



Cover photo: Ancient track at Oldbury Hill

SAXALERT

SAX NOTICES

LOCKDOWN 2: SUSPENSION OF EVENTS

All orienteering events and organised club activities in England suspended from 5th Nov until current restrictions lifted. Personal exercise (such as MapRun events) still permitted. [More info here.](#)

CLUB AGM

This year the Saxons AGM will be a virtual event on Zoom, on Friday 27th November from 19.30. Please see p.6 for more details.

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EDITORIAL



Welcome to another issue of SaxAlert, produced again in times of strange and challenging conditions. I hope that you and your families continue to cope and to stay healthy.

After a summer where it briefly looked like life might return to normal, we find ourselves back under difficult and frustrating restrictions. Hopefully these will not last long but while they do, we can look back with satisfaction at what we as a club achieved in this year's all-too short summer season.

This was the year that the MapRun app really came of age and proved its worth. Like a number of other UK clubs, Saxons adopted MapRun with gusto: a Summer Challenge was rapidly piloted and rolled out, to great success (see Simon Blanchflower's article later in this issue). In addition, some members managed to compete in the few 'physical' (as distinct from 'virtual') events that were taking place.

Given the disruption to orienteering caused by the first lockdown, we should be pleased that we kept going, adapted and overcame. Now we face a similar challenge again, albeit shorter. Hopefully this issue will help inspire you to persevere through the winter to better times beyond. Thank you to all contributors to SaxAlert No. 186: again, your response has been terrific and made this issue considerably larger than I thought it would be, given the relative lack of events over the summer.

Stay well and safe!

Graham Denney



Hopefully this is a sight we'll be seeing again soon!

Image: Steve Rush

BRITISH ORIENTEERING PERFORMANCE AWARDS

Well done to the following:

Adam Fulcher	Navigation Challenge	★★★★	01/10/2020
Austin Howe	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	01/10/2020
Ben Cronin	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	01/10/2020
Beryl Pring	Racing Challenge: Gold Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
Brian Henry	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
Judith Armit	Racing Challenge: Gold Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
Nicky Bedford	Navigation Challenge	★★★★	18/10/2020
Peter Martin	Racing Challenge: Gold Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
Rob Gladden	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	18/10/2020
Sean Cronin	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★	15/09/2020
Simon Greenwood	Racing Challenge: Gold Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★★	01/10/2020
	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	01/10/2020

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.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Jean Fitzgerald



Well this has been anything but a 'normal' year! Saxons got into 'virtual orienteering' using MapRunF to enable individuals to run a course at the time of their choosing while social distancing. Simon Blanchflower was instrumental in setting this up and we had reasonable numbers of runners on the leader boards for each of those 12 'events'. These courses are still available on the website, so if you didn't have a chance to try the system, you can still do it now. Do have a look.

Then we were able to begin 'conventional' orienteering again in August, when restrictions on sporting activities were lifted. We needed to make our events Covid-secure, and safe for competitors and volunteers. A lot of background work went into this and I would like to thank Alison Howe in particular for the work she did on setting up the pre-entry and payment system. We have been finding it difficult to obtain agreement with some landowners for use of their land, so several venues have been changed at short notice. Saxons have held 3 KNC events so far and have had to make several changes to the format: pre entry only; no mass start; no trip to the pub; no on-the-day results; no hanging around afterwards to discuss routes etc, but we have been getting lots of orienteers at these events, and generally having fun. We have also held one KOL event at Blean Woods. We had a really high number of entries (again all in advance) for this; some keen orienteers who previously didn't know where Blean was turned up and enjoyed the courses set by Alison and Brendon.

Now we are going into lockdown again, and have cancelled all events due to take place in November. We will then need to see what the government decides to do in December. Meanwhile we are discussing the possibility of producing more MapRun courses, so keep checking the website.

And finally, Saxons will be holding their first virtual AGM via Zoom on 27 November at 19.30. Papers for the meeting and details for joining will be available shortly. Please do take the time to support your club at this event.

Jean

AGM & COMMITTEE NEWS

This year's AGM continues the trend of recent committee meetings, so will be a virtual event. It will take place on Zoom on Friday 27th November, starting at 19.30. Please put the date in your diaries and support your club!

If you have any substantive items you feel need to be discussed please send details to [Beryl Pring](#) so they can be added to the Agenda.

If you have any nominations for committee members please send them to Beryl once you have agreement of the nominee.

Further details of how to join the meeting will be circulated by email closer to the date of the AGM.

FUTURE EVENTS

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](#)



Finish control, KOL at Hucking

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Senior: Dany Grade, Deirdre Diggins and Peter Rogers

Junior: Courtney-Jade Jones

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.

Courtney-Jade's mum Roxan tells us a bit about how her daughter took up orienteering:

"Courtney had her first trial run at the age of 3 when she was only in nursery at Lordswood school alongside her brother Cameron, age 5, at the time who was in reception. As running and the outdoors are two of Courtney's favourite things, orienteering was a big hit. She was really fast for her age and was quickly picking up her map reading skills. First recognising key symbols while attending orienteering club at school. Unfortunately, Courtney moved school during her reception year and her new school did not offer orienteering as a club. We began to explore other avenues of getting her to still participate in events as Courtney constantly asked when will she get to go orienteering again. Since Saxons was affiliated with Lordswood school, I went to the Saxons website and the rest is history. So far Courtney has participated in two events since the new season and loved every minute. She is getting better at map reading and is now looking forward to her next event."



**Courtney & mum
Roxan at a Saxons
event**



Another of our new members, Dany Grade, also introduces herself:

"Dear Saxons,

My name is Dany, and I recently joined Saxons.

Having previously competed internationally in Obstacle Course Racing (a mixture between Tough Mudder and Ninja Warrior), unfortunately, shortly after a successful World Championships in Canada, a shoulder injury resulted in a complex surgery followed by a very long and frustrating recovery phase. I

never managed to get back to compete and totally lost my mojo. Gaining 12kg and two dress sizes in the process has not helped and I've been trying to get back to fitness ever since.

Shortly before lockdown, I stumbled upon orienteering! It seemed like a perfect combination for me: Exercising in beautiful scenery, whilst at the same time being so distracted with the navigation that I'd never find time to get bored with the running. As a keen hiker, I am very familiar with OS maps and naively thought I'd be able to master orienteering in my sleep. Oh, how wrong I was! Participating in my first races and realising after the first control that I didn't really have a clue what any of the control symbols meant and hence being clueless as to what I was actually looking for was a bit of a wake up call. And white background for woodlands - who thought of that?? So since then, I've been studying symbols etc and felt a little more prepared for the next races and completed a couple of green courses at KOL events (Footh Cray and Blean).

Hearing how popular the KNC events are, I thought that surely I'd have to try on of those as well. Instead of being patient and waiting for an urban event, I stupidly booked onto the Enchanted Place event, all excited one day, and slightly panicky the next, coaxing my boyfriend into running along with me, just because I might be too scared out in the woods in the dark on my own. As feared, I didn't pay enough attention, took a wrong turn in the dark and got a little meddled up. Only found 4 controls, but made it back safely - and in time (whilst many others got substantial penalties on this run). Not a great result, but I still enjoyed it and definitely learned my lessons from it. I have since done a couple of urban events and absolutely loved them.



Sadly the new lockdown prevents further events for now, but I'll try to make use of some of the MapRuns in the meantime to improve my orienteering skills.

I can't wait to meeting you all at future events and to watch and learn from you all, since I can see there's a ton of skills and experience combined across all Saxons, young and old. If you see me out there (now in my brand new Saxons kit), please do shout out and say hello.

Stay safe during lockdown and beyond.

Dany"

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 send details of your qualifying results (organising club, event, course and orienteer's name) plus a stamped addressed envelope, to Anne Power, 6 Mallard Close, New Barnet, Herts EN5 1DH, or email Anne 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!

COACH'S CORNER

Brendon Howe

The Attack Point

I was recently asked by a fellow Saxon for some advice on choosing Attack Points in more complicated terrain. This is great news as the Attack Point was due to be my next TOPCAR topic in SaxAlert.



In previous articles I have introduced the mnemonic TOPCAR as an orienteering 'tool of the trade'. **TOPCAR** stands for: **Thumb - Orientation - Plan - Control - Attack Point - Route.**

To date we have looked at Thumb, Orientation, Plan and Control. So, we've got our map pointing the right way and we can keep track of progress. We've looked at how we actually go about finding controls by Making a Plan. To do this, we work backwards by identifying the Control feature before choosing an Attack Point, then finally our Route to the chosen AP.

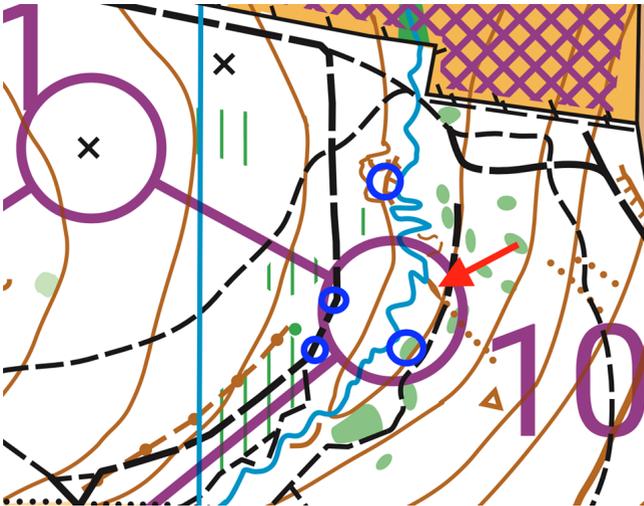
So, what is an Attack Point? It is a feature near to our Control that is:

- Prominent, easy to find and identify
- Can't be confused with other similar nearby features
- Going to help lead us towards our Control

What does this mean in practise?

This might mean using a distinctive path junction, knoll or hill top, lake or vegetation boundary for example. Some APs aren't as good as others however. Take a look at the map excerpt below.

This is from the blue course at Blean in October (except I'm looking at the 10 to 11 leg backwards). The blue circles show possible APs running from the hide to CP10.



The two APs on the path bends are very easy to find. However, it might be difficult to be certain which bend I'm on, so if I took a bearing from here, I might miss my control.

The AP on the thicket is also problematic. It's not an issue that it is behind the Control. There's no reason why you should chose an AP past the Control if its easy to find.

No, the concern with this AP is the nature of the feature. There are similar features nearby; also the prominence of the feature might change with the seasons or over time.

The earth bank feature (circled) might be another option. Its difficult to miss, but might be too far away from the Control to help us too much. In this instance we would have to run significantly further, and would probably lose time on our competitors.

We could use the whole river as our Attack Point. If we Aimed Off one side or the other we could use this to lead us to the Control site. However, we wouldn't

know how far we are from our AP as the river feature is busy; this might mean us moving slowly and is perhaps not our best option here.

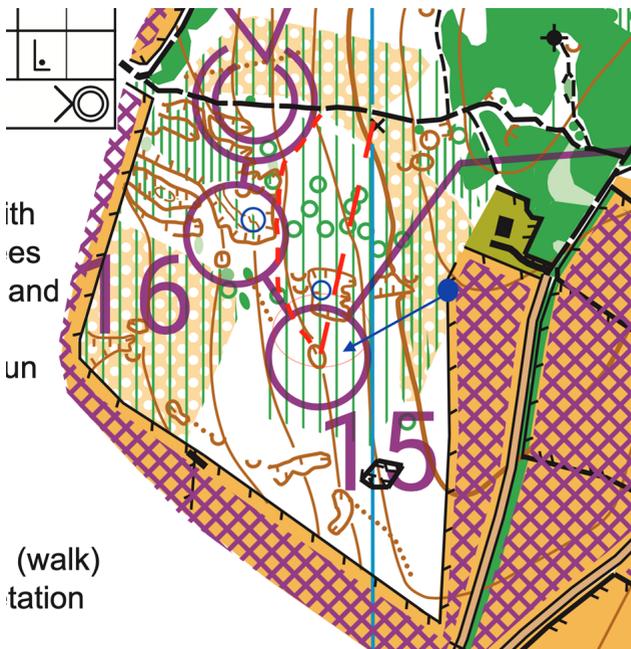
In this situation, I would choose the gully (shown with the red arrow) as my AP. Although it is past my control, this feature is very visible as I run down the opposite slope. Being an earth feature it doesn't tend to change shape or move about on the map over time. With a confident bearing from the hide, following the controls down hill, this AP is a good choice. Fast and not over cautious.

In fact, I would not need to run to the Gully AP before heading to my Control. It's so prominent I can just use it as a visual guide to funnel me towards the Control as I approach the river.

Tricky Terrain

Sometimes the terrain can be more complicated and this can make things difficult. The map below shows the penultimate leg on the Light Green course from Blean.

The control itself is in a 'negative' feature, so it is not sticking up out of the ground and might be easy to run past without spotting. It's also in an area of undergrowth, and the surrounding terrain is quite busy. Good care is required here.



I've marked three possible APs: two earth features and a fence corner. Let's look first at the fence corner.

The fence is a good Attack Point in principle. Fences don't tend to move and often separate areas of different vegetation. This one is a field edge, so easy to spot and unlikely to move or fall down. However, the route to the AP is fiddly with plenty of undergrowth. Worse though is the terrain between the AP and the

Control; the map shows a band of brambles en route. This alone makes it an unsuitable choice.

The two earth features make for better Attack Points, though in busy terrain like this we need to use more than just an AP to find our Control. Instead we need to locate our AP in a series of little steps. To demonstrate this I've drawn two possible routes in.

Option A: We could have gone in from the Hide (black x), past the yew trees to the large E shaped depression (see RH dotted line) which is our Attack Point.

Option B: We could use the change in terrain from rough open to runnable woods to head off the path, then look for the earth bank as a hand rail, lone Yew tree, follow the contour or compass to depression.

In both cases you can see we are employing a number of little steps from the surety of the path to the Attack Point. Each step will involve using various items from our orienteering toolkit: feature identification, pacing, compass, contours.

In both cases we're using similar earth features as our AP. Option B is further from the control, but more difficult to miss. Brown features don't change with the seasons or move about on the map, so we can be pretty certain on finding them.

With option A it might be easy to mistake which distinctive tree is which. There are two lines of three yews, and I could be pulled off course and miss the AP completely. The evergreen foliage would make identifying which yew was which more difficult. Also, the undergrowth might occlude the depression (AP) making it harder to spot at speed.

I would have taken option B by preference. The earth bank is a big feature and impossible to miss. There is less undergrowth on the left hand leg, so quicker to run. Also, I would go near CP16 and can scope it out for the return leg. The short steps from the path help to guide us. We would quickly be aware of any missing steps allowing us to relocate expediently.

Conclusion

There are no hard and fast rules about Attack Points other than they are critical if you want actually to find your Control!

Pick something that's easy to find and identify and which will lead you simply into the Control circle. An extra few seconds getting to the perfect Attack Point will doubtless pay dividends compared to rummaging aimlessly in the undergrowth looking for an elusive Control that's "here somewhere... I think".

LETTER FROM THE LAKES

Jerry Purkis, Saxons 2003—2018 now LOC

It all started at the end of the first lockdown, when Beryl and Rowan had a long chat on the phone.

Beryl was enthusiastic about how Saxons had just started their summer series using MapRunF, and how it was getting everyone back into orienteering, in a socially distanced way, and there was the added bonus that there were no controls to put out or collect. It was all done over the phone using MapRunF.

Rowan twisted my arm to check it out, and as there was no one in LOC doing it, I experimented with test courses created using open orienteering map, and with the expert help of Simon Blanchflower, created courses that I could demonstrate to a select few in LOC, including Dick Towler.

Lots of enthusiasm to proceed, approval by the committee, and a set of OCAD maps were georeferenced. I am now promoted to LOC POC/VOC manager, and started creating a series of 6 weekly events as a summer series, similar to Saxons. I am also promoted to MapRunF administrator for South Cumbria, and created a LOC MapRunF user guide, and a MapRunF planners guide to help those new to the app to use it.



The Summer series went well, with over 100 orienteers competing, most for the first time using MapRunF. The majority were from LOC, but there was a number from other local clubs, and visiting orienteers on holiday.

The series all used OCAD maps, which I released with a pin code to control who ran in each event. They started on easy low level open fell, before progressing to complex sand dunes, with the final on high level Stickle Pike (pictured).

The next series, LOC Urban Night Series, (equivalent to the Kent Night Cup), is also MapRunF. The first around the streets of Kendal, starts in the first week of November.

Independent of Covid, I believe MapRunF is here to stay. Carol McNeil, LOC's lead coach, will be using MapRunF for junior and senior training, with the benefit of no controls to hang, and instant feedback on the runner's course

using the Routegadget track.

I have also just sent out a series of maps to a region's junior squad for their training.

MapRunF in South Cumbria is also now being used by fell running clubs, running clubs, and the National Trust. There is a popular 6-hour MapRunF for Saunders Mountain Marathon training in the Howgills. Make sure your phone is fully charged before you start.

So that's it. All started by a phone call between Beryl and Rowan. If you want to try any of the courses, please come up to the Lake District and give them a go and then pop round for a cup of tea – in the garden if necessary.

Jerry Purkis - Lakeland Orienteering Club (Saxons until 2018)

LETTER FROM YORKSHIRE

Bill Griffiths

Not to be outdone by his Cumbrian neighbours, former Saxon Bill Griffiths kindly gives us the view from the other side of the Pennines.

The strange times caused by the Covid pandemic are no different in Yorkshire than in other parts of the UK. Yorkshire is a big place and the major levels of disruption (currently referred to as “tiers” by our political leaders) has impacted much more in industrial West Yorkshire than it has on us in rural Ryedale. But Scarborough and Middlesbrough are not far away from here, and the recent announcement of the new tier status in York is quite worrying for us here in the (otherwise quiet and tranquil) Vale of Pickering.

There has been a huge increase in “staycation” holiday-makers in the North York Moors. Most of them have gone home now, but the roads, cafes and shops have been very busy indeed as people swap their plans for holidays in the sun to trips to the countryside round here.

Orienteering has started again – well a bit (!), and most (IT savvy) O- clubs have had an advantage on Eborienteers as they have been able to run their own pre-entry



Download at EBOR's Skipwith Common event



Controller (left) and planner astride the water-filled depression with start and finish in the background. The control is approximately in the centre of the pond between the two officials. Photo courtesy of Dougie Nisbet.



Paul Boyles seen retrieving the control.

systems to stage events. Eborienteers on the other hand have had to rely on Fabian4, and (so far) have only held one event since the sport restarted. Inevitably, Clubs relying on pre-entry “contractors” have had to charge a premium to cover the extra costs involved in cash handling. This is an especial problem for level D events.

The new (socially distancing) procedures at events seem work well, and no O-clubs want to be singled out as a possible source of disease transmission. I am lucky – my first event (as organiser) is not till April 2021. Plenty of time to get used to all the new systems – or so I keep telling myself – but I am sure that time will fly by and who knows if the event will happen anyway!

Flooded control at Doctor's Gate Mapping continues as before, and I have been involved in interesting mapping projects for HALO (Hull and Lincolnshire), although my own Club (EBOR) are putting so few events on, they don't need maps!

The recent heavy rain took its toll with a regional event at Doctor's Gate (near Hadrian's Wall) having to void their Green course after overnight rain flooded a control site and made it inaccessible to anyone without a wet-suit! A minor depression became a lake overnight!

The future of orienteering in the area remains questionable. Some land owners are reluctant to give permission for events with several having been cancelled this last few weeks. In particular some local authorities are putting a maximum on the number people on their land at any one time.

The limit on participant numbers is a problem for event profitability, and people who live in “challenging areas” are finding it more difficult to get to events. The future of major event weekends is definitely a problem with White Rose and Acorn (to name but two) downsized or not run at all!

So the future is uncertain. Some O-clubs may not survive. Some events will disappear and pre-entry makes participation more challenging for many. Like “down south”, orienteering in Yorkshire is not going to be easy!

Bill Griffiths
Allerston, Yorkshire

GEAR REVIEW

Brendon Howe

Hoka One One - Challenger ATR - Wide Fitting!

I've been a fan of the Hoka One One design concept for some time (pronounced Hoka Oh Ney, Oh Ney - Maori for 'Now its time to fly'). The plush but surprising low profile sole with the active rocker midsole looked very tempting.

I recall chatting to one competitor during an OMM Lite in 2017 who waxed lyrical on the comfort and effortless drive the shoe provided. I ordered some shortly after only to find they were too narrow for my feet (a bit like Salomon shoes). How disappointing!



Imagine my excitement in March when I heard that Hoka were now offering Wide Fitting on some of its range. With a mixture of excitement and trepidation I ordered a pair of Hoka One One Challenger ATRs. These were billed as an all terrain shoe as home the road as on the trail.

From the moment I put them on they became my new favourite shoe. The additional space in the one box allowed for a bit of toe spread, but without too much flopping around. The mid foot lacing was good and held everything in place. The active midsole rocker brought the shoe alive and made it run fast providing I managed my gait correctly.

Being relatively light weight at 266g and with 5mm of lift they were a great balance between speed and comfort. I'd been advised to go up a size, so opted for the 44 2/3 instead of a 44 (size 10 instead of 9.5) - perfect.

On the downside I found the rocker meant I had to run a focussed forefoot on moderate ascents in order to maintain good progress. The sole is definitely not designed for thick mud and became slippery in challenging terrain. That said, it's billed as an all terrain trail/road shoe, not a fell shoe.

Score 4/5

Pros

Out of the box comfort, great over long distance and mixed terrain. Active rocker propels you effortlessly.

Cons

Quite expensive. Slight gait change required to get the most from the shoe. Occasionally chafing of the exterior ankle bone when traversing steep slopes.

Hoka One One - Speedgoat 4 - Wide

After the success of the Challenger ATR I bit the bullet and purchased a pair of Speedgoat 4 in the wide fitting in September. Broken toe complications after the OO Cup in the summer meant I was looking for a more serious off road shoe with a bit more toe box space.



I was not disappointed. The fit was very similar to the ATR, but with a more aggressive outsole. At 263g and a 4mm drop the shoe stats were very similar too. Again, I ordered up a size 44 2/3 instead of 44.



I found the midsole rocker to be a little less obvious than the Challenger ATR. The upper is made of a non soaking material which doesn't seem to get wet or heavy in soggy conditions. Fantastic!

As you'd expect from a trail shoe, the sole does become clogged in thick mud when the well spaced 5mm lugs become overwhelmed. That said, it did offer confidence on downhill sections, particularly on wet grass. I have noticed that the detailing on the outsole sides has a tendency to hold on to wet mud increasing shoe weight unnecessarily.

Conclusion

I think I'd award these shoes a **4.5 out of 5**. There's little to fault them for the task they were designed for. Quite expensive though. Lovely to run in.

OO! AN OVERSEAS TRIP

Alison Howe

With Orienteering at a standstill in the UK since mid March, and with no holiday plans following the cancellation of the Creoso, I was surprised, but delighted to hear from a fellow orienteer in mid June that the OOCup had rescheduled its dates for 2020, and

was planning to go ahead with a 5 day competition in early August. The French Jura mountains was the destination on spectacular, highly technical terrain. Cinderella - you shall go to the ball! We booked ourselves straight away, and managed to rustle up a campsite and a few days in an airbnb after much internet searching. And so, laden with a hefty supply of hand sanitiser and face-masks, we set off early on Friday 7 August in our trusty camper, excited at the prospect of orienteering, croissant and not having to listen to a daily news briefing from Boris.



**Austin Howe
finishing at the
OOCup**

A little over 24 hours later, we had arrived at the Arena for the first of 2 model events, and Covid seemed to be a distant memory. The sun shone, the woods looked fabulous, and music blared across the parking field. We collected our maps, and headed up to the start. It was at this point we realised that a) the start was a long way up hill, (sigh), b) we were not sure we could remember what to do, and c) it was jolly hot to be running around in the woods! Sweating profusely some 20 minutes later and feeling somewhat lightheaded, I punched the start and set off. What were all these contours? Where was I going? Am I lost already? I saw Austin zoom past 25m's to my left. Okay, time to relocate, and I haven't even reached the first control! Several baptisms of fire later, I punched the finish. Delighted to have finished, delighted to have been running in terrain again, and delighted I had not mis-punched. I was somewhat less delighted by the time taken, the mistakes made and how out of shape I felt, but not a bad days outing and plenty of room for improvement! Compared to Kent, we were bound to find the mountainous terrain a challenge, even if we were match fit, so time would be needed to adjust our techniques as much as brush the heavy rust off them. The day 2 model event was better. Started to read the contours and use the compass with a little more confidence. Not all plain sailing, but only one significant time loss, getting distracted by other orienteers and being pulled off my line. Another lesson remembered.

Model event done, we had a rest day to prepare for the main event.

Day 1 - Col de La Faucille: The first day's action took place at a ski resort. The start could be accessed for those willing to part with €8 via a ski lift. A godsend, since I would be making the trip twice; first for my own race, and second to shadow Holly. The courses were a game of 2 halves. The top section was characterised by open steep pastures, with fine contour detail and a few scattered trees making navigation technical, but more straightforward

than what was to follow. Well almost. The presence of ski lifts marked on the map ought to have provided useful features to aid navigation. However, when you mistake two parallel lifts for north lines, it can lead to rather a costly error! Onto part 2 which led competitors onto the lower half of the mountain and down to the ski base. This was characterised by a steep sided wooded area with plenty of contour detail, a few paths and crag and rock features. The wood was marked as white, however, the floor was covered with plenty of lush vegetation. Whilst it did not overly impede progress, (it was not the scratchy kind), it masked the underlying contour detail and completely obscured the paths. The vegetation also masked the rocky terrain which made the going pretty tough. Overall, this led to very slow progress and some hefty time losses.

Day 2 - Les Moussieres: Thankfully a less steep area, with courses taking in the lower slopes of a much steeper day 3 venue, and a flatter section with plenty of contour detail and intermittent small clearings which made for challenging orienteering. Brendon and I coped quite well with the steeper section, but lost time in the flatter section. Austin by contrast nailed the flatter area, and so had his best finish of the week!

Day 3 - Les Moussieres part 2: One of the most technical and tough days of the 5. A mass of steep sided valleys with hill tops, crags and a few east to west paths. After 2 days punctuated with heavy losses, I decided to take it very slowly today. A back to basics approach. The extra time I allowed myself gave my brain sufficient room to make better route choice decisions and to interpret the terrain. It may have been slow and steady, but with no big time losses, it turned out to be my best performance of the week coming 3rd.



[Click for PDF](#)
[map](#)

Day 4 - Le Tumet: The biggest day for the W45 class with 4.7km course, and a stonking 245m of climb. Made some frustrating errors early on, the first from a loss of concentration, the next 2 due to rushing. And then after control 10, we descended down into what can only be described as an intricate and steep crag hell. I caught a cold on the first control in this area, so mirroring day 3, I slowed it right down and made it through this section with no further significant time losses. Speed was not particularly an option here in any event, with controls 12-16 being both technically demanding and also involving 115m of climb in about 750m. Thankfully the planners then took pity on us with the 3 final controls, taking us out into the open and gently downhill.



[Click for PDF](#)
[map](#)

Day 5 - Cret Fury: Another complete change in terrain, and back to the ski

resort from model event 2. The terrain was more forgiving than day 4, and with less climb, (excluding the long and steep hike to get to the start). A mix of open pasture and woodland, led to faster orienteering and fast times. After 2 very tough days, I had become hesitant and lacked confidence to make the most of the opportunity. Recognising this towards the end of the course, I got sloppy and made a silly error, missing an easy control losing 3 minutes before the very steep run down to the last control and the run in. Plenty of time to reflect on this, as I hiked up to the start again to shadow Holly. I would sleep well that night!

Overall, a great competition. Holly was the best of us, finishing 2nd overall by only 41 seconds, and with two 1st's and a 2nd. I finished 6th overall in W45 which I was super pleased with, with best placing of 3rd. Austin produced a solid mid table finish which was a great result in such technical terrain with a best placing of 20th - a big step up from the light green courses he had been used to. In the hugely competitive M50 class and with a broken toe, Brendon too finished mid table being 47th out of 108 competitors.



Thank you OOCup for making the impossible possible this summer. Great orienteering and a slice of normal life before returning to face 2 weeks of quarantine and running laps around the garden!

Alison Howe

MAPRUN & THE SUMMER CHALLENGE SERIES

Simon Blanchflower

When I last wrote about MapRun we had only just got to grips with creating courses and shortly afterwards the first one was live on the web-site. We started with four events: Dunorlan Park, Mote Park and Shepway, Milton Creek and my local one at Kingsdown. We got good feedback on these and, as there seemed to be the demand, we planned the “Saxons Summer Challenge”. There were new events launched each week which remained open (for the challenge) for two weeks. This was a joint effort with Brendon Howe and I coordinating the delivery of events through local planners and Sean Cronin doing the communication and league. The idea was to rotate the challenge locations around the Saxon’s area so that there was one local to most people. This seemed to work well and we thank those people who used their local knowledge to plan great courses. The series ran for ten

events finishing at Saltwood and Hythe where Brendon planned a fascinating route around an area that was unfamiliar to many people.

Is MapRun real
me it ticks many
are running with a
concentrating
the time pressure.



orienteeing? For
of the boxes, you
map
hard and feeling
I still feel the flush

of satisfaction when I get to the control (hopefully first time) and my phone goes bleep. Less satisfying is the finish, I find it a bit disheartening not being able to celebrate or commiserate with anybody immediately afterwards. Maybe I'm not alone as, looking at the leaderboard, it seems particularly popular with couples and family groups who can enjoy a good "post-mortem" on the drive home

During lockdown (that should now read lockdown-1!) a great many clubs created MapRun leagues. Our neighbour DFOK had a weekly league which many Saxons enjoyed. BO have encouraged all forms of virtual orienteeing and seem to be looking for ways to integrate MapRun into the sport, probably alongside permanent orienteeing courses. The plan is to make maps available to download from their POC portal so many of our MapRuns will soon be available there.

As I write it is still not clear what we will be able to do in lockdown-2. If MapRuns are permitted remember that even though the summer challenge is over they are still available and the leaderboard continues, so why not visit your local one and improve on your previous score.

Looking to the future I feel that MapRun is perfectly suited to easy to organise, informal, sociable, summer evening events ending at a pub ... hold that image in your mind until it comes true.

O-BSCURITIES—Part 1

The history and heritage of our MapRun courses

Graham Denney

Thanks to MapRun, and the considerable efforts of a number of club members, our summer was largely salvaged through the Saxons Summer Challenge Series. It was a fun and successful series and those involved should be congratulated for having adapted to the new format of MapRun so quickly and effectively.

The 10 Challenge courses were all set in historic and interesting parts of Kent. But while the mainstream history of those places is well-known, there are more obscure facts about their past that are no less fascinating. So for this two-part article I wanted to shine a light into the nooks and crannies of these places - and show that perhaps we are not as familiar with them as we may think...

[Click any of the map thumbnails below for an annotated PDF map.]

Week 1 Challenge - Faversham:



Faversham, it is commonly said, used to be famous for the three 'Bs': Beer, Bricks and Bangs! The Beer is still there - the town remains home to Kent's oldest brewers, Shepherd Neame, founded in 1698 - but the Bricks and the Bangs are long gone, though traces of them can still be found around the route of our MapRun course.

If you bagged control 1, you would have run to the junction of two narrow lanes, one of which is Gatefield Lane. Along here you might have noticed that the bricks forming the walls here are much rougher and misshapen than those used to build the surrounding houses. For centuries brickmaking was a fairly hit-and-miss affair, and it was common for there to be a lot of misfirings. Instead of just throwing away the imperfect bricks, they were sold for uses where the visual appearance of a structure was less important than on buildings - hence why they often turn up in old walls such as here.

As for Bangs, for nearly 200 years Faversham was the centre of Britain's explosives industry. You wouldn't believe that today, but scattered around the town and surrounding area there are plenty of reminders, if you know what to look for.



**Chart Gunpowder
Mills Museum**

Gunpowder manufacturing arrived in Faversham around 1550 brought, interestingly, by the monks at Faversham Abbey: clearly ecclesiastical houses were the technological innovation centres of their time! Today, the remains of the Abbey lie in the grounds of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, which is between controls 5 and 20 on our course map.

Near control 19, near Stonebridge Way, are the most complete remains of this industry: the superb little museum of Chart Gunpowder Mills. Originally this was

two pairs of milling wheels, which operated in tandem from a central waterwheel, though only one still survives. The Chart mills were 'incorporating' mills, where the ingredients of gunpowder underwent a grinding process to combine, or 'chemically incorporate' them. How well this process was carried out was critical in determining the final quality of the gunpowder - how evenly it burned, and how much explosive power it generated. The mill machinery - two huge stone grinding wheels turning at right angles to each other - can be viewed inside when the museum is open.

The oldest of its kind in the world, the Chart Mills were part of the much larger Home Works, a major factory here which was nationalised by the government in 1759 to protect the supply of quality gunpowder to the armed forces. This was a wise decision, and the Chart Mills are believed to have provided much of the gunpowder used by the Royal Navy at Trafalgar and the British Army at Waterloo. By the 20th century however, the Faversham area - which housed 3 major gunpowder and explosives factories - was seen as vulnerable to attack from the sea and air and Chart Mills closed in 1934.

The Home Works covered a large area roughly between our controls 19 and 12 and made much use of waterpower from local streams, not just for turning mills but also for transporting gunpowder between each stage of the manufacturing process. Hand-propelled punts were used for safety reasons, even when steam and petrol engines became available - all risks of sparks or flames near the powder had to be avoided.



A little NE of control 18 is Stonebridge Pond, which is the only remaining millpond of the Home Works. In 1781 there was an enormous explosion of gunpowder here - three tons in all - which was so loud that it was heard in London. Three Home Works employees were killed and much of the surrounding area was badly damaged. It took another five years however for the most hazardous steps of the manufacturing process to be moved out of Faversham to new premises in the marshes.

On the far side of Stonebridge Pond, our control 12 lies at the head of Faversham Creek. Here the Ordnance Wharf was located, where the ingredients for gunpowder - mainly sulphur and saltpetre - were brought in by



boat, and the finished product was loaded for shipping out to magazines around the country. At first this was just the Tower of London, but as Chatham Dockyard and Woolwich Arsenal grew in importance, gunpowder was sent for storage there too. The sailing barges that carried these deadly loads from here flew a red flag to warn other vessels to keep their distance.

Just to the E of control 2 (on the E side of the railway line) is Faversham Cemetery. Here can be found a memorial to the 108 people killed in the Great Explosion at the Marsh Works in Uplees, on 2nd April 1916. A fire at the works led to 15 tons of TNT and 150 tons of ammonium nitrate detonating. The shape of the land directed the blastwave northwards out across the Thames Estuary, so that while Faversham town was spared the worst effects of the blast, windows were blown out 14 miles away in Southend, and the shockwave was felt in Norwich. Happening as it did at the height of the First World War, this accident highlighted the vulnerability of the Faversham gunpowder works to enemy attacks from the sea, and hastened their closure with production being moved much further north and west in the country.

Week 2 Challenge - Tunbridge Wells Three Parks:



The three parks of the title are Dunorlan, Grosvenor & Hilbert, and Calverley Grounds (although The Grove is also visited and Camden Park is passed).

Dunorlan Park: a Saxons favourite, Dunorlan started life as the ornamental grounds of a large private house of the same name, as did many of our modern-day urban parks.

The house and grounds were built in the 1850s and 1860s for a wealthy Yorkshireman, Henry Reed, on the 19th century 'Millionaires' Row' of Tunbridge Wells, Pembury Road. Reed had been highly successful in business in Tasmania and was a devout Wesleyan evangelist, and later a supporter of William Booth in the early and difficult years of the Salvation Army. He was also biblically prolific across his two marriages, raising a total of 16 children.

Having settled back in England in 1847, Reed only occupied Dunorlan from its completion in 1862 (with which, incidentally, he was deeply dissatisfied) until

1870, when he moved back to his native Harrogate. In 1873 he returned to Tasmania where he died in 1880.



Dunorlan was unsuccessfully put up for sale twice, in 1871 and 1872, before finally finding a buyer, a Canadian banker. It was requisitioned by the military during World War Two, before being sold to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in 1946, shortly after which a fire damaged the house. Despite repairs the Council could find no use for the house, so it was demolished in 1957 with 8 smaller houses being built on its footprint while the park remained open to the public.

One of the most interesting features in the park is the Chalybeate spring: this was turned into a visitor attraction on the site of the original building here, Burnthouse Farm. It was intended to cash in on the rising popularity of the other such springs around Tunbridge Wells, particularly the Pantiles Chalybeate. Its age is uncertain but the Pantiles spring was discovered in 1606 so the Dunorlan spring may date back to shortly after that time.

Grosvenor & Hilbert Park: the Grosvenor Recreation Ground was Tunbridge Wells' first public park, opened in 1889 on the site of the former Calverley Water Works. It was purposely built for the industrial workers and their families who by now were living in new suburbs at the north end of the town and had no access to common land or other public spaces. It was designed by the same man responsible for Dunorlan Park - Robert Marnock, who lived locally in Rusthall and was one of the 19th century's most outstanding landscape gardeners. It was also his final commission, as he died in the same year that it opened, but, he felt, the best site he had worked on throughout his entire prolific career.

Our control 4, at the S end of the park, is by the lake which was created from former reservoirs of the water works. The lake still has its original island and grottoes at the N end, known as the 'dripping wells'. Until 1934 there were 2



other lakes in the hollow north of here, which were filled in a few years after Hilbert Recreation Ground (formerly Charity Farm) was absorbed into the park in 1931.

Over the years some people have claimed to have witnessed a ghostly coach and

horses hurtling along Auckland Road near the park (parallel to Dorking Road where our control 6 is). It is said that they were guests heading to a party at Charity Farm in the 1800s when the horses bolted, overturning the coach and killing all on board...

Calverley Grounds: when Decimus Burton began his garden suburb development of Calverley New Town in 1828, he included the Grounds as a private park exclusively for the residents of his 24 villas there. In 1840 the Calverley Hotel was created by rebuilding the Earl of Egremont's former house Great Mount Pleasant, and hotel guests were also granted privileged access to the Grounds. And thus it remained right through to the 1920s when the Town Council were finally able to buy and open them to the public. Considerably more trees were planted then too, changing the original, very open, character of the park.

Week 3 Challenge - Walderslade:



The name is Saxon (yay!) meaning 'wood in a valley' (woods are 'Waelder' in German), which our Maprun course certainly proved. The valleys (predominantly between controls 3, 9 and 8, from north to south) are dry chalk valleys dating back aeons to the ice ages.

Despite modern development - from the start of the 20th century but particularly since the 1950s - a reasonable amount of Walderslade's woodland remains, particularly on higher ground and to the south of the area (near to controls 13-17).

Local farms supplied wood, notably oak, to Chatham Dockyard for the construction of Royal Navy ships. HMS Victory, which was built at Chatham and launched in 1765, might have used Walderslade timber.

Lords Wood Lane, right on the E edge of our map, may date back to at least the Bronze Age, which probably makes it the oldest lane in Walderslade. A Bronze Age hoard of two gold penannular bracelets ([now in the British Museum](#)) was found in Walderslade in 1965. The area as a whole has ancient antecedents: the megalithic burial chambers of Kit's Coty House and Little Kit's Coty House, as well as the White Horse Stone, are located not far south over the M2 on Blue Bell Hill. On a much more



The Walderslade Hoard

© The Trustees of the British Museum.



Ruined cottage in woods,
Walderslade

modern note, Rochester Airport nestles into the high ground between Walderslade and the M2. It opened as a municipal airport in 1933, and the famous aircraft manufacturers Short Brothers moved here the following year, remaining here through World War Two until relocating to Belfast in 1946. The airport's recent history has been more difficult, and its future is somewhat uncertain although BAe Systems has a significant presence on the airport industrial estate.

Steve Coast, the founder of OpenStreetMap, grew up in Walderslade. As orienteers we owe much to Steve and his vision, which made possible sites like oomap.co.uk, from which the base maps for most of our MapRun courses are drawn.

Week 4 Challenge - Leybourne and West Malling:



Although much of the local area is modern development, both Leybourne and West Malling nearby have far longer histories.

Leybourne Church (NW of control 2) dates back to Saxon times when the village was called Lillieburn. A Norman baron by the name of Sir Philip Libourne came to live here and the names became entwined to create Leybourne. One of his descendants, Sir William Baron de Leybourne, was the first Englishman to be given the title Admiral, for his naval exploits. The church contains two crowns, votive gifts presented by King Edward I and his Queen, Eleanor of Castille, when they visited Sir William in October 1286. Sir William's father, Sir Roger, a great friend and companion of Edward I before he became king, built Leybourne Castle. It is a rare 'enclosure castle' - a defended residence whose main defences are just its boundary walls and towers, of which only 126 are known nationally, all being virtually unique in design.

On the NW of our course is Leybourne Grange (controls 16-20), a Grade II listed country house built around 1850, replacing an earlier 1725 house which itself was built on the site of late 14th century estate buildings. A grange was a farm belonging to an Abbey: in this case the Cistercian Abbey of St Mary Graces, London, which inherited the estate (including Leybourne Castle) at that time. Occupation of the Grange goes back much, much further however: recent excavations have revealed Mesolithic and



St Leonard's Tower,
West Malling

Neolithic flints (between our controls 17 and 19), and Late Bronze Age pits and ditches and Late Iron Age ditches (between controls 16 and 18). These finds cover an enormous timespan from possibly as far back as 10,000BC through to 42AD.

Nearby West Malling village has plenty of its own eye-witnesses to history: St Leonard's Tower, W of control 9, is a Norman keep dating back to 1077 built as a defended residence for Gundulf, the Bishop of Rochester. Gundulf also founded the Abbey of St Mary in West Malling village. Today it is an Abbey of Anglican Benedictine Nuns, who have lived here since 1916. There are many other historic buildings in the village centre, including possibly the oldest extant buildings in Britain: 65 and 67 High Street and The Ancient House, which together are Grade I listed, the highest possible level of protection for historic buildings. Originally all three were part of a single, large building under the control of the Abbey, which dates them to 1160-80.



West Malling is also where the first known cricket match in Kent took place, on 24th July 1705, between a 'West of Kent' team and a team from Chatham. The Old County Ground, to the west of the village, near our control 11, later became a county-level cricket venue and may have inspired Dickens' match in Pickwick Papers between All Muggleton and Dingley Dell.

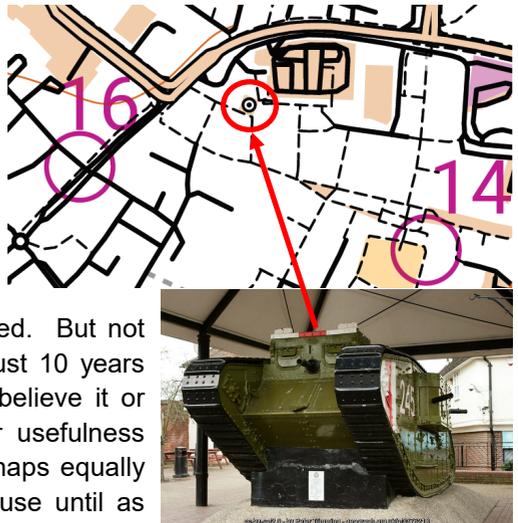
The Old County Ground, West Malling

To the south West Malling is Manor Park (controls 8 and 9). Facing the park across the road is the imposing Douce's Manor, a large Georgian house now converted into apartments. During World War Two, it was the Officers' Mess for RAF West Malling to the south, who had their own special bar in the cellar. This was wryly named the 'Twitch Inn', after the nervous twitch many of the aircrew developed from the immense strain of air combat, constantly checking over their shoulder for enemy aircraft sneaking up behind them. According to one source, each night, depending on the weather, officers would place one of two objects on the bar to indicate their mood to the barman: either a scrubbing brush ('flying scrubbed' for the night) or a dice ('dicing with death'). They also found time for more relaxing pursuits in the bar, most notably signing their names on the ceiling with soot from a candle held between their toes (along with other graffiti). The signatures have been preserved, almost unbelievably given the cellar's later use as a nightclub... Today the cellar houses the Twitch Heritage Centre, which in normal (non-Covid) times is open up to 10 times a year for free.

Week 5 Challenge - Ashford Parks and Streets:

Ashford has a tank. Not, apparently, because the neighbours are hostile - perish the thought - but because they were given one.

Tanks debuted on both British and German sides in 1916 during World War One. In November 1917 the British National War Savings Committee put a (rather well-used) tank on display at Trafalgar Square to get the public to buy war bonds. A national touring campaign involving 6 tanks soon followed, with each tank visiting a city or town for a week to sell the war bonds. Although very popular, to boost sales even further a competition was announced whereby the municipality that spent the most per person on the bonds would win the Trafalgar Square tank, called 'Egbert'. The prize was won by West Hartlepool, but after the war had ended the Government decided to donate a further 264 tanks to metropolises around the country by way of thanks ('Tanks for Thanks' perhaps!)



Over the century since then all apart from one have, inevitably, disappeared. But not number 245 - Ashford's tank: after just 10 years on display she was converted into, believe it or not, an electricity substation, so her usefulness ensured her long-term survival. Perhaps equally unbelievably, her substation was in use until as late as 1972. However in 2006 she became a Grade II Listed War Memorial, which obliges Ashford Borough Council to protect and maintain her. No. 245 is a Mark IV 'Female' tank (hence referring to her as 'she' above). British tanks were originally designed with 2 six-pound guns (i.e. cannons) and 3 machine-guns. Concerns that they might be overwhelmed by enemy infantry led to a decision to create a variant which carried 5 machine-guns. This was designated a 'Female' version, to match the 'Male' version with the six-pounders, and they were intended to operate as a pair, supporting each other. No. 245 can be found to the NE of control 16 on our MapRun course.

Challenge Weeks 6-10 will be covered in the next issue of SaxAlert.

ASH DIEBACK

Simon Greenwood

Ash dieback will kill around 80% of ash trees across the UK. At a cost of billions, the effects will be staggering. It will change the landscape forever and threaten many species which rely on ash.

What does ash dieback look like?

Ash dieback can affect ash trees of all ages. Younger trees succumb to the disease quicker but in general, all affected trees will have these symptoms:

- Leaves develop dark patches in the summer.
- They then wilt and discolour to black. Leaves might shed early.
- Dieback of the shoots and leaves is visible in the summer.
- Lesions develop where branches meet the trunk. These are often diamond-shaped and dark brown.
- Inner bark looks brownish-grey under the lesions.
- New growth from previously dormant buds further down the trunk. This is known as epicormic growth and is a common response to stress in trees.



Crown dieback in a mature ash tree.

Credit: Sarang on Wikimedia.org

What is ash dieback?

Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is a fungus which originated in Asia. It doesn't cause much damage on its native hosts of the Manchurian ash (*Fraxinus mandshurica*) and the Chinese ash (*Fraxinus chinensis*) in its native range. However, its introduction to Europe about 30 years ago has devastated the European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) because our native ash species did not evolve with the fungus and this means it has no natural defence against it.

What happens to the tree?

The fungus overwinters in leaf litter on the ground, particularly on ash leaf stalks. It produces small white fruiting bodies between July and October which release spores into the surrounding atmosphere.

These spores can blow tens of miles away. They land on leaves, stick to and

then penetrate into the leaf and beyond. The fungus then grows inside the tree, eventually blocking its water transport systems, causing it to die.

The tree can fight back, but year-on-year infections will eventually kill it.

Where has ash dieback impacted?

The ash dieback fungus wasn't formally described until 2006, but it has been known of in Europe for about 30 years.

In the UK, ash dieback has had the most impact in the south-east of England. This is where it was first recorded in the UK back in 2012. It is unknown how long the fungus was in the area before the symptoms became apparent, perhaps some years.

We see evidence of the disease throughout the UK. However we are still at the beginning of the epidemic, so we won't know the full impact for a while. The slow progress of the disease exacerbates this, so we need to track the sometimes subtle changes brought about by ash dieback.



Wilting of leaves caused by necrosis of the rachis.

Courtesy The Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), Crown Copyright.

How did ash dieback get here?

The spores of this fungus can travel in the wind so it is possible that it arrived in the UK naturally, however it was also inadvertently imported on ash saplings with the Woodland Trust being a major importer. The UK was importing thousands of ash plants from infected parts of Europe until a ban came into place in 2012. This undoubtedly sped up the spread of the disease within the UK because the disease was able to spread from areas of new planting via wind to mature trees.

What impact will ash dieback have?

It's thought that we are going to lose around 80% of our ash trees in the UK. This is going to have a devastating impact on the landscape and the biodiversity of our woodlands, as well as a major loss in connections between habitats as we lose hedges and individual trees outside of woods.

The predicted cost of managing the diseases is high. It includes the practical expense of clearing up dead and dying trees, to the loss of its environmental services such as air purification.

Is there any natural disease tolerance?

There is hope on the horizon. Initial findings suggest that we might have some trees that are tolerant to ash dieback, meaning that the population could eventually recover over time (likely over 50 years).

However, tolerance to the disease is complicated because a number of factors play into it including genetic traits, the health of the tree and the number of ash dieback spores in the atmosphere.

How you can help:

- Clean your shoes before and after visiting a wood.
- Avoid taking cuttings or plant material from the countryside.
- Wash your car or bike wheels to remove mud or plant matter.

What to do if you spot ash dieback:

Gardeners and managers of parks and other sites with ash trees can help stop the local spread of ash dieback by collecting the fallen ash leaves and burning, burying or deep composting them. This disrupts the fungus's lifecycle.

LEAGUES

Kent Night Cup 2020/21

Due to the new lockdown, unfortunately we have had to suspend the current KNC season until government restrictions are lifted. If this happens as planned on 2nd December, then the first KNC event after that will be Angley on 10th December. If restrictions are not lifted then, we will advise in due course what is happening with the KNC.

Stay tuned to the Saxons website for the latest news!

Mark Glaisher, KNC Co-ordinator

MapRun Summer Challenge:

Congratulations to everybody who participated in Saxons' first ever Summer Challenge using MapRun. The Series consisted of 10 courses spread across mostly urban areas of Kent. In total 56 people took part, with 4 completing all 10 challenges: well done to Alan Hickling, David Float (HAVOC), Beryl Pring and Roger Pring.

The final leaderboard is here:

https://www.saxons-oc.org/documents/SSC_League_10_Final.pdf

All 10 Challenges can still be run, as can 6 non-Challenge/training courses. See <https://www.saxons-oc.org/maprun> for downloadable PDF maps and ongoing leaderboards.



The residents of Leybourne have an unusual sense of humour... Posters seen by Sean Cronin during his Leybourne MapRun.

South East League:

2019/20 League:

Saxons had a successful end to the season, coming top of Division 2 and thereby earning promotion to Division 1 next season. Congratulations to Sarah Howes for being one of the top 5 people during the season to achieve their target speed.

[Final SE League table \(after Burnham Beeches\) \[PDF\]](#) / [more detailed version here \[PDF\]](#)

[2020 Individual League results \[PDF\]](#)

[Saxons Individual results \[PDF\]](#)

2020/21 League Events:

08-Nov-20	SN	Hindhead (SE Long Champs)	Cancelled
22-Nov-20	SLOW	Winterfold	Cancelled
10-Jan-21	CHIG	Epping N	Cancelled
17-Jan-21	DFOK	Westerham	

24-Jan-21	SAX	Hindleap
06-Feb-21	GO	Redlands (SE Middle Champs)
14-Feb-21	LOK	Leith Hill
21-Feb-21	HH	Ashridge S&E
16-May-21	SO	Oldhouse Warren

Note that these are all dependant on the Covid 19 situation and fewer events may again be used to decide the league results.

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

UK Orienteering League:

The 2020/21 season has not yet been announced on the UKOL website, so it is unclear what events will be taking place. The only remaining event in the 2019/20 season, the Southern Championships, has been cancelled.

In the 2020 Club League, Saxons are 10th (out of 71) with 773 points. Current leaders are SO with 1473 points.

[2020 schedule of events](#)

[2020 Club League](#)

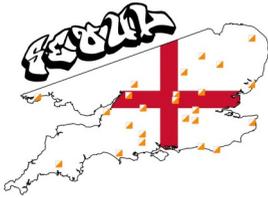
[2020 Individual League](#) (filter by setting Club to SAX to view individual Saxons' results)

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

Southern England Orienteering Urban League:

SEOUL has had a somewhat tumultuous year, with the entire League being suspended in March due to COVID-19, formally cancelled in August with, at that point, no plans for 2021 or beyond, then revived in September (for 2021) with new League Co-ordinators. On top of that SEOUL has just launched a SE England GPS Orienteering League (SEGOL). One of the new Co-ordinators, Tom Dobra, who is well-known to many Saxons members, explains what's been happening and SEOUL's plans and hopes for the future:

O leagues: SEOUL and SEGOL



The Southern England Orienteering Urban League (SEOUL) is undergoing a significant evolution.

Firstly, Tom Dobra (me) and Sandra Mather (SMOC) took over coordinating the league in late August after Chris and Simon Branford stepped down after many years. Thanks to their hard work, SEOUL has a strong following with about 20 races a year stretching from Norfolk to Cornwall often via Kent. Chris and Simon announced in late 2019 that 2020 would be their last but unfortunately nobody offered to take over. Thus, when they bid farewell in August, neither Sandra nor I could bear to see SEOUL cease to exist, so here we are.

Of course, 2020 is a very unusual year to be finding your feet, and we were promptly greeted with a suggestion to include MapRun courses in SEOUL. After careful thought and consultation with our Facebook followers and a few clubs, we think there is demand for GPS orienteering but it should be separate from regular events for fairness, so in early October we launched SEGOL, the Southern England GPS Orienteering League. By running both a conventional league and one to be run any day any time, we feel we can appeal to the widest possible audience and still ensure that clubs that feel uneasy about having hundreds of orienteers tearing up a town centre during COVID-19 can still offer something. Indeed, the concept is spreading and the West Midlands GPS Orienteering League will be launching shortly using the SEGOL infrastructure.



All competitors interested in either league should visit our website in its new location www.seoulorienteering.org.uk and follow us on Facebook. SEOUL will resume in 2021 with entries as normal. However, SEGOL has already started with the first rounds in Bristol, Taunton and Gloucester plus hopefully Brighton in December. You will need to register for the league on our website, then follow the competition links to find the details for each course. Get enthusiastic and spread the word!

Tom Dobra

[SEOUL website](#) | [SEGOL website](#)

SAXONS OUT & ABOUT

Saxons At Home

[View the latest KNC league table here!](#)

KNC1—Bearsted & Grove Green, Thursday 1st October, hosted by DFOK

[Results](#) | [Results with KNC points](#)

KNC2—Canterbury, Thursday 8th October

This was a straightforward urban night 60-minute score event with 20 controls and a 1:4,000 map, planned and organised by Peter Martin with the support of KNC Coordinator Mark Glaisher. As the first non-MapRun Saxons event of the season, learning and experience from BOF and events run by BAOC and SLOW were utilised to minimise the Covid-19-related risks. Features included online Pre-entry, competitor pre-printed control sheets, easy-pick pre-rolled maps, lamp post numbers as controls (i.e. no O-kite or box), dibbing at Start and Finish only, no live results, social distancing measures and hand sanitiser.

There were 42 pre-entries via RaceSignUp of which 38 actually took part. The winner was Tom Dobra BOK who visited all controls in a time of 36:20.

Peter Martin

[Results \[PDF\]](#) | [Results with KNC points](#)

KNC3—Enchanted Place, Thursday 15th October

For the first time, we used the Pooh car park on Chuck Hatch Lane – this car park is not available for use in the daytime because its primary purpose is to facilitate access to Pooh Sticks Bridge. A benefit of using this car park is that it is close to the lower, wooded slopes that form the best orienteering terrain in the Ashdown Forest. The weather was excellent; dry and mild, with little wind. Despite the good weather, the event was a test of orienteering skill and fitness. The best result was achieved by Stanley Heap (Southdowns Orienteers) with a score of 170 out of a possible 200. Jonathan Crickmore (also Southdowns Orienteers) visited all the controls but incurred time penalties so finished third.

The event was spoiled by the behaviour of some of the competitors who crossed into land belonging to a private landowner and who were then abusive when challenged. The landowner complained to Saxons Orienteering Club and to the Conservators of Ashdown Forest. Hopefully no long term harm will have been

done but we will need to be careful not to upset landowners in this part of the Forest in future.

Richard Field

[Results](#) | [Results with KNC points](#)

KNC4—Paddock Wood, Thursday 22nd October

Planner Sarah Howes comments 'I hope you enjoyed this informal level D event in Paddock Wood which was put together at quite short notice after permission for the scheduled Trosley & Vigo event was withdrawn, rather than there being no event at all this week.

There was some lively discussion after download about a couple of the controls so in the interests of fairness everyone has been credited with 10 points for all control points, that they indicated on their control sheet, they had visited.

There's a huge amount of new housing development going on in Paddock Wood at the moment so a return visit in 2-3 years' time could be on an entirely different looking map.'

Sarah Howes

[Results](#) | [Results with KNC points](#)

KNC5—Maidenbower & Pound Hill, Crawley, Thursday 29th October, hosted by SO

Our thanks go to Neil Crickmore and the Southdowns team for hosting this round.

"When I heard that the organisers of the KNC were happy to allow lamp posts to be used as control sites I was more than happy not to have to put out units on a damp October evening. I did though want to give you the option of using the MapRun App that so many of us have been using for the last 6 months. This did throw up its own challenges, like how to not reveal the course in advance. If I had used a PIN then MapRunG users needed the PIN to download the event files -which could have been problematic at the event itself, so instead I went for the redacted map approach. Most MapRunF users got their phones to accurately record their control visits. Some MapRunG users had problems - but



**Cutting it fine! -
Sean Cronin's
finishing time at
Paddock Wood**

mainly with getting the software to work. Mind you others also had problems working out how to use a pen properly. At the event itself I was surprised how many decided to head across the wet field from the start, and by the way the crossing point symbol just indicates that the feature can be crossed not that you have to cross there or that there will actually be anything on the ground there.

We hope to be back in the Crawley area in January for the traditional Tilgate New Year KNC.”

Neil Crickmore

[Results \[PDF\]](#) | [Results with KNC points](#) | [MapRun results](#)

The Good, the Bad and the Hopeless...

Peter Martin

Feeling both vulnerable and frustrated by the lockdown and continuing constraints, I jumped at the chance to plan a Kent Night Cup event (KNC2).

There would be one beforehand planned by Neil Speers DFOK, which I entered. As a first starter I was soon on my own plodding around the roads and paths of Bearsted. Despite a few wrong turnings I got to eleven of the twenty controls and finished well within the hour having worked up a fine sweat and enjoyed the challenge.



With support from KNC Coordinator Mark Glaisher and useful input from Alison, Jean and others, KNC2 duly took place in Canterbury with online-only entry and briefing, downloadable control sheets, lamp post numbers as controls and individual timed starts rather than the usual live briefing and mass start.

Amidst a few late planning changes I messed up one of the control sheet clues. Also, with the nights drawing in, a couple of gates that had been open when I tested routes in the evening three weeks previously were already closed by the time competitors reached them on the night. I felt bad as I always want to get thing right. Fortunately although a few competitors did mention them, they seemed to be very amicably treated as minor hiccups.

I have only managed to do one or two night events in recent years but KNC3 at Enchanted Place offered a further opportunity to reconnect with the darkness. I missed the turning to the car park and drove an extra five miles in a loop before finding it. Not a great start, giving me five minutes to get from car to Start and then I was off. I made a quick decision to go firstly to the nearest control, mainly



to get a feel for the map and terrain, even though it was close to the Finish so might have been a good one to pick up when finishing. Pacing carefully down a ride and small path I soon reached it.

The next control in the 90s series was not far away, with a sequence of ground features leading towards it but when I thought I'd gone far enough I couldn't see it. Scanning around with my rather weak headtorch I couldn't pick out the kite. I stomped around for a while before deciding to go on to another one. Several other competitors passed in the darkness and I watched as their lights flickered on trees, bracken, bumps and hollows. I did manage to find the 'changeover' control but after a couple of fruitless searches picked up just one more on the way back to the Finish. At download, Mark stared at his laptop screen saying something must have gone wrong because it was showing a very low score. I had to admit that apart from the changeover, in 52 minutes I had found just two of the twenty controls.

Saxons Further Afield

ARMY EVENTS

Beryl Pring

Some of us have been lucky enough to go to the army events held every Wednesday in the Aldershot and Camberley areas since 5th August.

They were run very efficiently as you can imagine with social distancing a priority.

We entered on line using Racesignup, a very easy to use entry management service which in fact Saxons are using too. On arriving at the venue, we were parked in lines boot to bonnet and then in rows roughly three to four metres apart so social distancing was easy. There was hand sanitizer outside the toilets which you were asked to use before and after. You had to pick up your Emit tag from a van parked near the start, as all the controls were electronically activated. There were two starts, 10 runners every 15 mins and only 6 people at a time in each start lane. This worked very well and at no time did one feel you were too close to anybody. Occasionally you met people out

in the forest and open land but it was not a problem. At the finish again you went to the van, downloaded and dropped the Emit tags in a box and got a printout which was cut off automatically so no touching anything.

Overall, except for my poor performances at all of them, 6 in total, we enjoyed it immensely and it was great to meet up with friends from other clubs again.

Unfortunately for the time being at least there is a limit of 30 civilians only to attend these events instead of the usual 200. This has come down from the top although the Army Orienteering Association is requesting this be looked at.



**Saxons at the JK2019 Sprint—
Aldershot Garrison [Steve Rush]**



**To boldly go where others have gone
before you...When taping up controls for
a KNC at Seal Chart, I found that I wasn't
the first planner to use this control site!
[Graham Denney]**



The truth is out there...somewhere... Pre-O at JK2019 [Steve Rush]

Credits:

Cover photo: Ancient track at Oldbury Hill taken by Graham Denney.

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Apologies to anybody inadvertently missed off this list—let me know and I'll credit you in the next issue—
Graham

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Beryl Pring	Secretary and Permanent O Courses	secretary
Fiona Wilson	Membership	membership
David Kingdon	Land Access	landaccess
Simon Blanchflower	Mapping	mapping
Alison Howe	Development	development
Heather Brown	Coaching	coaching
Brendon Howe	Team Captain	team.captain
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SAXALERT is the official journal of Saxons Orienteering Club.

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