

CompassSport Trophy Heat 2023

The CompassSport Trophy heat is unique in the club's annual calendar. Yes, the regulars get together at the Six Days and JK, we sometimes run a relay or two, and nothing beats the atmosphere of Greensand day, but only at CompassSport do a substantial proportion of the membership come together to compete for the club rather than as individuals.

This year's event was at Beacon Hill, north of Leicester, an area made up of a spectacular, craggy central hill surrounded by diverse woodlands and pastures. We had 28 competitors, roughly half of the entire membership, including several strong new competitors who have happily decided to move to Milton Keynes and join us.



The CompassSport format is well-designed to encourage participation. It divides runners into 12 classes based on age and gender, with a maximum of two scoring in each category, so rewarding the ability to put out runners in every class.

SMOC's secret weapon in the CompassSport is our ability to pay for entries from Greensand Ridge Relay proceeds. This regularly means that we get better participation than other clubs. Our Achilles heel is that we are - according to the table occasionally compiled by Dave Nevell for CompassSport Magazine - officially The Worst Club in the Country. (This is a matter of some pride to me as Club Captain.) So each year's Trophy is a matter of seeing how these two factors balance out. Recently, the "Worst Club" bit has had the upper hand; our qualification in 2012 is a faded memory now.

So how did we do? Well, the club tent was a great place to be, with long-standing members catching up and meeting some of our new joiners for the first time. We had a great view of the hilltop, the eponymous beacon, and the finish, largely achieved by sticking the tent right in front of OD's small palace while no-one was looking. Most people were pleased with their runs, and the live online results meant that we could see our points total ticking up and down in real time. Our [final outcome](#) is shown on the right: a total of 1250 points. Our scorers combined reliable regulars (with Ian, Karen, Milly, Rosie and Steve scoring in our top 13 for the third year in a row) with newcomers Davey, Lawrence, Edward and Siobhan getting into the points on their first run for the club.

SMOC

Name	Class	Score
Richard Pownall	6	99
Stephen Hardy	7	98
Rosie Shaw	10	98
David Averill	4	97
Lawrence Jones	1	97
Milly Askham	8B	96
Freya Askham	5	96
Edward Calderbank	8A	96
Barbara Wysocka	3	95
Ian Byrne	6	95
Helen Nisbet	7	95
Karen Vines	5	95
Siobhan Patrick	3	93

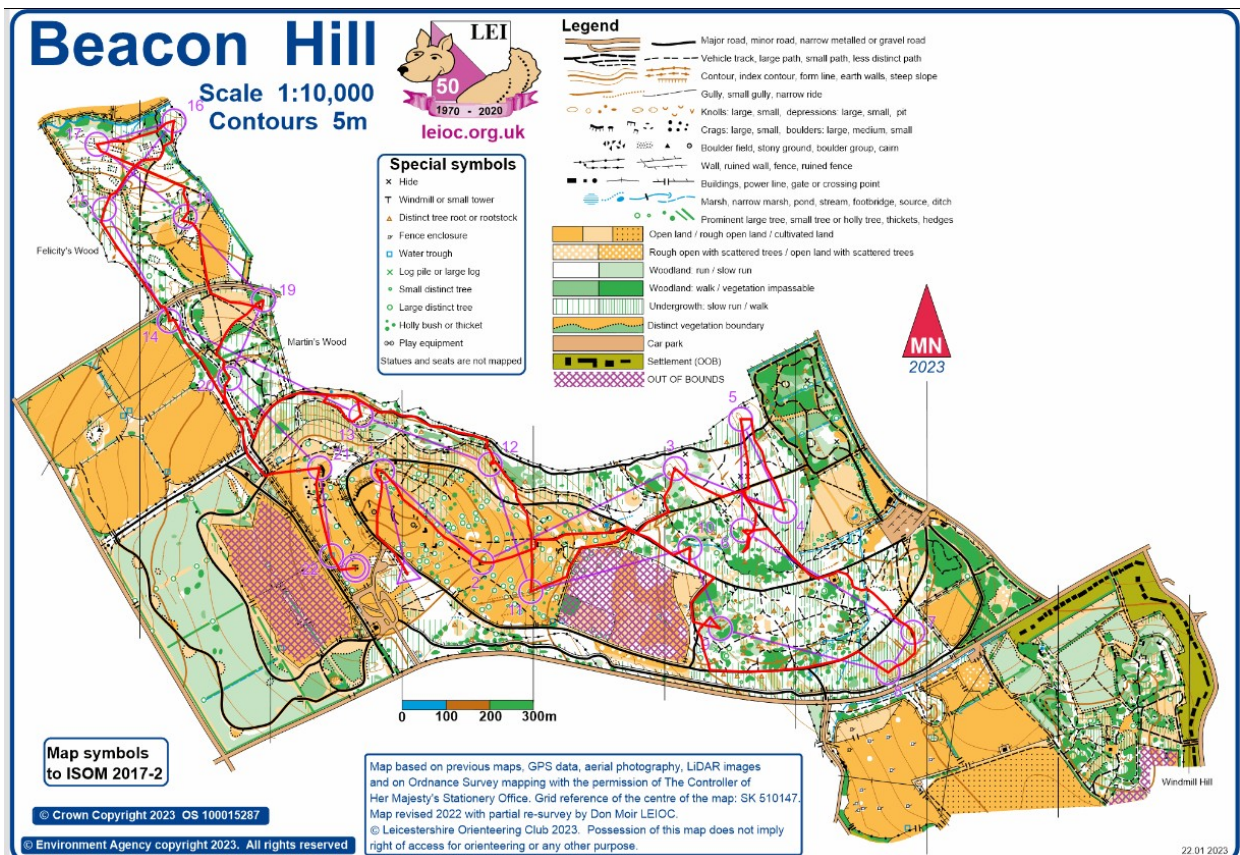
However, this wasn't quite enough to carry the day. In fact, we were last, with quite sizeable gaps to NOC, LOG and LEI. This despite the fact that Barbara, Davey, David, Dorien, Edward, John, Karen, Keith, Mark, Ric, Ros, Sarah, Siobhan, Steve, Sue and TC all put in runs within their best six of the past year.

Compass Sport Trophy

Pos	Club	Scorers	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8A	8B	9A	9B	10
1st	LEI	13	1280	98 (1)	97 (1)	198 (2)	96 (1)	197 (2)	0 (0)	196 (2)	198 (2)	0 (0)	100 (1)	0 (0)	100 (1)
2nd	LOG	13	1268	191 (2)	197 (2)	191 (2)	199 (2)	100 (1)	98 (1)	94 (1)	0 (0)	100 (1)	98 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
3rd	NOC	13	1260	199 (2)	100 (1)	195 (2)	189 (2)	190 (2)	197 (2)	100 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	90 (1)
4th	SMOC	13	1250	97 (1)	0 (0)	188 (2)	97 (1)	191 (2)	194 (2)	193 (2)	96 (1)	96 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	98 (1)

So how much better do we need to be? LEI are a bigger club than us, and in some years have been big enough to be in the Cup rather than the Trophy. But they only had 10 competitors more; if they had given up their first 10 places, they'd still have beaten us. Looking closely at the results, I found that only Davey, Richard and Ian beat their corresponding LEI runners. Our other 10 scorers were a total of 1 hour 35 minutes behind their LEI counterparts - an average of more than 9 minutes each. That's a lot of time to make up! So next year, as I do every year, I will focus on optimising team strategies such as "try running Short Brown myself and see what happens", and will encourage participants to follow these simple precepts:

- don't make mistakes
- run a lot faster
- if that fails, enjoy a great day out with the team.



Dorien James
Club Captain