellow runner Tim into coming along with me (he's now also joined Saxons!) and we had a great time running around Mote Park in the sunshine - once we'd located the start point (least said about that the better!). Since then I've been around several of the local permanent orienteering courses and also went on a coaching session in October run by Jean and Brendan. To me it seems like the perfect combination of treasure hunt and a good run! My compass skills certainly need some work, and I'm not sure about night time orienteering, but for 2023 I'm hoping to get to grips with the orienteering basics and get out and about enjoying the lovely Kent countryside."

SEOA BADGES

Send off for your free colour course badge!

You can get a fabric colour coded badge to sew on your track suit or O-top, sponsored by the South East Orienteering Association, if you beat the par time three times, on any qualifying colour-coded course. Three qualifications at the same colour get you a badge—there is no time limit on when you can get them.



Par time is set at 150% of the winner's time, or within the top 50% of competitors, whichever is greater, except for the White course, where you only have to complete the course three times to qualify.

To obtain your badge, please email details of your qualifying results (organising club, event, course and orienteer's name) to Neil Crickmore from the SEOA website Contacts page (<https://www.seoa.org.uk/contacts>). There is no charge for these badges, and Seniors and Juniors alike are eligible for them!

PERMANENT ORIENTEERING COURSES

Beryl Pring

Saxons have [8 Permanent Courses](#) throughout Kent. The courses can be used in different ways, depending on your own specific needs. The great thing about them is that you can go at a time to suit you, on whatever day of the week you choose. They are also an ideal way of introducing children and adults alike to the sport, where you can go at your own pace and spend as much time as you like figuring out the map. If you want to go in a pair or as a group, again, this is the perfect opportunity. You may have just started orienteering and are wanting to gain confidence in your skills outside of the pressures of an organised competition. So whether you are using them for training purposes or just for a more adventurous family stroll, the choice is entirely yours.

- Bedgebury Pinetum
- Betteshanger Country Park
- Brockhill Country Park
- Kent University, Canterbury
- Milton Creek Country Park
- Mote Park, Maidstone
- Trosley Country Park
- Whinless Down near Dover

Full information on the [Saxons website](#) with maps available from the [Go Orienteering website](#).

If you have any problems regarding the courses, [let me know](#) and I will try and rectify them.

FIND YOUR WAY

Alison Howe

Saxons have joined up with Dartford Orienteers to participate in a British Orienteering project funded by Sport England aimed at increasing youth participation in orienteering activities in particular for deprived areas, although the activities are available for all. The project uses the virtual orienteering MapRun application which came to prominence during lockdown



and it is envisaged it will be rolled out across both existing permanent orienteering courses, as well as new parkland areas within communities.

- Saxons areas launched or close to launch to date include Trosley Country Park, Brockhill Country Park, Betteshanger

Country Park, Whinless Down, and Haysden Country Park

- We also have approval to map and launch virtual courses at Capstone Country Park, near Gillingham and have a long list of areas we would like to target in 2023.
- British Orienteering Find Your Way website and Instagram account successfully launched <https://www.findyourwayvo.org.uk/virtual>



Participants can complete the courses any time they want and as many times as they would like. Now it is easier than ever to get your orienteering fix, or to do a spot of training away from events and closer to home!

COACH'S CORNER

Brendon Howe

Dealing with New Terrain

I thought this time we might discuss techniques for dealing with new, unfamiliar areas. One of the great things about orienteering is the ability to take part in events outside of our local area. I've been lucky enough to have taken part in events in various parts of Europe, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the past. I approach each visit with a mixture of excitement and trepidation.



As a new orienteer I was surprised to learn that I could actually take part in events run by different clubs! I also discovered the BOF ranking system and found that I could compete against fellow orienteers across the country. These

two facts urged me to look further afield for events, initially starting with events run by nearby clubs, then looking nationally...

Soon we decided as a family to travel to Wales to take part in Croeso 2016, a five day event centred that year around Cardiff. As the first two events were based on sand dunes I went into a mild panic. All of my experience to date had been in the South East of England. Due to its high population almost all areas were littered with footpaths and tracks and thus these became my first port of call for navigation; this wasn't going to be of much use.

So, if you are keen to broaden your orienteering experience, but aren't super confident about the transition from local to national and international orienteering, here are some things that can help...

Data Gathering

When I'm planning a trip to a new area the first thing I do is try to gather as much information about the area as I can.

The following are good sources:

- Old maps - try and find old maps of an area from other orienteers. There aren't that many areas that have never been orienteered on. World of O website has many scanned maps for example.
- Google Earth - check out the area using the satellite imagery from Google Earth or similar. It is possible to do a fly pass of the area in question and check out the terrain, vegetation and hill shapes.
- Routegadget - If an event has been held in an area in the last decade it is possible that the details will be held in Routegadget. Unhelpfully, there are multiple Routegadget repositories, one for each club, so you will need to know the name of the club hosting the previous event in order to find it. Often a Google search will throw up the right information, failing that, guessing which club local to the area might have organised can bear fruit.
- OS Maps and their online versions - OS maps and their online versions (Bing Maps for example) allow you to see the standard OS data for the area. This is particularly important for seeing the contour information.
- Talking to the Old Un's - There are plenty of older orienteers who have been orienteering for donkey's years and have raced on every conceivable area. These guys are a fountain of useful knowledge. They often keep good notes on each race they've done and can opine on effective techniques for a specific area, where time can be gained and lost, and key features.

Data Analysis

So, we've managed to gather some data for a new area, but what do we do with it? Simply staring at the map might seem like a good idea, but it seldom delivers the tangible benefits of proper analysis.

Whether you are using an old map, or Routegadget the first thing I will do is to try to identify the major features of the map. This will help us to identify what O skills we will need to navigate successfully.

I would look for key themes in the map, which features will allow me to simplify the map, where are the major catching features, which bits of the map are going to be tricky, and where the big climbs will be. One trick can be to use a piece of tracing paper to draw each Index Contour on the map. This will give you an overview of the 'shape' of the area.

Think about the orienteering skills you have and techniques available to you and decide which ones will be appropriate in the map terrain. If there are lots of intricate contours then using them to navigate will be important; on a flatter area compass work will be more useful for example.

Take time to look at the symbols used on the map. Do you know what they all are? If not, check them out and, at the same time, find out the control descriptions for each. I don't often run on rocky terrain so am unfamiliar with the different map symbols for big and small boulders, rock pillars, rock clusters and stony ground. I will spend some time familiarising myself again before a race.

Having taken a basic look at the map the next thing I will do is to look at the appropriate course for my race. For each leg I will try to plan out what I would do. I would use the CARE mnemonic to categorise each leg: envisage the Control, decide on an Attack Point, chose my Route, plan my Exit towards the next control.

Once I have done this for each leg I will look at the actual GPS traces from previous competitors. I'll try to find proper GPS traces rather than a competitor drawn trace, ideally from someone finishing in the top 20% of the race. I'll compare this to my planned route and look for anomalies. If I spot that other orienteers were successful contouring a specific leg rather than going straight up and over a hill form I will bank that information for the race. Essentially, I'm looking for information on which techniques will work for me and which to avoid.

Occasionally, an event's race details will identify approximately where the race start will be. This can often use a different start from previous races. In these instances its worth trying to plan the first few legs of your course. I will work on the premise that the first few controls will be in quick succession and make the

most of any tricky terrain nearby. I'll plan a number of different 'starts' and, by doing this, hope to have developed a clear picture in my head of the start of the race. This will enable me to have a good start to my race and build my confidence. If the race starts with long legs then I've not lost anything.

No Map Available?

Occasionally we find an area where there is no map. Don't panic though. All is not lost. One option would be to look for an O map of an adjoining or nearby area. This won't be perfect, but should help with preparation particularly when appended with Google Earth data.

Sometimes it is possible to actually create your own map of an area if there isn't one. This is particularly true of urban areas. Open Orienteering Mapper is free to use software to create a simple urban map. I know of one family of orienteers who created their own urban sprint map of the army barracks used for the JK sprints in 2018. Having created the map they then used Purple Pen (free course planning software) to plan a host of potential control sites. This hard-core map geeking allowed them unparalleled insight into the hidden traps on the map, and to identify the best route choices before the race.

Before the Event

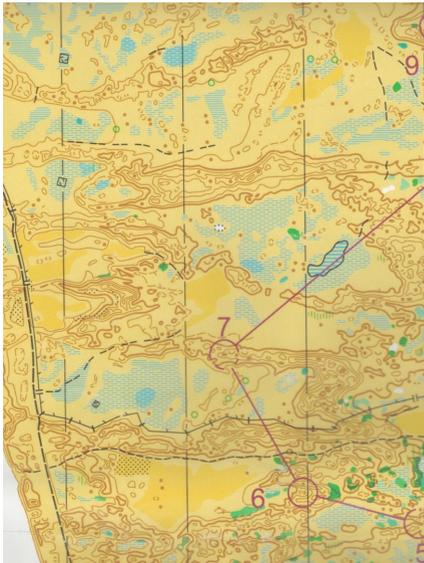
Before any major race the event area will be embargoed so you can't go and reconnoitre thus gaining an unfair advantage. Despite this, larger events will often create training events for you to practise on.

You'll recall my story about my first experience of sand dunes; Croeso 2016 created a training event on sand dunes adjacent to the race area for two days prior to the first race. I made sure I arrived in Wales early and took full advantage to familiarise myself. OOCup in the French Jura ran a similar thing in 2020 and allowed me to get a better sense of the terrain and how the mapper had interpreted it.

Not all major events offer a training area, so we need to get creative. Why not check for a nearby Permanent Orienteering Course, or Maprun circuit to tackle?

Maps and Areas

I thought I'd finish with a few map extracts from a few of the wilder parts of the UK and France and to identify some techniques for similar areas.



Kenfig Sand Dunes - Wales

The obvious bits are the large flat areas in the dunes. These are punctuated with the steep sided dunes.

I would use the flat areas to re-group and use the dune sides as handrails where possible.

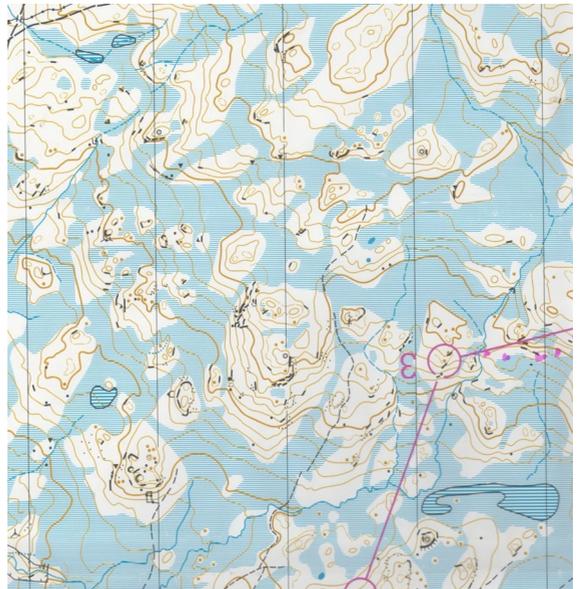
Vegetation can be an issue on sand dunes. Although not predominant in the map here, thick areas of gorse or sea buckthorn can make direct progress very unpleasant.

Kenfig Sand Dunes

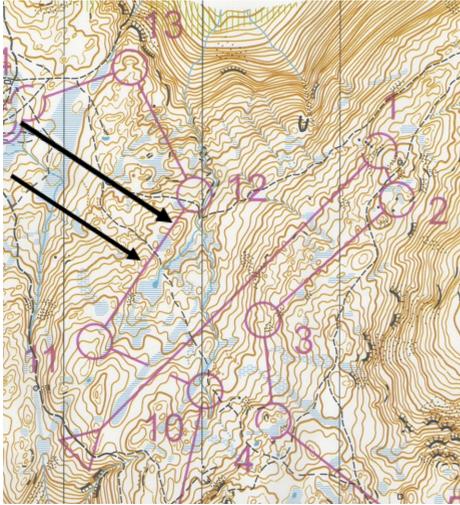
Swindale South - Lake District

This map looks awfully blue. In essence the blue bits were marshy areas. In the summer they were just identified as having a different grass type and didn't impede progress too much.

The drier white islands (not tree covered, they were just saving ink!) provided suitable progress markers. Contours were king here and proved the most useful navigation aid.



Swindale South



Angle Tarn Pikes - Lake District

Quite a fiddly area. The changes in slope shown by the contours is quite dramatic and can prove helpful.

There are also a number of distinct hilltops on the map that aid navigation. This is open terrain despite the map colouring; being able to see further makes it easier to identify major hill shapes. I've identified two hilltops that would allow the route to CP12 to be simplified.

Angle Tarn Pikes

Le Tumet - France

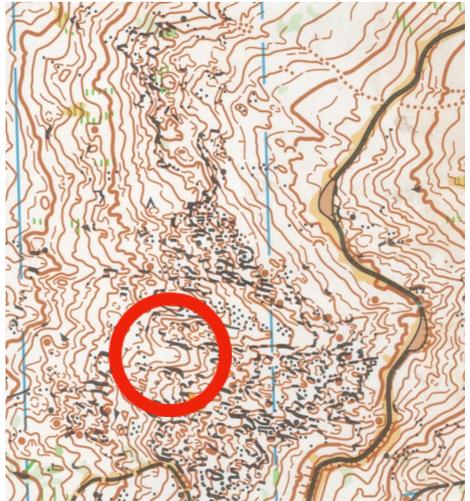
This rocky section of the map fills me with dread.

Here the trick is to have a very clear entry point to the zone and to identify each rock feature as you pass. Try to nav via rock clusters rather than individual rocks; look for unique shapes and envisage what they'll look like on the ground.

For a first timer this is an area where one can only lose time by rushing.

Despite the busy terrain there are a number of major features that might help for nav. There are a few depressions and distinct hills, one of which I've circled.

Consider bringing a magnifying glass with you for the busy bits. There are a number of orienteering magnifying glasses available. I use one that connects with my thumb compass.

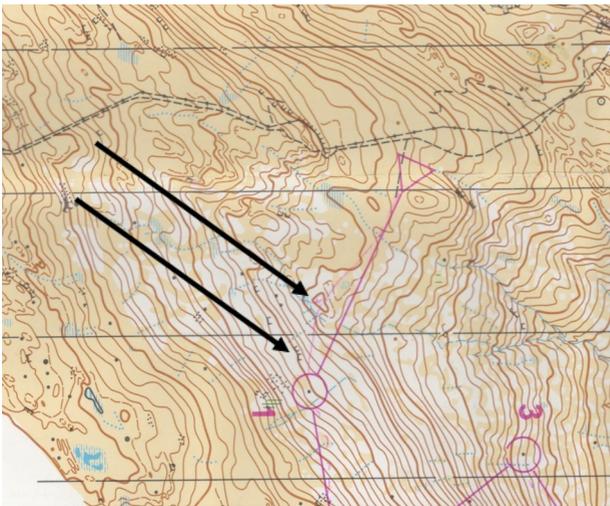


Le Tumet

Creag Choinnich - Scotland

Changes in contour direction and pitch aid navigation. An ability to count contours and to identify how much up or down you need to go is very helpful. Practise this at home and use your GPS watch to confirm.

Consider aiming off to a navigable feature on the same contour then follow the contour around to the



Creag Choinnich

control. Consider the route to CP1 - I would simplify by heading to the hill arrowed, then aim off to the cliff, then contour around to CP1.

LICENCE TO ROAM

Richard Field

I took over from David Kingdon as Land Access officer for Saxons at the start of 2022. Although I have been orienteering for 40 years or so, the process of gaining approval to use areas of land for orienteering is new to me.

It is self-evident that orienteering depends on landowners being willing to allow us to use their land. That isn't something we can take for granted and we generally need to seek permission for every event. In some cases, an orienteering map may include several pieces of land with different landowners, all of whom must give their permission.

With some organisations – such as Forestry England – there are framework agreements in place that mean we can reasonably expect to be granted access. Private landowners, however, can do whatever they like.

Orienteering is an unusual activity in that we don't want to stick to established paths or tracks. Good courses will have controls in out-of-the-way places and route choices that encourage orienteers to find their own way from A to B. Not all landowners understand this, and their expectation is that all runners will follow

the same course along existing tracks. They may well have allowed other events to take place where that is exactly what happens. There is an ongoing process of education for landowners, so that they understand how our sport works. Inviting them to attend our events can be a good idea.

Even with a good understanding of orienteering, landowners may have concerns about environmental damage or disturbance to wildlife. There may be sensitive areas that are no-go areas for orienteering: one example is at King's Wood, where there are Scheduled Ancient Monuments (ancient burial mounds) within the forest.

We also need to be mindful of the impact we have on local residents or other users of the forest. There is particular sensitivity around night events; neighbours can find it quite disturbing to see head torches lighting up the woods without really understanding what is going on. Animals such as horses can also find this upsetting.

Every landowner has their own requirements, which we must follow to be granted permission to use an area. But here are some general rules that I have learned:



He's got licence to roam...unusual competitor at KNC6 Betteshanger Park / Credit: Peter Martin (who survived the encounter)

- Almost every landowner will want to see evidence of our liability insurance. This is arranged by the British Orienteering Federation each year, and it covers us as a Club.
- Most landowners will want to see a Risk Assessment. Not only will they want to see it, they will read it and comment on it if they think it is deficient.
- In some cases we will also be asked for an Event Management Plan. This will go into the arrangements we will be making for the event to run smoothly. An Event Management Plan will be more relevant for larger events but may be requested even for small events, where there might be an impact on other users of the area, for example.
- We will have to let landowners know which parts of their land will be

affected. That can sometimes mean submitting our courses for approval. In that case, an “All Controls” map will normally be sufficient. We may be asked to revise the planned courses – to avoid disturbing a badger sett, for example, or to keep further away from houses.

- It is simplest to send in all the required documents in one go. Some landowners will check their events diary and give us informal approval in advance; others insist on having all the documentation in their hands before beginning the approval process. It is really helpful for me to have the Event Organisers lined up well in advance, so that they can work on the Risk Assessment and Event Management Plan in good time. Where landowners want to approve the courses, the Planner needs to be on board as well.
- Landowners have their own priorities and we might need to alter our approach accordingly. For example, at Brockhill CP we were asked to avoid filling up the car park either by making our own parking arrangements or by holding our event at a quieter time of day. Both the National Trust and Forestry England have asked us to publicise our events so that neighbours know what we are doing. At Mote Park we slotted our event in between ParkRun and a music festival, all happening on the same day.



Lakeside control at Haysden / Credit: Sean Cronin

There were particular problems in obtaining land access while Covid restrictions applied. Thankfully, these now seem to be behind us. However, British Orienteering has established a WhatsApp group for club Access Officers to share information and learning. Recently, some clubs have encountered objections from Natural England because of concerns over protected habitats. Other clubs found that events had to be cancelled during the official period of mourning for Queen Elizabeth II.

Mostly, I would say that the landowners we deal with are supportive and helpful. We need to reciprocate, and the most important message for all orienteers is to appreciate that we are representatives of our sport every time we take part. Landowners will probably not get any feedback if we are well-organised, tidy,

considerate to others and follow their rules. They will be much more than likely to hear about it if we leave a mess, cause damage or disturbance, or upset other people. It rarely happens, but bad feedback obviously makes it harder for us to get landowners on side the next time we ask for permission.

'A MATTER OF (MAPPING) STYLE' (OR 'SPOT THE DIFFERENCE')

David Kingdon

I've planned a few times at Hindleap Warren, including a 'Regional' event back in 2016 and, more recently, our 50th anniversary 'National' event this November - which will have taken place by the time this issue of SaxAlert is published.*

What struck me when looking at courses for the November event was the difference in mapping style between this new Dave Peel version and the former Roger Maher map of 2013. I've planned (and run) in many events on maps of other areas produced by both in the past, so did have some appreciation of the different approach they have to mapping. I thought it might be useful, particularly for newer members, to look in a bit more detail at what these differences are and whether they really matter.

Firstly, the following two maplets demonstrate the differences in level of detail which the two (both professional and highly regarded) mappers choose to show. In these I have stripped out most of the vegetation screens (colour), to show the ground features more clearly. The first extract is from Roger Mayer's 2013 map (RLM Maps). Roger, who is a Southdowns member, has produced many maps for us, regionally and further afield. He is known for the level of detail at which he maps. (For example, he has been known, when discovering a few small rocks in an area, to try to find a few more and then construct a cairn, which he will then map (as a potential control point). This, I must admit, is a technique I followed in a couple of places when producing our Scotney Castle map a few years ago).



The second extract below, is the same area from the new Dave Peel map (Peel Land Surveys). Dave hails from Yorkshire and has also produced several fine maps for us. His style is what I would term a bit more 'minimalist', ignoring some of the finer detail, e.g., smaller knolls/platforms/rootstocks, on the basis that these stand to clutter the map and make it less legible. He is also renowned for his use of contours to represent ground features as we will see below.



Both maps (and these extracts), were produced at 1:10,000 scale. The level of detail which one might map is always a little subjective – to a degree a matter of style rather than absolute correctness. It will also depend on the scale of map being produced, as specified by the club to the mapper. Clearly the first map above would be pretty difficult, with that level of detail, to read at 1:15,000 scale, while the second might well be 'useable'. At a larger scale, say 1:7,500 or 1:5,000, a lot more detail might need to be included. Of course, an 'O' map is something to be used in competition and should be clear and legible and 'fit for purpose'. The level of detail needed by an orienteer may depend, to some extent, on the age and fitness of the individual – a speedy M/W 21 will probably not be interested in the odd knoll or platform, while someone slower like me may use such detail for finer navigation. 'Horses for courses' as you might say. Both maps are excellent in their way and will have been used perfectly well at events. A lot of differences, nevertheless!

It should be noted that Roger largely uses extensive land survey (laborious but detailed) whereas Dave uses as much 'remote' data (Lidar (see below) and aerial photos) as possible before the land survey. A secondary factor may be the age difference of the two – Roger being an M80 and Dave an M55!

Below are two further map extracts that again demonstrate the two different styles. Note particularly the use of contours in the second, in the old quarry area just to the east of the road (in Dave Peel's new map), to show the ground shape, as opposed to Roger Mayer's more traditional 'honeycomb' earthbank style.

Orienteering mapping has, of course, come a long way since the introduction of the sport in the UK in the 1950s. You may recall the Editor's article on the sport's



history in the last SaxAlert, where he referred to the use of photocopied O.S. 1:25,000 maps, with six figure grid references for the control points!

In this context, it should be noted that Dave's new map has the benefit of being based on a Lidar plot, an acronym of "light detection and ranging", recently made freely available through the Government's Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This gives data using the pulse from a laser on a plane or drone, to collect measurements. These are then used to create a 3D model of ground shape and features and allows a much better and more accurate interpretation of the terrain when used with orienteering mapping software.

*And will hopefully have been enjoyed by those members attending!

LIDAR

David Kingdon / Mark Roberts

In my article on the Hindleap Warren maps and the differences in mapping styles, I make mention of developments in orienteering mapping and the use of Lidar. Having written it, I then came across the following article by Mark Roberts, an Australian mapper, in ['Orienteering Queensland'](#), which shows

rather well, I think, what the advent of Lidar data has meant:

“Back in the day, we made orienteering maps starting with a blurry aerial photo with questionable georeferencing and vaguely accurate contours derived from photogrammetry. It took dedication and enormous amounts of time to make an orienteering map of a bushland area, and the result was far from accurate – but no-one noticed – because it was good enough.



Start...

We have all learned orienteering on “good enough” maps that were often hopelessly distorted. Trust me, I drew some of them. I am particularly ashamed of one map that I made for a national championships a very long time ago. But of course no-one noticed how crap it was, because it was good enough; the features were well mapped, they were just not in quite the right place.

Mapping has changed enormously in the last few years, because of generally available excellent LIDAR contours, extremely accurate GPS receivers, and excellent mapping apps. So now when I go out in the bush to work on a map, I know **exactly** where I am, and I know **exactly** how the terrain is really shaped.

I can see something interesting in the LIDAR contours, walk there watching my location on the app, and as my little red dot reaches the contour feature I look down and there indeed is the knoll, or whatever.

Often a subtle feature will tempt me to add it to the map when it doesn't really deserve to be there. I now know exactly where to put it on the map without any extra effort – even if it's a worthless feature. Oops.

These new tools are so very important that if you now ask a mapper to update an old map, we all say “Yeah no sorry, I have to start again from scratch.” Older maps are so very poorly georeferenced and of course distorted by poor ancient aerial photography and terrible contours that our up-to-date and very accurate tools don't help us at all. If I find and accurately plot a new termite mound, but all the



...and Finish—Summer event at
Haysden / Credit: Sean Cronin

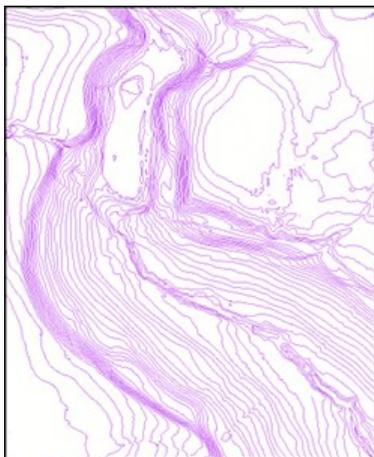
neighbouring features are displaced by 20m because of parallax in the old images, I now have to re-map everything nearby – and then everything else is also wrong – and madness beckons.

I recently re-mapped the core part of Musgrave Park in Southport, Gold Coast, one of our more important maps. It took me a few hours in the field and the same at home. I deleted the old map and started again; the old map was worthless to me.”

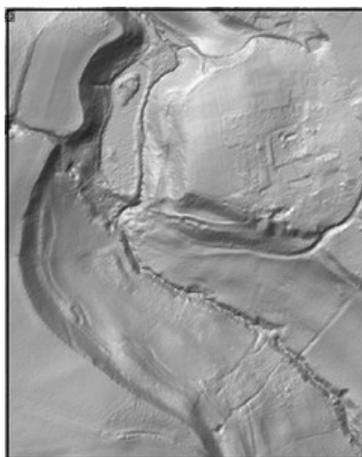
THE WONDER OF LIDAR

Simon Blanchflower

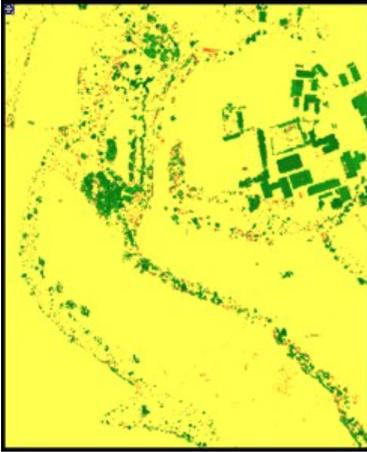
These images from the middle of the Brockhill map show how Lidar data is used as a background when mapping with OCAD. The draft map is produced by tracing over the detail in the background ready for checking on the ground.



OCAD uses the Lidar data to produce this highly detailed contour map with a 1m contour resolution. Banks, gulleys and depressions are clearly visible.



This hill shading view with north-west lighting helps understand the general landform and again small features can be seen.



Lidar defines the landform by the last echo received back, it also records the first echo as this is from the top of the vegetation or other object. In this vegetation height plot large object (trees, houses) are in green, intermediate things (scrub, bushes) are red and low things (grass) are yellow. Very useful for positioning individual trees and vegetation boundaries.

By combining the Lidar information with aerial images (e.g. Google earth) a draft map can be produced. This will need thorough checking on the ground to understand ground features (e.g. distinguish between knolls and depressions) and add the final detail.

MAPPING HISTORY

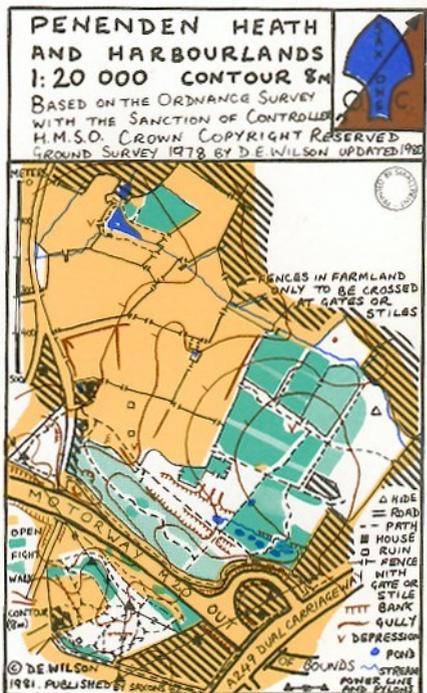
David Wilson

It's not every day that you click on a website and find yourself looking at something which you drew described as a 'work of art' – but that's what happened when I visited the SaxAlert no. 189. Bill Griffiths was kind enough to give me this credit for the Priory Wood map on page 19. The Ightham map on the following page is also one that I drew, though the surveying was largely done by Peter Billingham.

First, I'd like to assure all the Saxons that I knew back around 1980 that I'm still alive and well, bar a short bout of Covid. Because of changed personal circumstances, I'm re-connecting with the orienteering world again. You may see my name appearing under M80 – Southdowns as I'm now living in Chichester. Maybe I'll get to one of the more western SAX events?

I drew about 15 maps for SAXONS in the period 1976 -1986; indeed I don't

know how I had time for anything else! Most of them were of small areas near Maidstone, since I was trying to get orienteering established at Maidstone Grammar School where I was then teaching. Mote Park was at the school's back gate, so I used a B/W temporary map of that area for starters. Abbey Wood and Oaken Wood are areas which soon followed, still in use for local events, but there are others such as Loose Valley and Boxley Warren which have fallen by the wayside.



David's handdrawn 1981 map of Penenden Heath area in Maidstone.

Credit: David Wilson

area for which I drew the map and which might have tempted you north was Hope Woodlands, used for the National Relays in 1975. The weather caught us out there. There was snow lying on the course a week before the event in June, so we planned for a cold day, only to have to cope with a sudden heat wave and 25C in the shade.

When we moved south in 1976, it didn't take long before I was strong-armed by Tony Extance and John Bagness to join a group helping SO to get the map of Eartham Wood near Chichester finished in time for their JK commitment the

Most of these small maps were surveyed very quickly, probably in less than a day and – here's some heresy – I think it's more important for local events to have a selection of usable maps available now than one super-accurate one in a year's time. This does not of course apply to regional events and up.

I started orienteering in Manchester in 1971. My first map was of Styal Woods in 1972, a small area south of Manchester Airport. Land permission was a tense affair. The volunteer NT warden hated people running through 'his' woods; but the permanent warden welcomed us as he could take an evening off, reckoning that active orienteering would discourage the local vandals!

Then came an ambitious map, Wild Moor near Buxton, for the Northern Night Championships in 1973. The area is well named – the course planner was literally blown off his feet while going round a couple of weeks before the event. Another

following year. I then spent quite a lot of time at Hemsted, having difficulties with a detailed path network in the SE corner. I then met a lady there who said “Oh, that’ll be my husband. His hobby is creating new paths through the wood!”

I gave up orienteering in 1987, a combination of too much travelling (all the forests in Kent blew down – remember?), a fairly serious motorbike accident and the day job getting busier as the Government took an interest in education. Since retiring I’ve kept my hand in at map reading by doing long distance footpath walking. I’ve also been busy on family history; but let’s not go there. I think even a generous editor would draw the line at 400 pages just about the Wilsons.

MAPPING HISTORY—FOOTNOTE (PRINTED ON TYVEK)

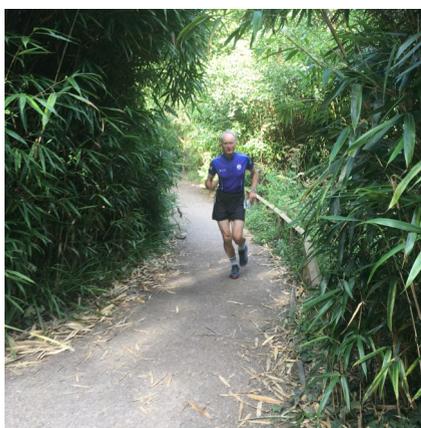
Graham Denney / David Wilson / Peter Billingham

David contacted me following our mention of his maps in the previous, anniversary, issue of SaxAlert. There followed an interesting conversation between us on the subject of mapping, which led to David kindly sharing his memories of a turning point in the development of orienteering technology—the shift to water-resistant maps, courtesy of Tyvek. Shortly afterwards, Peter was in touch via our Secretary, Karen Ransley, to share firstly some photos from Saxons’ 21st anniversary event (see below) then his own memories of Tyvek and how he became involved in the sport.

David Wilson:

“The first Saxons map to be printed on Tyvek® was that of Ightham in 1982 when Peter Billingham, who did much of the survey, obtained a complimentary supply from Wiggins Teape where he worked. Certainly he persuaded them to provide a free batch as a trial for orienteering purposes; there is a note mentioning Wiggins Teape in the margin of the Ightham map.

“Tyvek actually dates back to the 1960s, when it was developed by DuPont, but



Rob Sibley braves the ‘jungle’ at Brockhill

Credit: Sean Cronin



Frosty the Snowman tries to get in on the action—KOL4, Tunbridge Wells Common

Credit: Graham Denney

Wiggins Teape pioneered its use for high-quality printing. The first Tyvek map in the UK was probably that of Leith Hill at JK 77 - confirmed by a mention of its use there at https://www.mdoc.org.uk/documents/newsletters/Oct_2020.pdf page 12. I was there and I've looked at my copy of the map - it is indeed on Tyvek."

In terms of map printing technology, David remembers:

"All the serious maps I ever drew were colour-separated i.e. one sheet per colour to be printed and by 1982 that meant using black etching ink on dimensionally stable film plus 'Letraset' adhesive film for shading. These were turned over to the printer to get on with so I assume it was offset-litho, given the need for registration marks to be included on each tracing. Presumably a ream of Tyvek was provided for the Ightham map but I don't remember handling Tyvek until the map had been printed, so I guess Peter arranged for it to be delivered directly to the printer.

"Less serious maps e.g. for training events were often done on an office stencil duplicator ('Gestetner') machine. I've sent Simon [Blanchflower] one of this style of Mote Park for digitising. A friend in MDOC experimented with 2-colour printing from stencils on an office duplicator - just about passable!

"Smallprint, a company in Staines had acquired a good reputation for printing high quality O-maps and for a time had a virtual monopoly on maps printed in the SE."

Peter Billinghamurst:

"I was working for Wiggins Teape (which does not now exist). Tyvek is made by Du Pont of America and my company had the agency on it for UK, so I could source it at wholesale prices. Paul Kanssen of Smallprint, experimented with it and found it suitable for printing. It was used for several events, including the British Champs on Ashdown Forest in about 1982 (for which Saxons was the lead organising club). This event was extremely wet, which caused the colour of the unprotected maps to partially washout. Also, detail was lost where the maps were folded. Accordingly, Tyvek was not generally pursued and was eventually



**Unusual hide at Brockhill
summer event**

Credit: Sean Cronin

superseded by a more reliable medium.

“I started Orienteering in the late 1960s when I was in the Army. In typical Army fashion, an order came from on high that there would be an Army competition, which all units would enter. I was duly nominated as the officer in charge., when it was still relatively young for my unit, having not ever having heard of the sport before. So, I went on an O planning course and then borrowed the unit’s cross-country running team, taught them to read maps (in those days O maps were B&W copies of 1:25,000 OS maps). We did well by finishing 2nd! And even better, I had become hooked on the sport. In 1971, I was posted to Fort Halstead, just north of Sevenoaks, when I joined Saxons. At that time Saxons was chaired by founder Al (Reed?), who with partner Val, were collectively known as “Al

& Val”. Doug Deeks was a leading light and treasurer. I became editor of what was then SaxNews and eventually succeeded Al as chairman. My first effort at organising an event was at Toys Hill, a lovely stretch of Beech Forest flattened in the famous gale. This was not an unqualified success, as in my innocence I had also undertaken the planning. I was still putting out controls when the first runners started! Across the road from Fort Halsted, was some fragmented woodland, Badgers Mount, where I tried my hand at mapping for the first time. I loved the surveying part, but found the drawing fiddly, as no doubt described by David Wilson. I used pen and ink on film, but the professional mappers would scribe onto waxed, plastic sheets. I welcomed and was an early adopter of digital mapping.”

SAXONS 21st ANNIVERSARY PHOTOS

Peter Billinghamurst

The following photos were sent in by former Chairman, Peter Billinghamurst, who found them recently and contacted our Club Secretary, Karen Ransley, to see if we wanted copies for our records. They are from the Club’s 21st anniversary event. If the longer-serving members can identify any of the unnamed individuals in the photos, please let the Editor know!



Left, Tony Extance (a former chairman); next left, Peter's daughter Kay, who was a junior international. Others unknown.

Barbara Plant



Dorothy Hale on right, others unknown

**Tracy Curtis; Peter's wife Cora, bottom right corner – not posing!
All credits: Peter Billinghamurst**



LETTER FROM YORKSHIRE

Bill Griffiths

Well, it comes to everybody eventually. Sadly in my case – sooner than I thought. I am referring to my demise from orienteering. (I am still a member of BOF but have let my membership of EBOR lapse for now). Till the pandemic and the UK's withdrawal from the EU, I used to enjoy both walking and orienteering in Europe. I am sure this is just an excuse but there is little doubt that I am not as fit as I used to be. (Living in Yorkshire is not as handy as it was in Kent. Although the Hull to Rotterdam ferry is quite useful.) I have also been diagnosed with mild epilepsy which means that I can't drive either. Bit of a problem getting to orienteering events – which are normally out "in the sticks."

At least the onset of urban events helps a bit – and I will be going to the Brighton City Event in December, (train strikes permitting). My sister (who is fitter and younger than me) lives in Brighton and has taken a little sympathy on me – so you will see my name on Brighton Parks POC's and (maybe) at the BCR! (alongside SAX "regular" Graham Denney) perhaps.



Brockhill summer event

Credit: Sean Cronin

Who knows what the future will bring? I get my driving licence back in February. I am feeling fit and well and haven't had a seizure since Feb 2022. Need to do the "couch to 5k" a bit to get my fitness back. Maybe in 2023, I could do a 5km parkrun again!!

Meanwhile I am keeping fit (a bit) by doing mapping. The odd one in Yorkshire and you will see my name credited to odd maps elsewhere (including a few in SAX territory).

Meanwhile, thanks to your esteemed Saxalert editor, I continue to make the odd contribution to your mag. (Well, I was an active Saxon orienteer from 1980 till 2003).

LEAGUES

Kent Night Cup 2022/23:

Just 9 events into this season's KNC League and the series is being as fiercely contested as ever. Results for the first 8 KNCs show that 86 runners have already taken part at least once, and just 2 points separate the current leader - Sean Cronin (SAX) on 158 points from second-placed Mark Ford of CHIG on 156. Another tussle is emerging between Chris Hooker (SO) - 3rd on 148 points - and Neil Speers (DFOK) in 4th on 146. 5 more runners are closely spaced between 140 and 130 points (5th-9th places), with a further 4 hot on each others' heels between 120 and 118 points, including current leading lady, Sam Prior (SAX, 118 pts). Clearly this is already shaping up to be an exciting season. A wide range of locations is again on offer, with the first 8 events having visited Knole Park, Horley, Seasalter and Whitstable, Kings Wood, Hucking Estate, Hargate Forest and 2 first-time KNC destinations - Betteshanger Park and Tenterden. As ever, the remaining venues are spread across much of Kent, Surrey and East Sussex thanks to the help of our neighbouring clubs, DFOK, MV and SO.

The [current league table is here](#).

Kent Orienteering League 2022/23:

This season's Kent Orienteering League kicked off in early October with an event hosted by DFOK at Shooter's Hill, in SE London. November's event was held at a classic SAX venue, Mote Park in Maidstone. Early December saw us at Shoreham Woods near Sevenoaks, again courtesy of DFOK, followed by a neatly pre-Christmas KOL on Tunbridge Wells Common (SAX) on the 17th, as a daytime warm-up for that evening's Brighton City Race. The New Year will take in Buckmore Park near Chatham (DFOK), Trosley in February (SAX) and hilly Lullingstone Country Park (DFOK) in early March. Blean, Cobham and Betteshanger take the series through to late May.



Final control: Roger Pring in action at a snowbound Tunbridge Wells Common (KOL4) / Credit: Graham Denney

At the time of going to press, (results available up to the Shoreham Woods

event), the League looked like this:

Blue: Antoine Pesenti (DFOK) leads, with notable Saxons being Peter Dobra (4th), Alison Howe (5th), Sean Cronin (7th), Sam Prior (11th) and Steve Elliott (12th).

Green: Geoff Goodwin (DFOK) leads, pursued by a horde of Saxons: David Kingdon (3rd), Peter Lilja (4th), Rob Sibley (6th), Nicky Bedford (9th), Toby Prior (12th) and Judith Armitt (15th).

Orange: Adam Davidson (DFOK) leads, with Saxons Holly Howe (2nd), Kasie Chapman (4th) close behind, then Ronald Huggett (11th) and Adam Youseman (12th).

Yellow: the leaderboard here is dominated by Saxons Juniors - Harry Green is in current pole position, closely followed by Charlie Green (2nd), Percy Sanders (4th), Noah White (5th), Elliott Sanders (6th), Dylan Collins (7th), Samuel Wilks (9th), Alice Evans (12th), Sebastian White (14th), Izyan Murshed (16th) and Cameron Jones (18th).

Score: Saxons are present throughout the table here, with Will Prior currently 2nd to Keith Bennett of DFOK. Nicky Bedford (9th), Phillip Locke (14th) and Thomas Bates (17th) complete our KOL contingent as of early December, with 7 more events to go.

Schools: In the Schools League, which has been relaunched for this season, Ashford School currently lead the Seniors' table, and Lordswood School the Juniors'.

[The latest League tables are available here.](#)

South East League:

2022/23 League:

The current season is but 4 events old, with another 7 due between now and mid-May. As of the most recent event for which results are available - CHIG's Mitre event at Epping Forest East on 4th December - SO lead Division 1 (22 match points), closely followed by HH on 19 and SLOW on 18. DFOK (10 points), GO (8) and SAX (7) are trailing by a considerable distance at present, but with most of the season still ahead of us the final result is still far from certain. In Division 2, SN and MV are tying for first place (25 pts each), then it's LOK (20), BAOC (14), HAVOC (12), CHIG (10) and RAFO (4). At present Alison Howe is the only Saxon in the top 5

scorers overall, with 103.3 pts. HH and LOK both won their divisions convincingly at Epping, where only 7 people met or exceeded their target speed for their course.

[Club results](#) to Epping Forest East (4th December).

The remaining events in this year's League are:

22-Jan-23 DFOK Chelwood

05-Feb-23 GO Waggoners Wells

19-Feb-23 LOK Holmbury

05-Mar-23 HH Burnham & Egypt

19-Mar-23 MV Balcombe

16-Apr-23 SLOW Hankley (TBC)

14-May-23 SO Eartham Wood

[2021/22 Final SE League Table:](#)

The 2021/22 SE League was won convincingly by SO, on 52 match points with a clear 14 point lead over their 2 nearest rivals, HH and SLOW, both on 38 points. SAX managed to remain in Division 1 by taking 4th place with 33 points, but SN (31 points) and MV (17 points) were relegated to Division 2 for the 2022/23 season.

[2021 Individual League final results:](#)

In the Individual League, Saxons' results were led by Sarah Howes on 962.0 points, Mark Glaisher (838.4), Beryl Pring (829.6), Alison Howe (617.7) and Simon Greenwood (490.4). 63 individual Saxons took part in at least 1 of that season's SE League events.

If however we look at each runner's average (total points divided by number of events they took part in), there is some change to the top 5: Sarah Howes still led the Saxons table (average of 106.9 points), followed again by Mark Glaisher (104.8), then Alison Howe (103.0), Simon Evans (who managed a mighty 90 points from a single event - Chilham - which makes his average the same as his total points!), then Simon Blanchflower (86.2).

[2022 Individual League results as of Dec 2022:](#)

The SE Individual League runs to the calendar year, and all events for 2022 have now taken place and results are complete up to and including CHIG's

Epping E event on 4th December. **Well done the following Saxons!**

W12—Holly Howe (3rd)

W18—Ffion Bricknell (3rd)

W40—Karen Ransley (2nd), Sam Prior (6th)

W45—Lisa Blair (=18th), Catherine Slade (21st)

W50—Alison Howe (1st), Karen Bricknell (9th), Andrea Pauling (=20th), Lisa Fulcher (=22nd)

W55—Marion Bond (=12th), Renate Henry (=12th)

W60—Sarah Howes (2nd), Barbara Castle (19th)

W65—Jean Fitzgerald (6th)

W70—Heather Brown (=7th)

W75—Beryl Pring (1st)

M12—Will Prior (3rd)

M16—Austin Howe (1st), Ben Cronin (3rd)

M18—Toby Prior (4th), Henry Taylor (=11th)

M20—Dorian Kopij (6th)

M21—Peter Dobra (5th)

M45—Stuart Williams (=14th)

M50—Simon Deeks (9th), Graham Denney (18th), Brendon Howe (20th), Andrew Derrick (23rd), Richard Leahy (=25th), Rick Bayne (=28th)

M55—Sean Cronin (8th), Mel Taylor (18th), Neil Bricknell (19th), Alan Hickling (31st), Nick Betts (=36th), Brian Henry (48th), Richard Field (51st), Robert Newton (55th), Ken Fox (56th)

M60—Bohdan Rainczuk (=25th), Steven Elliott (=33rd), Peter Rogers (=36th), Graham Thomas (=36th), Robert Gladden (=39th), Paul Bowen (41st), Adam Fulcher (42nd)

M65—Simon Greenwood (8th), Simon Blanchflower (14th), Rob Sibley (17th)

M70—Mark Glaisher (2nd), David Kingdon (8th), John van Rooyen (22nd), Peter

Martin (25th), Richard Whitaker (27th), Phil Norris (28th)

M75—Roger Pring (4th...and apparently 16th as well!)

M80—Jeremy Oldershaw (2nd), Doug Deeks (3rd), Tony Connellan (9th)

[More info about the SE League and SE Orienteering Association is available here.](#)

UK Orienteering League:

2022 saw a near-full series of UKOL events run for the first time in 3 years (both 2020 and 2021 leagues were badly hit by Covid lockdowns). 26 events were planned for this year, with 2 being withdrawn, resulting in 24 actually taking place.



As a club, Saxons came 26th (of 108 clubs) with 3308 points, versus winners SYO's 5821 points. Of our neighbours, SN came 6th (4935 pts), SO 10th (4575 pts), SLOW 18th (3798 pts), SN (B) 39th (2591 pts), SO (B) 50th (2230 pts), MV 52nd (2202 pts), SLOW (B) 66th (1791 pts), DFOK 77th (1343 pts), and LOK 82nd (1009 pts).

Notable Saxons in the Individual competition were:

W40—Karen Ransley (38th, 71 pts)

W45—Catherine Slade (43rd, 102 pts), Sarah Covey-Crump (69th, 42 pts)

W50—Alison Howe (4th, 365 pts)

W60—Sarah Howes (6th, 365 pts)

W65—Jean Fitzgerald (48th, 109 pts)

W75—Beryl Pring (6th, 317 pts)

M16—Austin Howe (12th, 315 pts)

M21—Peter Dobra (56th, 119 pts)

M40—Simon Evans (51st, 65 pts)

M50—Brendon Howe (8th, 341 pts), Simon Deeks (49th, 124 pts)

M55—Alan Hickling (42nd, 187 pts), Sean Cronin (73rd, 102 pts)

M60—Graham Thomas (137th, 38 pts)

M65—Simon Greenwood (31st, 199 pts), Simon Blanchflower (126th, 43 pts)

M70—Mark Glaiser (14th, 276 pts), Peter Martin (23rd, 210 pts), John van Rooyen (42nd, 138 pts), David Kingdon (72nd, 85 pts)

M75—Roger Pring (66th, 82 pts)

M80—Jeremy Oldershaw (2nd, 356 pts), Doug Deeks (11th, 219 pts)

[2022 schedule of events](#)

[2022 Club League](#)

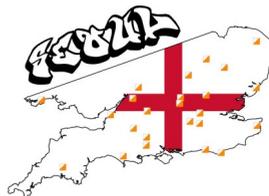
[2022 Individual League](#) (filter by setting Club to SAX to view individual Saxons' results)

[More info about the UK Orienteering League is available here.](#)

SEOUL:

Southern England Orienteering Urban League:

This year's SEOUL league consists of 20 events, with a further 2 having been cancelled or withdrawn. At the time of writing, only the Brighton City Race on 17th December has not yet taken place. Saxons' contribution came in early February, with our very enjoyable Whitstable Urban race.



Open Men: Alan Hickling (6th, 559 pts), Peter Dobra (29th, 249 pts)

Young Junior Women 12-: Holly Howe (7th, 100 pts)

Junior Men 16-: Austin Howe (19th, 96 pts)

Veteran Men 40+: Stuart William (88th, 88 pts), Andrew Derrick (95th, 87 pts), Graham Denney (112th, 84 pts)

Veteran Women 40+: Catherine Slade (6th, 438 pts), Karen Ransley (24th, 180 pts), Lisa Blair (31st, 100 pts), Sam Prior (53rd, 91 pts), Lisa Fulcher (66th, 88 pts)

Supervet Men 55+: Graham Thomas (41st, 228.5), Sean Cronin (109th, 86 pts), Brian Henry (119th, 84 pts), Neil Bricknell (127th, 83 pts)

Supervet Women 55+: Joanne Hickling (68th, 91 pts), Renate Henry (79th, 89 pts)

Ultravet Men 65+: Simon Blanchflower (85th, 91 pts), Peter Martin (89th, 90 pts), Phil Norris (107th, 85 pts), Simon Greenwood (124th, 81 pts), David Kingdon

(147th, 74 pts)

Ultravet Women 65+: Heather Brown (39th, 96 pts), Jean Fitzgerald (41st, 93 pts)

Hypervet Men 75+: Roger Pring (13th, 271 pts), Jeremy Oldershaw (40th, 90 pts), Tony Connellan (43rd, 89 pts)

Hypervet Women 75+: Beryl Pring (=5th, 200 pts)

[SEOUL website](#)

SAXONS OUT & ABOUT

Saxons At Home

Hindleap Warren—27th November 2022

Saxons 50th Anniversary & National Event

Hindleap Warren played host to the Saxons 50th Anniversary Event. The woods were resplendent in their autumn colours and recent damp weather gave everything a shiny hue. As one might expect with a level B race we had over 280 entries, this being the maximum we could possibly manage given the car parking restrictions.

The weather overnight and during the event was pretty wet requiring some last minute amendments such as the addition of safety hand ropes over swollen river crossings for the Orange course, and amending the route from the finish to avoid a little of the mud. Some road surface water flooding required competitors to find the long way round and made wellies mandatory for the many helpers.

Hindleap Warren is a tricky event to organise due to the number of road crossings and the use of multiple parking areas and we needed over 30 helpers to make it a reality. Many thanks to all those who volunteered, including those from



Forward leap at Hindleap—

Start box action

Credit: Sean Cronin



Our late club President, Simon Greenwood, and Chairman Jean Fitzgerald at Hindleap

Credit: Brendon Howe

neighbouring clubs DFOK, SO and SLOW that offered their help.

Feedback from competitors was super; many congratulating David Kingdon on the well planned and interesting courses. Great work from Charlie Turner as controller too.

Thanks should also go to the 7th Burgess Hill Scout Group who laid on an amazing spread of hot food and drink options for everyone. The bacon sarnies were so good I was forced to try a second one!

Whilst I'm thanking people I should say thanks to the Ashdown Conservators for allowing us use of Hindleap Warren and the far car park, and to The London Youth Ashdown Forest Activity Centre for the use of their land, parking and facilities.

Brendon Howe, Joint Organiser

[Event results](#) | [Route gadget](#)

Saxons Invade Dover Castle—Saturday 3rd December 2022

On a cold, windy and misty Saturday evening (3rd December) three Saxons braved a 5k run within the walls of Dover castle. The intrepid trio were Renate and Brian Henry and Simon Blanchflower.

It was organised by Sporting Events UK but did not seem to have been widely advertised so only attracted about 90 runners. The set-up was good with full chip-timing and a jolly of atmosphere aided by music, free Santa hats and glow bands. The start was on the green in front of the inner bailey and the two-circuit route took us round the central keep then meandered down to the lowest point within the walls overlooking Dover harbour. This was, inevitably, followed by a long uphill section to the barbican at the



Dover Castle 5K

Credit: Simon Blanchflower



L to R: Simon, Renate & Brian at Dover Castle / Credit: Simon Blanchflower

top, through a long tunnel and back to the start.

It was something a bit different and definitely worth looking out for if repeated next year.

Simon Blanchflower

KOL 4 Tunbridge Wells Common—Saturday 17th December 2022

Back in September I was asked by Brendon Howe if I was prepared to help organise and plan a KOL event. I was a bit hesitant as I have been out of the sport for 40 years and am very new to orienteering in the UK and only joined Saxons very recently, but I said yes as I thought I would enjoy it. Richard Field offered to support me and give guidance throughout. I found his help invaluable and learnt so much doing this with him.

I found out during the early stages when visiting the common, it is a very nice space for the locals and the sheer numbers using it every day is a testament to that. It is a very tight and compact space, and it was a challenge to squeeze in the distance on the blue course and provide an appropriate orienteering challenge for both green and blue runners, but the common has some nice features that provided good control points.

It turned out to be a great winter's day for a bit of orienteering at the common which served up a nice bleak sunshine over the cricket ground all covered in snow. There was a bit of early panic as I forgot to take my dibber with me when positioning the first 10 controls and I had to go out again to wake them up.



Snowy KOL 4

Credit: Andrea Pauling

Around 70 entrants turned up on the day and from the feedback seemed to have enjoyed it as there was plenty of tired but happy faces at download. I was thrown a bit by one runner, who when arriving started talking in Swedish to me. It turned out he was a local, Nick Barrable who lives in Stockholm, and it was nice to have a chat. Nick won the blue course on a very strong time of 33 minutes. Alison Howe was the fastest woman on blue with a time of 42 minutes. Mark Glaisher took the honours on the green course with a



time of 39 minutes. It was nice to see so many young orienteers running the yellow course on the day, and I also met some adults who were trying orienteering for the first time, this is good for the future of the sport.

I would like to thank everyone who supported me during the planning, Andrea who on the Friday went out to take some pictures to give us an idea of the wintry conditions, and all of you who volunteered during the event. A special thank you to those of you who collected all the controls afterwards without me having to go out again. This was my first event and your help made it easy for me on the day.

Snowy KOL 4

Credit: Andrea Pauling

Thank you to all the runners for turning up on the day, you all made my day.

See you all soon.

Peter Lilja

[Event results](#) | [Routegadget](#)

KNC 9 Tunbridge Wells Urban—Thursday 22nd December 2022

I was disappointed upon seeing the SE Yuletide O calendar not to get my KNC fix just before Xmas and after NY so volunteered to run events at these times. Luckily an Ian Ditchfield Esq. of Mole Valley Map and Compass Foot Racing Society has taken up the reins for the January date and I took Dec 22nd. Keeping it simple, liaising with the ever-capable KNC Co-ordinator Mark Glaisher, we settled upon a TW Street-O, resurrecting the 1:4000 Urban map made for the 2014 summer Urban O on my 40th Birthday - and what a splendid day that was!

Never the biggest fan of "funny business" i.e. odds and evens, dumbbells, stupid -whistles and suchlike, I went for a straightforward, get them all in any order - simples. In order to 'spread the O love' around glorious Royal Tunbridge Wells, I ended up with 32 controls and tried to place them so route choice and direction changes were a constant thought for runners.

I was delighted to see Tom Dobra, running to/from home (4.3km away) taking the lot in 43 mins running 10km or so. With hills that is a solid pace - in shorts and yellow Headington RRC vest too. I had a 6.5km optimal straight line route but was more than happy to have a small number clearing them all. 5 did and 2 more should have but 'missed' seeing a control till it was too late. Alison Howe managed the lot with an impressive 8 seconds to spare. Cunning time-

management with antlers on. Mark G's printer can't do A3 printing so it was back to back, adding an extra dimension for the flip - just to keep you on your toes. It was the southern central cluster that was the real teaser - what to do when. I think second placed Edward Lines got a more optimal route through these than Tom D did, having done the first half of the race with the same route as each other.



Prizegiving at KNC 9 / Credit: Rob Lines

Hope everyone had fun and enjoyed the 11 degrees and no rain! The 24 who stayed on for the secret Santa were treated to some live singing at TN1 Bar and Restaurant. The Opera House was full with a long Q outside. Mark Collins negotiated a table for 12, could fit 20 possibly, in TN1, so 24 of us piled in eventually!! I suspect this could be one of the closest apres-Os from a KNC start/Finish - some 40m or so.

Many thanks to Tom Dobra for some Computer consulting when he finished and the beautiful control collectors: Sarah-Jane Barrable, Mark Glaisher, Graham Denney, David Lobley, Messrs. D & G Thomas, Stuart Williams and Councillor Martin Brice - some were playing with gripple keys for their first time.

See you at Abinger Roughs on the 5th Jan!

Nick Barrable

[Event results](#)

Saxons Further Afield

London City Race—3rd September 2022

Organised by SLOW

This was the second time I had run in the City of London. Last time was in 2019 and the start was in the Barbican which was really daunting but I had really enjoyed the event so decided to have another go this year and I wasn't disappointed.

The start was in The Temple, going through alleys, across squares, an underpass and more alleys until arriving by St Pauls Cathedral. Route choice from here looked okay and we had been warned that we might get held up at



Family prizewinners: L to R

Austin, Alison and Beryl, London M16.

City Race

Credit: Beryl Pring

Ludgate Hill due to filming going on but of course I forgot this and ran the gauntlet (didn't see any cameras though, or even a film star!). I don't think it saved me any time but it added a bit of excitement.

The route then took us to some steps, of course the control was at the top, you did have route choice, I decided to go down again. Another control and then through a little park, more alleys before arriving back at The Temple. The last control took in some cobbles (ouch) down to the finish close to The Embankment.

Really good fun. To top it all I came first in W75. This was quite a family affair as Alison (Howe) was 2nd W40 and Austin (Howe) 3rd M16.

Beryl Pring

Brighton City Race 2022—Saturday 17th December 2022

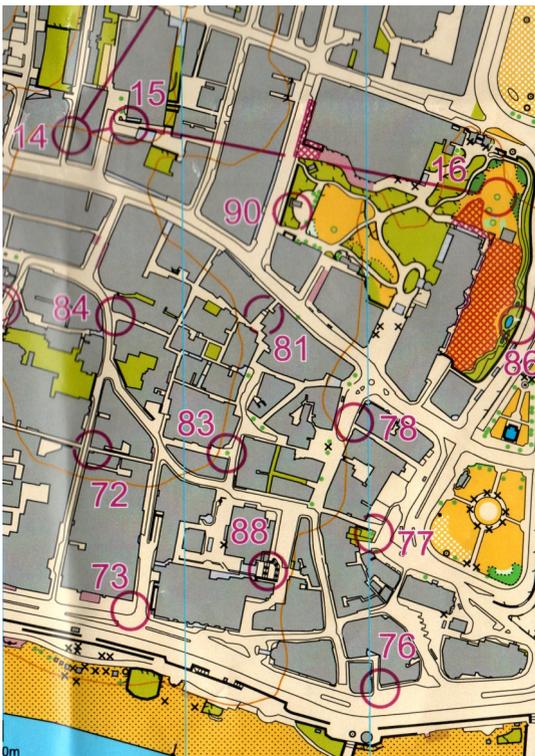
For the first time since 2019, the Brighton City Race was able to be held this year. Fortunately the Covid lockdowns which had stymied the event each of the last 2 years were conspicuous by their absence. The race went ahead as planned, and thanks to the efforts of members of Southdowns Orienteers was fully restored to its usual traditions: setting (event HQ as ever at the conveniently located Middle Street Primary School), time (the last weekend before Christmas and final event of the year's SEOUL urban league), and navigational challenge (plenty of devilry afoot courtesy of planner Neil Crickmore).

This is the fourth BCR I've done and I always look forward to it. In addition to the usual frenzied pace of an urban event, it provides a good excuse to visit Brighton and experience the town in all its Christmas splendour. It's an atmospheric time of year to be there, and a highlight of the winter O-calendar that was sadly missing in 2020 and 2021.

That said, train strikes probably put some people off this time, especially from further afield such as London, and numbers appeared to be down on what I remembered from 3 years ago. (That is, you could actually move in the school hall that was used as the event assembly area!)

This year Neil Crickmore had employed his fiendish skills to plan a series of

challenging split courses - half line, half Spanish Score, each was a veritable Minotaurian hybrid beast being pursued through the labyrinth of historic Brighton. Starting on the front, the first section of Course 2 (the Men's Open) was a line course along the beach and adjacent seafront area, then taking an underpass back up into the western and northern parts of the town centre. So far so good. Then came the googy: the line course dumped us—iconically, and with style—in the Royal Pavilion gardens for a 13-control Spanish Score course (olé!) A Spanish Score is where, as usual, the controls can be visited in any order, but they all have to be visited. Where a Spanish Score is held on its own, the winner is the runner to do this in the shortest time; here, obviously, everybody's total time for the entire course—line plus score—counted.



Olé! Line course meets Spanish Score in Brighton / Credit: Southdowns Orienteers

It's quite a challenge to have to change mental gear halfway through a race. Suddenly we had to jolt ourselves out of the simplistic thinking of the line course to plan ahead properly over all the remaining controls. It was vital to identify a route that took in all 13 of them in the shortest distance—in the Lanes, Brighton's cluster of narrow, winding and above all busy historic alleys and squares. The trick seemed to be to follow a series of alternate north- and south-bound curves, like a tightly-packed sinewave, to Hoover up all the controls (well, it worked for me!) Sadly, any advantage I gained from a lack of competition this year was well and truly offset by a lack of overall fitness and speed, by having done the KOL at Tunbridge Wells Common earlier in the afternoon, and by running in worn-out shoes.

Still, this year's BCR was as enjoyable as ever. Neil likes to use a range of planning techniques to split runners up and keep them entertained, hence routing through iconic areas such as the Lanes and the seafront, and course

variations such as butterfly loops, route choice and, this year, the combination of line and Spanish Score. The Spanish Score in particular was used to overcome the problem of lots of runners taking the same route through the Lanes at a busy time. The challenge it presented of having to change mindset halfway through the race was novel and fun, and made it great to be back in Brighton again after so long. Many thanks are due to Neil, organiser Rob Lines, the rest of Southdowns, Middle Street Primary School and Brighton & Hove City Council.

Graham Denney

GO Christmas Cracker, Newlands Corner—Sunday 18th December 2022

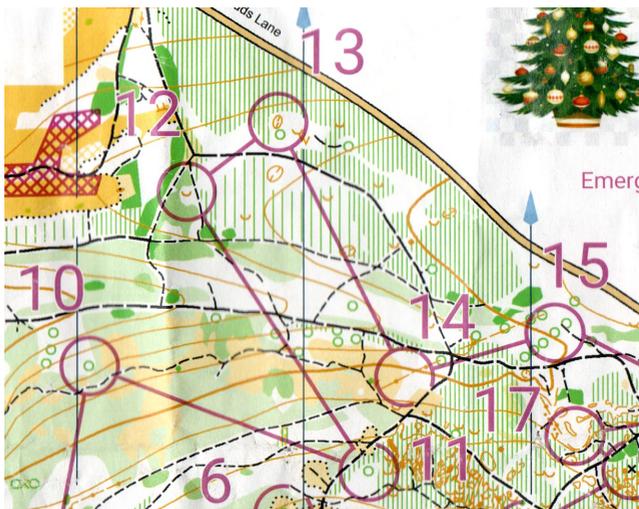
Like Brighton the day before, it's always fun to have a run at Newlands Corner near Guildford. High up on the North Downs just outside Guildford, it's a relatively small but challenging area with plenty of variety. GO traditionally run their Christmas Cracker here each year, with a drop of mulled wine and socialising by the car park afterwards, and it's a most enjoyable way to start preparing for the festive season. You know it's nearly Christmas when you find yourself in the Start box at Newlands Corner!

As ever this year's event was well planned and organised, and Short Blue, my course, in particular made good use of the varied terrain in the area. Starting from the top of the scarp, the route took me straight down the steep hill to bounce westwards around the large open area of the hillside with occasional brief forays into the adjacent woods.

From control 7 a climb due north took me into an area of shiggy brambles and pits amongst the trees for control 8. The area looked familiar, then I remembered that this was where I came a cropper for at least 20 minutes last year. I should have learned from that, or more pointedly, learned not to be tempted to follow other runners off the path. The chap in front of me turned off too soon and without thinking I took the same route, only to find nothing but brambles where I expected to see a control. However, recalling last year's mistake, I quickly returned to the path and decided to actually think about what I was doing. Slightly to the north the map showed a junction with a side path from the east. The control should be no more than 50m west of the junction, on the edge of a large pit and on a vegetation boundary. A quick bearing and a scramble through the brambles (the wood wasn't quite as runnable as the map implied!) and control 8 came into sight, complete with a rising sense of embarrassment at how easy it was to find from the right attack point.

It wasn't my only mistake that day. The worst was yet to come.

Controls 9 and 10 fell easily to the swipe of my dibber - perhaps too easily, because I became rather complacent while following the path from 10 towards 11, and didn't bother pacing it out. After a while however a sense of concern started building up, as the path seemed to be going on much further than shown on the map. Surely I should have reached a path junction by now? And why weren't all these side paths shown on the map? Where exactly was I? Gradually I became disorientated, and by the time I reached a path junction had largely lost contact with the map. I tried to re-orientate, decided to take the path to my right and looked for control 11 in the woods there. Nothing. Bewildered, I retraced my steps, only to find myself in luck - or so I thought. Back at the path junction a young family had just discovered a control in the woods right behind where I'd been scratching my head a few minutes before. Eagerly I leapt in, dibbed and ran off - all without properly checking the control number.



Controls 10-14 at Newlands Corner—the author's Nemesis / Credit: Guildford Orienteers

Controls 12 and 13 were fairly easy to find; 13 I'm sure was more or less in the same place as last year. Then it was on to 14. A path led back down to a four-way junction in a valley bottom. 14 was located in a patch of runnable forest to the SW of the junction, a lovely patch of widely spaced yew trees. Following an obvious earth bank led me directly to the control. I dibbed, leapt out of the woods onto the path beyond - and found myself exactly where I'd been for control "11".

I had just dibbed control 14 for the second time. And hadn't dibbed control 11 at all.

Now the map became clear, particularly the complex network of paths in this area. But what to do? The only way to avoid being disqualified would be to dib 11, then completely re-dib 12, 13 and 14 in order. That meant a descent into the valley again followed by a climb out of it back to 12 and 13, then re-descending

and re-ascending to 14. I was cold, wet, tired and, for various personal reasons, quite upset at the time (which at least explains why my head wasn't really in it that day) and really couldn't be bothered to do all that over again.

Instead I decided that I would get that ***** control 11 (if it killed me), then continue from 15. There didn't seem to be much point in leaving out 11 completely, as I'd be disqualified anyway and I was only just over 100m away from it. So I went and found it, amidst much *sotto voce* cursing (this is a family sport, after all), and went on to 15. This was near the end of a straight line of beautiful, huge mature yew trees, clearly deliberately planted rather than self-seeded, quite curious. There were plenty of small pockets of yew forest in the event area, but this line stood out by its apparent artificiality. Not far beyond, controls 16 to 20 were all in an intense zone of large pits. What, I wondered, had been extracted here, why and when? It was another curiosity of Newlands Corner deserving future investigation.

At Download, my semi-random ramblings around the course naturally caused a fair amount of confusion followed by amusement. But at least I had completed the course - just not quite in the right order. It was nothing that a couple of cups of mulled wine couldn't put right though, and like last year, Christmas Crackering at Newlands Corner was most enjoyable. Thanks to GO for putting on the event and making good use of the terrain. Next Christmas I aim to get it right...well, I've got a year to prepare for it!

Graham Denney

Saxons Abroaaaad!

Red Earth & Wet Feet—Knocknagalty, Co. Limerick, Ireland—Sunday 2nd October 2022

As many of you know, in recent years I've been spending a lot of time on the west coast of Ireland. Unfortunately there's little orienteering close at hand—most events seem to centre around Dublin, the southeast of the country, or Cork, as that's where most of the population lives—which means taking the opportunities within reach when they arise, and being prepared to do a lot of driving.

And so it was that in early October I took part in a Cork Orienteering Club event at Knocknagalty on the Limerick/Tipperary border. The event area was in Coillte (= Irish Forestry Commission) woods on the southern slopes of the Galtys - a 30 -km range of rugged sandstone and shale mountains in the south of Ireland, with

24 peaks above 100m, and the 13th-highest mountain in the country, Galtymore. At 919m it is one of Ireland's 13 Furths—a Munro-equivalent height peak in England, Wales or Ireland, and the highest point in both Co. Limerick and Co. Tipperary, with the county boundary running right along the ridge. The name Galtymore is an Anglicisation of the Irish *Cnoc Mór na nGaibhlte*—big hill of the Galtees, which is certainly accurate. Galty or Galtee itself may derive from *Sléibhte na gCoillte* (mountains of the forests, though this is by no means certain). So Knocknagalty (*Cnoc na nGaibhlte*)—which is the name of the townland on the southern slopes of the range - simply means hill of the Galtees, or possibly hill of the mountains of the forests, which in light of the event area makes a lot of sense.

Given previous, albeit limited, experiences of orienteering in Ireland, I opted to run down and do Light Green (4.3km / 135m / 16 controls). I have found the terrain in Irish forest events to be more technical than in SE England, probably more on a par with the North, Scotland or Wales, so at 6.5km with 225m of climb, Blue looked a bit too much to tackle. Plus I had promised a couple of Ukrainian refugee friends who came with me that we'd climb Galtymore afterwards. With the contracting daylight at that time of year beginning to impact on lengthy outdoors activities, we needed to be off the hill by about 5pm.

The event started well, with a friendly welcome from the Cork-O organisers. Good use of the map, control descriptions and a working knowledge of the devious nature of orienteering planners meant that I found the first control on a fence below the more obvious line of a track, ahead of the runner in front of me. Then it was on to control 2, not just below the track in a river valley but actually on a river/stream junction. It was difficult estimating distance along the track, to pick an attack point for descending the steep bank, but by sheer guesswork I picked the best spot. It still meant splashing across the stream, as the control was on the far side, in the crook of the junction with the river. And then splashing back. 2 controls in and my feet were soaked already—welcome to Ireland!



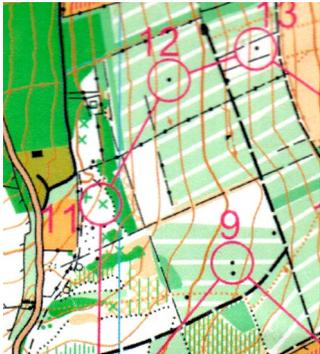
Control 2 on Lt Green at Knocknagalty

Credit: Cork Orienteering Club

As I scrambled back up the bank I noticed for the first time the distinct redness of the earth here. It reminded me of the soils around the Brecon Beacons, which are also sandstone (specifically Old Red Sandstone) and of a similar age, belonging to the Devonian era from about 419.2 to 358.9 million years ago (mya). For the rest of the course, wherever the underlying soils were exposed this red colouring showed through clearly, intriguingly beautiful.

For Control 3 I headed straight up a second steep bank above the track. This

was probably a mistake given the brushings en route to the path beyond, but it didn't seem to cost me much time over the alternative of following the track then backtracking up the path. Controls 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 weren't too difficult to find—for now the course and terrain weren't too different from any in SE England—but 9 threw me for far too long. A boulder in a conifer plantation that contained a number of large boulders (probably small glacial erratics), it proved maddeningly difficult to locate. My first attack point—a vegetation boundary—was probably wrong, which meant I was looking for a boulder where none existed. Another boulder further west turned out to be exactly that—another boulder further west



9 & 11-13 at Knocknagalty

Credit: Cork Orienteering Club

of the one I needed! Finally common sense prevailed (it can take a while sometimes...) and I re-attacked from the path junction at the start of this plantation area - and found the control straight away. Hmm...

10 was easily findable in forest that was more runnable than the map suggested. Likewise 11 was quite obvious, but I messed up on the way to 12 by trying to follow a ruined wall line. After all the walking I've done in Ireland, I should have known better. In many ways the recent (post-WWII) history of Ireland is fascinating, yet sad. Commercial conifer plantations have been slapped down willy-nilly, it seems, on top of and with no regard for the existing usage of the land. Hence—as here—you frequently see ruins deep amongst the claustrophobically-tight rows of trees. Often walls, sometimes cottages, they speak mutely of a past Ireland, where the landscape was more open, was small-scale farmed - more for survival than for the profit of conifers - and more accessible. This came home to me now, as a few metres in the trees and rampant undergrowth blocked me solid. I tried to box around, came to a firebreak or overgrown path, it was difficult to tell which, took it then went off on an attempted bearing, got lost, ended up on a wide track, saw a control and went there, found it was 13 and took a bearing back uphill to 12. My navigating should have been faster and better, but I'm still unclear exactly how. At least I now knew where control 13 was!

Tiring rapidly, I fell into the planner's trap and overshot 14. Mistaking a gap along the treeline for the side-path where 14 was located, I ran right past the control without, somehow, seeing it (not the first time I've done that!) It was only on turning round after plenty of head scratching that I saw it. I have to say that I did manage to kick myself for making such an obvious mistake while running towards it, though.

15 and 16 weren't far away, and close together—another planner's trap that I have learned to take care avoiding. Several years ago I realised that I was getting too complacent where a control was 100m or less away from the previous one—now I'm careful (usually) to take a bearing and pace it out. It certainly helped now, because I found no. 16 quickly, my pacing putting me on a level with it, only slightly off to its left. The Finish control wasn't far beyond, though cunningly hidden at the far end of the car park, just up in the trees. I was gratified to find it first go, then to see several other finishers flounder around looking for it.

To be honest, my performance wasn't great—10th out of 13 finishers—but it justified my decision not to run Blue that day. I was over half an hour behind the leader, but 5 people didn't complete the course, which gives you an idea of how technical it was. All in all though, it was an enjoyable though challenging event in a nice area that was very different from probably anything in the south of England.

My friends had gone for a gentle walk while I was running, and we met up further up the road at King's Yard. This is a farm on the south slopes of the Galtys which provides some basic facilities for walkers, like parking, tea and coffee, and camping in the season. We left the car there and headed up the lane towards Galtymore, before turning off onto the open ground towards the peak. The weather, initially warm and sunny, changed with height, cold winds blowing mist in then past us, obscuring then revealing the stunning views. The Galtys stand by themselves in central southern Ireland, with views southeast to the Knockmealdowns and the Comeragh, and southwest deep into Kerry to Macgillycuddy's Reeks—often just called 'The Reeks'—home to 10 of Ireland's Furths. The separation of the Galtys from all surrounding ranges, plus its height, gives it a feeling of isolation but also of being right on the edge of a wonderfully mountainous region, with peaks, hidden valleys, glacial corries, and all the secrets they hold.



“Well, that must be south” - the author looks for a way down off the Galtys

Credit: Nataliia Uskova

We didn't have long on the summit of Galtymore—it was too cold and daylight was in short supply—so we headed back down. Below, a long wall, partly

ruined, snaked west from the base of Galtymore summit. When the cloud cleared enough, we could see it running for miles along the ridgeline. It appeared completely pointless as a livestock barrier - there was a gap of perhaps 150m between the near end of the wall and where the ground rose to the summit - and I wondered if it was a famine wall. During the Great Famine of 1845-52—*an Gorta Mór* in Irish—occasional relief works were undertaken to provide a limited income for some people. The supposedly great and good of the Victorian era were notoriously reluctant to provide benefits for free (the exception being a few organisations like the Quakers, it has to be said). Their response to the situation was to provide a few limited opportunities for groups of starving people to carry out hard manual labour for limited financial reward. The works undertaken were usually pointless—roads that lead nowhere are not uncommon; I've seen and walked a few myself. This wall on the Galtys may well have been one of those works - it certainly seems to lack any sensible purpose, apart from possibly being a boundary marker between two large estates.

Our descent took us a different route back across the open ground. At one point we stopped to gather small sandstones, souvenirs of our foray into this stark yet beautiful landscape. Lower down, we handrailed a narrow wood, then jumped the fence to hit the end of a track back to King's Yard. It followed a wide, tumbling river that had worn down through the overlying rocks to expose outcrops of the red sandstone in small cascades. Other than the rushing of the water, it was silent, with none of the artificial, intrusive noise that usually forms a backdrop to our lives. And there was no one else around: we had its splendour to ourselves.

We reached the car not long before the daylight finally faded, then drove back through the autumn dark. It had been a great day out, and worth going all that way for. When I'm back over in Ireland next year, I shall be looking for more O-events which can be combined with other adventures - watch this space!

Graham Denney

Credits:

Photo credits: Graham Thomas, Sean Cronin, orienteering-world.net, Alison Howe, David Kingdon, John Cross, Peter Lilja, Simon Weatherley, James Ford, Catherine Catchpole, Brendon Howe, Peter Martin, David Wilson, Simon Blanchflower, Peter Billinghurst, Andrea Pauling, Beryl Pring, Rob Lines, Southdowns Orienteers, Guildford Orienteers, Cork Orienteering Club, Nataliia Uskova, Graham Denney and other contributors as credited.

Thanks to contributors to this issue: Jean Fitzgerald, John Cross, Jonny Wells, Peter Lilja, Simon Weatherley, James Ford, Catherine Catchpole, Beryl Pring, Alison Howe, Brendon Howe, Richard Field, David Kingdon, Mark Roberts, Simon Blanchflower, David Wilson, Peter Billinghurst, Graham Denney, Bill Griffiths, Nick Barrable.

*Apologies to anybody inadvertently missed off this list—let me know and I'll credit you in the next issue—Ed.
Disclaimer: Please note that maps are used for events with the landowner's agreement*

CLUB COMMITTEE & OFFICERS

WHO DOES WHAT Contact List

		e-mail «@saxons-oc.org»
	President	
Jean Fitzgerald	Chairman Fixtures	fixtures or chairman
Sarah Howes	Treasurer	treasurer
Karen Ransley	Secretary	secretary
Beryl Pring	Permanent O Courses	poc
Graham Thomas	Membership	membership
Richard Field	Land Access	landaccess
Simon Blanchflower	Mapping	mapping
Alison Howe	Development	development
Brendon Howe	Head Coach	coaching
Brendon Howe	Team Captain	team.captain
Mark Glaisher	Club Printing KNC Coordinator	knc
Sean Cronin	Publicity	publicity
Alan Hickling	Statistics KOL Coordinator Equipment	kol
Graham Denney	SaxAlert Editor	saxalert
Mike Solomon	Minutes	
Alison Howe	Saxons Clothing Junior Kit	clothing
Sam Prior	Welfare Officer Junior Coordinator	junior-coordinator
Andrew Derrick	Committee Member	andrew
Doug Deeks	Auditor	

SAXALERT is the official journal of Saxons Orienteering Club.

Views and opinions expressed in SAXALERT are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the club committee or Saxons Orienteering Club.