



SAXALERT



NEWSLETTER AWARDS 09 ~ 17 20 22

CompassSport

SAX NOTICES

6 PODIUM POSITIONS FOR SAXONS AT THE JK

Saxons in top 3 on 6 occasions at JK 2023 in the Lake District—see JK report for full info.

SAXALERT WINS ANOTHER COMPASSSPORT AWARD

See News

HELP WANTED WITH SAXALERT

Volunteers sought for hazardous work with no pay! Help bring SaxAlert out more often and keep it winning awards—see Editorial

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Cover photo: The Power and The Glory—Brendon Howe powers contactlessly towards the Finish on the JK Sprint race / Credit: Graham Thomas

EDITORIAL

Well, we're now halfway through 2023 and it's proving to be a busy year for Saxons.

Since the last issue of SaxAlert, our annual KNC and KOL seasons have completed, we've run other events such as Marden Hill, a local at Ightham, and our Summer Series is in full swing. A large group of Saxons made the journey north at Easter for this year's JK in the Lake District, where we achieved no fewer than 6 podium positions and 12 other top 10 placings. Then shortly after that a couple of us ventured across to Northern Ireland for part of the Emerald Isle 10 Days Festival. In addition, I'm very pleased to say that SaxAlert has won another CompassSport Award, this time one of the 2022 Newsletter Awards. While we remember our late President, Simon Greenwood, in this issue with a full obituary, it's good to see that collectively we aren't letting his untimely death in December hold us back.

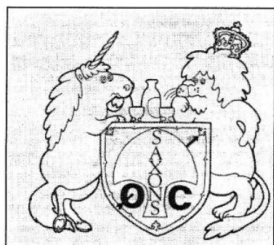


Photo credit: Sean Cronin

Mentioning the CompassSport Awards provides me with a neat segue into a request for help. At present I can only manage to bring out 2 issues of SaxAlert a year by myself. It would be great if we can produce it more regularly - ideally quarterly / 4 times per year - and in fact we should be doing this in order to remain eligible for yet more CompassSport Awards.

If you'd like to help with producing SaxAlert as part of the editorial team, please get in touch (saxalert@saxons-oc.org). I'm happy to discuss any ways of dividing up the tasks and also fresh ideas for improving the content. If you've got previous relevant experience, that's great but not essential, and this could be an excellent opportunity to learn new skills. Your input can help us improve on SaxAlert's existing success - hope to hear from some of you soon.

Graham Denney



SaxMystery solved! Having graced the cover of 'The Saxons Newsletter' from Jan 1972 until it became 'saxnews' in Dec 1985, this logo resurfaced during research for our 50th anniversary issue in Spring 2022. But there was no indication of who (if anybody) these two dubious characters represented. My thanks to Peter Billingham for telling me that they depict 'Al & Val, the 1st chairman and his partner, in customary pose... A very genial couple.' These were Al Reid, Chairman 1973-78 (also President 1978-80) and Val Westcott, one of the early Saxons Newsletter Editors.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Jean Fitzgerald

On 23 March there was a memorial service for Simon Greenwood, our President, at Balcombe church, which I attended along with several other Saxons plus representatives from other orienteering clubs. The church was packed, highlighting the interactions that Simon had with many different groups of people. Parking at the house for refreshments after the service was a bit like finding a space at some larger orienteering events with limited parking space!



We are now at the end of the main 2022/23 season with the full range of KOL, KNC and Sunday events behind us. Without our willing band of helpers, we would have difficulty putting on the number of events that we do, so thanks to them all. If you have some time to help on the day at our events, please do contact the organiser.

Behind the scenes, there has been a lot of work to spread the word about orienteering to a range of different potential participants with the aim of increasing event participation and club membership. Sean Cronin is continuing his targeted approach to communities local to events on Facebook. Saxons and DFOK are jointly developing areas the Find Your Way project. <https://findyourwayvo.org.uk/>. This project aims to encourage people who have never tried orienteering, or perhaps are not very active, to get outside and enjoy the benefits of virtual orienteering. All they need is a smart phone with MapRun loaded on and georeferenced maps, provided by us, to take part at any time. Maps are available for Trosley, Haysden/Tonbridge Castle, Brockhill, Capstone CP and High Meadow (Dover), with other areas going live soon, so why not have a go and encourage your family and friends to get active? Contact Alison Howe for more details.

In development work with schools, several have had their grounds mapped and POC or VOC courses installed for teachers to use in lessons. In May, Alison and Brendon Howe, in collaboration with the Medway School Games Organiser, set up the inaugural School Games Event at Capstone Farm Country Park. More than 100 year 8 students from seven Medway schools took part, completing two orienteering courses, with a break for lunch and to compete in an O maze competition. As a marshal, I was impressed with the enthusiasm of the participants. In her write up of the first course Alison said 'We had our first finishers in just over 20 minutes. Other teams took a little longer to get to grips with the skills, and the course marshals had to provide some

guidance to help the teams around the course.' We hope that other school/sports partnerships will get involved with Saxons and orienteering based on this initial successful event.

For the future, we are now into the summer local events (see details on the website). On 2 September Beryl Pring is organising the annual Saxons BBQ event which has morphed recently to a picnic in the park. The website will have more details of venue and timing soon.

Speaking of websites, the Saxons website will be redesigned in the coming months. I'll let you know when the new version goes live.

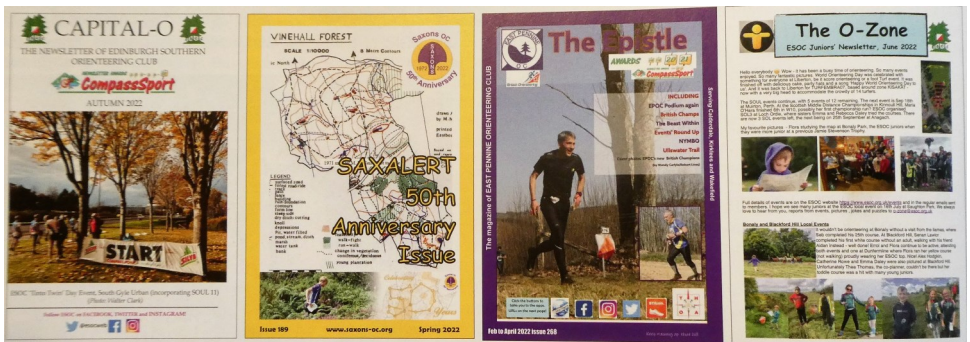
I hope you all have a great summer and return in September for the next full season of orienteering with Saxons.

Jean

NEWS

2022 CompassSport Newsletter Awards

Each year CompassSport magazine makes awards for the best UK orienteering club newsletters. Having won regularly over a number of years, SaxAlert is pleased to be able to add 2022 to its stable of awards. Indeed, the number of awards for last year was lowered to just 4, in order to maintain consistency against a background of fewer contenders. Our 50th Anniversary Issue was particularly singled out for praise as 'hugely impressive'. Our thanks go to Nick Barrable and his team for the award.



The 2022 Newsletter Award winners—L to R:

Capital-O (Edinburgh Southern OC) | SaxAlert (Saxons OC) | The Epistle (East Pennine OC) | The O-Zone (Edinburgh Southern OC Junior's Newsletter)

Credit: CompassSport Magazine, Vol 44 Issue 1

BRITISH ORIENTEERING PERFORMANCE AWARDS

Well done to the following:

Nicky Bedford	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★★	08/03/2023
Karen Bricknell	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	07/02/2023
James Cackett	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	16/04/2023
	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★★	28/05/2023
	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★★★	28/05/2023
John Cross	Racing Challenge: Gold Award	★★★★★	27/02/2023
Alice Evans	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★	28/05/2023
Harriet Evans	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★	21/02/2023
Adam Fulcher	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★	08/03/2023
Renate Henry	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★★★	28/05/2023
Holly Howe	Racing Challenge: Gold Award	★★★	08/03/2023
Beth Kendall	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★★	16/04/2023
	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★★★	09/05/2023
Peter Lilja	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	18/01/2023
	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award	★★★★★	18/01/2023
	Racing Challenge: Silver Award	★★★★★	18/01/2023
	Racing Challenge: Gold Award	★★★★★	03/04/2023
Phillip Locke	Navigation Challenge	★★★★★	07/02/2023

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 selection of forthcoming events run by Saxons and neighbouring clubs through to the end of the year:

Sat 01 Jul	HH Saturday Series & GLOSS Event	Nomansland, Wheathampstead (HH)
Sat 01 Jul	Park-O P4	Horsham Park, Horsham (SO)
Tue 04 Jul	London Park Series	Richmond Park, London (SLOW)
Tue 04 Jul	HH Street-O	Welwyn Garden City (HH)
Sat 08 Jul	DFOK Come and Try It Event	Darenth Country Park, Dartford (DFOK)
Sun 09 Jul	MV GLOSS Event	Epsom Downs (MV)
Sun 09 Jul	Yvette Baker Trophy Final	Sandall Beat, Sheffield (SYO)
Tue 11 Jul	London Park Series	Brockwell Park, London (SLOW)
Tue 11 Jul	HH Street-O	Borehamwood (HH)
Thu 13 Jul	Mole Summer Series	Nonsuch Park, Cheam (MV)
Sat 15 Jul	Park-O P5	Hampden Park, Eastbourne (SO)
Sat 15 Jul	Summer Series	Capstone Park, Chatham (SAX)
Sun 16 Jul	SLOW GLOSS Event	Streatham Common (SLOW)
Tue 18 Jul	DFOK Park Race Series	Crystal Palace Park (DFOK)
Tue 18 Jul	HH Street-O	Hitchin (HH)
Sun 23 Jul	LOK GLOSS Event	Hampstead Heath, London (LOK)

Tue 25 Jul	DFOK Park Race Series	Wick Woodland & Mabley Green, Hackney (DFOK)
Tue 25 Jul	HH Street-O	Potters Bar (HH)
Sun 30 Jul- Fri 04 Aug	Scottish 6 Days	Lossiemouth/Forres, Scotland
Tue 01 Aug	HH Street-O	Stanborough Park, Welwyn Garden City (HH)
Tue 01 Aug	Mole Summer Series	Nork Park, Epsom (MV)
Tue 08 Aug	HH Street-O	tbc (HH)
Tue 08 Aug	Mole Summer Series	Ashtead Common, Ashtead (MV)
Tue 15 Aug	HH Street-O	tbc (HH)
Thu 17 Aug	Mole Summer Series	Oaks Park, Sutton (MV)
Tue 22 Aug	HH Street-O	tbc (HH)
Sat 26 Aug	Virtual Orienteering Event	High Meadow, Dover (SAX)
Sun 27 Aug	White Rose	Pickering, N. Yorkshire (EBOR)
Sun 27 Aug	MV Urban Event	Reigate (MV)
Tue 29 Aug	HH Street-O	tbc (HH)
Sat 02 Sep	Park-O P6	Goffs Park, Crawley (SO)

Tue 05 Sep	HH Street-O	tbc (HH)
Sat 09 Sep	Park-O P7	Lancing Manor, Lancing (SO)
Sat 09 Sep	HH Saturday Series	Burnham Beeches, Farnham Common (HH)
Sat 09 Sep	Senior Home Internationals Individual & Welsh League Event	Merthyr Common South, Merthyr Tydfil (SWOC)
Sun 10 Sep	Peter Palmer Junior Team Relays	National Trust Stowe, Buckingham (SMOC)
Sun 10 Sep	Senior Home Internationals Relays	Clydach Terrace, Brynmawr (SWOC)
Fri 15 Sep	DFOK Regional event	Southwark Park, Bermondsey (DFOK)
Sat 16 Sep	City of London Race (UKOL)	Rotherhithe, London (SLOW)
Sun 17 Sep	British Sprint Relay Champs	Brunel University, London (LOK)
Sat 23 Sep	Milton Park & Kemsley Street O	Sittingbourne (SAX)
Sat 23 Sep	SN Saturday Series	Farnham Park, Farnham (SN)
Sat 23 Sep	Park-O P8	Hove Park, Hove (SO)
Sat 23 Sep	Junior Inter-Regional Champs & Welsh League Event	Kenfig Burrows, Port Talbot (SBOC)
Sun 24 Sep	GO Local Event	The Chancies, Guildford (GO)
Sun 24 Sep	Junior Inter-Regional Champs	Llantrisant Forest, Port Talbot (SBOC)

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:

01-05 Jul	Five Days Italy - Cadore	Cadore, Italy
02-07 Jul	55th Kainuu Orienteering Week 2023	Kuhmo, Finland
02-09 Jul	Junior World Orienteering Champs 2023	Romania
06-08 Jul	Primiero O Week - 3 days	Primiero San Martino di Castrozza, Italy
11-16 Jul	World Orienteering Champs	Switzerland
14-16 Jul	Hallands 3-dagars	Halmstad, Sweden
15-16 Jul	48th Kalevi Suvjeooks	Sae village, Lääne-Virumaa county, Estonia
16-22 Jul	Swiss Orienteering Week 2023 Flims	Flims Laax, Switzerland

17-31 Jul	California Orienteering Festival	San Francisco & Lake Tahoe, USA
20-23 Jul	CROATIA 4 days - 23rd Zagreb Open	Zagreb, Croatia
21-23 Jul	XX Limanowa Cup 2023	Limanowa, Poland
22-23 Jul	Orienteering competition SEA FESTIVAL '2023 + Baltic MTBO	Klaipėda, Lithuania
22-28 Jul	O-Ringen	Are, Sweden
26-30 Jul	Bohemia Orienteering	NOVÝ BOR, Czech Republic
26-30 Jul	OOcup 2023	Lokve, Slovenia
27-30 Jul	Sudety Cup 2023	Karpacz, Poland
29 Jul - 02 Aug	Bavarian Forest 5 Days	Bodenmais, Germany
29 Jul - 03 Aug	Lapland O Week	Saariselkä, Finland
30 Jul - 04 Aug	O'France 2023	Bolquère, France
02-06 Aug	World Cup Round 2	Czech Republic
03-06 Aug	Czech O-Tour 2023	Česká Lípa, Czech Republic
11-18 Aug	WMOC/World Masters Orienteering Championships	Košice, Slovakia
12-13 Aug	48th SIMM Swiss International Mountain Marathon 2023	Adelboden/Bern, Switzerland

12-15 Aug	4 days of Limburg 2023	Maaseik, Belgium
18-20 Aug	ASOM2023	Ghent, Belgium
25-27 Aug	Vienna O Challenge 2023 - VOC Sprint Weekend	Vienna, Austria
09-10 Sep	Suzuki-Esztergom Cup	Esztergom, Hungary
16-17 Sep	Lille O'Sprint Festival	Villeneuve d'Ascq, France
01-08 Oct	EOC Tour 2023	Verona, Italy
06-08 Oct	Brač Orienteering Championship	Postira, Croatia
06-08 Oct	Mentor Silva Cup - 7 Legs Mixed Relay	Curtea de Arges, Romania
21-Oct	Finale Coppa Italia Sprint	Genova, Italy



Concorde Chase, Star Posts, Bracknell

29th Jan 2023

Credits: Peter Martin



L to R: Sean Cronin, Neil Bricknell, David Kingdon

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Since our last issue the following new members have joined Saxons:

Senior: Justin Knott, Jody Carter and Madhav Karki.

Junior: Samuel Wilks, Noah White and Sebastian White.

Family: Edmund, Joanna, George, Theodore and Zachary Grobel

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 Co-ordinators look forward to meeting new Juniors.

Jody Carter, Madhav Karki and the Grobel Family have all told us about how they became involved with orienteering and Saxons:

Jody Carter: "Hello, I'm Jody Carter, 46, originally from Scotland now living in Ramsgate with my family. I got into orienteering very recently - took part in my first last weekend - having been an avid walker and therefore occasional map reader, for most of my life, and a runner for the last few years. I really loved it and I'm looking forward to many more. Hope to meet you in the future."



Jody Carter



Madhav Karki: "It's been a pleasure to be a member of Saxons club. Thanks so much for welcoming me. I am a Gurkha soldier currently at Invicta park barracks. I do participate the Saxons organized event monthly, sometimes twice a month. I enjoy orienteering and this skill is very relevant and crucial at my job side as well."

Madhav Karki

The Grobel Family: "Hello! We're the Grobel family (Ed, Jo, George, Teddy and Zach) and we're looking forward to getting to know other members through future orienteering adventures! We enjoy a variety of sports and outdoor activities, although the boys do need a bit of 'encouragement' sometimes to get off their backsides and out of the house (which I'm more than happy to provide).

We live in Sevenoaks where I (Ed) teach in a couple of local primary schools. It was in my role as Forest School leader at one of them that my interest in orienteering was sparked when DFOK helped us set up a course at the school. I then started entering events myself and absolutely loved the combo of mental

and physical challenge. So I thought my family shouldn't miss out on all the fun (my wife is a keen runner / cyclist but not as enamoured with map-reading... hopefully it will grow on her). We had done several events together over the last year or so when the idea of club membership came up and we found ourselves caught in the middle of the friendly rivalry between the Saxons and DFOK - I'm sure we've made the right decision!

My hope is that, as we all progress and as the children get a bit older, there might be opportunities to enter some more challenging events together (akin to adventure racing). In the meantime, thank you to all those who give up their time to run the events - we'll attend as many as we can!"



The Grobel Family

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.



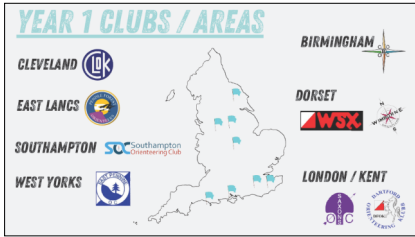
- Bedgebury Pinetum
- Betteshanger Country Park
- Brockhill Country Park
- Kent University, Canterbury
- Milton Creek Country Park
- Mote Park, Maidstone
- Trosley Country Park
- Whinless Down near Dover

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

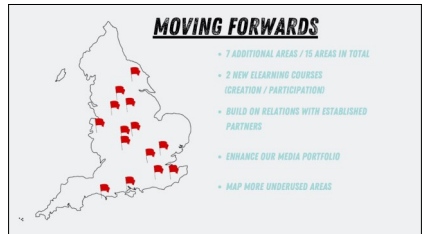


The Year 1 Find Your Way report has been released by British Orienteering, and is [available here](#) on the Saxons website.

In the Southeast, Saxons joined DFOK to participate in this Sport England-funded project aimed at increasing youth

participation in orienteering activities in particular for deprived areas (although the activities are available for all).

Using the virtual orienteering MapRun application has enabled 84 new VOCs (virtual orienteering courses) to be developed throughout England. In addition a number of community partners have been trained to deliver VOC activities, such as teachers and Scout leaders. 38 Come and Try It activities and a range of community days have enabled over 1000 people to experience orienteering via VOC courses. The majority of these—67%—were 16 years or under. 17% of all participants in Year 1 of FYW came from the highest decile of deprivation, which was one of the key goals of the project.



FYW will continue to be expanded in Year 2, to cover more parts of England, map more areas, create more courses, and engage further with potential partners and participants.



Saxons areas launched or close to launch to date include Trosley Country Park, Brockhill Country Park, Betteshanger Country Park, Whinless Down, Haysden Country Park and Tonbridge, and Capstone Country Park.

The great benefit of virtual courses is that you can complete them any time you want, and as often as you want. 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!

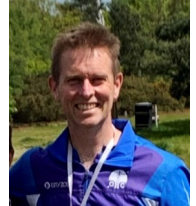
COACH'S CORNER

Brendon Howe

Sprint and Urban - Understanding the Planner's mindset

Introduction

A few weeks ago I was lucky enough to attend an online course on Street and Urban Orienteering Planning. The course was given by Alan Leakey of SLOW. Alan regularly plans the annual London City race, which, as anyone who's taken part will tell you, is always a challenging and enjoyable affair.



Although I've done a fair few urban and sprint races in the past, I was struck by the number of things I didn't know, or hadn't the intelligence to figure out for myself! In the hope that you too have missed some of the planner's finesse in curating excellent urban courses I thought it would be useful to pass on some of these things and suggest some techniques you can employ to improve your performance in these great events...

What's special about urban and sprint?

The fundamental difference between urban events and forest orienteering is technical difficulty. All urban and sprint areas are a maximum of TD3. This requires the planner to use other techniques in order to create an enjoyable and challenging event. The planner will rely heavily on Route Choice and Decision Points in this regard, although these are not his only weapons.

The other main characteristic of urban O is speed. We all know that orienteering becomes harder the faster you go as we have less and less time in which to make decisions; also oxygen debt makes the decision process more laboured. Urban orienteering is no exception, in fact, it is a major component of the discipline. A street or urban environment lends itself to increased speed. We can use proper road running shoes, use a consistent gait with faster leg speed, and can get away with less clothing (shin pads not required) that might cause overheating.

So, good urban planning boils down to the following basic equation:

Speed + Decision Points + Route Choice = Brain Overload!

Route Choice

Route Choice is a macro decision. Each leg in a race will ideally have a number

of potential route choices. These provide some mental challenge for the orienteer in evaluating each. However, once they've been decided upon they no longer trouble the orienteer's brain, who can then focus on other things.

If this Route Choice decision is then followed by a 1km 'dead running' leg it is going to be a boring race. Thus, a good planner will try to avoid this by adding other things to keep the brain busy. These are Decision Points.

Decision Points

Decision Points are micro decisions. On any one leg we are likely to make a number of decisions. As you can see in the example a decision is required at each corner of each building; each right or left turn. It is these Decision Points that will soak up most of our mental bandwidth, leading us to make mistakes if we over commit speed-wise on these tricky areas. Knowing when to slow down due to tricky terrain is a key tenet of all orienteering, not just in the forest.



The above excerpt from the London City 2019 race shows the two elements well. Take CP24 to CP25. There are two key route choices Blue and Red. The planner has cleverly placed both controls to ensure that Red is the shorter route. However, the Red route includes multiple Decision Points (as seen by each change of direction of the red line - I think about 12 on that leg). Whilst the route choice decision is over quickly, the runner still has to expend mental bandwidth with the multiple Decision Points.

I'm sure some of you might be tempted with the Blue route, but this has more decision points than it seems at first. Although the bulk of the leg appears to be running in a straight line, the need to count each LH turn in order not to miss the correct turning will keep us busy mentally and cut down the time we have to

plan the next leg.

The Planner's Other Weapons

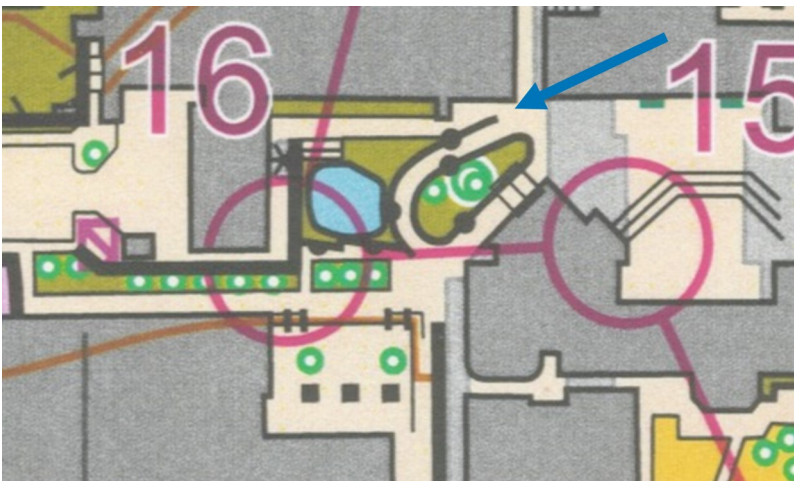
Access Point

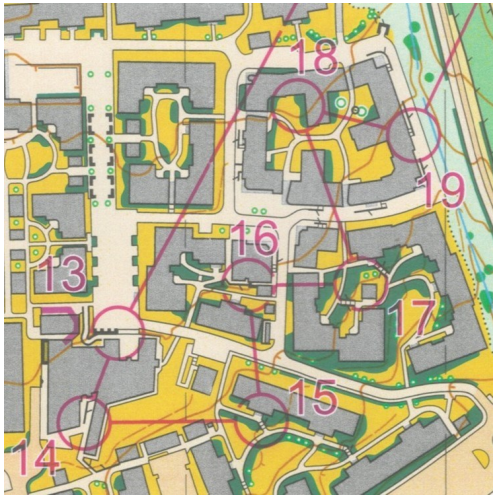
An Access Point is defined as a single point that a competitor must pass through in order to reach a control. This could be the entrance to an alleyway, or the entrance to a complex area that's closed off from the wider terrain for example.

Often these Access Points are not obvious and will send the orienteer heading in the wrong direction - aka **The Trap**. If the orienteer is able to identify the Access Point, they will not fall for the planner's shenanigans. The best way to avoid this trap is to plan each leg backwards.

- Identify the control site
- Identify the Access Point
- Assess the route choices to the AP
- Choose the best route
- Execute

In the example below (taken from my course at the JK Sprint 2023 at Lancaster Uni) the Access Point for CP16 is shown by the Blue Arrow. In my haste I had run directly towards the centre of the control circle expecting it to be on the outside corner of the wall. I had read the Control Description, but in my oxygen deprived state it wasn't making any sense to me other than it was something to do with a wall. On arriving there I found no control, but quickly realised I had to be on the walkway above. This required a re-route and some lost seconds.





Knitting

Another technique the planner will use is Knitting. This is the use of complex fine grain areas with relatively short legs that criss cross over a small area with many decision points and changes of direction.

Masking

This is similar to Knitting. The planner will use a series of controls to try and keep you mentally busy before a crux leg (one that requires forethought because it has many route choices, or Access Point traps within it).

Composite Decisions

A Composite Decision is a leg that does not obey the usual route choice rules. Whilst they do not crop up very often as the terrain doesn't allow it, they do offer a pitfall for the unwary.

Essentially, a composite decision is created where the first part of a leg has no route choice, but pushes the orienteer off the line of the shortest route between controls. It is easy for the orienteer to make one route choice based upon minimising the area between each route choice and straight line at the outset of the leg only to find that the start point for the route choice decision has shifted away from the shortest line to one side, thus changing the optimum decision. "What is all that gobble-de-gook?" I hear you say; well its probably best explained in this example from Harwich Urban earlier this year...

Take CP21 to CP22. On the face of it the purple route seems shorter than the



blue one. By assessing the area between each route choice and the dotted purple line joining the controls we can quickly see that its lower for the Purple route. However this leg has a barrier that changes the decision process.

Regardless of our route choice we need to pass the Pink Star as there is no route choice before this. Thus the Pink Star becomes the de facto start point for our decision. At the other end the Access Point is the other end. The shortest line shown by the Red Dotted line.

If we now consider the area between each route and the Red Dotted line we see that the Blue route is clearly a better choice. Not only is the Purple route longer it also has more decision points.

How to Fight Back!

There are two categories of things we can do to get ahead: the physical and the mental.

Physical

The physical is essentially physical training. Solely increasing your road miles is probably not sufficient, but will help. Including speedwork drills, such as interval training, hill sprints, or power specific strength and conditioning exercises such as HIIT will really pay dividends.

Mental

In terms of mental preparedness we can split this into two main elements: practice and geeking.

To practice we can run on urban or sprint terrain to help get our eye in. We can also manage this virtually using the Running Wild app (<http://3drerun.worldofo.com/2d/runningwild.php>). With the Running Wild map it is possible to upload maps from a previous event and race them virtually. This is really useful for getting an idea of the pitfalls in any particular area as well as practicing route choice and decision point management.

It is generally possible to find a relevant map from the same area as an upcoming event. Failing that the likes of Google Earth and Open Street Map generally enable us to get a pretty good picture of an area before we run it. Some orienteers have been known to use mapping tools such as Open Orienteering Mapper and Purple Pen to create their own maps and develop fantasy courses in order to understand the race terrain better.

Rather than randomly geeking the map, it is helpful to be a little more structured in our analysis.

We should consider the granularity of the features on the map and how they change across the area. This will help us to ascertain how the mapper might use each area and the techniques we might need to employ.

In an area of large granularity there is likely to be fewer decision points, so the planner will use longer legs to create multiple route choices. Focussing on Access Points is also pertinent here as large grain terrain is more likely to present traps. In areas of fine grain the planner will use shorter legs requiring many decision points, often employing other techniques such as Knitting and Masking to further bamboozle us.

Think Like a Planner

A good planner will try to ensure there are no dead running legs, or 'out-and-backs'. To do this they will start by planning good legs rather than looking at specific control sites; this comes later. If we can get into the planner's mindset we are better placed to do well in the event.

Other planning considerations will also influence the courses. Channelling is used to feed runners through a particular pinch point, such an underpass that is required to avoid competitors using a dangerous road crossing. Identifying these points and pre-empting the planners course will speed your progress.

The concept of Theatre is another facet we should consider. Is there a visually fantastic piece of landscape or architecture that the planner would like us to pass, such as Winchester Cathedral, or The Eiffel Tower? If so, how is the planner likely to route us?

Could the planner improve the area by adding blockades? This is more likely on sprint areas that are not open to the public. Shutting an entranceway may significantly change the map footprint and particularly disadvantage those competitors who have spent a long time geeking a previous event map, practising using the Running Wild app and memorising ideal routes.

Know Your Symbols

Read the event details to find out what symbol format is being used. Is it ISSOM 2007, or ISSPrOM 2019-2? There are a number of key changes in the mapping methodologies.

Passable walls - These have changed form a grey line to a black line with dots (like for forest O)

Asymmetric walls - These were grey lines just like passable walls, but are now black lines with semi-circle dots (the side of the dot showing the down-side of the wall)

Dragon's Teeth - These are a new symbol used to show where it is possible to cross over or under something else. This addition greatly improves our understanding of areas where there are two levels, such as car parks and shopping centres. It doesn't help if there are more than two level however, in which case sensible planning is required in order to avoid luck becoming a factor in finding the CP.

In conclusion, I hope you now have a better picture of how a planner goes about creating an urban or sprint course, the techniques they employ, and the skills we can practise to get ahead of the game.

OBITUARY

John Simon Greenwood SAX M65 18th May 1955 - 12th December 2022

Nick Barrable

The following obituary originally appeared in CompassSport earlier this year, and is re-used here with kind permission of its Editor, Nick Barrable.

Simon Greenwood, Saxons OC Club President since 2009 and Chair of the South-East Orienteering Association since 2000, died unexpectedly on 12th December in hospital. He was competing only 8 days earlier at CHIG's Epping event on the 4th December.

It is difficult to know where to start writing an obituary for Simon; he was such a universal presence at orienteering events. Many will have seen him at major South-East O events over the past 20 years, handing out prizes and shaking hands in his role of Chair of SEOA, smartly dressed in a tweed jacket. For those local to the South-East, he was a regular at many events although rather differently dressed, often wearing an assortment of old and new style Saxons O kit, some much-repaired.

Simon was an Old Etonian. After



Simon at Sunny Sussex 2018 - SE Middle Championships, Rivers Wood, Balcombe

Credit: Rob Lines



**Wales beat Ireland - Judith
Wingham Trophy 2012 - with
Simon Greenwood 14th
October WJHI - Day 2 relays**

Credit: photo via Nick Barrable

league. He was always a keen supporter of the Harvester relays and competed in at least two of these overnight relay events where in both 2004 and 2012 his team was placed 3rd in the handicap class. He was also a keen supporter of, and participant in, Trail O.

Simon had been active in Saxons OC for decades and was an enthusiastic competitor, both individually and as part of Saxons relay and CompassSportCup teams. He was a planner of major events, including the Harvester Relays at Eridge in 2010 and the Peter Palmer Junior relays in 2019. He regularly and conscientiously attended Saxons committee meetings, before covid often travelling from London to various locations in Kent to take part. He also enjoyed the social gatherings of the club, wherever they were held; the most recent was a fish and chip supper in a park in Ambleside during the 2022 Lakes 5 Day event.

Simon's BO ranking list of events shows that he competed in 51 events in 2022 alone (and this doesn't include his regular attendance at BAOC Wednesday events). His best results got him into the top 10 ranked competitors in his age class. In 2003 he was 6th at the British Sprints on Ham Hill, Men's Vets class. In 2010 he was 7th M55 at the Haverthwaite BOC Middles.

Everyone who knew him (and that will include almost every orienteer in the SE)

leaving in 1973 he served in the Grenadier Guards for 11 years. He then attended Agricultural College in Cirencester and after completing his studies took over the management of the family's 3500-acre Balcombe Estate in West Sussex. For a major landowner to be a committed orienteer is a very rare thing and Simon was very proud of having four orienteering maps of different parts of the estate, which are used by SO and MV. His 'contacts' were often used to good effect when clubs were struggling to gain access or hold an event. He could reassure a fellow estate owner that orienteers were really no bother at all! Over the decades he has helped and furthered orienteering many times.

Simon joined Saxons in 1977; the first mention of him in the Saxons 'Hall of Fame' (aka the history of the club's first 40 years) was as an M21 in 1978/9 when he was 37th in the Saxons annual

will remember his friendly and enthusiastic presence at orienteering events. He was always keen to chat about the day's race, the map, the competition, or all three, but also about his many other pursuits, such as his off-piste heli-skiing in North America, his hunting, grouse shooting and salmon fishing in Scotland, the health of his woodlands on the Balcombe estate, the sex lives and management of deer, or even his extensive stamp collection. He will be greatly missed.



Simon Greenwood on Day 1 of the Scottish 6 Days 2019

Credit: Wendy Carlyle

There will be a memorial service at Balcombe Church on 23rd of March 2023 at 2.30pm. Further details will be on the Saxons website once they are available. <https://www.saxons-oc.org/simon-greenwood>

Update

Graham Denney

With Simon's memorial service now having taken place, it is worth updating Nick's excellent obituary to cover that as well.

St Mary's Church, Balcombe, was packed to the gunwales for the service – so much so that it was standing room only inside and latecomers were standing in the doorways and outside. St Mary's is not in any sense a small church, and for it to be filled to bursting shows how widely and strongly Simon's passing was felt by the range of communities he was involved with.

A number of orienteers not just from Saxons but from across SEOA were present. Judging by the number of Grenadier Guards ties on display, there was a strong turnout from serving and veteran members of his old regiment. From the local hunt, the whippers-in with their hounds formed a guard of honour at the main entrance. Through sensitively chosen readings and hymns, an extensive order of service covered the great interests of Simon's life—horses, service to his country, sport, and the life of the countryside. To close the proceedings, a bugler from the Grenadier Guards played the Last Post—an act of remembrance that Simon's military service entitled him to.

We retired to the Greenwood family seat of Balcombe Place for refreshments, and what a house it was—a large, Grade II* Listed Building, constructed in 1856 in the then-popular Tudor style for John Alexander Hankey near the site of a much older original residence. In recent years the Greenwood family has

revitalised the house as an events venue and has carried out thorough and tasteful renovations. It too was packed—it was difficult to accurately estimate the numbers but a rough guess amongst orienteers came out in excess of 400. Certainly the sheer numbers made it challenging to move around the ground floor rooms. Two lady equestrians provided a mounted honour guard outside the main entrance, even as rain settled in for the rest of the afternoon, and we enjoyed the excellent food and drink provided. All in all, it was a fitting way to bid our Club President and SEOA Chair farewell.

I'd like to conclude our commemoration of Simon with a reminiscence from another orienteer, and excerpts from two of the poems read out at the service which I feel are appropriate. Perhaps the second poem in particular could be said to be an orienteer's blessing!

Earlier this year I received an email from Peter Billingham, one of our former Chairmen and Presidents, with this fond memory of Simon:

"I am very sad to learn about Simon. A great character. Of aristocratic background, he was a most unassuming man. I remember at a Scottish 6-day based on Pitlochry. He camped on the event campsite. He happily took part in club social activities over the week, except on one evening when he emerged from his small tent in full black-tie rig, as he was going to dinner with his cousin the Duke of Athol, whose castle was nearby."

From 'He is Gone' by David Harkins:

"You can remember him and only that he is gone.

Or you can cherish his memory and let it live on."

From 'A Gaelic Blessing' [unknown author]:

"May the road rise to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face.

And the rains fall soft upon your fields.

And, until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hand."

Thanks to Mark Glaisher and Sarah Howes for the lift down to Balcombe and back, and to Sarah for sending me a copy of the order of service for this article.

SAXONS PARKRUN 2022

John Cross

When I started to take part in our local Parkrun and was considering taking up orienteering, I noticed a long-established Saxons Orienteer, Simon Blanchflower, had featured regularly in the results lists for many years. From the far East of Kent, it's a long westward trek to most of the orienteering events, so a few of us instead sometimes settle for a local Parkrun. Sidenote as the SaxAlert Editor likes to find out about the local areas: the Walmer and Deal Seafront Parkrun route goes along the seafront, passes two historic castles, a lifeboat station, a pier, a timeball tower, and the alleged spot where Julius Caesar first set foot in Kent.

Consequently, I thought it might be interesting to compile a list of the Saxons orienteers who finished at least one Parkrun in 2022, along with the great sounding places that their Parkruns took place in. Rather than list by fastest time etc, which would look just like the results of most of our orienteering events, I've ordered this list by number of runs, and will leave you to draw your own conclusions.

Apologies if anyone has been missed off this list, but that might be the necessary hint to add 'Saxons Orienteers' to your Parkrun profile, which would add to the Club's publicity, and might even plant the thought amongst members of the running community that orienteering is very much a connected activity.

Dave PICKUP	37	Canterbury x 26, Whitstable x 10, Margate
Gaby ROCH	28	Canterbury x 15, Whitstable x 12, Margate
Lisa FULCHER	27	Ashford x 17, Mote Park x 2, Bexley, Dartford, Lullingstone, Lydiard, Orpington, Shorne Woods, Squerryes Winery, The Leas
Alex PULLEN	26	Canterbury x 3, Banstead Woods, Catford, Clapham Common, Gladstone, Great Dunmow, Great Notley, Hampstead Heath, Hazelwood, Highbury Fields, Hilly Fields, Kagerzoom, Mile End, Moors Valley, Mote Park, Northala Fields, Pegwell Bay, Sittingbourne, Sunny Hill, Sutcliffe, Swanley, Whitstable, Wickford Memorial, Wormwood Scrubs
Tim VEYSEY-SMITH	26	Bedgebury Pinetum x 26

Simon BLANCHFLOWER	20	Walmer and Deal Seafront x 19, Parke
Catherine CATCHPOLE	19	Bedgebury Pinetum x 17, Cheltenham, Penrose
David KINGDON	18	Jersey Farm x 4, Malling x 4, Tonbridge x 4, Higginson Marlow x 2, Panshanger x 2, Bedgebury Pinetum, Gadebridge
John CROSS	17	Walmer and Deal Seafront x 17
Graham THOMAS	16	Sittingbourne x 12, Penrose x 2, Bracknell, Malling
Simon EVANS	12	Ashford x 7, Folkestone x 3, Cheltenham, Clevedon Salthouse Fields
Graham DENNEY	11	Tonbridge x 5, Dartford x 2, Mote Park, Malling, Swanley,
Renate HENRY	10	Walmer and Deal Seafront x 9, Holyrood
Neil BRICKNELL	9	Maidstone
Sarah COVEY-CRUMP	8	Folkestone x 4, Ashford x 3, Clevedon Salthouse Fields
Judith ARMITT	5	Shorne Woods x 4, Amsterdamse Bos
Brian HENRY	3	Walmer and Deal Seafront x 2, Holyrood
Alison HOWE	2	Ashford, Glossop
Austin HOWE	2	Ashford, Glossop
Brendon HOWE	2	Ashford, Glossop
Holly HOWE	2	Ashford, Glossop
Mark GLAISHER	1	Great Lines Medway
Peter DOBRA	1	Whinlatter Forest

PLANNING THE BLEAN KOL

Peter Martin

Over the years I have planned courses at many Saxons areas. In February I took on the planning for a Kent Orienteering League (KOL) event at Blean, near Faversham. I have planned at Blean a couple of times and also run there so could recall the general lie of the land. It includes Holly Hill with rhododendrons, pine trees and an abandoned tower; a stream valley running north-eastwards from the steep-sided southern end; and a gently sloping runnable wooded area with a scattering of hides towards the north-east. A profusion of tracks and paths gives ready access to almost all parts of the

area but their erratic distribution and seemingly random wiggles can very easily become confusing.

Simon Blanchflower provided the OCAD map file and several printed copies for my planning purposes. Richard Field arranged permission from the landowners and for parking at Mount Ephraim. In total the area, which is almost completely encircled by private lands deemed Out of Bounds, only amounts to roughly a square kilometre. This is very small compared to most of the maps in my collection although not unusual for an orienteering area in our corner of the country.

Sometimes it is feasible to prepare draft courses on a map before visiting an area and, especially when time is limited, this can be an efficient way to get the job started. My own preference is to start "in the field" by finding good legs and potential control sites and then deciding on an overall approach so I had a couple of lengthy sessions in the wood in February while at the same time trying to picture how it might look by the time of the event in mid April - when leaves would be opening, bracken and bramble could already be spreading and boggy areas could be much less wet.

The courses at KOL events are line courses - Yellow, Orange, Green and Blue – with the addition of a Score course comprising twenty-one controls. The aim with the Blue course in particular is to provide the greatest possible navigational challenge whereas the Orange and especially the Yellow need to be suitable for children and newcomers, making use of paths and other well-defined line features with only straightforward decision-making required. With very limited options for parking and consequently a long (1.5k) walk to access the area, it was the shorter and easier courses that in effect required that the Start and Finish be close to the access point.

When I joined Saxons, in the 1980s, each competitor carried a Control Card that had to be punched at each of the controls in the correct order to provide the evidence that the course had been completed. Punch times at controls were not recorded. Line courses tended to be planned as a single loop to avoid tempting competitors to visit controls out of sequence. The general custom was to use only as many controls as were necessary. Nowadays dibbers record the sequence visited, allowing a course to be planned that criss-crosses an area. This can be helpful when trying to make the most of a small area and as a consequence, abrupt changes of direction have become commonplace and are sometimes even regarded as a part of the technical challenge.

It seems to me that there has been a general trend towards using more controls. My (M70) course at the recent British Championships had twenty-one controls in

6.8k. As a rare contrast, my 4.2k course at Arisaig (Scotland 2021) had just six controls and included three legs each of over a kilometre.

While having lots of controls can perhaps be considered 'good value' it occurred to me that for the longer courses at Blean – Green and Blue - I might be able to create a fresh experience by using the best parts of the area with a minimal number of controls. After some lengthy sessions tramping through the terrain I concluded that this approach would work. Also, rather than the oft-used pattern of having a cluster of controls close to the Finish to challenge the concentration of tired runners, I decided instead to make the final leg on these courses unusually long and add some early intensity with a cluster of controls very close to the Start. For the Yellow and Orange courses I had no choice but to plan for competitors to use the main tracks close to the Start and Finish, which I expected would become less muddy by the time of the event.

Controls and distance per course were as follows: Blue 10 in 6.1k; Green 8 in 4.3k; Orange 12 in 2.9k; Yellow 6 in 2k. The Blue, Green and Orange courses all had three controls within the first 300 metres.

After a dry February, March was wetter and the first couple of weeks of April were especially wet with mud everywhere. Leaves were opening creating a slight veil on some legs but no more than I had anticipated. (Unlike at the Southdowns event at Eartham in May where a distinct vegetation boundary corner, used as a control site, completely disappeared.)

A torrential downpour early on the day of the event gave me a drenching while putting out controls. By mid-morning the rain eased and it transformed into a warm and bright spring day. Of the many people trying orienteering for the first time, most seemed unphased by the ankle deep mud although one young boy lost a shoe in it. (I was pleased to meet him, undeterred and wearing his new trainers, at the Ightham event in May.)

One or two more experienced orienteers commented on the difficulty of crossing the stream – which had swollen considerably since the previous evening – while



Potential new members at Trosley wondering how edible the control kites are...

Credit: Sean Cronin



The Saxons Tent Dance: a club ritual whose origins are lost in the mists of time but which is held to bestow great fortune upon each event at which it is performed...

Credit: Sean Cronin

others had taken it in their stride. Several competitors very much liked the long legs but I did also hear one experienced orienteer complain that without the excuse to “stop at controls to look at the map” it all felt like hard work. Of course, standing at a control is likely to highlight its location to others and is not to be encouraged.

Some enjoyed taking direct routes through the terrain; some enjoyed navigating around the multitude of paths. The clustered controls near the Start were not cleanly picked in the right order by everyone. Also, one competitor on Blue saw a line on the map and set off up and over the hill before noticing that it was actually the line from the last control to the Finish, so he had to go all the way back past the Start en route to the first control. This could be considered sloppy map-reading but I admit it was probably also at least in part a consequence of (a) having the Start and Finish very close together and (b) not having a last control relatively close to

the Finish to create a ‘run-in’. Someone did express disappointment at not having a ‘run-in’.

Overall, the comments were positive but as a planner, it seems, you can’t please everyone all of the time.

ORIENTEERING ON HOLIDAY

Richard Field

I am in Scotland where we have been enjoying a short break.

After we left home, I discovered that there was an orienteering event taking place at Culzean Country Park in Ayrshire, not too far away and using a new map. That sounds good, I thought, so I entered the event and put in a request to borrow a dibber.

It then dawned on me that I didn’t have any of my orienteering kit and would

have to improvise. I have some old trail running shoes with me, so that's ok. Also some old trousers that I use for hillwalking; not ideal but good enough. Compass? Don't use it that much anyway.

The event took place yesterday morning in weather that got steadily wetter. I picked up my dibber from the organiser, who asked me "Saxons OC, where is that?" They don't get many people from Sussex at AYROC events, as a rule.

As soon as I punched the Start and looked at the map, I realised that I needed my bifocal spectacles that I now use for orienteering to be able to see the map clearly. It was too late to do anything about that, so off I went in the general direction of the first control.

My shoes weren't ideal; the ground was slippery in places and going up or down steep slopes involved a bit of sliding. The views were good, though, especially along the cliff top bordering the Firth of Clyde. As the rain came down more steadily, I found that my trousers were flapping around my ankles and becoming heavier. Still, I got round in reasonable shape and was pleased I had bothered.

I have been mentally reviewing my missing O kit and the impact it had on my run. Shoes: definitely made a difference in wet conditions, maybe a minute or two in lost time? Dibber: no SIAC so a couple of seconds on each of the 15 controls. Control

description holder: a fiddle having to keep unfolding and turning the map to check the control codes and descriptions. Even more of an issue when I was trying to keep the map oriented correctly in the absence of a compass. Compass: costly on one leg where I headed away from the previous control in the wrong direction, forcing me to relocate, but otherwise not a problem; maybe a minute or two lost time for that. Spectacles: the big one, couldn't always spot the best route from one control to the next, nor the fine detail around the control. I estimate this cost me time on the majority of legs and several minutes overall. Whistle: didn't need it, thankfully.

The obvious lesson is to plan ahead better and come prepared. But as I came first on the Green course, I am not too bothered!



Finish at Betteshanger

Credit: Sean Cronin

SI TIMING—UPDATES

Simon Blanchflower

SiTiming is the software used to manage the timing and course checking at orienteering events. We have just renewed our licence and have found that the latest version has a few enhancements. Most are simple changes to page layout and the style of function buttons which will only be of interest to our SI users (the instruction manual has been updated accordingly) but of wider interest is an optional package now available that we also purchased with our licence.

We now have the “Complex Scoring add-on”, which allows non-standard scoring systems such as the 90s/100s score courses (without the non-scoring change over control) used at some KNCs to be checked and calculated automatically. As anybody who has organised a KNC event will know, until now this has always required the use of a spreadsheet to work out the scores (usually in the pub immediately after the event!) The Complex Scoring add-on should help make post-KNC pub visits rather less stressful for organisers!

This new Complex Scoring add-on to SiTiming was originally developed for in-house use by SI for novelty multi-part events and corporate challenges but equally can be used for small-area events with special rules. It does not come with pre-set schemes for different types of event but requires a specific piece of computer code known as a “Schema” to be uploaded to tell it what to do. We now have the Schema for the 90/100 sets rules (can be adapted for e.g. 40/50s or odds/evens). Hopefully other rules can be added in time (e.g. dumbbells) though as each scoring system is different they require further coding in XML language.

In practice we will prepare template events on each laptop which can be copied and used without needing to understand the detailed set-up. Over time we hope to develop a library of event types to cover the majority of scoring situations.

It is currently unclear what other types of rules can be used, only time will tell, as we and other clubs attempt to make more inventive use of the add-on. However for any planners out there who are tempted by the possibilities offered by complex scoring, I would encourage you to contact me well ahead of time so we can discuss how to create the necessary scheme for your event.

LEAGUES

Kent Night Cup 2022/23:

A slightly shorter KNC season—21 events vs the traditional 26—was no less popular and certainly no less fiercely contested. The season wrapped up on 23rd March with an urban event hosted by DFOK in Tonbridge, rescheduled from December due to icy conditions at the time. Men's League Winner with 390 points overall was Ian Ditchfield (MV), and Women's League Winner on 293 points Sam Prior (SAX). Category prizewinners were:

- Veteran Women: Julie Collins (DFOK)
- Veteran Men: Sean Cronin (SAX)
- SuperVeteran Women: Sarah Howes (SAX)
- SuperVeteran Men: Chris Hooker (SO)
- Nick Hope Cup: Sean Cronin (attended 20 of the 21 events)

Our thanks go to everyone who's been involved during the season: the hosting clubs and backroom staff, the Planners & Organisers, the control collectors and all who have come out for a winter night's adventure. We are also grateful to Simon Holford, whose League software has made the production of the table straightforward. The [final league table is here](#).



KNC Prizegiving: Mark Glaisher presents prizes to (above) Men's and Women's League Winners Ian Ditchfield and Sam Prior, and (right) Veteran Women's Winner Julie Collins

Credits: Sean Cronin



Kent Orienteering League 2022/23:

The season wrapped up on 27th May with the 10th and final KOL at a warm and sunny Betteshanger Country Park.

Final results by course are:



Blue: won by Simon Evans (SAX) who stormed through in the last 6 events to overtake previous leader Antoine Pesenti of DFOK (2nd overall). Other notable Saxons were Brendon Howe (3rd), Peter Dobra (4th), Alison Howe (5th and 1st Woman), Dave Pickup (7th) and Sean Cronin (9th).

Green: Saxons cleaned up on the podium here, with Richard Leahy 1st, well ahead of Peter Martin (2nd) and Peter Lilja (3rd). Geoff Goodwin (DFOK) took 4th, followed by Sarah Covey-Crump (SAX) (5th and 1st Woman).

Orange: Adam Davidson (DFOK) maintained his lead to win overall, with Saxons' Kasie Chapman (4th and 1st Junior Woman) close behind, then Ruby Gisby (DFOK) 3rd (and 2nd Junior Woman).

Women's KOL prizegiving at Betteshanger

Credit: Sean Cronin

Saxons Alice Evans and Holly Howe took 4th and 5th (3rd and 4th Junior Women) respectively.

Yellow: Saxons Juniors continued to dominate the leaderboard, taking 4 of the top 5 and 6 of the top 10 positions. Harry and Charlie Green came 1st and 2nd respectively, with Joseph Embleton (no club given) 3rd. Elliot Sanders and Izyan Murshed (both SAX) took 4th and 5th positions, followed by Isla Findlay (DFOK) (6th and 1st Junior Woman), then Percy Sanders (SAX, 7th) and Dylan Collins (SAX, 8th). Poppy Embleton (no club given) came 9th / 2nd Junior Woman, with Maks Petrovs of SLOW 10th.



...and the Men's

Credit: Sean Cronin

Score: Saxons did well on Score courses too, with

Jonathan Wells coming 1st overall, followed by Will Prior (2nd) and Thomas Bates (3rd).

Schools: In the Seniors' Table, Rivermead pulled off a shock triumph at Betteshanger to pip previous Table leaders Ashford School by just 3 points overall and win the Seniors title. Lordswood School maintained a consistently high performance in the Juniors' table to remain far ahead of the other contenders and take the Juniors title.

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

South East League:

2022/23 League:

The final event of the season took place at Eartham Wood in Sussex on 14th May, with SO securing an overall Division 1 victory thanks to a huge win on home turf. Their event score of 5018 points was more than 4 times that of 2nd-placed SLOW, on 1241 points! Saxons were last in Division 1 at this event, scoring 449 points, and low representation from mainly the more senior age groups.

This means that the [final season club rankings](#) were as follows :

Total after 10 events:-

Position	Club	Match Points	Position change
DIVISION 1			
1	SO	57	-
2	SLOW	40	↑ 1
3	HH	38	↓ 1
4	DFOK	30	-
5	GO	23	-
6	SAX	22	-
DIVISION 2			
1	SN	64	-
2	MV	63	↓ 1
3	LOK	47	-
4	BAOC	37	-
5	HAVOC	24	-
6	CHIG	22	-
7	RAFO	13	-

—which I think unfortunately relegates Saxons to Division 2 for next season.

[2023 Individual League results as of March 2023:](#)

The SE Individual League runs to the calendar year, and results are currently available for all events up to Balcombe on 19th March. **Well done the following Saxons!**

M18	Austin Howe Ben Cronin	=2nd =6th	W20	Ffion Bricknell	=1st
M21	Peter Dobra	=7th	W40	Karen Ransley	=2nd
M40	James Cackett	=4th	W45	Catherine Slade	=9th
M45	Stuart Williams	16th	W50	Karen Bricknell Alison Howe Andrea Pauling	6th =12th =17th
M50	Simon Deeks Graham Denney Brendon Howe John Cross	6th =14th =19th 23rd	W55	Anne Poole Renate Henry	9th =10th
M55	Alan Hickling Mel Taylor Neil Bricknell Sean Cronin Nick Betts Brian Henry	6th =13th 18th 27th 28th =30th	W60	Sarah Howes Barbara Castle	1st 18th
M60	Richard Field Steven Elliott	=17th 19th	W70	Jean Fitzgerald Heather Brown	2nd 6th
M65	Simon Blanchflower	=19th	W75	Beryl Pring	1st
M70	Mark Glaisher John van Rooyen David Kingdon Peter Martin Steve Waite Phil Norris	3rd =7th =13th 19th 22nd 30th			
M75	Roger Pring	6th			
M85	Doug Deeks Jeremy Oldershaw	2nd =4th			

2023/24 League:

Fixtures for the new season have already been announced, as follows:

19/11/23 SAX Kingswood Challock

26/11/23 SN Mytchett/Windmill Hill

03/12/23 CHIG Epping NW

14/1/24 DFOK Westerham
 04/2/24 GO Redlands (S Champs)
 11/2/24 MV Holmbush & Buchan
 25/2/24 HH Ashridge
 12/5/24 SO Houghton Forest

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

UK Orienteering League:

The UK Orienteering League exists to encourage greater and better quality competition at a national level, across a variety of terrain types and to promote new and alternative event formats. To achieve this it provides a series of 16-24 events (although 25 have been planned for this year) throughout the UK.



For 2023 a programme of 25 events is in full swing, with 7 left between July and early November: 2 at the Scottish 6 Days end of July/early August, the City of London Race on 16th September, 2 at the Caddihoe Chase (Forest of Dean) end of Sept/early Oct, and 2 at the November Classic (Winchester/New Forest).

In the Club League, Saxons currently lie 60th (out of 110 clubs) with 1467 points, versus leaders SYO with 5319 points. Of our neighbours, SN are 11th (3439 pts), SN (B) 61st (1465 pts), SO 19th (2970 pts), MV 66th (1279 pts), SLOW 25th (2741 pts), SLOW (B) 68th (1256 pts), DFOK 72nd (1190 pts) and LOK 85th (698 pts).

Notable Saxons in the Individual League at present are:

SAX Pos	Name	Age Class	Total Score	Age Class Pos
1	Beryl Pring	W75	324	6
2	Jeremy Oldershaw	M85	196	5
3	Alison Howe	W50	182	25
4	Mark Glaisher	M70	164	25
5	Brendon Howe	M50	152	23
6	Sarah Howes	W60	142	29

SAX Pos	Name	Age Class	Total Score	Age Class Pos
7	Doug Deeks	M85	94	10
8	Graham Denney	M50	89	45
9	Jean Fitzgerald	W70	80	44
10	Sean Cronin	M55	77	67
11	Alan Hickling	M55	68	74
12	John van Rooyen	M70	66	75
13	Roger Pring	M75	56	71
14	Peter Martin	M70	47	89
15	Simon Deeks	M50	44	81
16	Simon Blanchflower	M65	36	118
17	Karen Ransley	W40	24	47
18	Austin Howe	M18	20	42
19	David Kingdon	M70	17	139
20	Mel Taylor	M55	3	159

[2023 schedule of events](#)

[2023 Club League](#)

[2023 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:

The 2023 SEOUL league consists of 18 events, which the organisers admit is looking a little thin in relation to the normal schedule; however there is still space for extra races to be added to this year's League. At the time of writing, 10 events have taken place, with 8 still to come from 9th July (Exeter University) through to 16th December (Brighton City Race). Saxons have unfortunately not made a contribution to this year's



programme of races yet. Locally, Mole Valley are hosting a SEOUL event in Reigate on 27th August, SLOW the London City Race on 16th September, and SO the Brighton City Race on 16th December. League standings are individual, not by club, and your best 7 races out of the maximum of 18 count towards your score. At present notable Saxons in the League are:

Open Men: Brendon Howe (19th, 179 pts), David Thomas (21st, 174 pts)

Young Junior Women 12-: Alice Evans (=6th, 96 pts), Harriet Evans (10th, 91 pts)

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

Veteran Men 40+: Simon Evans (45th, 89 pts), John Cross (59th, 85 pts)

Veteran Women 40+: Sarah Covey-Crump (34th, 89 pts)

Supervet Men 55+: Alan Hickling (51st, 88 pts), Graham Thomas (82nd, 79 pts)

Ultravet Men 65+: Peter Martin (23rd, 180 pts)

Hypervet Men 75+: Roger Pring (30th, 86 pts)

Hypervet Women 75+: Beryl Pring (3rd, 288 pts)

[SEOUL website](#)

SAXONS OUT & ABOUT

Saxons At Home

Ightham Local Event—7th May 2023

Putting on a Regional level event on the Coronation weekend was always going to be somewhat chancey; combined with difficulties in finding a Planner beforehand it began to look as if it wouldn't go ahead at all. I offered to step forward as a provisional Planner, to do the initial groundwork before handing over to somebody else for the actual event, given that I was heading back to Ireland straight after the JK. Fortunately Richard Field had plenty of possible control sites already mapped out, plus a risk assessment from a previous Ightham Regional event. A decision from Jean Fitzgerald to downgrade the event to Local level took some of the pressure off.

We agreed that courses would just use Oldbury Hill plus the area to the NW, which takes in a lot of complex pits and paths, plus extensive vegetation. For a

Local event I was reluctant to take people across the A25 to the southern areas for safety reasons, even though this made it difficult to fit the longer courses into the northern areas.

Time before the JK was scarce though; I managed to fit in one lengthy visit on the ground to find and tape controls then it was to work with Purple Pen to build the courses and pass them over to Jean. In the meantime Alison Howe joined Jean as Joint Organiser. A short back-and-forth discussion by email fine-tuned the courses, including adding a second Finish control in the NW quadrant for Blue and Green. Parking was confirmed as the layby next to the pub on the A25 (the former Crown Point, now reopened at long last as The Amherst) plus some of the pub's own car park. The pub kindly agreed to let us use their loos as well. On the Friday before the event, Brendon Howe visited all the control sites to ensure he could find them when putting out controls on the day.

Given the Coronation the day before, the poor weather forecast and that this was now only a Local event, we were uncertain how well-attended it would be. We needn't have worried. In the end, 115 people took part across all 5 courses on offer, including somebody who caught the train and then cycled up from Sevenoaks station (a long, hard, uphill ride!) and a mother and son who turned up on the day. Brief stats are:

- Blue: 33 runners, won by Liam Marsh M21 SO. First Saxons were Peter Dobra, 6th then Dave Pickup, 10th.
- Green: 51 runners, won by Frank Edge M65 SN. First Saxons were Richard Leahy, 16th then Peter Lilja, 18th.
- Orange: 14 runners, won by Tom Freke M45 no club given. First Saxon was Sarah Reith, 7th.
- Yellow: 6 runners, won by Thomas King M10, no club given.
- Score: 11 runners, won by Phil Conway M60 GO. First Saxons were Kenneth Fox, 2nd and Holly Howe, 7th.

My thanks to everybody who rallied round to help plan and organise this event, which looked for a while as if it wouldn't go ahead at all. With me having to hand the planning over to Jean this was much more of a team effort and more complicated even than usual, but all went well in the end and there were plenty of positive comments from competitors.

Graham Denney, Joint Planner

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

Saxons Further Afield

SE Sprint Championships, Ham Estates—11th June 2023

Organised by SLOW

This championship event was organised by SLOW and held at Ham, just south of Twickenham but on the east side of the Thames. It comprised two races. Sometimes at Sprint events the first race is treated as a Prologue with the starting order for the second or Final race being in the reverse order of first run results. On this occasion, each competitor's Start time for the second race was fixed at 90 minutes after their Start time for the first race. The two times were then added together to give overall results.



B3 map excerpt, SE Sprints

Credit: Peter Martin

Most controls were amongst the housing of the Ham Estates but for the first race, the courses included a few controls on Ham Common. This change of terrain required an instant shift from tight corners and angular routes amongst intricate alleys and cul-de-sacs to picking lines through long grass and around dense and bramble-lined blocks of trees; and then—particularly challenging—the sudden re-entry into the housing.



Peter Martin (far R) with his M70+ Silver Medal at the SE Sprints

Credit: Beryl Pring

Excellent maps at 1:3000, almost no contours and almost no traffic meant that quick feet and fast decision-making would be key to success and any errors or confusions would be costly. The high temperature (32°C in the afternoon) would be energy-sapping. Picnic areas, a drinking water tap, showers, a cake stall and marquees at the Event Centre—Thames Young Mariners—were a bonus.

Only five Saxons took part! Alan Hickling

entered Course 1—the (longest) Mens Open class. On arriving he discovered that he had forgotten to pack his running shorts. After a good result on his first run he cycled into Kingston for a purchase, arriving back at the Event Centre with only minutes to get to the Start. He again had a good run although lost some time on #11. Roger Pring, on his second run, having successfully navigated a tricky butterfly loop on Course 3, also saw a little extra scenery looking for a (different) #11. Cate Slade had two good runs while Peter Martin came away with Silver in M70 and Beryl Pring came away as South East Champion with the Gold medal in W70.

Peter Martin

And another perspective of the same event from Beryl Pring:

SLOW orienteering club organised the SE Sprints this year on the Ham Estates, Richmond.

Parking was by kind permission of the Thames Young Mariners, where we had toilets, a fresh drinking water tap available, much needed as it was extremely hot, 30°C+, and lots of tents to keep out of the sun if needed.

It was a timed start for everyone with the first race starting at 10.30am and then the 2nd race at 12 noon, so a quick turn around for the slower runners. The winner on my course took under 12 mins whereas I took 23 mins, a big difference.

It takes a lot of organising to put on such an event and I think SLOW did extremely well especially as they had problems with some of the residents in the area who didn't really want it happening at all!

There were only five Saxons there which was a shame but two medals won:

- Peter Martin M70+ Silver Medal
- Beryl Pring W70+ Gold Medal

Beryl Pring



More of the B3 map from the SE Sprints

Credit: Beryl Pring

Mole Valley Reigate Street-O—17th January 2023

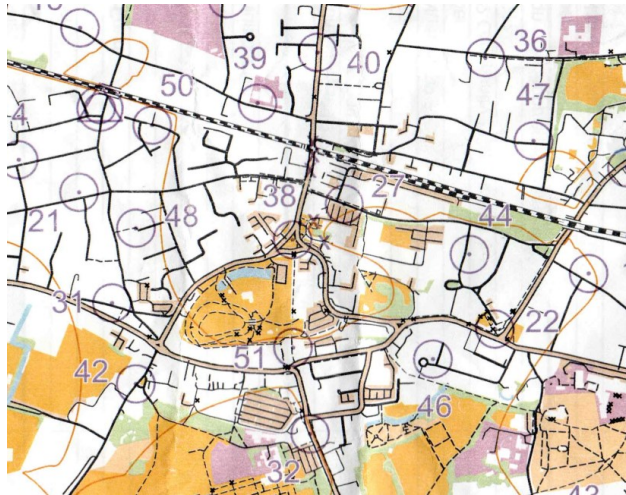
There has been some debate within Saxons recently about the way forwards for the Kent Night Cup series when it resumes later this year. This appears to have mainly been driven by problems with getting pubs to serve food up to 9pm, which particularly affected control collectors during the 2022/23 season. KNC Organiser Mark Glaisher conducted a survey of KNC participants in June, seeking views and comments. One idea that seems to be popular is to use MapRun for KNC Street-O events, as this can eliminate the need to put out controls (if made straightforward for the Planner to set up), and therefore to collect them at the end. As I've taken part in a number of events like this, I thought it might help to share my experiences.

Prior to the pandemic, when I was working in London, I would often do SLOW evening Street-Os (I'd go as far as to say I got quite good at them!) At the time, these did not use MapRun; instead it was a 'treasure hunt' type format where, at each control location on the map, you'd look for an item of street furniture with information on it to answer a question. For example, it might be the number of a lamppost or post box, words on a sign (headteachers' names on school signboards were particularly popular!)

In mid-January I noticed that Mole Valley were running a Street-O series across

Surrey, organised similarly to SLOW's highly successful events but now using MapRun as the primary means of recording controls. It so happened that I was free on the Tuesday of the Reigate Street-O, a short drive from Sevenoaks.

Able organised by Dawn Clifford and Jenny Sibley, 39 controls were located across the wider area of the town. As with similar SLOW events, controls carried 10, 20, 30, 40 or 50



Reigate town centre control locations

Credit: Mole Valley OC

broadly according to difficulty and distance from the Start/Finish. Being a Score event, there was a 40 or 60 minute time limit (individual runner's choice, with time penalties for being late). Even the best runners are unlikely to be able

to bag all the controls inside an hour, so it's essential to use a strategy to maximise your points according to your abilities. Sadly I'm nowhere near as fast now as I was in 2018, when I was probably at my peak in the SLOW Street-Os, so more modest ambitions had to come into play at Reigate!

For non-MapRunners, Dawn and Jenny had retained the paper-based treasure hunt approach, by locating all the controls on street furniture (Control 10: Lamppost number; Control 20: Postbox RH2 ???D; Control 30: Hydrant 4/? - that sort of thing). This was also a useful fallback if MapRun didn't register a control for any reason.

05/01/2023, 21:00

OpenOrienteeringMap: The easy Street-O map creation tool

REIGATE STREET O

1 hour score event. Time penalties will be incurred at 30 points per minute or part of over the 1 hour time limit PIN = 4003 EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER 07981 339 838

Name	Club	
Start	Finish	Time
Score	Penalty	Total

No	Score	Description	Answer
10	10	Lamppost Number	
11	10	Lamppost Number	
13	10	Lamppost Number	
14	10	Humps for ??? miles	
20	20	Postbox RH2 ???D	
21	20	Lamppost Number	
22	20	Postbox RH2 ??D	
23	20	Road Name ??? Court	
24	20	Postbox RH2 ???D	
25	20	Lamppost Number	
26	20	Hydrant 75/??	
27	20	Bus Stop Letter	

Reigate Street-O—Question/Answer sheet

Credit: Mole Valley OC

It was an enjoyable though challenging event, making good use of the town centre, housing estates and both hilly and flatter areas. I should also say that once my ageing phone finally locked on to the GPS at the Start, it didn't fail on me once out on the course. (I've since bought a Garmin Forerunner 55 watch which picks up GPS signals much better, and works with MapRunG).

The event was also run out of a good pub—The Admiral—with a rear yard which was used for Registration (Start and Finish were both on the street immediately outside). This in fact is something SLOW have been doing for their Street-O events for years.

Thanks to Dawn and Jenny's excellent organization of this event, a few points can be taken which could well help with any KNC MapRun Street-Os in future:

- Pre-entry remains the same as before, being on Racesignup.
- Competitors need to ensure they have the latest version of MapRun installed on their phone or watch (now v7 for phones, MapRunG for Garmin watches), and to download the course to their phone or watch before arriving.
- Access to courses is controlled by PIN number. That is, the course will not be visible on competitors' devices until they receive the course PIN number at Registration on the night.
- Competitors can write down the answers on paper if they can't use MapRun; the timing for this is by dibber/SI timing (Start and Finish controls as usual). This means that Organisers need to site controls on items of street furniture that carry pieces of information which can form answers to questions (as shown in the examples above).
- MapRun Street-Os still use printed maps (on waterproof paper as usual).
- Competitors still need the usual O-paraphernalia: headtorch, hiviz clothing, whistle and compass advised, pen/pencil to write answers.
- For this Winter series, Starts were from 6:30-7:30pm, with no mass start and no need for competitors to book an exact start time. This may make it easier for competitors and Organisers to get post-run food in a pub!
- Provisional results are shown on the MapRun app as soon as each competitor uploads them, but final results are not available on the organising club's website until later.
- Locating Registration at a pub is a very good idea!

The Molies have produced [an excellent PDF guide](#) to planning/organizing an evening Street-O, which we could do worse than adopt for KNC MapRun events.

Graham Denney



Finish at Florencecourt Sprint—Emerald Isle 10 Days (see p.55) / Credit: Graham Denney

The JK 2023: Lancaster & The Lake District

Following a successful return last year after 2 years of Covid-restriction cancellations, the JK was again on form for 2023. A full programme of events was on offer across the 4 days of the Easter weekend, taking in the historic and attractive city of Lancaster and its universities (Day 1: Sprint) and the beautiful southern Lake District (Days 2-4: Middle, Long and Relays). Even the notoriously fickle northwestern weather played ball for most of the weekend, providing abundant sunshine right through to the end of Day 3. The rain at Dale Park during the relays wasn't enough to dampen spirits, or even bog many vehicles down in the car parks.

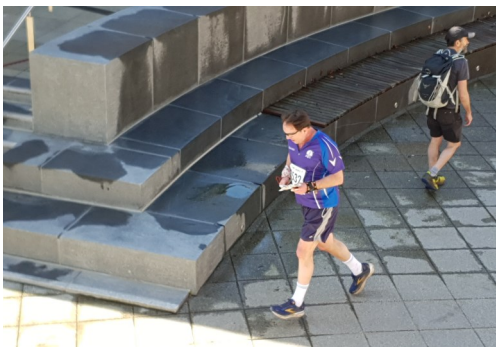
Around 20 Saxons made the trip north, most taking a couple of days and breaking the long journey en route. Your Editor took the opportunity to stay with friends near Rugby, and also make it a 5-day JK by sneaking in a POC at Irchester Country Park (near Wellingborough) on the way. Thanks are due to David Kingdon for putting me onto [this POC](#) a few years ago: the crazy contours of multiple parallel earth banks makes every course a fun challenge worth going back for from time to time. Highly recommended for a leg-stretch on a lengthy drive to or from Kent!



Day 1: Jeremy Oldershaw with his first medal of JK 2023

Credit: Alison Howe

The Day 1 Sprint was based at Lancaster University, south of the city centre at Bailrigg. The sun shone on our endeavours to tackle the planners' successful efforts to make a fairly small and regular modern campus complex and mentally stretching. 18 Saxons ran, with Jeremy Oldershaw (M85) and Alison Howe (W50) notably achieving podium positions in their classes: 2nd and 3rd respectively. A good start.



Day 1: SaxAlert Editor in action! Graham Denney in the Sprint

Credit: Alan Hickling

For 3 Saxons a short sprint race wasn't enough, and Alan Hickling, Peter Dobra and myself moved on to

the University of Cumbria campus in the city for the Day 1 TrailO competition. Peter and Alan excelled themselves in the Elite Combined event, coming 3rd and 11th out of 46 competitors respectively. Even I did well in the Standard PreO, given that it was my first ever TrailO, coming equal 1st out of 17 (a position shared by no fewer than 6 of us!) Clearly beginner's luck though - this startling success was not to be repeated in the British TrailO Champs at Armagh a few weeks later (see next article)...



Day 1: ...and another podium position—

Alison Howe (2nd L) 3rd in W50

Credit: Holly Howe

The venue for the PreO was Williamson Park, a lovely, extensive open space high up on the edge of the city with great views over the historic centre, the River Lune and out over Morecambe Bay towards the distant hills where we would find ourselves in the days to follow. The Park is also home to the iconic and Grade 1 Listed Ashton Memorial, commissioned by local industrialist Lord Ashton in 1909 in memory of his late wife Jenny. 150 feet tall, and positioned high up on a mound, it dominates the local skyline, being visible from far around, including the M6 a short distance to the east. Taking part in the PreO had the extra benefit of putting paid to a long-held misconception of mine, which was - having only ever seen the memorial from the motorway - that for some reason it was part of Lancaster University's campus. In my defence it was a very long time since I'd last visited Lancaster!

Day 2 found us again enjoying the sunshine, this time up at High Dam near Finsthwaite at the far SW edge of Windermere, for the Middle Distance race. Complicated vehicle access due to narrow lanes and tiny settlements made it an

adventure just getting to the parking area. A long walk in to assembly followed by another to the Starts gave an idea of what terrain lay ahead. Graham and David Thomas, Simon Blanchflower and Alan Hickling had all headed up early to pitch the club tent, a much appreciated effort.



Day 2: Club tent and banner at Assembly, High Dam

Credit: Alan Hickling



Day 2: Peter Dobra finishing on M21E

Credit: Alison Howe

The JK organisers described High Dam - somewhat laconically - as offering "complex terrain in open, semi-open and wooded areas with plenty of contour and rock features. Lying between 20 and 230 m the area is not high compared to the surrounding fells but views are still extensive."

Well, partly true. If you've ever tried ascending a low ridge directly up the contours with creaky knees already tired from running along contours stuffed with small boulders, undergrowth and soil that starts sliding as soon as you put pressure on it, then 230m is high enough. And that was only at control 3. Finally managing an up-and-over on the ridge brought me far down into an area of marshes and rocky outcrops that was scenically beautiful but frustrating to navigate through. I slowed down, focused on just completing the course without mistakes (a vain hope, as it turned out) and managed to conserve enough energy for a sprint

finish, to make it look as if I wasn't a complete no-hoper (while desperately hoping none of the other Saxons had seen me wandering around the area of my third-to-last control - clearly visible from the Assembly area below - without actually seeing the wretched thing).

The day ended as it had begun though, in glorious sunshine and beautiful surroundings. Saxons had fielded 22 runners, with the now-unstoppable Jeremy Oldershaw taking 2nd place in M85 again. The Howe family also had an excellent day, with mum Alison and siblings Austin and Holly all achieving single-digit placings in their classes. Meanwhile, Peter Dobra had carried on to do the Elite PreO (which included a timed section), coming 27th out of 43 competitors.



Day 2: The pressure's on...Alison Howe just managing to hold off son Austin at the Finish

Credit: Sarah Howes

To make the most of the good weather, a group of us RV'd in Ford Park in nearby Ulverston for the now-traditional

(well, since last year anyway) Saxons JK fish-and-chip supper. Sarah Howes, Mark Glaisher, Graham and David Thomas, Simon Blanchflower and myself sat on socially-distanced benches with food from an excellent nearby chippy, and toyed with the idea of walking up to the lighthouse. (Which isn't actually a lighthouse but a memorial to local worthy Sir John Barrow in 1850 - although it has a lantern chamber - which has never housed a light - and an official post of lighthouse keeper - which is still in existence - because Trinity House donated £100 to the original construction fund on the condition that the monument be designed as a seamark. Confused yet?)



Day 2: Trad fish 'n' chip supper, Ulverston

Credit: Simon Blanchflower

However we collectively decided to conserve our strength for the trial ahead that was Sunday's Long Distance Race. Even a sign for a combined nature trail/orienteering course in the park couldn't distract us.



You can't get away from it...sign for orienteering course at Ford Park, Ulverston / Credit: Graham Denney

Day 3 at Bigland meant an early start for me, having for some unfathomable reason offered to volunteer at the JK (I know, I know...) and been allocated to help on White Start. This was located high in the hills above the Assembly area, and quite exposed, so it was fortunate that the good weather held, not least because the view was wonderful. I was under the expert supervision of Derek Fryer, who

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Day 3: The view from the loo at White Start / Credit: Alison Fryer

some of our longer-standing members may remember from his time with Saxons in the 1970s (he sends his regards, by the way). Derek put me on the Elite starts, which was an interesting experience. Elite runners they may have been, but for many turning up on time and picking up the correct race number (different numbers were issued for Day 3) proved to be taxing, to say the least. One M18 achieved the dubious record of missing his start time by 1hr 20mins. I'm pleased to say though that all Saxons I was aware of were highly punctual.



Day 3: Sarah Howes (2nd R) and David Thomas on the way into the Finish

Credit: Graham Thomas

Start duties over, I headed to my own course, where I had been allocated one of the very last Start times.



Day 3: Feeling the strain...Brendon Howe at the Finish, Bigland

Credit: Graham Thomas

At first everything went well, albeit not particularly quickly, but then it all fell apart between controls 10 and 11 down in the bottom end of the course. An intricate area of steep rocky and wooded slopes full of spurs and re-entrants - some of them quite indistinct - coupled with fatigue proved my undoing. For some reason I really could not match map to ground, ended up going round in circles, winding back up at control 10 at least 3 times, and missed the obvious solution, which was to return to a known point on the way from 9 to 10 and reattack from there. Then, abandoning 11, I couldn't even find my way to control 12 - and I'd run right past it on the way from 8 to 9!

Now badly losing time, abandonment was the order of the day, so I cut my losses and ran (or rather staggered in an exhausted fug) broadly northwards in the hope of somehow finding control 13. I believe I may have referred to this in a previous issue as 'Random Control Acquisition Strategy', more commonly known as 'Headless Chicken Mode'. Hey, it works (and more often than



Day 4: Mark Glaisher gets off to a toasty start in the Relays for Team Panini!

Credit: Sarah Howes

as I had hoped and I dibbed the finish 10 minutes after course closing time, having missed 4 controls - the first time I can actually recall doing that deliberately. It was a dispiriting experience, not helped by the fact that I couldn't even get any food as the vendors had already shut down when I finished. Clearly, I made the right choice with controls 11 and 12 and 18 and 19 to cut my losses and run, and it was the right decision from a stamina point of view to run the Long M50 course on the Middles the day before, and Short M50 on the Longs, but very disappointing in terms of micro-navigation. I'm still trying to work out what went wrong. But then again, it was far more technically challenging terrain than we're used to in the Southeast, so perhaps the only answer is to get in more experience in these difficult areas.

That said, I wasn't alone in my struggles on Day 3. As the results show, of the 21 Saxons who ran the Longs, no fewer than 6 of us missed at least 1 control. There's no doubt - it was a toughie. Given that, we should be very proud of our achievers that day: Austin Howe, 3rd on M18L, and the orienteering machine that is Jeremy Oldershaw 2nd on M85. Congratulations also to the other

you might think), although in this case I'll admit it probably only worked because I followed somebody else onto a control - any control - luckily to find it was my number 16, and relocated from there. But it put me back in the game, albeit against a clock that was rapidly ticking down to course closing time.

And then it all fell apart again when trying to find control 18. Fatigue and time-anxiety conspired against my reading the ground in the area around the control. Knowing I was going to be out of time, I decided to sack the whole thing and retire.

Backing out of the woods led me to a wide track heading directly towards the finish. Then I realised that my last 2 controls really should be easy steals, so despite the time penalty I went for those, mostly to keep my spirits up. They proved as straightforward



Day 4: Holly Howe (on loan to SLOW) at the uphill Start

Credit: Sarah Howes

'single-digits': Mark Glaisher (8th on M70L) and Beryl Pring (6th on W75). Peter Dobra must also be mentioned for achieving 11th place (out of 40) on the Elite PreO, this time a Sprint event.

Day 4 unfortunately dawned to a break in the weather. Well, it was the Lake District - we'd been lucky to get this far without seeing a drop of the wet stuff. Fortunately it was more of a steady drizzle than a deluge, and although the Assembly area at Dale Park was pretty muddy, we had the club tent for shelter and the courses themselves were mostly in the woods. It was also good to see former Saxons Rowan and Jerry Purkis (now LOC), as they were helping with the parking.



Day 4: Mel Taylor leads off for Team Scooby Snack

Credit: Sarah Howes

Saxons entered 4 teams - 2 of Veteran Men, 1 Ultravets and 1 Mixed Ad Hoc. Despite being the last day of the JK, the relays attracted many clubs and both parking fields were very full. To be honest, other than our Mixed Ad Hoc team, we were unlikely to be competitive - some of the other clubs were clearly taking the Relays very seriously - so for most of us Saxons it was a fun event. The uphill start was interesting though, especially by the final leg when it had been churned into mud. In addition, the Start kite was over the hill and out of sight of the actual Start itself, at which point all courses immediately took a sharp right turn onto a track (also very muddy) through the woods. The courses themselves were not particularly technical or complex (although yours truly still managed to perform a 180 coming out of an early control, which I didn't realise for over 200m!), but it was a nice area and very suitable for a relay. There was also a real googly on the run in, with a final control for many courses hidden well off the direct route to the handover/Finish. There were more than a few competitors who had to run back uphill to dib this control, before running back down for a second time. And despite having seen this happen plenty of times before our own runs, we all had to think very clearly when the time came to not make the same mistake.

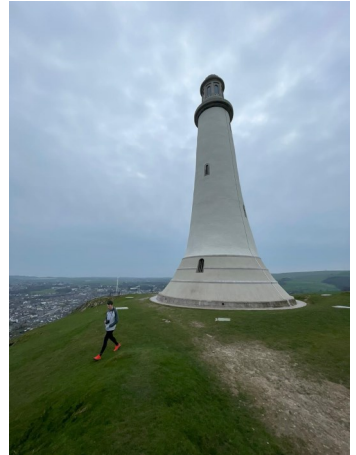


Day 4: David Thomas' relay leg at Dale Park

Credit: Graham Thomas

Our best performing team was Mixed Ad Hoc - David Thomas, Alison Howe and Austin Howe - who came 7th in their class. Our 2 Veteran Mens' teams came 23rd and 41st, and our Ultraveterans team 27th, in their respective classes.

And so ended an enjoyable and successful JK. Saxons had gained 7 podium positions across the FootO and TrailO events, plus 11 other Top 10 slots, we'd had mostly good weather (always a bonus in the Lakes!) and maintained tradition by having an open-air fish and chip supper. Some people even finally made it to the lighthouse before heading home!



Austin and the lighthouse

Credit: Brendon Howe

Next year's JK looks like it's in the Midlands - [the map of embargoed areas is here](#) - spread over a large area from Loughborough (Sprints) to Cannock Chase (Middle and Long - Beaudesert, a venue some of you may remember from 2018's JK) and Stanton Moor much further north in Derbyshire (Relays). Remember that Easter is early next year! - 29th March to 1st April - and get training. See you on the courses!

Graham Denney

Download full JK SaxResults here: [spreadsheet version](#) | [PDF version](#)

More from JK Day 2:



Jeremy Oldershaw makes the podium again



Roger Pring sprint finish



Part of Jeremy's JK medal haul

Credits: L: Sarah Howes | Centre: Alison Howe | R: Jeremy Oldershaw

The Emerald Isle 10 Days—Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, 28th April—7th May

Hot on the heels (almost) of the JK came an event of great vision and challenge across the sea in Ireland - the Emerald Isle Festival of Orienteering. With 10 days of orienteering on offer across both the Republic and Northern Ireland, it looked set to be varied and highly enjoyable - and it lived up to expectations.



Credit: Northern Ireland Orienteering Association

The organisational challenge was enormous. Events needed to be co-ordinated across 2 different associations (IOA and NIOA) in 2 countries, incorporating 7 championship events within the space of 2 successive weekends. But an impressive programme was put together and run most successfully.

The Festival kicked off in the Republic with the Irish Orienteering Championships on the early May Bank Holiday weekend (28th April to 1st May - a long weekend in Ireland as in the UK). The venue was County Wicklow, on the east coast not far from Dublin, hosted by CNOC (Curragh-Naas Orienteers). It closely followed the same 4-day format as the JK:

- A Friday sprint at Glending near Blessington (an evening and forest race rather than a daytime urban)
- A Saturday Middle Distance event at Stranahely in the Glen of Imaal on the western edge of the Wicklow Mountains
- A Sunday 'Classic' (i.e. Long Distance) race at Devils Glen over towards the coast
- A Monday Relay on the Tottenham Estate, adjacent to Devils Glen Forest



Credit: Northern Ireland Orienteering Association

The east coast of Ireland is a fair distance to travel from SE England; nevertheless contingents from Southdowns, SN, MV and SLOW made the journey, with some success it has to be said:

Sprint - Glending:			
W80	Ruth Rhodes	SO	2nd
M65	Ian Ditchfield	MV	3rd
W35	Sarah-Jane Barrable	SLOW	1st
M45	Nick Barrable*	SYO	1st
Middles - Stranahely:			
M65	Ian Ditchfield	MV	2nd
M45	Nick Barrable*	SYO	1st
Longs - Devils Glen:			
M75	David May	SLOW	2nd
W35	Sarah-Jane Barrable	SLOW	1st
M45	Nick Barrable*	SYO	1st
Relays - Tottenham Estate:			
SOs (Southdowns) - 6th on Handicap 6 course			
An SYO team including Nick Barrable* also enjoyed success:			
SYO HasBEEs - 1st on Handicap 12 course			
*mentioned here because of his close connections to Saxons and SEOA			

Unfortunately due to a prior commitment I was unable to make the IOCs. However I was free the following week, and already up near the border on the Bank Holiday Monday. It was a simple matter to drive up for the remaining events, all in Northern Ireland, with great variety in race type and location:

Tues 2nd May	Belfast City Touristic MapRun
Wed 3rd May	Fermanagh Sprint—Florencecourt
Thur 4th May	UK Urban League—Carrickfergus
Fri 5th May	‘Orienteering the Cosmos’—Armagh Planetarium
Fri 5th May	Hillsborough Forest—middle distance training
Sat 6th May	British Sprint Championships—Armagh

Sat 6th May	British TrailO Championships—Armagh
Sun 7th May	British Middle Distance Championships— Drumkeeragh Forest

Florencecourt - a magnificent Georgian house and estate, set deep in the lovely Fermanagh countryside south of Enniskillen and just a few miles from the border. In the care of the National Trust since 1954, our sprint race, courtesy of Fermanagh Orienteers, took us round the carefully restored gardens and parkland.



UK Urban League, Carrickfergus - the first UKUL event to take place in Northern Ireland. Carrickfergus is one of the oldest towns in Ireland and the oldest in County Antrim, predating Belfast by a long way (and for centuries far more prominent). A settlement existed well before the Anglo-Normans built a castle here in 1177, which is still the major feature of the town today. Our courses made good use of the historic town, castle, marina and modern housing estates.



Belfast city centre - a 'touristic' MapRun had been developed specifically for the festival, starting and finishing at City Hall and taking in key visitor sights across the city centre covering a wide swathe of Belfast's history - ancient and modern - not least several of its pubs! At present the map and commentary are still available (price £5) [on the Go Orienteering website](#) and on MapRun - you'll need to pay to get the PIN to unlock the course on MapRun. Very enjoyable, there's a real energy and buzz about Belfast city centre, although GPS signal was poor in some of the older, narrower streets so be prepared to adjust the results on MapRun afterwards.



Orienteering the Cosmos - this was a special show at Armagh Planetarium on Friday lunchtime. It was presented by the Director of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium, Professor Michael Burton, who in fact has been an orienteer for longer than he has been an astronomer. It also neatly linked to Saturday's British Sprint Champs, which used the Observatory grounds for the qualifier races. As I used Friday morning to do the Belfast MapRun, I had to miss this show but those who went said it was



very good.

Hillsborough Forest - Friday afternoon's event had originally been planned as an indoor race but unfortunately access problems forced cancellation. LVO provided a very good middle distance training run at Hillsborough Forest instead, which proved to be surprisingly challenging in places! Much of the forest was also wonderfully runnable (no brambles, yay!) The attractive village adjacent to the forest is formally known as Royal Hillsborough, as the castle is the official residence of the royal family in Northern Ireland, and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.



Armagh - Ireland's 'Holy City' - its ecclesiastical capital with sacred connections back beyond the time of St Patrick (5th century AD) to pagan era and prehistory.



Saturday was a challenging day for both myself and Alan Hickling, as we competed in both races of the British Sprint Championships (qualifiers and finals) then the British TrailO Champs straight afterwards. The qualifiers took place in the grounds of the Royal School and the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium, with

a challenging start through an archway between historic buildings on The Mall, straight into a maze of car parks, back yards and high walls. Crossing College Hill took us on to the infamous Hill of Infinity, with steep climbs up and over the Observatory campus, before finishing at the City of Armagh High School.

The finals began with a lengthy cross-country walk to the Start in a farmyard (seriously) across the road from St Luke's Hospital. After a considerable delay to proceedings (fortunately in sunshine), due to the Start list having been sent up in order of name rather than start time, we were off racing round the hospital grounds. Then as soon as we'd finished and got back to the Assembly area, it was straight off for Alan and me to the Palace Demesne on the other side of town for the TrailO Champs. The start was however pushed back an hour due to the delay with the sprint finals. The weather, which briefly threatened to rain, proved kind in the end, with sunshine for the whole event. Personally I found it demanding on my concentration after 2 sprint races already that day, and was unable to repeat my surprise performance on Day 1 of the JK, coming 5th of 7 in the Standard PreO (though interestingly only 3 points behind the winner). Alan slipped to 19th out of 24 in the Elite event, probably because the delay in starting was putting pressure on him to catch his return ferry that evening. It's pleasing to say though that former Saxons Tom Dobra and Nick Barrable

achieved 1st and 3rd places in the Elite event.

Drumkeeragh—Sunday brought the Emerald Isle festival to a close with the British Middle Distance Championships at Drumkeeragh Forest, somewhere in the middle of nowhere heading south towards the coast and the Mourne Hills. From a beautiful Assembly area surrounded by gorse in full bloom, uphill treks to the Starts took us into a dense forest of complex contours, paths and water courses. Much of my course was surprisingly runnable (or at least, staggerable) on direct bearings, although I can't admit to a fast time. However, and surprisingly for Ireland, the sun continued to shine, making it very warm in the thicker stands of trees, but also possible to sit out at the Assembly area soaking up the heat. It was a most pleasant way to finish a highly enjoyable week of orienteering in a fascinating and hospitable area. Well done to all from across SEOA who made the trip over the water—it's a long journey but was well worth the effort. Apart from Saxons, I noticed members of DFOK, SO, MV, HH, SLOW, LOK and SN, a great turnout (apologies to any other SEOA clubs who I've missed off this list).



Finally, congratulations are due to all involved across the IOA and NIOA for pulling off this feat of orienteering vision and organisation.

Photo credits: all Graham Denney except:

Armagh Cathedral—Flying jacket, [CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

Armagh Planetarium—Telescope, Armagh Observatory by Rossographer, [CC BY-SA 2.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons



Above: entrance to the Start at Carrickfergus

Right: Elegant Finish at Florencecourt



Left: Control hide-ing away at Hillsborough Forest

All photos: Graham Denney

Notable Results:

All results are given for Saxons competitors. Only top 10 placings are given for other SEOA clubs' competitors.

Florencecourt (results by age class not available):			
Long:			
	Nick Barrable	SYO	1st
	Tony Burton	MV	2nd
	John Dasey	SO	5th
	Ian Ditchfield	MV	7th
	Sarah-Jane Barrable	SLOW	9th
	Graham Denney	SAX	20th
UKUL Carrickfergus:			
WO	Sarah-Jane Barrable	SLOW	3rd
MV	Nick Barrable	SYO	1st
MV	Graham Denney	SAX	14th
WV	Jane Lambert	SO	8th
MUV	Ian Ditchfield	MV	3rd
MUV	Alan Rosen	HH	5th
MUV	Don McKerrow	SLOW	8th
WUV	Janet Rosen	HH	1st
MHV	Tony Barrable	RAFO	8th
WHV	Ruth Rhodes	SO	7th
MO	Tony Burton	MV	5th
MO	John Dasey	SO	6th

British Sprints (Finals):			
M50B	Graham Denney	SAX	5th
M55A	Alan Hickling	SAX	17th
M16A	Luke Bennett	DFOK	4th
M65B	Andrew Evans	DFOK	1st
W60B	Jane Lambert	SO	2nd
W65B	Linda Hulley	SO	4th
W80A	Ruth Rhodes	SO	3rd
M65A	Ian Ditchfield	MV	5th
M75A	David May	SLOW	2nd
M60B	Ronan Cleary	LOK	2nd
W55B	Julie Cleary	LOK	1st
M60A	Simon Errington	HH	2nd
W65A	Janet Rosen	HH	4th
M65A	Peter Jones	SN	2nd
W14B	Charlotte Lovegrove	SN	4th
W45A	Sarah Rollins	SN	1st
W55A	Melanie Slade	SN	1st
Orange	Erin Cooper	SN	2nd
British TrailO:			
Standard PreO:			
	Graham Denney	SAX	5th / 7
Elite PreO:			
	Tom Dobra	Now TVOC but former SAX	1st / 24
	Nick Barrable	SYO	3rd
	Sarah-Jane Barrable	SLOW	4th
	Alan Hickling	SAX	19th

British Middles:			
M50	Graham Denney	SAX	16th
M16	Luke Bennett	DFOK	6th
M40	John Dasey	SO	8th
W80	Ruth Rhodes	SO	2nd
M65	Ian Ditchfield	MV	3rd
M70	Don McKerrow	SLOW	4th
M75	David May	SLOW	2nd
W35	Sarah-Jane Barrable	SLOW	1st
M60	Simon Errington	HH	4th
M65	Alan Rosen	HH	4th
W65	Janet Rosen	HH	=3rd
M50	Dmitry Ushakov	LOK	3rd
W55	Julie Cleary	LOK	10th
W75	Trina Cleary	LOK	7th
M16	Tommy Rollins	SN	1st
M45	Nicholas Cooper	SN	4th
W18	Rebecca Lovegrove	SN	9th
W45	Sarah Rollins	SN	1st

Graham Denney

Credits:

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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

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