

SOUTH MIDLANDS ORIENTEERING CLUB

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SMOC Signals

# Chairman's Chat

As ever I will be covering what we did in 2009 though I'll have a few remarks to make about how 2010 has gone so far. As ever SMOC members travelled far and wide to orienteer and put in appearances at all the major events around the country. Some SMOC members even managing some creditable performances with special mention for James Nisbet who was third in his class at the Scottish 6 Days.

I didn't make it to the Six days this year being in the middle of moving house at the time but, by all accounts, it was a very successful event with lots of old and new SMOCies meeting up and taking part.

The major activity for any Orienteering club is putting on events and we had a very busy year in 2010. Early in the year we held a regional event, also the EA champs, at the cunningly renamed Silverstone North (only one complaint). The weather nearly put paid to the event with heavy snow in the week before making parking problematic but with sterling work by Keith and with the cooperation of the local farmer a successful event took place.

In the Autumn we held a regional event at the expanded Stockgrove and Ramamere. The additional area certainly made the area readily able to support a full range of colour coded courses.

The Keyne-O events held in the MK parks and woods continued to attract plenty of competitors both new faces and old hands. In 2009 we held nine events – January to May and September to December. The midsummer gap was meant to be filled by some Summer Series events only one, poorly attended one took place. This year we are rescheduling Keyne-O to run from March to November. December has never been well attended as people have other things to do, January and February are usually quite popular with competitors but are purgatorial to run. Hanging controls in the dark and sitting in a cold tent for 3 hours isn't too much fun. This year we are running events right through from March to November, hopefully the continuation through the summer will help to retain numbers, along with the Keyne-O Keeny Collector Cards we introduced this year to harness pester power.

Last year the Keyne-O events attracted a total of 356 entries which, given the large number of families and groups taking part represented well over 500 participants. This year things are even better with the three events so

far attracting over 200 entries and about 360 participants. So the numbers we are getting for each event aren't that far short of our District or, for that matter, Regional event which both attracted less than 200 competitors. With this level of uptake for Keyne-O we need a slightly larger team to run them. Gone are the days when two of us could run an event comfortably. We now really need a team of 4 to comfortably run an event – Planner/Timer, Organiser/Registration, 2<sup>nd</sup> Registration and Advice. We'd also like to spread the load a little wider across the club so please do consider helping out.

One key element in running all these events is having good maps to orienteer on. Robert continues to coordinate our mapping effort and I have found his advice invaluable though he sometimes despairs of my cavalier attitude to standards.

Finally this is my last Chairman's chat as I have now finished my stint as Chairman and all that remains is to wish Rosie Shaw all the best as she takes up the reins.

**May you always run in sunlit forests,**

**Steve**



## **Membership Secretary's Report for SMOC AGM 2010**

Since my last report, membership is holding fairly steady at 51 households, down just one household. In terms of individuals, there has been an increase from 90 to 101. I would expect membership to increase throughout the year

Of the 22 members who didn't rejoin this year, all bar three were Local members who had joined for the free membership and KeyneO discount. Two had moved away from the area.

*Helen Nisbet*

# GREENSAND RIDGE RELAY UPDATE

Saturday 26 June 2010

Thanks for the great response in supporting the Greensand Ridge Relay. Not too long to go now, and I'm pleased to report that it looks like being another record-breaking year, but still with, I hope, the customary friendly atmosphere that has come to characterise the Greensand.

In fact I'm a little worried that we'll be turning old friends away. I thought last year that the 29 teams were about as many as we could handle, not so much because of the race mechanics, but more the parking and congestion at change-overs such as Stockgrove and Millbrook. So I publicised an entry limit of 30 teams this year. At the time of writing we have 22 entered, and I know of at least 10 more on the way. I'm going to try to arrange off-road parking at these two, and if successful, maybe we can extend a little. I'd welcome your views here.

The 'Solo' class - for the madmen (and now madwomen) who want to run the full 33.4 miles - started off as an interesting added dimension to the day, and last year rather took us all by surprise with 16 entrants. I heard second hand of a few grumbles from competitors who had hoped for a little more organisation and support than we had set out to offer, so I knew that we had to be careful how we took this forward. I was reluctant to lose it altogether, and settled on the compromise of welcoming only soloists who were guaranteed the support of a club team already competing in the relay. I think it fair to say that from the many communications I have had during the year, left unchecked the solo event could easily have overtaken and overshadowed the relay. I had one chap asking if he could use it as his club championships and bring 20 or 30 ultra runners. No thanks. (As an aside - there's a chance that Leighton Buzzard AC may now pick up the demand and organise a dedicated Greensand Ultra, on a different day.) So this year we will still have a few, but all local and looked after by their respective teams.

But at least we have our own team to represent the home club. We probably won't win, but that's hardly the point. The good news is that by swapping around the runners, and with a bit of tactical ageing on my part, we get to start a full 11 minutes earlier than last year. Planned team is:

1 Richard Pownall  
2 Ric Brackenbury

3 Rachel Edwards  
4 Haydn Leaker  
5 Keith Downing  
6 Steve Hardy

so if you need to refresh your memory on your route, you have nearly 4 weeks to give it a recce. **Would anyone like to volunteer as first reserve?**

On the change-over staffing, I'm relieved that we are in a stronger position than in recent years. I think we really need two people on each to be secure, with the possible exception of Sue's Maulden set-up, where she really seems to have got the whole thing sewn up. Current plan here is:

Start Richard P, Rosie and John  
Stockgrove Janina and Keith  
Woburn Steve and Karen  
Millbrook Robert and Neil  
Maulden Sue  
Deadman X Volunteers from Bedford & County  
Finish Richard P and Richard H

If you'd like to join in there is still room for more help, perhaps to lend Sue a hand, or maybe to secure the coveted position of the extra checkpoint outside the Stone Jug pub in Clophill. Drop me a line if you are free and willing.

I'll circulate further instructions, time estimates and guidelines to change-over helpers in due course, but hopefully that's a starter to plan your day. Please tell me soon if you have a problem with any of this.

Otherwise. the SI kit is booked, the pub is expecting us, and favourable weather has been ordered. It's all go for the 26th.

See you then,  
Richard

# SUMMER ORIENTEERING

Have you made plans for your summer holidays yet?

If not and you have free time in July and August, perhaps you might like to venture to one of the many holiday events.

The world of O website has published a list of some of the top suggestions and included examples of maps which might whet your appetite.

Closer to home, there is always the 5-day event in the English Lake District from 22 to 27 August. [www.lakes5.org.uk](http://www.lakes5.org.uk)

<http://news.worldofo.com/2010/05/24/top-o-travel-picks-july-2010/>

*Keith*

## **Art or science?**

You can think of training for orienteering as an engineering exercise. There are tests, formulas, ways to precisely design each interval session, and so on. You can "optimize" your training.

You can also think of training for orienteering as something more like managing a bunch of people working on a project. You have a general end goal and you make steps toward that goal, adjusting as you go, and dealing with problems (both expected and unexpected) as they arise. You muddle along.

Both points of view have some value. Both points of view give you some useful tools and insights into preparing

# SMOC in the Rankings

	<b>Position in national ranking</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Points</b>
1	594	Richard Pownall	6855
2	865	Roger Williams	6571
3	930	Mike Jones	6501
4	1068	Dorien James	6364
5	1136	Keith Downing	6280
6	2162	John Shaw	5055
7	2340	Helen Nisbet	4785
8	2447	Rosie Shaw	4592
9	2966	Robert Dove	3449
10	3009	Rachel Edwards	3323
11	3049	Stephen Hardy	3203
12	3082	Neil Carter	3115
13	3119	Ann Harris	3020
14	3156	Carys James	2919
15	3349	Karen Vines	2371
16	3517	Dryden Williams	2019
17	3682	Haydn Leaker	1709
18	4363	Terry Penny	818
19	4391	Ros James	796
20	4569	Kelly Gladstone	611
21	4584	Colin Nicholson	594
22	4622	Will James	526
23	4666	Rachel Thomas	426
24	4719	Lois Matthews	308

as at 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Our intrepid international orienteer, Senor Haydn Leaker, went to a two-day event near Granada and came back with a trophy for third place in his class. Made it up from 4<sup>th</sup> after Day 1. ¡ muy bien !



Trofeo Nazaries  
Capitulaciones 2010  
3° H – 55  
Santa Fe, 8 y 9 Mayo

# Orienteering Simulation Games

Some while ago I gave details in SMOC Signals of 'Catching Features' an orienteering computer games but there are several other orienteering simulation games available on the Internet, they all seem to be for Microsoft not Mac users. Some are good introductions to orienteering; one or two might be useful for training when you can't get outside to the wild outdoors or even into the park.

Keith Downing

## "Catching Features" from [www.catchingfeatures.com](http://www.catchingfeatures.com)

By far the most realistic simulation of an outdoor event. This game reproduces a complete event with day-1 and day-2 courses, other competitors, wildlife, great maps, and wet stream crossings. The scenery is detailed with good terrain, various water features, and all kinds of vegetation. This level of complexity requires a fast, new, computer and lots of disk space. There is 6meg free demo available for download, with the complex versions available for on-line purchase.

## "WinOrient" from [www.mirakron.com](http://www.mirakron.com)

This is Shareware available for download, but if you want the full version then you need a \$19.95 licence fee which gives you 1000 maps and 1000 courses. It has very good graphics in both full screen and windowed mode. There is not much variety in vegetation; every tree looks the same; no thickets, no bushes. The map is a bit sparse, but it has good-looking moss-covered rocks! It takes a long time to complete each leg - closer to the time you would take for an outdoor event! Replaying your route enables you to learn from your mistakes, alternatively, you take an arctic train ride!

## "WinOL" from [http://www.melin.nu/winol/winole\\_direct.html](http://www.melin.nu/winol/winole_direct.html)

This is also Shareware which doesn't seem to be freely sold any longer, but the demo version is available for free. A good overall program though less sophisticated. The software controls are most intuitive, and therefore, make a good introduction to those unfamiliar to orienteering. The map quality is not quite as good as the previous program. The program does allow you to run through the scenery by holding down an arrow key. After a run, WinOL will replay your route choices on the map.

## "Oriantica" from [http://www.melin.nu/oriantica/index\\_eng.html](http://www.melin.nu/oriantica/index_eng.html)

This is the development from WinOL. The demo version is freely available but the full licensed version costs 39 Euro or 330 Swedish Crowns. Both Oriantica and Catching Features can use OCAD maps to create simulations of real orienteering events and can host competitions over the Internet. If you buy Oriantica you also get a copy of WinOL.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The club managed a surplus of funds from all of its activities for the year of £411.63 which will be slightly boosted by the interest we receive from the Deposit Account, once the bank finally respond to my requests for an updated statement.

This leaves the Club's funds standing at £8,877.45 at the turn of the year, an increase of approximately 5%. This surplus would have doubled if we had not taken the decision to subsidise club shirts to the value of £438.89 in order to raise the club's profile, and be able to easily identify club members at the various competitions held throughout the country.

The costs incurred in running the club are approximately £275.00 a year, ie BOF affiliation, EAOA capitation and website hosting fees. This is regardless of any fundraising activities that take place.

Therefore it is very pleasing to report that all of the competitions held by the club turned in profits. A big thank you goes out to all those who involved in putting them on, be that in the planning, mapping, controlling stages or just being helpers on the day. Without that involvement our accounts would not look anything like as good.

*Neil Carter*

# SMOC Signals

As we now have such an active web site we have decided to make SMOC Signals a three-monthly magazine. So please check the following details for issue dates and copy deadlines

## SMOC Signals deadlines

issue date	copy deadline
September 2010	August 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2010
December 2010	November 21 <sup>st</sup>

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>

