

WINTER TERM • JAN 2025

# KENT SCHOOLS ORIENTEERING NEWSLETTER



## British Schools Orienteering Competition

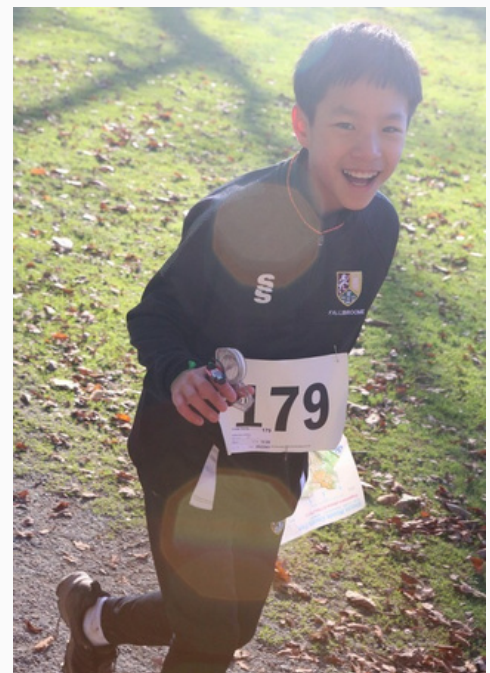
Andrew Evans, Dartford Orienteers

For the first time in almost 40 years, the Championships came to Kent, with the event hosted by Dartford Orienteers on 16th and 17th November.

The weekend started with a training event at Trosley Country Park on Saturday afternoon. This used courses and controls from a Saxons event earlier in the day and gave the children a chance to run a proper course, with SI card and result print out.

For the main event on Sunday, Geoff Goodwin had planned 18 courses with different courses needed for each school year group 5 to 13 and also split between boys and girls. Fortunately, the previously forecast rain had moved elsewhere and competitors had clear blue skies for the event. After an early start for the course planner and some additional volunteers putting out all 62 checkpoints, a relative calm descended before quite suddenly there were children and their teachers/parents everywhere.

In all, 225 starters were set off in a 75 minute window ranging from Year 12's and 13's completely fired up and speeding off every minute to some Year 5's and 6's competing in their first event with initial apprehension very evident. One thing they all had in common was big smiles on their faces making it quite clear the event was something very special to all of them! Then just as abruptly, like a passing thunderstorm, 12:30 came and all was suddenly quiet again.





## British Schools Orienteering Championships (Cont).



The run in to the finish garnered much shouting and encouragement as teams cheered in their later finishers. Some of the biggest cheers were for the very last finishers, who had persevered to make sure they finished their course despite being out for two hours or more.

A Year 5 teacher said "Thank you so much, it was a really good day. That is the first time they have run alone and they were so excited to finish. They all struggled with one control, although a different one for each of them. I was so proud that they didn't give up. They will remember today for the rest of their lives."

Seeing the faces of so many children and the comments received afterwards was quite moving. It makes you feel you have been a small part of something so much bigger.

The British Schools Orienteering Association provided massive support towards the event - a special thanks to Mel Elkington who co-ordinated much of this

Kent Schools put in a strong showing with several individual and year/school top finishes:

### Individual

#### Year 5 Girls

3rd Isla Findlay (St Dunstan's)

#### Year 6 Boys

2nd Joseph Embleton (Sandling Primary School)

3rd Zeki Ramadan & Mofopofoluwa Olaitan (Hextable Primary School)

### Teams

#### Year 6 Boys

1st Lordswood School

2nd Hextable Primary School

#### Whole School - Primary

1st Hextable Primary

2nd Lordswood

Well Done all.

The 2025 competition is in Edinburgh on 16th November.



## School Orienteering Club's : Hextable Primary School

Alex Mills writes about his experience setting up an orienteering club at Hextable Primary School



'I had been very interested in promoting orienteering at our school due to the wonderful array of physical and mental benefits the sport has. In addition, the sport is extremely inclusive - as a school with a high proportion of children with SEND from a wide variety of backgrounds, this aspect is very appealing, with the sport having the potential to unlock the outdoors for children facing barriers. To promote the sport, I had been liaising with Dartford Orienteers who mapped our school grounds for us to deliver map-based activities and helped us to install markers so that we could deliver OAA on a cross-curricular basis using letters and numbers from the markers.

At Hextable we hold a number of after-school extra-curricular clubs with each teacher contributing. For the Summer term I decided to try setting up an orienteering club. I wasn't sure how many pupils would sign up for this being a less well-known activity, but I hoped that if 3 or 4 came along to the first session then word may get around and the number of interested

pupils might increase. I met with my main contact at Dartford Orienteers and he gave me some input into possible areas to cover in the first few sessions, gradually enhancing the map reading and compass skills of the pupils and providing a variety of exercises.

I was pleasantly surprised when I received my club list, finding that 28 children had signed up for the first session with another 9 coming along to the second one.

For it to be all inclusive, I had pupils from all year groups. Some of the older pupils gained experience helping to train some of the younger participants; they really enjoyed this, commenting on how they looked forward to the sessions. Yr 3 worked alongside Yr 6 which was great to see and the overall positivity of the club was commented on by many of our other teachers.

For the second half term we introduced the pupils to the SportIdent equipment with electronic punching and timing. This went down really well, the children loved taking their new skills to the next level with the electronic timing and spent whole sessions running the course multiple times, trying to beat their PBs!

The addition of orienteering to our club portfolio has been fantastic - of the 40 children who now attend, the vast majority do not attend other 'sport' clubs, this impact is priceless as we all know the benefits of getting children outside and moving. I also found it gave a huge amount of confidence to children in whom this can sometimes be lacking, especially for children with SEND.





## About the Outdoor Classroom



The Outdoor Classroom uses tablets to create accessible and equal sporting opportunities for all children. It is available free of charge to inspire schools to increase their physical activity and help to build a happier, healthier society. There is also a paid system available for schools looking to fully embrace an active education right across the curriculum.

The most recent updates include a comprehensive lesson library, so teachers can select from a huge range of pre-planned lessons, and take any subject outdoors in a few quick clicks.

The system is versatile, supporting unlimited activities, from CPD sessions and teacher training to library clubs and inter-school sports competitions. There is an annual competition, The Big League, which offers schools the opportunity to compete on a national level without leaving their own school site, and is backed by British Orienteering, who generously arrange virtual meets with Team GB athletes and other great prizes to inspire competing schools.

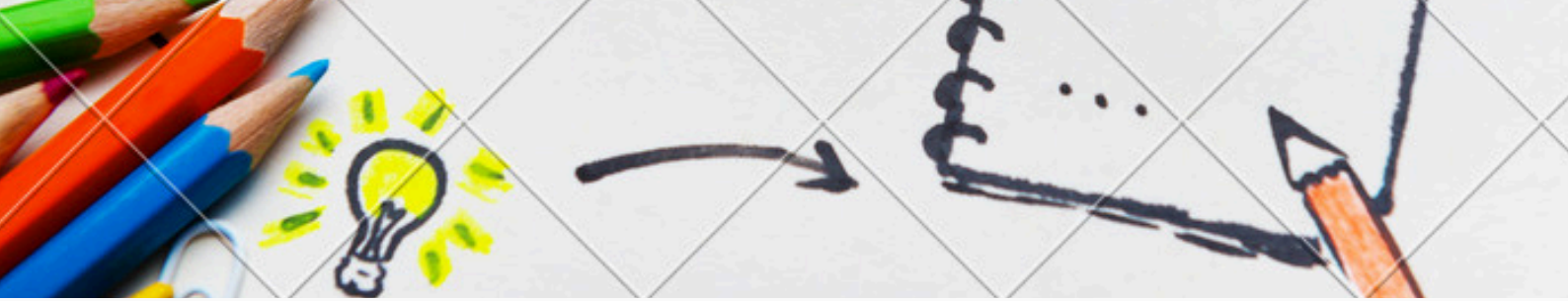
Josh Jenner, Founder and CEO of The Outdoor Classroom says

I am thrilled to announce our strategic partnership with British Orienteering. This collaboration signifies our commitment to enriching educational experiences by integrating orienteering programs into our offerings. By joining forces with a respected national governing body, we aim to provide students with valuable navigation skills, foster a deeper connection with the outdoors, and position ourselves at the forefront of innovative and impactful educational initiatives."

Kay Hawke, Projects & Partnerships Manager at British Orienteering adds:

"The Outdoor Classroom offers an innovative option to deliver orienteering in educational settings. With increased focus on developing the rounded learner outside of classroom settings, there's no better way to get pupils outside, learning and developing than through introducing orienteering to the curriculum. The ease of using The Outdoor Classroom for both teachers and pupils makes it a great choice to add to the school offering. Taking learning outdoors offers both physical and mental benefits to both pupils and teachers, increasing activity levels away from the structured PE curriculum. We are excited to support the next phase of The Outdoor Classroom and see the benefits of more people, more active, through orienteering."





## Teaching Orienteering course - Tuesday 1 April 2025



Would you benefit from some guidance from an experienced former elite orienteer and professional tutor on how to deliver map based activities in your school grounds? We are holding another Teach Orienteering Part 1 course on Tuesday 1 April 2025. It is a full day course (9am-4pm) at St John's Catholic Comprehensive School in Gravesend.

Confidence in the delivery of Outdoor Adventurous Activities was highlighted as an issue for some schools in last year's Ofsted report "Levelling the playing field". The Teach O Part 1 course aims to provide teachers and others working on school sites and other enclosed sites with the knowledge, understanding and practical ability to teach the basic skills of the sport of orienteering mainly at Key Stages 2 and 3. The very practical nature of the course includes working as a small group to plan a short exercise, briefing another group as to what they should do, experience the activity as a pupil would by doing the activity prepared by another group and then sharing feedback afterwards.

For further information, click [here](#).



## Upcoming Orienteering Events in Kent this Winter

For further information on upcoming events, visit [www.saxons-oc.org](http://www.saxons-oc.org) and/or [www.dfok.co.uk](http://www.dfok.co.uk).

|                    |   |                          |
|--------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Sat 8 Feb</b>   | <b>Ightham</b>                                  | <b>nr Sevenoaks</b>      |
| <b>Sat 15 Feb</b>  | <b>Shooters Hill</b>                            | <b>nr Eltham</b>         |
| <b>Sat 1 Mar</b>   | <b>Hosey Common</b>                             | <b>Westerham</b>         |
| <b>Sun 23 Mar</b>  | <b>Knole Park inc. Yvette Baker Trophy Heat</b> | <b>Sevenoaks</b>         |
| <b>Sat 12 Apr</b>  | <b>Angley Wood</b>                              | <b>Cranbrook</b>         |
| <b>Sat 26 Apr</b>  | <b>Lullingstone</b>                             | <b>Eynsford</b>          |
| <b>Sun 4 May</b>   | <b>Ightham</b>                                  | <b>nr Sevenoaks</b>      |
| <b>Thur 15 May</b> | <b>Medway Senior School Games Competition</b>   | <b>Capstone, Rainham</b> |
| <b>Sat 17 May</b>  | <b>Milton Creek</b>                             | <b>Sittingbourne</b>     |
| <b>Tue 20 May</b>  | <b>Bexley Primary Schools Competition</b>       | <b>Danson Park</b>       |

All of our events have courses for beginners. Guidance will be available to newcomers and novices before the start. Go around individually or as a group, pair or family.

## Yvette Baker Trophy - 23 March 2025

The Yvette Baker Trophy is a Junior inter-club competition run annually. It is named after Britain's first World Orienteering Champion, who won Gold in the Short Distance event in Scotland in 1999. This year's heat will be held at Knole Park in Sevenoaks on 23 March.

Juniors from across the South East of England will compete for their club with the winning club going on to the final which will also be held in the South this year at Capite Wood in West Sussex on 6 July. All you need to do to take part is join your local orienteering club! Saxons and Dartford Orienteers cover the entry cost for this event for its juniors.





# Orienteering Activity: Understanding contours and contour detail

**Skills:** Learning to interpret map detail

**Resources:**

- Map of an orienteering area with contour detail.
- Plasticine or sand
- Paper / pencils

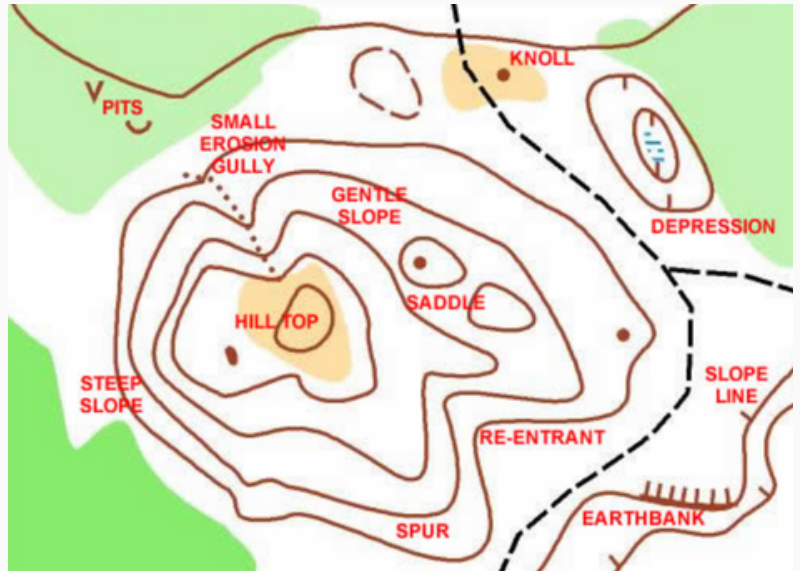
**The Session:**

What is a contour recap:

- Contour lines are brown lines on a map to help illustrate the shape of the ground and changes in elevation. By definition, a contour line is a continuous line on a map that joins points of equal elevation throughout its length.

Describe contour features on the sample map:

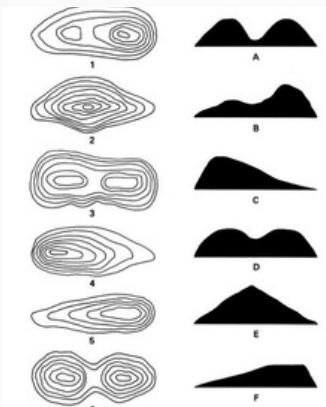
- Contour Lines
- Depression / pit
- Gully
- Re-entrant
- Knoll
- Spur
- Earthbank
- Saddle



Ask the children to prepare a model of the sample map using plasticine.

**Follow on exercise 1:**

- Create a plasticine or sand model of an illustrative orienteering area taking care to add some of the contour detail features as described above
- Ask the children to draw a map of the area using contours and contour detail.



**Follow on exercise 2:**

Download the [contour exercise](#) (shown to the left) from Saxons website.

Match the contour lines to the correct landform

Answers (1B, 2E, 3D, 4C, 5F, 6A)