

SOUTH MIDLANDS ORIENTEERING CLUB

issue 125

JUNE 2008



SMOC Signals

Chairman's Chat

It's a fairly quiet time for orienteering at the moment, well it is for me anyway. But we still have our summer series events running; keep an eye on the website for dates and venues. The rather overdue club championships should take place at the July event at Stewartby. A (fairly) definite date for your diaries is the Club Dinner and very overdue AGM on the 12th of September.

One thing we will be doing at the AGM is updating the Club Constitution; don't worry we won't be spending hours at the AGM going through it clause by clause - it will be circulated well ahead of time. We need to clarify some of the wording in order to qualify for the like of local authority support and in inspecting it we discovered some overly prescriptive clauses. Apparently the constitution requires us to hold a club meeting the first Thursday of every month. Older members may recall we did just that at one time but it isn't really something that should be in the constitution.

Returning to actually orienteering the highlight of the summer should be the Welsh 6 Day at the beginning of August, lets hope we actually get a summer this year and Wales doesn't live up to it's reputation. I certainly recall an extremely challenging day in the mist at the last Welsh. Hope to see a good few SMOCies there.

May you always run in sunlit forests,

Steve



GREENSAND RIDGE RELAY SATURDAY 28 JUNE 2008

Summer's coming and it's time to rally the troops for the Greensand Ridge Relay – now in its 21st year!

Race date this year is Saturday 28th June, with starts in Leighton Buzzard from about 11am, and a finish at Northill near Biggleswade at about 5pm depending on how well the teams find their way.

I'm looking for willing volunteers in one of two ways:

1) Anyone wanting to run in a SMOC team. Men or women (we can enter a mixed team if we have 3 ladies). Any age (older runners and under 21's get a better handicap) Leg lengths range from about 4 miles to 8 miles. 6 legs in all. If you would like to run then Richard Harris has kindly volunteered to co-ordinate the SMOC team(s). Contact him at RHarris@generic-software.com. There was a time when we raised 5 teams of 6! We won't do that now, but I hope the home team can raise at least one.

2) Anyone willing to man a changeover point or two and record the times. Much less hard work, and a good social afternoon. We'll be using the SI electronic timing again, and I'm planning a few improvements such as race numbers to make the job easier.

All the details are on SMOC's website at <http://www.smoc.info/GSRR>. We should have a good turn-out of teams from our customary neighbours. If anyone knows any other clubs or groups that might want to raise a team they would be most welcome. It's a nice little earner for SMOC too, with not too much effort.

All runners and helpers welcome at the post-race bash at the Crown at Northill. I'm expecting the landlord to lay on another Barbecue, and I think this year we can negotiate a few extra bar staff to cope with the crowds.

Thanks. Do please let me - or Richard H - know if you are available to run and/or to help marshal. Any questions just drop me a line,

Thanks, *Richard Pownall*

The Welsh 6 Day

Croeso 2008 is a 6 day Orienteering festival taking place between August 3rd to 9th around Tredegar in South Wales. This is the biggest O event of the summer set in some spectacular countryside. The closing date is 15th June.

For more details see www.croesomultiday.org.uk

Tick Alert Survey

Climate change is exposing more outdoor enthusiasts heading for activity holidays in Europe to a potentially fatal tick disease. Higher temperatures and more rainfall across central Europe are creating perfect conditions for ticks to thrive in countryside areas, according to the ISW, a group of experts investigating Tick Borne Encephalitis (TBE).

“It is believed that the life cycle of ticks will increase in the next few years, and as a result the geographical distribution of ticks will expand and population density will rise,” said Professor Jochen Süss of the ISW.

Tick Alert, a campaign to raise awareness of tick disease has launched ‘Tick Watch 2008’ - the first-ever public survey about ticks in the UK and abroad – and is asking ramblers, orienteers, campers and other outdoor pursuits lovers to take part.

The survey aims to find out if ticks are spreading and becoming more common, if people have had problems with ticks on holidays in the UK or Europe and whether ticks are being spotted outside the main spring/summer tick season.

To take part in the survey go to <http://www.masta-travel-health.com/tickalert/click> .

A spokesperson from Tick Alert said: “We hope that by encouraging people to ‘think ticks’ when they are out and about in the countryside that they will be more aware of the potential disease risks from tick bites and take adequate precautions to protect against them.”

The number of TBE cases requiring hospital treatment in Europe rose to 13,000 last year, a 30% increase on 2006.

Every year in the UK up to 3,000 people suffer a tick infection and the Health Protection Agency reports that the number of laboratory-confirmed cases of Lyme disease in England and Wales almost trebled to 768 in 2006. Scotland alone has seen a tenfold increase in numbers over the last decade with 177 cases reported in 2006.

More information about ticks can be found by visiting <http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/downloads/documents/TickAlert.pdf> .

Caroline Povey – British Orienteering

See also article on Lyme disease in Dec '07 SMOC Signals.

Ticks (Families Argasidae and Ixodidae)



What do ticks look like? Ticks are usually round or tear-shaped. Some ticks are so small that they are hard to see. Others, when filled with a blood meal, are as big as a pencil eraser. They can be gray, brown, black, or even reddish. Ticks have eight legs, which makes them a type of arachnid, but

they are not actually spiders.

What do ticks eat? Males and female ticks suck blood from mammals (including people), as well as from birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Like redbugs, they wait on small bushes, moss, and sticks for an animal to walk by. They jump onto you and crawl around until they find a spot where they feel safe enough to bite you. (This will often be on the scalp (head), back of the neck, waist, or ankles.) Ticks have sharp mouthparts which they bury in your skin. Their mouthparts hang on really tight and make it difficult to remove ticks from your skin. While attached, they drink blood to use as food. After they are full, they drop off into the plants on the ground. Female ticks lay eggs in the moss and shrubs.

How do you avoid getting bitten by ticks? Stay away from piles of sticks and moss where baby ticks might be hatching. Instead, walk on grass or paths. Wear light-colored pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck your pants into your socks. Use a tick repellent (like sulfur powder), and check yourself for ticks every 3 - 4 hours. (Be sure to check in your hair and anyplace that bends or has tight elastic.)

How do you get a tick off once it has bitten in? Use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible, but don't squash him. Do not twist or jerk the tweezers. Instead, pull the tweezers up with even pressure. To kill the tick, drop it in alcohol. Afterwards, be sure to clean the tick bite very well. If the mouthparts stayed in your skin, it may make a sore. Try not to scratch it.

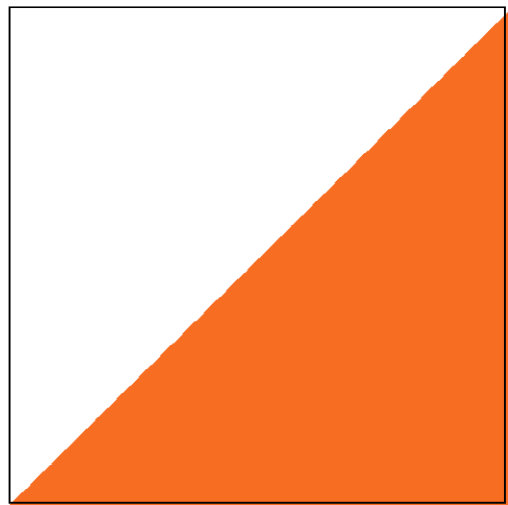
What is Lyme Disease? Some ticks carry a sickness called Lyme disease. Not all ticks carry the disease. So if you get bitten, don't worry! Just watch the tick bite. If the bite looks red right after you remove the tick, that just means your skin didn't like the tick's saliva (spit!) Some people are allergic to tick spit. If you get a rash in the shape of a circle around the bite, that could be Lyme disease. The rash usually shows up one to two weeks after you are bitten. Lyme disease can be cured if a doctor treats you with antibiotics right away. Some other signs of Lyme disease are tiredness, fever, headache, and upset stomach.

[To learn more about tick safety, click here.](#)

SMOC are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Charlotte Jones and Richard Collins from Milton Keynes,
Alison and Martin Arnold from Leighton Buzzard,
Sophia Curtis from Aspley Guise
and the Zygo family from Milton Keynes.

**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
August 2008	20 July 2008
October 2008	21 September 2008
December 2008	16 November 2008