

Interlopers

March 2023 Newsletter

Welcome to the March 2023 club newsletter! Another jam-packed edition.

So far this year we've had the Big Weekend, Compass Sport Trophy Qualifiers, Winterlopes and our first event of the year at Craigmillar Castle Park. Read on for coverage, as well as other contributions from club members on diverse subjects – Ski O, the Masterplan Christmas Cup, Portuguese adventures, an update on WOC planning and much more.

Many thanks as ever to everyone who has provided material. Anyone who's ever edited a newsletter will be familiar with that nail-biting period when you wonder if anyone will contribute anything, or whether you'll have to make up some waffle vaguely resembling reality (I know, some people actually get paid to do that!) ... But hey this is the modern era and we're a modern go-ahead club keen as mustard to embrace technology (Maprun and payment card readers at least), so could artificial intelligence provide the solution??? Well, you can judge below!!!



I suspect the consensus will be that there are limits to how far ChatGPT can go in generating decent content, though it deserves a credit or two. And if you read to the end, you'll see it seemed to enjoy orienteering! There'll be another newsletter at the end of the summer, so please bear that in mind and send me things for it – or run the risk of more machine-driven perspectives on our sport 😊

Happy reading.

Katherine Ivory, Editor.



VIEW FROM THE CHAIR – Colin Eades

Welcome to another Interlopers newsletter. Interlopers got the defence of the CompassSport Trophy off to a good start with a win in the small clubs category in the Scottish heat at Faskally, ahead of INVOC Moravian and the newly-diminished ESOC. Well done to all those who counted (a close run thing, with had the bare minimum 13 counters - one mis-punch would have sent us tumbling out!).



We will need to raise a strong team to take on all the other clubs that qualified in the final. More rousing from Rob to come nearer the time. Thanks Graeme A for captaining in Rob's stead given the unfortunate timing of the CST qualifiers to clash with a large number of INT February holiday plans ... Paul Caban and myself had so much faith in everyone that I stayed on in Lanzarote not getting back until later on the same day, so apologies to those who had to haul themselves round the course when I was still sunning myself *[or bouncing around on a space-hopper, it would seem! – Ed]*.

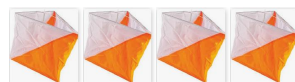
For Saturday events, Craigmillar Castle Park kicked things off with planning from Louise Adams and Roanne Lilley, and making-it-happen-on-the-day from Paul Caban. The second event at Kinneil is fast approaching, on 1st April, you will be fools to miss it!

The Big Weekend saw us orienteering locally with Friday night in Deans village, the Saturday urban in Steils and Oxgangs, then Arthurs Seat to finish things off on Sunday. Errochty and North Pentlands events started the SOL series for 2023, with a number of Interlopers getting their campaigns started.

STOP PRESS! The British Championships Weekend has just finished (25/26 March) includes the Long Distance Championships on the Saturday at Cold Ash near Newbury and the Relays on the Sunday at Hambleden Woods between Henley and Marlow. Lucy, Laurence and Colin took 2nd in the mixed ad hoc Relay, with Louise, Lorna and Claire 4th on the Women's Short. EUOC took 1st and 3rd, with Fiona and Mairi both running.



Happy orienteering and hope to see you at an event soon.



New Technology Experiment #1! CHatGPT has a bash at the Chair's report ...
[A bit made-up, but hey, some useful ideas here for the future – a Lunar New Year special perhaps?? – Ed.]

[Input = “write a newsletter article about being the chairman of an orienteering club in Edinburgh that has had a busy few months.”]

“It has been a busy few months for the Club! As the Chairman, I am excited to share a few of the highlights of our recent activities. In December, we partnered with the Edinburgh City Council to host a beginner-friendly orienteering event in the city’s parks. The event was a great success, with over 50 people attending and learning the basics of the sport.

In January, we held a special event to celebrate the Chinese New Year. The event was incredibly popular, with over 100 people taking part! We also hosted a series of workshops to introduce newcomers to orienteering, and it was great to see so many enthusiastic participants.

We were delighted to host the Scottish Orienteering Championships in February. This was a great opportunity for our members to compete against the best orienteers in the country. We also held a series of seminars and talks, designed to help people improve their skills and understanding of the sport.

Finally, we have also been busy preparing for our upcoming Spring Orienteering Series. The series will comprise of five events taking place around Edinburgh, and is open to all levels of experience. We are really looking forward to this event and hope to see lots of new participants getting involved. All in all, it has been a very busy and exciting few months for the Club. I am delighted with the progress we have made and I look forward to the year ahead.”



CLUB STUFF

- **Big hearty welcomes** to lots of M/W21s! - Louise Adams, Alastair Flynn, Roanne Lilley, Rodrigo Lara Molina, Colm Moran, Anna Murgatroyd, Alexander Robinson, Aidan Smith.
- Congratulations on various **selections to GB** teams: Alexander Chepelin; GB Development Squad - James Ackland, Pippa Carcas; Mairi Eades; Talent Scotland - Laurence Ward (<https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/gbteams>).
- Thanks Jane & Max for hosting a very nice **Burns Social** once again! Haggis pie (and great desserts) is a time-honoured way to prepare for the Big Weekend class race on the Sunday morning after.
- The **Scottish Night Championships** took place at Balmoral in late February – congratulations to Sasha Chepelin (1st, Men’s Open), Louise Adams (2nd, Women’s Open), and Max Carcas (4th, Men’s Supervets).

- **Winterlopes and Fight With The Night** are now over for the season. Congratulations in FWTN for short course podium-ers Ann Haley 2nd and Tricia Alston 3rd. For Winterlopes, Ann was 5th on the Long. Thanks to Graeme, Lorna and Katherine for planning.
- Our **Craigmillar** event attracted 100 entries, on a lovely sunny day. Thanks to planners Roanne and Louise (who also did pre-event organisation) and to Paul for on the day organisation. [Brief summary](#) on the website; photos and reports to follow.
- Congratulations to Ann for a 2nd place on the podium at the **Scottish Middle Distance champs** at Beecraigs
- Many thanks to Lorna for running another series of Wednesday evening **Zoom Strength & Conditioning** sessions this winter– much appreciated and hopefully has done those who participated some good as we move into spring, lighter evenings and more activity! Spreading the 12 days of Christmas over two sessions definitely works better than blitzing it 😊
- We have **THREE further events** before the summer break. Hope to see you there!
 - Kinneil Wood - **Sat 1 April** (no joke)
 - Dechmont Law – **Saturday 13 May**
 - Almondell – **Saturday 4 Jun**



Club Champion 2022 – Robin Galloway

Our club champion for 2022 finally got determined at the end of January..

Unlike many / most club championships, being fastest on the day is unlikely to win the Interlopers Club Champion trophy. Instead, the previous year's champion will decide on a devious way that the club champion will be determined and keep it secret until after the event chosen for the championship has been run. Our last club champion, Robin Galloway, picks up the story for the 2022 championship...

As promised Day 3 of the Big Weekend on Arthur's Seat was the Interlopers Club Championship. In celebration of the 47th anniversary of the club, the winner of this prestigious award was the club member who came the closest to achieving 147% of the Winner's time for their course. Competition was fierce, with William putting in an early bid, only to see Ann Haley put in a stunning effort on the green course to come 44.9% behind the winner – only 2.1% off the target. Good enough to win? Well, you would have thought so...but never rule out the 2017 champion Lawrence Ward who, hungry to recapture the

title, and the honour of organising next year's event, put in a storming run to come within 0.5% of the target time – 146.5% of the winning time on Brown.

So the Top 3 were

- Lawrence Ward – 146.5%
Ann Haley – 144.9%
William Ivory – 149.5%

And how did I fare in my attempt to retain the title? 'Could do better' as my old Maths teacher used to say. I managed to get disqualified for the first time. No excuses - red OOB on Green gorse didn't help, but neither did my failure to read the final details (the things you have to do to avoid organising the next event!)

Congratulations Lawrence!



EVENT REPORT – CRAIGMILLAR CASTLE PARK – Louise Adams & Roanne Lilley

As new members of interlopers, the club has been very welcoming and so we wanted to get more involved with it.

We went along to the planning and organising workshop that was held on Zoom and that led us to volunteer to jointly plan and organise the Craigmillar CATI event. We've both had some experience with both planning and organising events before as part of Edinburgh University Orienteering Club, but this opportunity gave us more support and mentoring that will help with future roles.

We were shown where to access official BOF and SOA documents that covered all the tasks that needed completing prior to and after the event which was super helpful and ensured we always knew what we needed to do. We had various meetings on Zoom and in person with experienced club members allowing us to chat through our ideas and ask any questions. There was also an Event Safety Workshop held by the club that we attended in order to learn about safer planning and organising practices.



We found it particularly useful to learn more about planning courses on Condes and how to format the maps for printing and became aware of how planning courses more regularly can be beneficial to your own orienteering skills.

Completing the planning and organising tasks as a pair made the experience much more enjoyable and meant we were able to bounce ideas off each other and share our personal skills and knowledge.

For anyone thinking about getting involved with planning or organising an event, we would really recommend volunteering for a role at a local Interlopers event (e.g., Sprintelopes!). There is so much support available so there is no need to worry about not knowing what you're doing!

We would just like to give a massive thanks to William, Lorna and Paul who supported us throughout and ensured the running of the event on the day went smoothly since we were down attending the Lakes spring events for the weekend.

Really appreciated: putting out controls – Colin, Lorna, Mike; Start – Graham, Mo, Lorna, Rob; Registration – Colin I, William, Paul ; Collecting in – Mary, Jane A, Mike, Graeme A



New Technology Experiment #2! ChatGPT reports on Craigmillar

(And not too badly really , considering it wasn't there - even if it was pessimistic on the participant numbers... and 'many' should have been 'all'!)

Input = "write a report about having been the organiser of a successful, well-attended orienteering event in Edinburgh on Saturday March 4 March."

"This report is to document the success of the orienteering event held in Edinburgh on Saturday March 4th. The event was organised by myself and was held in a local park. The goal of the event was to promote orienteering as a sport and to encourage new people to try it out. The event was well-attended, with a total of 30 participants, ranging in age from 8 to 70. Each participant was given a map and instructions for navigating the course.

The orienteering course was designed to be challenging, but still achievable for all levels of experience. All participants were able to successfully complete the course, and many of them had a great time doing so. The event was also successful in terms of safety. All participants were given safety briefings before the event, and there were staff on hand to assist with any difficulties that arose during the course.

Overall, the event was a great success. Everyone had a great time and there were no major incidents. All of the participants enjoyed the experience and many of them expressed interest in participating in future orienteering events. I am very proud of the success of the event and am looking forward to organising more orienteering events in the future."



Compass Sport Trophy Qualifier, Sat 11 February – ... A Pain in the Back! – Robin Galloway

So there I was in the garage wrestling my bike onto my indoor trainer when an unfortunate twist sent my lower back into a painful spasm. I hobbled back into the house, Quasimodo style, and thought grimly about the forthcoming Compassport Cup and the Tour of Flanders my mad cycling friend Steve had persuaded me to enter. My training plans crumbled to dust before my eyes ...

I am not one to suffer from back problems. However I do remember my Dad hanging by the arms from door frames, and sometimes wearing a corset to ease his recurring issues. Never me though, until now. This has been my first experience of it.

Some lessons learnt so far.....

1) Keep moving.

Matthew (my medical middle son) told me to stop whimpering on the sofa, take ibuprofen, apply heat and get up and keep moving. This was also the advice I had got from Lucy – who I had been trying to ignore. At the end of a few painful days I took Matthew at his word and decided to go for a light jog. Miraculously my back didn't hurt at all when jogging and when I got home the sudden spasms of pain had really reduced. Such a revelation was this that I decided I probably could manage to drive up to Faskally the next day and attempt to do my Compassport Cup bit for the club. Astonishingly I succeeded in getting round, punching the right controls in the right order and getting a counting result. It was a remarkable performance (if I do say so myself!).

2) Take drugs – ibuprofen seemed to ease things

3) A long soak in a hot bath listening to a podcast really helped. Highly recommended.

4) Apply a hot water bottle periodically to the lower back (the part that I twanged) . Definitely eases the pain, though I did develop a peculiar looking heat rash. Matthew confirmed that this was not life threatening.

5) Lie down on the floor for a bit and listen to another podcast. Feels surprisingly good for the back – best done every couple of hours through the day and safest in a home environment

6) Stretching exercises. There are particular ones for lower backs. One of the causes of my problems has been cycling – spending some hours hunched over the handlebars. The video below has some useful stuff in it, though I will bet Lorna has some better suggestions...!

[7 Hip & Lower Back Exercises For Cyclists | Emma's Workout To Beat Back Pain - Bing video](#)

My recovery has been slow – but I am getting there. And I am certain that household chores such as hoovering and doing the dishes would just make things worse again, so am delaying my return to these activities for as long as I can get away with ...



Christmas Cup Day 4 2022

Masterplan Adventure is an unusual club. It doesn't compete, despite having some of the UK's best elite orienteers (and some elderly hangers-on). The remit is "To organise a program of events that is high quality, highly visible and a credit to the Scottish Orienteering Association and British Orienteering and identify new areas for orienteering in new places and produce high quality maps". For several years we have organised a Resolution Sprint on New Year's day, then last year Chris Smithard launched the Christmas Cup (<https://christmascup.co.uk/>). The idea is pretty simple – everyone is on holiday and looking for something to do, with a bit of coordination of anyone willing to pitch in we can put together a series of three middle-distance and one sprint race. This year the organising mantle passed to Alasdair Pedley, making full use of the Theoretical Physics that I taught him.



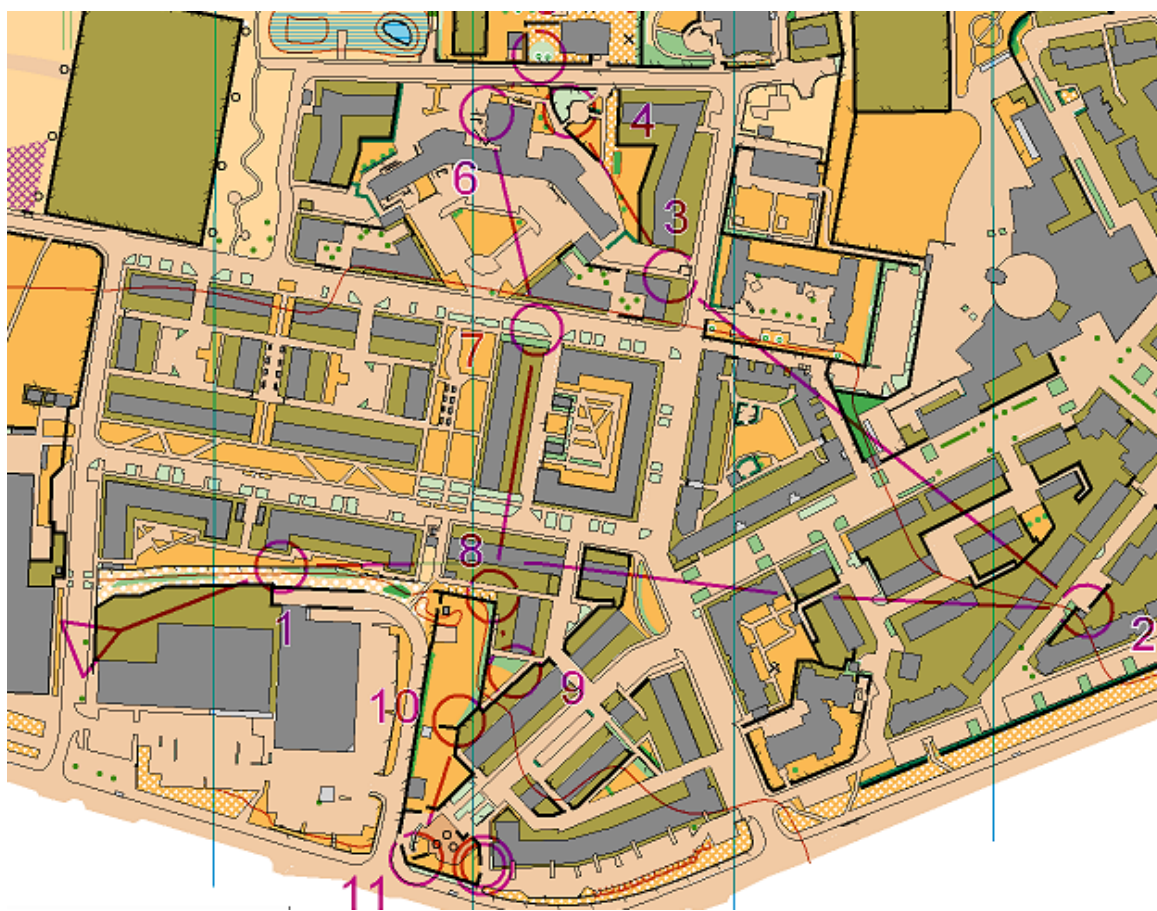
The event has a bare-bones concept, with minimal frills and courses, and the focus unashamedly on technical quality and good maps. In Scotland, it means the roughest, toughest areas: This year the middle races were in Dundurn, Edinchip and Fairy Knowe, and the roughest, toughest area of them all... Niddrie. The 1930s Niddrie Mains slum clearance scheme was demolished in the 2000s, and I've been watching the Niddrie redevelopment as it has blossomed into a

potential orienteering area. Gentrification is a stretch, but Wikipedia will tell you that *"gang fights and knife crime are of a lesser degree today compared to the levels recorded between the 1980s and 2000s"*. So that was promising. There is still a fair bit of, er, rough open (see photo) which comprised flytipping from bedsteads and washing machines down to individual bottle tops. And then, as is usually the case in this sort of area, everyone I spoke to was generous and welcoming.

New Year's Day had its own challenges for event organising. No time for a full clean-up of the Hogmanay detritus, but I cleared a few bits of broken glass and didn't find anything obviously explosive. Then, every useful part of the area – schools, the "community campus", shops was locked shut. Well nearly everything – the parking cameras outside Lidl were still on, waiting to entrap anyone not visiting the closed store. More helpfully, the rather lovely art deco White House was open for drinks, snacks and SI downloading. So we were sorted for a venue out of the January cold.



We opted for a chasing start format, which let us plan an intense sprint and offer some value-for-money extra distance too. Technically, the area is not quite as challenging as 2022's South Gyle event, but is still reasonably challenging. It a very easy format to deliver – runners are responsible for calculating their race 2 start time by adding the first race time to a known “base time”: a mathematical challenge with which everyone coped. For the planning, I mixed up the challenges in the first round: a few longer route choice legs at the start, a little bit of control picking in the north, and then some trappy legs with lots of twists and turns at the end. Can you spot the leg where most time was lost?



Interlopers racked up a couple of wins, Lucy Ward won both rounds of the short course quite comfortably, and took the overall 4-day honours too. New member Aidan Smith, running as SYO because the event started in 2022, had the fastest chase time en route to overall victory in the Cup.

If you enjoyed it, and for those of you who missed it, Niddrie is slated as a Big Weekend and WOC 2024 preparation venue. Come and see what the World's best make of it.



WOC 2024 update - Lorna Eades



The organising committee is starting to re-build some momentum. Two major key roles have recently been filled:

- **Arena manager** (Iain Smalls) busy preparing drawings for arena layouts. Iain's Background is in major events organisation particularly for events where TV is present which will be a bit of an aid for me in my role this time around.
- **Volunteer coordinator** (Richard Oxlade) very recently in role.

Other major roles or helpers that need filling that I aware of currently are:

- **Athlete and IOF services**, Elizabeth Furness (Moravian) currently offering to do the Accreditation part of this role but someone else needed to take on some of the other admin work, Elizabeth did this role last time so would be a good person to speak to if anyone interested.
- **IT** (Mark Stodgell, Walton Chasers) and myself (TV coordinator) need some one to be in charge of cable routes, role will require e.g. visiting all properties/shops etc along routes where either timing or TV fibre optic cable will need to be laid, identifying where they can be routed e.g. above shop fronts.
- **TV presentation**: I need someone with an interest in video editing and filming to assist creating several videos for live production and website. Anyone with a **drone licence** would be particularly useful, or anyone who has contacts for someone who does. We have permission to use drones provided operator is fully licenced.
- **WOC tour (spectator races)**: offers of planners/organisers for these events should be made to Lindsay Knox (Roxburgh Reivers)
- **WOC training**: any offers of planners etc to assist with training packages should be made to Ian Maxwell (also Roxburgh Reivers).
- **WOC merchandising**: Fiona Eades is preparing all the art work but doesn't want to do the ordering/distribution side so we need someone to coordinate this

The other key area is **sponsorship**: WOC2024 was budgeted back in 2018/19 on the basis of hosting WOC2022, but with Covid we moved back to 2024, so as you can imagine with the cost of living increases etc budgets are now much tighter. The IOF is allowing us to put in place our own title sponsors, various levels available for negotiation. **So if anyone works for**

a company who might be interested please contact us, would particularly suit a company who wants exposure to TV streams in Scandinavia, Switzerland, Czech (3 live broadcasts). Any amounts of sponsorship considered.

And finally...

There is a WOC Legacy Group: Representatives from each of the local Edinburgh clubs are working on how to maximise potential interest generated from hosting WOC, Colin Eades and Max currently involved with this group from Interlopers. **Speak to them if you are interested in finding out what is being discussed, planned.**



Ski Orienteering – Pip Ascough & Chris Dibben

In February four members of INT took part in a Ski Orienteering event held on 10-12 February 2023 in Beitostølen, Norway. Chris Dibben, Rob Lee, and Colin Blackburn all competed in the World Masters Ski Orienteering competition, and Pip Ascough took part in the 'Åpen' event, which is essentially the Ski Orienteering equivalent of a CATI. This was Pip's first go at the sport, and based on a smile at the finish, hopefully won't be the last. We travelled out to Oslo a few days before for some practice (a.k.a. skiing to huts to eat pancakes), staying at what turned to be a James-Bond-style apartment up in the hills above Hollemkollem. We also managed a day sightseeing in Oslo, visiting the National Museum and the Fram museum (both highly recommended if you have time), and eating out in one of Oslo's funky burger joints.



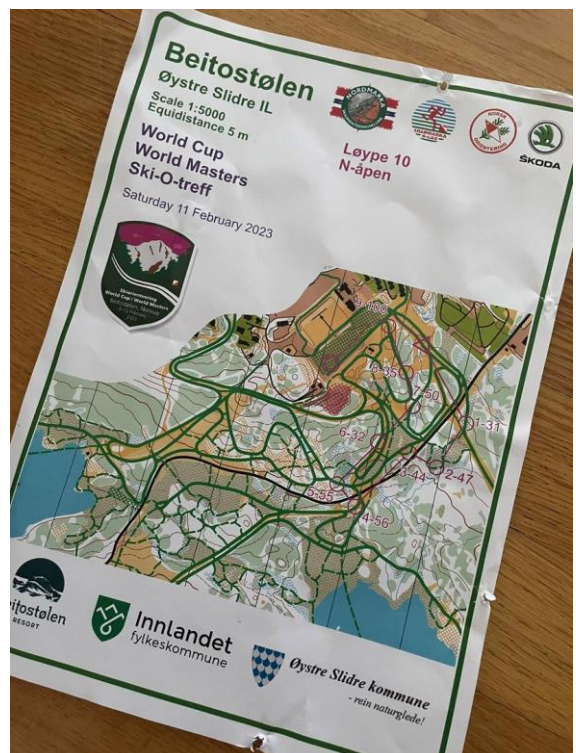


Once we had picked ourselves off the floor at the restaurant bill, it was off Beitostølen in the hire car. The ski resort of Beitostølen is about 3 hours drive north of Oslo, and has pretty much everything for cross-country activities, along with downhill slopes. Along with the WMSO and Åpen events, the competition included the Ski-O World Cup. We stayed in a well-appointed self-catering apartment, where we were joined by Nick Barrable, and Donald McCarthy, who had come across from Sweden, and a friend from Norway, Dominique Lazanski. Dominique is a ski coach and biathlete, but after doing the N- Åpen course was clearly bitten by the Ski-O bug!

Given that the intrepid INT members were competing against ex-national team members, and people who had been skiing since the age of 2 years old, we acquitted ourselves very well, and crucially had a lot of fun. Everyone finished all their races successfully, and pancakes with jam are the real winners prize, as everyone knows 😊



For anyone who hasn't heard of, or tried, Ski-O, this is essentially orienteering on cross-country skis. Competitors use either skate or classic skis- either style is completely fine. Although any route is acceptable, as you can see from the map, a series of trails are laid out by the organisers which are generally the fastest option. The thickest green lines are usually pisted XC tracks, while the thinner dashed lines are laid specially for the race, usually by skidoos dragging a pallet to press the snow down. Although Ski-O isn't really suitable for anyone very new to cross-country skiing, you certainly don't need to be an expert skier to take part. For a first go, the lowest category in the Åpen events will be designed for first-time Ski-O enthusiasts (and the very young). These will be short in duration (the sprint N- Åpen at Beitostølen was c.1.5 km), with simple route-finding. Map boards and dibbers can be hired easily at the event.



POM again! – Jane Ackland

At some earlier stage of this miserable winter, I was doing a spot of multitasking when I heard the unmistakable languid drawl of Jacob Rees Mogg on a Question Time type programme. In response to someone moaning about how Brexit had ruined their recent trip to Spain, JRM's advice was that one should simply vacation in Portugal instead. For once, he had a point, even if he failed to clarify that one should vacation for a long weekend in mid February, and ensure one's attendance at POM.

This year's Portugal O Meet was based inland, around two hours southeast of Lisbon. All the forest areas were accessed from the same assembly arena in a small and very tolerant village, S. Bartolomeu do Outeiro, whose inhabitants seemed to cope with the sudden change in pace, population and toilet usage. The maps were beautiful, and the terrain just gorgeous for running, being impressively clean underfoot. For someone like me with a knee that grumbles at the slightest provocation, this was paradise. On the downside, the exciting features; complex outcrops of huge rocks, completely defeated my rusty navigation skills.

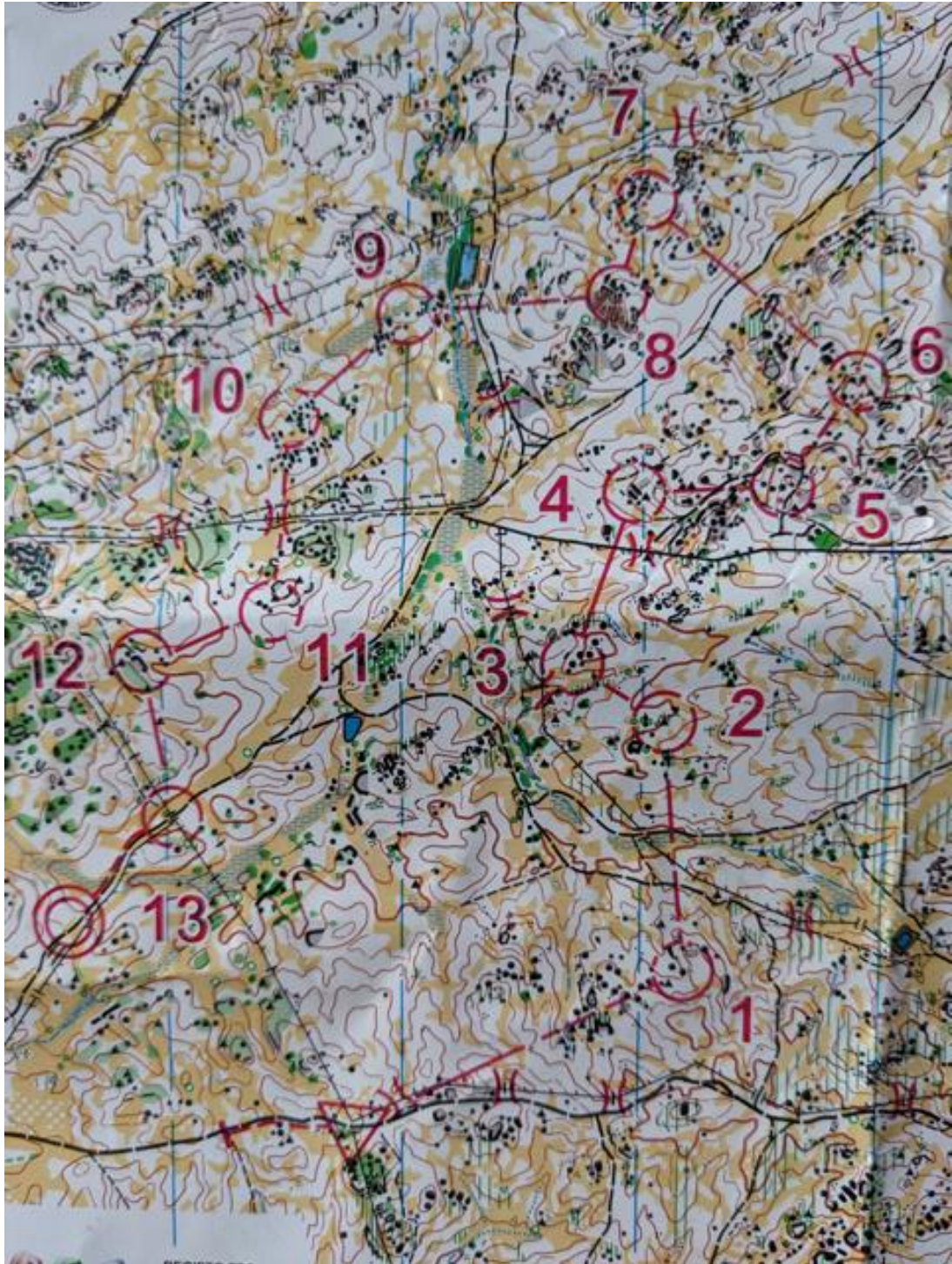
I wasn't the only one in our JOK group of 8 to make a bit of a flying pig's ear of it, but we fared rather better in the urban night sprint, bringing home two first and two second prizes. The night race was in a small hill top village, which, alongside other cute cobbled fortified towns was fun to re-explore by day. This area of Portugal also features a number of menhir collections, impressive enough that you wonder what all the fuss and bother at Stonehenge is all about.



This year's event included a WRE, thus attracting a smattering of 21E types, including our boy. It was nice to catch sight of him, even if he was staying in luxury elsewhere with a bunch of squaddy types. Our own accommodation on a farm outside Evora (another fortified town worth a visit) was pretty close to perfection.

In case you are interested in dull behaviour, we added Antiwordle, Worldle and Statele to the daily competition.

For a week of slickly organised good quality orienteering, warmth, and a plethora of oranges, POM is hard to beat. You can manage it with a cabin bag (Easyjet, maybe not Ryanair), partly because you don't have to pack the wads of banknotes apparently required for Spain.



Five Interløpers Get Over-Excited In Lanzarote

– PAUL CABAN

Five Interløpers, and an interloper, spent a week or so in Lanzarote, for warm-weather training and generally having fun fun fun at Club La Santa, in early February. We came from, variously, Edinburgh, Ljubljana, Paris and Amsterdam. And that was just Lorna! Colin, Jane, Max and myself, as well as once-of-this-parish Tim, all came the direct way. Fi-Fi didn't travel (that's enough 80s music jokes; I hope at least Colin I noticed). Keith Dawson had been there the week before.

For the uninitiated, CLS is a "sports camp" on the northern (quieter) coast of Lanzarote. It has a wide range of facilities, including a 400m track, 50m pools (plural), racquet sports courts. There are off-road trails and a sheltered lagoon. All sorts of equipment, including bikes and water-sports facilities can be borrowed for free. And there are introductory lessons, again (mostly) for free. <https://www.clublasanta.co.uk/>



We stayed in two three-person apartments- Colin, Tim and I in one; Lorna, Jane and Max in the other - each of which had a twin room and a pull-out sofa-bed. There were cooking facilities (and a wee supermarket on site), a balcony for where Tim would usually dis- and re-mantle his bike (although controversially, he didn't bring one this time), and a stupendous shower with amazing hot water pressure. And when we got too lazy to cook, a choice of bars and restaurants to eat out at.

We'd all been before; Colin and Lorna seemed to have been so often recently that Colin was the Strava "local legend" for one of the standard runs. Experience had taught us the golden rule of pacing oneself, as it's all too easy to run forty or so miles in the first three or four days, and then simply be broken. The first time I went, I ran just over a hundred miles in the week, and was then broken for weeks afterwards. Fortunately, we're all older now, and even if we hadn't learned, none of us have bodies that can undertake that level of punishment anyway.

For those without an EU passport, Lanzarote Arcife airport was a mess. The queue for taxis was even messier (transfer by public transport is possible, but would have anyway taken longer), but eventually we'd rocked up at CLS, settled into our room, and gone out for a gentle run in cloudless 20°C skies. It's a hard life ...

The next morning started promptly at 8am with the morning exercises followed by a gentle group run of no more than 5km. Both are "institutions", and part of the true CLS "experience"; in fact, I've just watched a video of it again. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUEr7guV8tg> Astonishingly, Tim joined us on the first morning, and admitted that he'd never done it before (and didn't do it again!). The run that follows is sensibly paced, at 5mins per kilometre, although it can get a little, er, competitive in the last km or so; yes, I am looking at you Pippa Carcas!

After breakfast – pains-au-chocolat were popular; I'd naturally brought Rice Krispies with me – we got into the important business of loosely planning our week's activities. Running was de rigeur, and whilst Colin was going to be doing lots of cycling and stretching, and Tim cycling and swimming, I'd already got my target planned – the weekly triathlon – and I'd fit all sorts of other stuff around it. And because most activities were included, it was a chance to do things I wouldn't normally even

consider. In past visits, that's included paddle-boarding (dull) and wind-surfing (never again: I was beyond rubbish). This time I had my eye on slack-lining, aerial relaxation aka falling-asleep-in-a-hammock and "introduction to Olympic weightlifting". Really.

I'd done the triathlon the last time around. Most people would have classed my performance a failure; I was just pleased to finish. My swimming then really wasn't good enough, so I was last out of the pool by a long, *long* way, last off the bike, and eventually overtook a couple of people on the run. My target this time was not to be last out of the pool, and this time around, the headline news was that the cycling was going to be on static bikes rather than out on open roads. We never got a definitive answer why, but it was almost certainly on safety grounds.

Whatever, it meant that far fewer people wanted to compete, which in turn was likely to mean that the pool would be a much less frenetic experience. And so it turned out: Max and I had a lane to ourselves, and he was gracious enough to let me beat him too. All that really meant was that my rubbish-ness on the bike replaced my rubbish-ness in the pool. And it didn't help that the app didn't start, so I wasted the first minute whilst that was fixed. Of course, I was last off the bike, but not that far behind so I was certain that I'd 'have' the person in front of me, which I duly did. Yay for me.



Of the other things I did, well ... the aerial relaxation was fantastic, with the bonus that I didn't start snoring (apparently it happens quite a lot). I was surprisingly "not completely rubbish" at slack-lining, although not a patch on all the under 10s.



And the weightlifting was as bad as everyone else said it would be, and will be added to the "never again" list. Let's just say that the weight of the basic bar and locked weights was around a third of my bodyweight.

The pools were lovely, although the tumble-turn lesson wasn't a success either. I swam in the lagoon. I had session on the climbing wall with Jane. I got hammered by Lorna on the crazy golf, and Jane and I were both hammered by Lorna playing boule. And I really enjoyed the "senior core" exercises, complete with a 70s&80s soundtrack.

What I didn't enjoy was the (almost certainly) Novovirus attack the day after the Triathlon (and about two hours after the weightlifting). Colin had had it a couple of days earlier, initially blaming it on a dodgy chilli on the Pizza Diavolo. And Max also succumbed the day after flying back. Fortunately none of us had it during the flight home. It would have been messy ... Still, it's right up there with dysentery as being the best weight-loss course I've ever been on. And it meant I wasn't available to get hammered by Lorna playing badminton.

Looking forward to the next holiday there.



Lorna's kayak race; Mac and Tim at the finish line, Jane and Max on volcano-oriented bike ride; plus other fun activities! (Credits Jane / Lorna / Max)



FROM THE ARCHIVES [Thanks Graeme A. Clearly eyesight was better in them days... online readers can use the zoom function at least!]

From 1986. Fresh as ever, except perhaps for the definition of "older members" starting at 35!

A VOTE FOR MERGER

Why are there two orienteering clubs in Edinburgh? Whilst ESOC is now about 25 years old, Interlopers was started as a closed club in the early 1970's by ex Edinburgh University O.C. members who for a variety of reasons did not wish to join the existing Edinburgh club. Interlopers soon became an open club and now has a membership of about 80, of whom only a few have links with Edinburgh University.

Historical associations and rivalries there may be between Interlopers and ESOC, but the continuation of two separate open clubs in Edinburgh is surely now outdated, when the advantages of amalgamation are considered.

A member of ESOC put it to me recently that Interlopers and ESOC are actually two separate halves of the same club in that Interlopers have the bulk of the younger membership (ie under 35) whilst ESOC are more family oriented with a greater proportion of members over 35.

The questionnaire survey carried out of the clubs' membership two years ago showed a small majority in each club against a merger. However, I wonder whether feelings have changed, after eighteen months of a very successful joint newsletter and joint socials (eg January's Burns Supper which was an excellent evening). I have not spoken to anyone recently who is against combining the clubs; least of all those people presently involved in organising ESOC or Interlopers.

So what are the advantages that a single club would bring? They are in three areas: resources, competition and identity.

Resources

A crucial point is that greater resources in terms of money and active manpower would be available to a combined club. Two separate clubs does mean that more active club members than necessary are tied up in administration rather than improving other aspects. Improvements could be made in the following areas:

(a) Mapping - Rather than competing for suitable areas, the mapping effort could be more effectively managed. With the greater financial resources available, and the mappers in both clubs properly coordinated, a greater range of quality maps could be made available to Edinburgh orienteering.

(b) Juniors - Both clubs have been failing to provide adequate training, coaching and encouragement for keen juniors. That there is a demand for this is shown by the huge response to the SE Area Junior Squad run by John Biggar and Fiona Hendrie. Some 50 juniors turned up to one of their recent sessions. They can't cope effectively with those numbers and a combined Interlopers/ESOC Junior Squad would clearly fill a need and enable the SE Area Junior Squad to operate as it should.

(c) Events - A larger number of local events could and should be put on in Edinburgh each year. A major problem is finding a sufficient number of active members to take on the Organiser/Planner/Controller roles: a combined club without a duplicated committee may ease this problem.

Presently co-ordination between the clubs in putting on small series of events is usually successful but hasn't really resulted in more events. How much easier organisation would be if we were all in one club!

(d) Physical and Technical Training - For fit orienteers, physical training is well catered for in Edinburgh with Tuesday night intervals at the Meadows and Thursday night runs from Meggetland, but there is too little physical or technique training available for other club members of varying fitness and ability.

A problem in Interlopers has been that there have been too few people at a particular level, eg beginners requiring rudimentary technique advice, to cater for properly. A combined club with greater numbers of members at particular levels should solve this and beginners and more experienced orienteers could get the advice and training they want.

Competition

The effect on CompassSport Cup prospects of a merger is obvious. I would add that success in the Cup competition and advancement to the later rounds and finals has engendered a very good club spirit in the clubs which have reached those stages, which the Edinburgh clubs lack to some extent at present.

Clearly stronger relay teams in the major competitions would result, and a healthy and competitive club championship with more people taking part could be enjoyable and significant, and replace the existing Interlopers/ESOC friendly rivalry.

Identity

For a newcomer to orienteering in Edinburgh, the existence of two clubs must be confusing. Which club should the prospective orienteer join? It also hinders attempts to promote the sport in Edinburgh, not least in obtaining aid and finance from public and private sources. A single Edinburgh club would give the sport a clearer profile in Edinburgh and should aid recruitment.

Permanent courses have recently been a topic for discussion. A unified club would surely be better equipped with resources and manpower to set up and administer such a course.

Several people have said to me: "What a good idea to merge but what would we call the new club?" This ought not to be a stumbling block. I personally favour the straightforward Edinburgh Orienteering Club, which would help to promote the sport but there are many possibilities: Capital Orienteers or Dunedin Orienteers for instance.

The Interlopers committee are resolved that it would be in the best interests of Edinburgh orienteering if the two clubs were to merge. We are proposing a motion to this effect for debate at the club's AGM on 22nd May. We would like to hear the views of club members, and ESOC members for that matter, perhaps in "Capital O", so that we can have as full a discussion as possible on the issue before this date.

For my part, the advantages to orienteering in Edinburgh of a single unified club which could provide more events, more maps, better coaching programmes, and stronger competition far outweigh any disadvantages or the historical attachment to separate clubs and names.

Bob Cherry

A wee further comment from your Interlopers editor....

The arguments for and against a merger were discussed at the last Int committee meeting, and as Bob indicates all those present were in favour of putting the motion described above to the club at the AGM. It should be mentioned, though, particularly for any members not too keen a merger, that some committee members were not present at the meeting, and at least one (me - I was abroad at the time) does not support

the motion. I am very much against the idea of a merger (and may well expound on this in the next "Capital O") and I know of other folk who do not like the idea. Mike Burton was also not at the committee meeting and he too is not all for an amalgamation - and is also threatening to produce something for the next newsletter. So let us know YOUR views, it's not all one way traffic among "those people presently involved in organising" the club. Isn't it exciting? We'll be arguing like politicians next....

Charlie Walton

I would heartily endorse all that Bob says - the sooner we get together the better
Ben Bate

Read it today in Capital 'O' and tomorrow in Score and Compass Sport!.

And finally ... ChatGPT tries orienteering!!! 😊

[input = "write a report about going to an orienteering event. "]

“On the weekend of April 24th, I had the opportunity to attend an orienteering event. Orienteering is a sport that tests a person’s navigational skills, physical endurance, and problem-solving skills. This was my first orienteering event, and I was looking forward to the challenge. The event was held at a local park, and the course was set up with several different checkpoints throughout the area. The first step was to receive our maps and orienteering compass, which were provided by the event organizers. After we had our equipment, we were briefed on the rules of the course and the expected safe conduct.

Once the briefing was over, the event began. We were all given a time limit of two hours to complete the course. I found the course to be quite challenging, as there were several areas of dense vegetation and steep terrain. However, the equipment and skills I had learned before the event proved to be invaluable. I managed to find all the checkpoints and complete the course with plenty of time left.

Overall, I had a great experience at the orienteering event. It was a good challenge and I felt that I had learned a lot. I would definitely recommend this sport to others, as it is a great way to test your navigational skills and physical fitness.”



Club Committee 2022-23

- Chairman – Colin Eades
- Secretary – John Barrow
- Treasurer – Robin Galloway
- Social Secretary –Lorna Eades
- Communications – Katherine Ivory
- Club Captain – Rob Lee
- Junior member – Fiona Eades
- Ordinary member: Mike Stewart
- Ordinary member: Mike Stewart
- Events coordinator – William Ivory
- Child Protection Officer – Lucy Galloway (co-opted)
- Equipment officer – Paul Caban (co-opted)
- Webmaster – Graham McIntyre (co-opted)

For full details on club management, training, forthcoming events etc, see www.interlopers.org.uk. Enquiries to info@interlopers.org.uk.

