



My summer on tour extended beyond WMOC19 and Scotland as I decided to go up to Yorkshire and do some of the Race the Castle events in Yorkshire. These were a series of events, mostly urban or park O over the nine days up to and including the August Bank Holiday weekend, culminating in the White Rose. Each of the venues had a castle, or a connection with a castle – a little tenuous in some instances.

A number of SMOCies travelled to Sheffield for an excellent urban. We had a beautiful afternoon, and Sheffield city centre was suitably busy with puzzled shoppers and tourists. This was a fast and fun race, slightly marred for me by a contretemps with a pavement (I lost). Urban orienteering is certainly a way to see the sights of our beautiful (and not so beautiful) cities.

I used my newly acquired senior citizen railcard again the following day to go to Lincoln. Once again I met Ann (Harris) and her family; I'm not sure if anybody else from our club was there. For those of you who know Lincoln, we started nearly at the top of the hill, just below the Cathedral. This meant we were going to run down the hill, and then at some point had to come back up again! Those of us with early starts got exceedingly wet in the early downpour, but the sun then came out, favouring those running later. I ran to parts of the city I hadn't been before, but also had the pleasure of running around the outside of the Cathedral

As I was camping outside York for the week, I selected a couple more events to attend. On Monday I went to Wakefield. After spending the day at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (getting wet again) and then the Hepworth Gallery, I had a run through streets and parkland. This is such a fun way to spend an evening.

I gave the indoor sprint at Bradford Grammar School a miss (see my piece on Riga) but had a great time at the urban at Knaresborough on the Wednesday evening. I had spent some time walking around the town during the afternoon including some early control spotting. The town has a castle built on a hill, high above the deep river valley. This meant there were spiralling roads and pathways, providing plenty of confusion for an inadequate orienteer. It was a really interesting town to run around, and I would highly recommend it should they put another event on there.

The Race the Castles series had further events in Beverly (a park/score O) and Robin Hoods Bay (the only moorland event) before the White Rose in Scarborough;

which those of you who have known me for a few years (and the RNLI) will be glad to know, I didn't attempt this year. I switched to the much safer sport of rock climbing for the Bank Holiday weekend.

I can't imagine this series working any where else except Yorkshire – where else are there so many clubs and suitable venues in a comparatively small area. The events through the week were quite low key, but fun nonetheless. I will certainly keep an eye open for similar series in the future.

*Rachel Thomas*

