

SOUTH MIDLANDS ORIENTEERING CLUB

issue 124

APRIL 2008



SMOC Signals

Chairman's Chat

Something of a "What I did on my Holidays" chat this time. Not that the JK felt like much of a holiday this year. For newcomers who haven't heard of it the JK is the major event of the orienteering year with four days of orienteering over the Easter weekend. There is a sprint race on Good Friday, normal age class events on the Saturday and Sunday and a relay event on the Monday. It rotates around the regions; this year it wasn't too far away being based around Dorking in Surrey.

Being at Easter the weather can be a bit unpredictable I've been to most of the JKs in the last 25 years and this year's weather was easily the worst. We've had snow before; sufficient to curtail courses one year but that was half way up a Welsh mountain and it was actually a nice day once what was left of the event started. We didn't do the sprints or the relays but Good Friday, apart from the occasional hailstorm (in Guildford anyway) wasn't too bad.

Saturday at Leith Hill, however, was too bad. The strong icy cold wind interspersed with snow showers was nasty. But this was compounded by a 1k walk from the car park to the assembly area and then, for most people a further 2-3k walk to the start. Sometimes it seems planners like to have a long walk to the start just to ensure everyone is warmed up nicely but in this case it was dictated by the terrain. Closer starts would have inevitably led to lots of dead running and much less time in good terrain. Timing was critical in not arriving at the start too soon and we managed it with only about 5 minutes to spare. Once actually going the weather was less intrusive and on my course I had 7k of unremittingly technical orienteering with lots of little humps and bumps and a confusing (but very well mapped) network of small paths created by mountain bikers. I had no major disasters but with 22 controls got enough of them sufficiently wrong to end up in the middle of the field.

Sunday in Ashdown Forest was, if anything, worse. The wind had dropped a little but it was snowing steadily when we reached the event. Snow isn't actually too bad as it tends to bounce off rather than soak in. However, as the day proceeded the temperature rose a teeny bit and the snow became sleet which does soak in, I have rarely been so cold when actually running. Ashdown forest is less technical than Leith hill but, despite the name, it does have quite extensive areas of open moorland which included bracken, heather and tussock grass - these open areas were particularly nasty as trees provided some shelter. The final nastiness was having a third to half of the climb on most courses in the last two (easy) legs, again like the walk to the starts on Saturday imposed by the terrain, but still less than delightful!

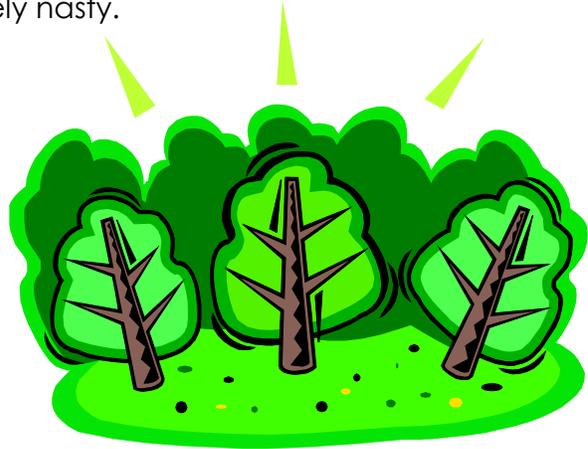
Like Saturday I was again around the middle of the field. Scanning the results I would seem to be fairly typical of most SMOCies - middle of the field - though a couple of SMOCies did rather better: James Nisbet won his class (M10B) on the Saturday and Karen Vines was 5th overall in W40S with an excellent third place on Saturday's technical terrain. Apologies if I've missed any other stars but I'm not exactly sure who was there and what classes they were running (see *article below*). Unfortunately the weather was such that it was a case of heading for the

nearest tea-shop once we'd run so I only met a few other SMOC members in passing.

Finally a very big THANKYOU to all those who braved the elements to help at the JK - it wasn't too bad if you were competing but to be standing around helping, even well wrapped up, must have been extremely nasty.

May you always run in sunlit forests,

Steve



**Come and join us for a drink and a chat at our
Club Pub Night
at The Swan Inn, Milton Keynes Village
on Thursday 15th May
at 8:00pm
in the 'Snug' (turn left upon entering the pub)**





SMOC at the JK

The JK, which is held every Easter, saw some rough weather this year with snow and hail making the forests of Surrey and Kent more challenging than the planners intended. Thirteen SMOCies braved the elements with the weather making for some mixed results.

Saturday's event was held at Leith Hill where the hail stones and mountain bikes added to the challenge. There were some good SMOC performances and we covered 13 different classes which was encouraging to see. Everyone has their own targets, especially when competing in such big fields, so it would be wrong to pick on individuals but credit to our James for continuing his winning ways in the M10B despite a nasty fall and Karen Vines' third place was the SMOC highlight of the day.

		Day 1 Leith Hill		Day 2 Ashdown Forest	
		Time	Place	Time	Place
James Nisbet	M10B	13.45	1st / 13	-	-
Dryden Williams	M16A	73.17	52 nd / 78	71.33	49 th / 71
Jason Falconer	M35L	142.06	29 th / 33		
Roger Williams	M45L	85.34	81 st / 131	74.04	49 th / 128
Mike Jones	M50L	67.16	49 th / 142	71.40	53 rd / 138
Steve Hardy	M55L	86.51	62 nd / 113	73.12	66 th / 104
John Shaw	M55S	76.05	35 th / 42	67.43	25 th / 39
Terry Penny	M60S	125.23	46 th / 47	71.55	33 rd / 41
Rebecca Nisbet	W10B	21.29	6 th / 12	-	-
Elin Falk	W21L	87.16	34 th / 51	77.58	15 th / 48
Karen Vines	W40S	47:20	3rd / 35	61.27	11 th / 35
Helen Nisbet	W45S	57.10	18 th / 45	-	-
Rosie Shaw	W55S	69:08	23 rd / 29	51.52	10 th / 29

Easter Sunday saw heavy snow in the early morning and the early starters had to put up with the worst of conditions. Experience seemed to pay off though with most of our club improving on their previous day's position – Elin's 15th in the highly competitive W21L was a highlight although Karen was closest to getting a podium finish overall.

I've been to a number of JKs now, mainly as bag man for the children, and it never ceases to amaze me how many people turn up from so many countries to compete over the Easter weekend. Our family choose to do just the one day but 98% of people do both days and many of those camp. It was devised as a festival of orienteering for everyone and by and large it stays true to its roots despite a bit of a tendency to pander to the elite runners. Certainly if you've never been to a big event then the JK isn't a bad place to start and certainly gives the sense of occasion. Furthermore if you have youngsters then it invariably has the best quality string courses that we've been on - this year we had

electronic punching, themed controls, on string/ off string, sweets and choice of furry bugs! All we need one of these years is some decent weather – the JK is normally set in lovely areas of countryside and it's a shame that there wasn't much let up in the hail and snow this year for visitors to enjoy it to its full extent.

Don Nisbet



WHITE ROSE WEEKEND 2008

Towards the end of last year, there was some confusion about the position regarding the White Rose Weekend in August 2008, and some initial thoughts that the weekend might have been held in May under a slightly different format.

Over the last two or three months however, plans have been finalised for the event weekend to take place in the traditional format this summer, over the August bank holiday weekend – with five separate orienteering races (two regional events, a night score, a team relay and a MTBO score) based around the event assembly and campsite at Low North Park just NW of Scarborough.

Full details are now available at the new 2008 website at www.whiteroseweekend.org.uk, and further details will be available at major events from JK2008 onwards.

We hope to welcome you to North Yorkshire again for White Rose 2008.

Regards, Bill

Bill Griffiths, White Rose Weekend 2008 - Project Manager

Tel: 017 5146 7020 mob: 077 1000 2961

wr2008org@tiscali.co.uk www.whiteroseweekend.org.uk

The Harvester Trophy

Saturday night/Sunday morning 17/18th May

The Harvester Trophy is a multi-leg orienteering relay which starts during the Saturday night and continues into the Sunday morning.

There are two courses: a 7 leg A course and a 5 leg B course. There are a variety of leg lengths during both night and day to allow most clubs to enter a team. There is more information about the event here www.splitsbrowser.org.uk/harvester/entrydetails.html

This year it is being held at Park Wood and Naphill Common (between High Wycombe and Princess Risborough) on the 17th and 18th May. With the event being in the local area we are trying to get together a SMOC team!

Roger William is aiming to put together a 7 person team. He will run a Night Leg and Dryden will do a dawn leg so he is looking for volunteers to make up a team.

If you are interested please contact Roger rogerwilliams@lineone.net

Let's hope we can get a team

Street Score Event – Friday 4th July 2008

Winslow Scout HQ – Explorer 192 – 770 282

Classes

60min Score – Explorer & Older Scouts

50min Score – Younger Scouts & Cubs

40min Scout – Beavers

SMOC members are welcome to join in any time period

Mass Starts

19:30 for the 60 Minute Score

19:35 for the 50 Minute Score

19:40 for the 40 Minute Score

Fire Hydrants will be the typical Control Site

Regards, Roger Williams, 1st Tingewick Scouts



Roger at the JK

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2008

We hope that you will want to continue your SMOC membership for 2008. Membership subscriptions include membership of the BOF and EAOA and are as follows:

	Senior	Junior	Family
LOCAL	£6.60	Free	£11.00
NATIONAL	£16.50	£3.85	£22.00

For a full list of the benefits of membership, both National and Local, see the SMOC membership page on our website <http://www.smoc.info/members.htm> .

Full-time students who are 21 and over continue to pay at the Junior rate but need to provide the BOF Office with proof of full time higher education before they will send your membership card.

New to orienteering? If you have not been a member of an orienteering club during the past three years then LOCAL membership is FREE for the first year.

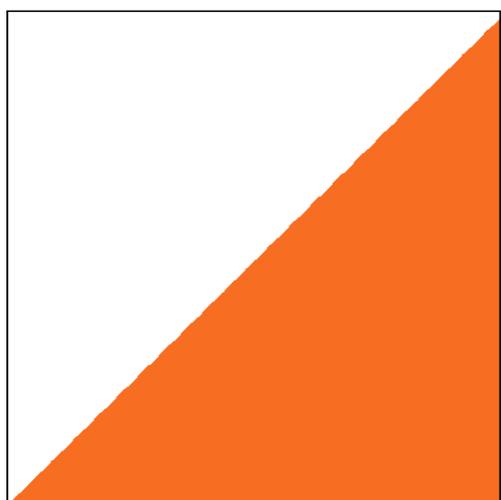
Please renew your membership directly to BOF, either using the form they sent you before Christmas or, for those of you who have mislaid it, the form on the website <http://www.smoc.info/forms/MembForm.pdf>

Please would you renew your subscription as soon as possible. Thank you

Helen Nisbet

Membership Secretary

Don't forget to check the website for
fixtures, results, SMOC personnel,
SMOC Signals deadlines
or any other information you require
<http://www.smoc.info>



SMOC Signals deadlines

issue date	copy deadline
June 2008	25 May 2008
August 2008	20 July 2008
October 2008	21 September 2008
December 2008	16 November 2008