

Interlopers

May 2021 Newsletter

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Spring 2021 club newsletter: another feast of tales from another somewhat peculiar year. We started in lockdown, but have been steadily emerging since then, with events and training starting up again. Maprun's still useful and novelty Strava tracing gives occasion fun competition (various wonky Christmas Trees on Whinny Hill, for example), but the focus is thankfully once more on 'real' competitions. Leafing through the archives, I found a reminder that of course twenty years ago the sport saw another pause in activities (thanks Foot & Mouth Disease). Such things happen but let's hope that it really will be back to normal next year. Larger events are now on the horizon: last weekend saw Sprint Scotland and the inaugural race of the new Scottish Juniors' Cup series (at Auchengarrich). The Six Days is currently still on the cards (fingers crossed).



This edition includes, amongst other things: events and training by Graeme, William and Mo; an insight into the mysteries of Turfing by Mo; the outlook for Day 1 of the Six Days by Mike; adventures in rubber-wear by Paul; lockdown pursuits by Megan; Max's words of wisdom on warming up (and actually looking at the map) and some Ancients from the Archives. Plus all your usual favourites such as Ramblings from the Chair, Nippers' News, and the Committee Contact List! There are some very nice landscape photos, as well as lots of ones of people standing around (occasionally running, but I've just checked and yes, mostly just standing around).

Enjoy getting back out into the streets / parks / forests. Good luck all for forthcoming events especially the selection races for those taking part (Lakes, 4-6) June, and then the Scottish Champs. Go INTs!

Happy reading. *Katherine Ivory*



Apparently it's easier to get controls with one's eyes open. Your editor finally learns the reason (well, one reason) behind her poor orienteering performance to date.

Back in the day, in May

INTERLOPERS NEWSLETTER NUMBER 9

MAY 1975

Since John Barrow has now taken over the lucrative perk of S.O.A. Treasurer and spends all his time away on expensive holidays (instead of training?), the burden of compiling the Newsletter has fallen on the Peck household.

We hope from now on to put to right some past omissions, and that the Newsletter will do a lot more for the club, which, because of its constituents, needs some form of up-to-date, useful communication. To do this, the Newsletter will be regular, and will contain as much information as you give us and we can gather.

The date of the next issue is late August, so if you have any news/plans/queries/requests/articles?/complaints, please get in touch before then.

Thanks everyone who has contributed to this edition. I hadn't actually thought about the next issue, but there's a thought – August is quite realistic, isn't it, so make sure you get scribbling during your summer hols!

June 2001

Hello ! Hello ! It's Good To Be Back !

Well here it is at last. I can make lots of excuses but none of them stand up to careful scrutiny. You might see this as my bid to relinquish the post of newsletter editor. If you feel strongly enough about my failure to keep the membership fully informed then vote me out at the AGM which you should have had belated intimation of around now. I suppose the general dearth of orienteering is one of the reasons why I haven't really been rushing to put fingers to keyboard. On the family front I've been watching lots of rugby at the weekends



Is it a McIntyre or an Eades ? Do you recognise the knee ?

Orienteering was on hold twenty years ago, though thanks to a different type of biological threat and we could still go to the pub, pool etcetera. Mystery knees were also an issue.

Ramblings from the Chair – Colin Eades

The lockdown appears to be easing and thus we are now able to start considering orienteering in other areas. Even the weather seems to be starting to improve a bit although that will also encourage the undergrowth! The easing has meant that your chair and his family can come and see Interlopers on Thursday training and local events, which we have missed, although Roxburgh Reivers scandalously have had the Eades family as second claim club members to allow us to get any sort of orienteering.

Over Easter we lost a dear friend, coach, helper, fundraiser, guru and all-round running enthusiast, the list could go on and on. I write about the passing of Martin Hyman who has

made a huge influence on many, interlopers over the years. From my own perspective he took a keen orienteer and introduced many other forms of running to me. Hill running and cross-country running were, I guess, natural progressions. Stranger was ending up running a leg of the Edinburgh to Glasgow road relay which I never imagined to be part of my running journey. Thank you, Martin for the wide variety of running experiences you tempted me in to, and I will miss seeing your car parked as close as possible to the finish line and being encouraged from so many places on the course.

We have hosted some local orienteering events and many thanks to all that have helped and put in the time to get these up and running, especially with the extra imposition of COVID secure processes. Looking forward we are starting to get bigger orienteering events back again and so I hope to see you all at events soon, it will be great to be back doing what is really a very socially distanced sport, but we must be patient with the imposed turn-up-run-then-go-away that the organisers have to keep reiterating (it is so opposite to what so many of us want to do and makes our sport seem more unfriendly, but this is temporary I am sure).

See you at an orienteering event soon. Colin



GENERAL STUFF GOING ON

Events might have been on hold for quite a few months but nonetheless it has actually been quite busy if you look back over the calendar since the last Newsletter (Christmas).

Things got off to an active start with a 1st of January online exercise session followed by a more sedentary quiz. Both good fun, and the exercise session unleashed a series of evening sessions throughout the winter and early spring, really until enhanced daylight and Sprintelopes meant better seasonal alternatives for Wednesdays at least! Many thanks to Lorna and Zoe for putting together and delivering the programme, ably 'assisted' by Mette from Club la Santa on Mondays and Fridays (barefoot fitness / senior core / stretch and relaxation), even if the toe wiggling proved to be beyond some of us ... As somewhat hit and miss in my S&C efforts previously, I can certainly vouch for the benefits, and now know the name of all sorts of tortures including floor-wipers, dead-bugs and aeroplanes. It was really nice to have a chance for chat before and after too, particularly during our locked-down phase.



Barefoot fitness <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5kMVMjQ4Xo&t=3s>

Stretch and Relax <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svP9docjnKU&t=1928s>

Senior Core and Stretch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwNWYru8Rnw&t=39s>

Quite a few Intrepid Interlopers ventured further into explorations in online socialising, with a Haggis drive on Burns Night, and assorted slideshows of summer packrafting (Chris and

Philippa), a year in Sweden (Ray and Claire) and mountain marathons (Mike and Graeme & Morag). Mike also ran another quiz in May with some interesting (and tricky!) questions on a wide range of subjects as well as an all-or-nothing accumulator scoring format for the last round (Ivories sneaking past Paul in a tight race – something unlikely to happen in normal types of race!).

Welcome to

Several new members had joined the Club since the last Newsletter, including Matthew Leitch, James Taylor, Valentin Dolle, Craig Hogg, Zoe Harding, Sasha Chepelin and Keith Dawson.

Farewell to ...

Martin Hyman (1933-2021) sadly passed away in April after a short illness. An inspiration to a huge number of athletes, and much respected for his advice and philosophy on training. He will be sorely missed by many. Much has already been written in tribute, e.g., here <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/news/a-tribute-to-martin-hyman/#more-19700> and https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/index.php?pg=news_archive&item=5526.



COVID CHRONICLES CONTINUED....

WINTERLOPING – Graeme Ackland

The Deer in the Headlights

The Sprintelopes were bored. Summer had been and gone, and all the people were hiding in their homes. Christmas usually brought a cheery visit from their Finnish pal Rudolph, but this year their rosy-nosed friend was downbeat. “Not needed” he moaned. Now that anyone can get a headtorch for thirty quid from CompassPoint, nasal illumination is no longer at a premium.

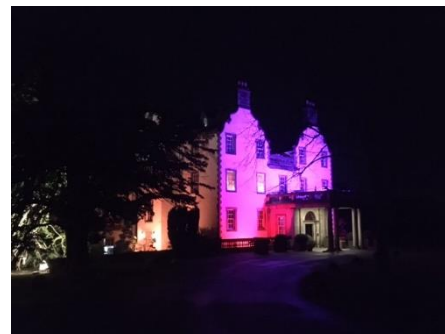


The sprintelopes pondered. “We don’t usually go out in months with an R in them”, said Deirdre. “Hibernation” said Penelope. “Isn’t that just for bears?” said Elkie. “Well, migration then, hordes of sprintelopes stampeding through the wastelands of Niddrie?”. “I think not”.

As the light faded, illumination dawned: “Wait! If we could get headlights, we could go sprinteloping in the dark, through the winter, in places we can’t go in daytime. Like around Golf courses”. And so the Winterlope with his torch so bright, went off to find his way tonight.



Whimsy aside, the pandemic opened new possibilities of setting up a new series of non-contact night orienteering. The Maprun software enables everything to be handled with a GPS device. No controls are needed, no printing costs, start lists, assembly, registration, helpers, levies or entry fees. Maprun handles the results, and Ben Brown’s wonderful Munroleague software puts results and league points in place (<https://munroleagues.com/leagues/Winterlope%202021>).



Winterlope is how sprintelope was originally envisaged, before the bells and whistles started accumulating. We had five events, Prestonfield, Craigmillar, Liberton, Braids and Duddingston. Most of the map can be generated from googlemaps, and the mapping fieldwork was done during lockdown, in the snow, and under cover of darkness.

The league attracted a slightly younger crowd than traditional sprintelope, including some juniors who were able to run without concerns about traffic or strangers. The areas were mainly runnable, and although with modern headlights navigation was easy, the techniques needed of mapreading, compasswork and distance judgement felt like proper orienteering. The league, including the University’s Fight With The Night (FWTN) on alternate weeks, generated some friendly competition and even had two female overall winners, both interlopers: Claire on the long and Mary on the short.



*** The outstanding question now is, should Winterlope be a pandemic one-off or should it become annual? Let Graeme Ackland know. ***



Full results from the Buckstone Night-O, Thursday December 17th.

Long White – 0.95 km, -20m ascent, 0 controls, navigate to finish, admittedly without a map, but “I can find my way to your house OK so see you there”.

M Carcas, M50 – DNF – Timed-out, having failed to find the finish after 45 minutes

CHRISTMAS 2020 “ALL THE WAY!” – ROBIN MORRIS RUN

Robin Morris was a keen athlete and great supporter of all things running including Edinburgh Athletics Club and Scottish Hill Running who sadly passed away in 2018. He would always do a run on Christmas Day starting at 9am from his house on Holy Corner up to the top of the Braids with anyone who wanted to join. Following this Robin would have a full day of activities supporting Christ Church as church warden. This year a number of us in Interlopers Orienteering Club thought we would revive this tradition in memory of Robin. We had a great run to the top of Braids, socially distanced of course and in compliance with the regulations!



Edinburgh based Interlopers Orienteering Club is recognised as one of the best small orienteering clubs in Britain. Ex-Olympic track athlete and friend of Robin Morris, Martin Hyman was one of our members who initiated the Meadows running intervals that have happened without fail for over 40 years (7.55pm every Tuesday by the SE play park, everyone welcome). “ALL THE WAY!” was Robin’s shout of support to runners completing each interval when helping Martin.

EVENTS REPORTS – William Ivory (Events Coordinator)

Over the space of the past month or two, it has really felt as if we’re getting back to normal in terms of orienteering. Back to real events, running around at the same time as other orienteers, and (within reason) being able to stop and talk to others at events. The Scottish Junior Cup first round was held at Auchingarrich on 30th May, to be followed not long after by the Scottish Championships at Craig a Barns (albeit only the Championships if all Scots are

allowed to travel). Meanwhile, here's a round-up of events so far this year, along with a look at the changes in technology and organisation needed to support orienteering during COVID restrictions.

Fight With the Night (FWTN) and Winterlopes

FWTN carried on over the winter, with runners able to run the courses at any time over a seven day period, and being trusted to run after dark. This meant the delights of owls, foxes and the noises of other local 'wildlife', as well as igloos and night skiing for some. After Christmas, in addition to the fortnightly FWTN races, there was a welcome addition of Winterlopes, organised by Graeme Ackland. These made use of various golf courses to provide a different challenge, including Braid Hills, Craigmillar, Duddingston, Prestonfield and Liberton golf courses. For a couple of weeks, ski-o was possible too! There were two leagues run in parallel – the full pre-and-post-Christmas FWTN series, and the post-Christmas FWTN and Winterlope series. Top 10 finishers in each league are shown below:

- FWTN Elite: Mairi Eades (2nd), Max Carcas (3rd)
- FWTN Long: No Interlopers completed enough events
- FWTN Short: Ann Haley (1st), Mark Haley (2nd), Pat Bartlett (3rd), Tricia Alston (4th), Mary Ross (6th), Leah Bartlett (8th)
- Winterlope + FWTN Long: Claire Ward (1st)
- Winterlope + FWTN Short: Mary Ross (1st), Pat Bartlett (2nd), Sam Bartlett (3rd), Tricia Alston (4th), Leah Bartlett (8th)

Local Events

So far this year the club has run two local events, at Craigmillar Park and Dechmont Law, with a third to come next month at Polkemmet. These events have been pre-entry only, open only to members of SOA-affiliated clubs, though the Polkemmet event is open to all comers following the recent relaxation of restrictions as most of Scotland enters Tier 2. The Craigmillar Park event took place in early April, on a gloriously sunny Saturday, with approximately 70 participants over the 2 hour start window. Thanks to Graeme Ackland for planning and to Jane Ackland for organising.

This was followed by a Dechmont Law event in May, on a rather wetter day. Lorna Eades' courses made full use of the area, and the undergrowth was still low enough not to cause any problems. With two starts, we had just over 100 participants on the four courses, with green and blue being the most popular choices (and very enjoyable they were too).



Thanks to Robin Galloway for organising, Crawford Lindsay for pre-event Controlling, and Colin Eades for acting as Controller on the day, and thanks to all the other helpers on both days who made the events possible.





Craigmillar Castle Park event – an INT event in decent weather for a change

Sprintelopes

After last year's Maprun-based Sprintelopes, we're back to the real thing this year. Pre-registration is required, with start times allocated to prevent too many people from gathering together. So far we have had 4 Sprintelopes, with 2 in Edinburgh (South Edinburgh and Fairmilehead run by Interlopers) and 2 in East Lothian (Prestonpans and Haddington run by ELO). There are another 14 to come, with several in new areas both in Edinburgh and elsewhere. Participant numbers seem to have been up on 2019, with 60 or more entrants at each race. Still too early to see any clear leaders emerging as it's best 7 out of 18 results that count...



Technology and Organisation

COVID has forced a few changes on us regarding entering and paying for events. To avoid too many people congregating at the start, we need to allocate start times. ESOC and ELO have opted to allocate individual starts, whereas Interlopers has taken the typically more relaxed approach of having start blocks with 10 participants for each 15 minute block. This has required the use of Google forms with the likes of the 'Choice Eliminator' plugin in which just about manages to control the number of entrants per block, though can be somewhat temperamental leading to occasional panics when we've realised we have 14 entrants for 10 spaces... We have also been able to display the start list 'live' on our website as this can be driven from the Google form data directly (thanks to Michael Atkinson at ELO for explaining

how to do this). Payment also is handled differently, as collecting cash on the day is to be avoided, taking online payment instead.

These changes have advantages and disadvantages. We know how many maps to print, and can charge everyone once at the end of the season rather than having to deal with cash each Wednesday. However, it makes it rather harder to attract new members when they can't just turn up on the night, and there is also an amount of reconciling of payments to be done by our treasurer at the end of the series, which I'm sure he's looking forward to! We will see what system we end up with next year – perhaps a hybrid model where you can register in advance and pay at the end of the season to guarantee a map, or turn up and pay on the night, but risk having to borrow a 'used' map!



Ex-Chairman Musings – A Tale of Woe (and Insight) - Max Carcas

Hello Interlopers,

Thought I would drop you a line musing on Auchingarrich today. Sadly I had pulled my hamstring doing Meadows intervals on last Tuesday having not warmed up. I had, in fact, planned to be doing the timing that day so I'd rushed there on my bicycle having spent the whole day at my desk writing boring emails (about fish in Canada, and how I/we don't want to kill them, if you must ask...). I'd even remembered the bag of bits containing the timing clock, wooden cross thing, bungy to strap it altogether (no I still don't know how) and can of white non-permanent spray paint - all vital stuff.

Anyway someone else had already planned to be doing the timing so I thought "oh well, I'm here I may as well do the intervals". I'd also bought myself some new bright luminous pink superboost Adidas "6% faster guaranteed, that'll be £100, mate" trainers so was keen to try them out. Unfortunately third lap into the final straight and the inevitable happened - "ouch! BRAKE!". So returned home with tail between my legs. Mike Lieberman (long time intervaller) had suggested I should get someone to inflict pain on me by putting the point of their elbow into the back of my leg until I squealed. Terry suggested I should peddle on a bicycle without any tension. I chose the latter. Then I went to the Sprintelope the next day but sadly didn't make it twenty steps before I felt it pull again, which was a real shame as it was a lovely evening and I was going to thrash everyone with my pink Superboosts. Well, at least Terry Johnstone from ESOC!...

So back home and on to Mike's advice - Son #1, Alex, willingly obliged... I then discovered he had a battery powered vibrating handheld instrument of torture, which I applied up and down my leg with various attachments. SprintScotland was on Saturday after all! Saturday morning came and tried a little jog at 8am round the kitchen in my dressing gown... Nah, not going to happen.... :(What about Auchingarrich on Sunday? I was down for the long course and thought I would at least try the first leg. In fact I ended up completing the whole course, albeit walking... And although I came last (apart from the three DNFs) my time wasn't that bad. Actually it was great fun! I now know why the mappers put all that stuff on the map that I normally ignore. I mean light yellow and white, they're almost the same colour aren't they? Not much contrast, what's the point of that, eh? The white winding strip in the green - I found there really was one! Those little insignificant black dots - oh there *is* something there! Perhaps in the words of Confucius "To run faster little grasshopper, you

must first run slower...". Actually it might have been Claire Ward who told me that, and she knows a thing or two I can tell you!

So that my friends is my tale of woe but turned out to have a silver lining. Read the map! It gives you lots of clues telling you how to get from A to B! Now off to Bob tomorrow for some professional massage, hopefully he can patch me up for the British. And I've promised to Jane to warm up next time!



Nippers' News

Three aspects to this! (1) ESOA junior training experimented with online sessions, organised by Katherine with input from David Robertson (ESOC), Roger Scrutton (ESOC), Alistair Duguid (TAY) and Moira Laws (TAY). Delivering meaningful online orienteering training is a skill in itself (not least managing the technology and human interactions with it, as well as of course having a sense of how to teach orienteering), so it was a steep but interesting learning curve. Things were just starting to get into some sort of stride as lockdown started to ease, and quite rightly most kids wanted (needed) to be outdoors doing real-life things instead (although real training was still constrained by travel restrictions). There's a lot of potential though for using online sessions for geeking, and this could bring really useful benefits as event prep and de-briefing (and not just for the kids).

(2) The ScotJOS'ers (Pippa, Fiona, Angus, and Laurence) similarly took part in various virtual offerings, covering sports psychology, nutrition, and a bit of Strength & Conditioning (Zoe again!), before a couple of day sessions this month (which included Lorna and Colin as coaches). The prize for active effort though goes to (3) the MoWSquad (more below), for working their way through Mapruns and much else to really develop in the sport.

Lorna reports ...

"Two ScotJOS training sessions were held in May. The first was held on Dundrum first used in the Scottish 6 days 2019. Exercises were set to help the juniors regain skills and confidence in TD4 and 5 terrain. Juniors and coaches were split into training bubbles for the day with everyone having some friends in their bubble. The sessions included a line course to get from the car drop off to the 'assembly' areas to be used for the entire day. Three further loops were available, e.g. Control picking, leading up to a final relay. The relay teams were decided by lining everyone up in age order then paired oldest/youngest etc.

The second training day was held on two different parts of Loch Vaa. The semi-open area to the south west of the steam railway line with exercises concentrating on detailed contours and how to spot and use lines created by ridges/depressions etc. Some corridor courses were included. A tough morning with most of the juniors clocking around 8 km. The afternoon moved to north of the Main railway line to Granish for a Sudoku themed relay in teams of 3. Each team member had to



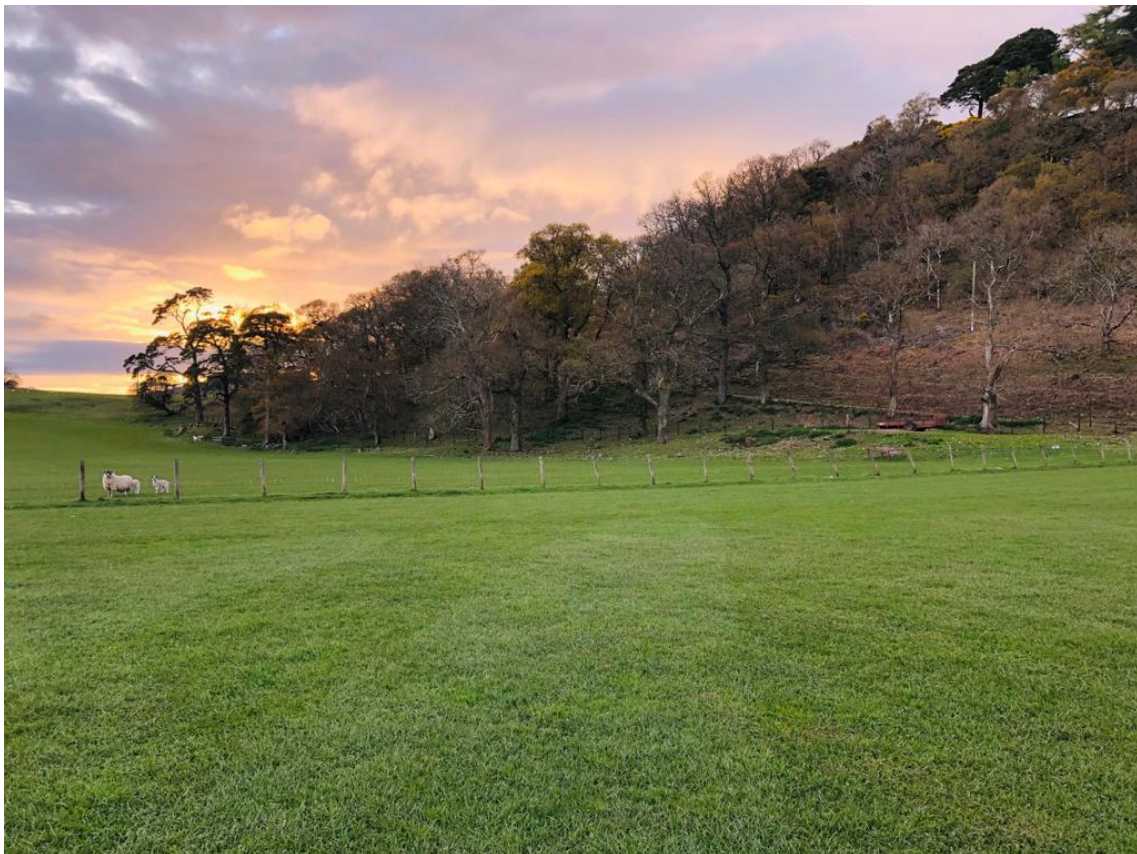
find 9 controls with a different end number from 1-9 with the team needing to have found all 27 between them."



Beautiful Granish Moor; lucky ScotJOS



SIX DAYS 2021 - Day 1, Ardchattan - Mike Stewart





Graham McIntyre letting me know we have found the right Event area overlooking Loch Etive.



Sunset on the bay after a glorious weekend in April

A view over opening control terrain at one of the starts.

Back in 2020 our Club was looking for officials for planning and organising our Club's day at the 6-day event. Both Graham and I have been there before and after a decent interval to allow any other interested parties to volunteer, we threw our hat in the ring as joint planners. Max has subsequently stepped in as day organiser.



We had one day in early September last year to check out the area and meet the landowner and the local farm manager. Local help from Ross Lilley has been invaluable.

Planning has been relatively straightforward as this is a tried and tested area used by the 6 Day Event back in Oban 2011 amongst other Events. The map proved to be particularly good, and corrections have been minimal. All in all, the planners' lot has been a happy one so far.

Graham and I were fortunate in April to be at the area in a working capacity for a focused weekend checking and marking control sites. Map corrections were identified, and a successful trip was had. Courses are complete and I have got one last visit this weekend with the controller to check a few features and sites and finalise those dreaded white and yellow courses.

I must say that this has been one of the easiest events so far I have ever planned and it helps to have two old hands in Graham McIntyre and Brian Bullen around. Graham has done courses C1 to C12 and me the remainder. You know who to target after the event if you have any gripes!

We are all hoping that covid will not compromise the event and the weather holds fair for what will be the opening day of the 6-day event. We all deserve some quality orienteering in surroundings that are not in our backyard. I hope that many of you have entered and have your accommodation in place.

I will finish with the inevitable plug. We are Day 1 which means our club is off the hook after the opening day. As some of you will know, I am not a spring chicken and walk only these days. We will need help on the Saturday and Sunday in putting this event on. Not least of all in getting bars, kites and SI units where they should be on the hillside. So, expect a call up!

Max will require the usual volunteers for familiar duties at such an event.

I will finish off with the positive view that everything will be fine on the day and the weather is going to shine on us. Enjoy your runs on what should be a great opening day.



Lockdown-O with the MoW Squad – Megan Mowbray

It's the 19th of December and Nicola announces another lockdown.

- Christmas plans are scuppered.
- Travel restrictions are in place.
- We are all confined to our family groups.

Yet, all clouds have a silver lining! As a single parent, with two young children (Freya age 12, Eilidh age 10) we were allowed to form a 'bubble' with another family. Who should we choose to bubble with? Similar aged children. New baby for Eilidh to play with, instead of relying on the silicone alternative. Similar interests: outdoors, running, cycling, orienteering, the odd drink, eating, and film evenings.

The decision was made and the MoW Squad was formed.

- Megan Mowbray AKA coach 1
- Freya Mowbray (age 12)
- Eilidh Mowbray (age 10)
- Ray Ward AKA coach 2
- Claire Ward AKA weekender
- Laurence Ward (age 13)
- Lucy Ward (age 11)
- Bertie Ward (age 1)



With all extracurricular activities cancelled, mission one was to provide a replacement for those cold, dark, wet winters evenings. 'An interval session please' we heard them cry. At 6.30pm every Tuesday and Thursday evening the MoW Squad alternated flat reps with hills, dry outdoor reps with undercover innocent railway reps. Coach 1 was in charge of a professional warm up, while coach 2 fine tuned the session requirements. Highlights of these sessions were the sledge reps on Blackford hill, Prestonfield and Craigmillar golf courses.



Weekends took on a different form. Daylight allowed us to venture a little further afield. Bertie and Claire (weekender) were able to join us, and more fun was to be had. Staying in our local area, variety was added by some HBT challenges. Climb all 35 hills within the Edinburgh boundary, hiding a beer at the top for the next customer. The 7 hills of Arthur's seat by sledge were a good start, the kids got the hang of 'what 3 words' to locate beer cans under gorse – very similar to a large scale easter egg hunt. Another HBT highlight was to celebrate a friends 40th by using Strava to write a number 40. MoW Squad took to bikes.

As lockdown weekends continued, scouring the Edinburgh area for decent MapRun options became a popular pastime. Craiglockhart, Liberton, Braids, and a group favourite Dregghorn. The latter provided not only a great base for orienteering but child entertainment was on hand by way of hunting for dead bullets. Morrisons happily had matches and marshmallows in stock for the campfire.



Saturday evenings soon slotted into a standard pattern. An alternate trip to the Mowbray or Ward pad. A bottle of prosecco. Kids played. Food was enjoyed. Then all settled into a good film. Educational classics, selected by the adults: The Commitments, The full Monty, Cool Runnings, Hot fuzz, Le mans 66.....

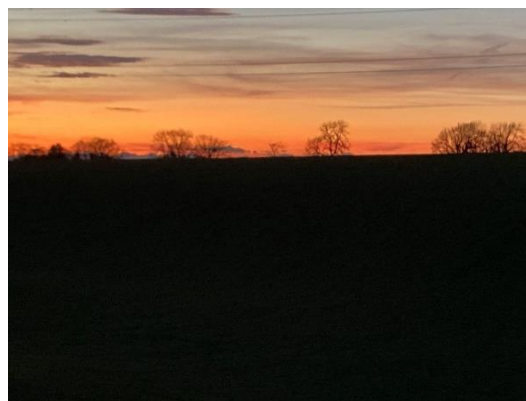
As coach 1 and 2 were starting to run out of new options for a Thursday night the Sprintelope series came along. What better way to fine tune those orienteering skills than night-O. Beautiful, snowy, golf courses by lit moonlight, made all the more enjoyable for the kids by the absence of dogs and cars. I soon realised that the moonlight wasn't strong enough for me to be able to read my map and three decent head torches were bought.

As nights started to get lighter, the vaccine was 'go', and lockdown eased. What better way to celebrate than a Sprintelope for fellow orienteers organised by the Mow Squad. Now we are able to travel further and meet different friends and family. However, we will always be grateful for our silver lining in being able to form a Mowbray/Ward bubble. Freya and Eilidh have enjoyed seeing an improvement in their orienteering. They can now 'go it alone' and we have all strengthened our friendship.



Thursday Off-Road Training – Morag McIntyre

Thursday training got back on track for those in the Edinburgh City area on 18th March, and for that first run together in 2021 we met at Bonaly (after a little confusion over whether the top carpark was open or not – it was). It was a delight to be out and we were treated to a spectacular sunset.



Graham Mc continues to issue a weekly email which details which of the training runs will take place, and has a link to the google sign-up sheet and to the Strava route. This works well most of the time – although some confusion can arise with a couple of the training runs which start at the same location (2 distinct runs start at Harlaw, 2 from Bonaly and also 2 from Holyrood Palace car park), so it can be a good idea to either check the schedule direct on the website (<https://www.interlopers.org.uk/go-orienteeing/Training/thursday-off-road-training>) or arrive at the meeting point on time!

Our next March run saw 8 of us back on the Braids and Mortonhall route in somewhat damp weather. I got spurred on to a PR on the 'Drop to Braids Hill Drive' segment - perhaps by the weather, or perhaps trying to keep up. I should point out here for anyone who hasn't joined a group training run yet, that we stop and regroup frequently, and so nobody gets left behind.



Our April Fools' Day run was the popular Torphin, Water of Leith, Poets Glen, Clubbiedean, Warklaw Hill route. We managed to evade Max C altogether on this one, as he set off behind the group and decided (?) to run a bit further along the Water of Leith rather than run up the hill to Lymphoy Road. It wasn't until his Strava route popped up that we realised he'd been chasing us. Again, running in a group helped me to a couple of segment PRs. Humbling to note that how much slower I am on these than the female Course Record holders - 53.4% slower on one of the shorter segments. This was another glorious evening, and the photo which adorns the Training Page (linked above) was taken this evening beside Clubbiedean reservoir.

The following Thursday 7 of us braved wet and windy conditions from Glenallan Drive – this looping run takes in The Inch, Craigmillar Castle Park, Hawkhill Wood, and Hunters Hall Park up the Niddrie Burn to the Jack Kane Centre. Although mixed social areas, the run cleverly links some of the South Edinburgh open spaces. One of the segments on this is called the Roller Ski Hill Interval – who knew roller skiing is a thing in this part of Edinburgh?



Back in the bonnie Pentlands on 15th April, 11 Interlopers enjoyed the clockwise run from Harlaw Car Park, heading up Bells Hill in the sunshine, and successfully crossing Threipmuir over the newly repaired Black Springs causeway and dam on the way back in. I always reckon Interlopers runs take about an hour, and this one came out at 59.00 minutes moving time for the 8.42k for me.

The following week was a McIntyre/Caban outing in Holyrood. We did the short (6.38K) loop through the Park and Duddingston. Graham,

Callum and I had done the Meadows intervals on the Tuesday and a recce of the first Carnethy Spring handicap route on the Thursday and so a shorter run suited us fine (and Paul wasn't complaining either – he is usually carrying a good few miles in his legs!)

The big news on 29th April was that the Eades' could now join us, with travel to Boghall for Borderers and City of Edinburgh folk alike now being allowed! We all ran to Castlelaw Car Park together, and then some took the northerly track over Fala Knowe and up onto Allermuir, whilst others did the full slog South and West of Castlelaw, and up Allermuir tracking a bit behind the advance party.



Not many takers for the Braids and Mortonhall run from the Observatory car park, to which we arrived in truly torrential rain. Miraculously though, for the 1h08m elapsed time we were out the rain held off. We kept dropping people on this run, with the Haley's heading back after the Blackford loop, Cal heading back from the top of Buckstone Snab and Paul leaving us to head West along the Hermitage and home. Max, Graham and I made the decision to carry straight on up the path from the Hermitage to the Observatory rather than take in an extra loop around Blackford Hill to take the run up to 9.34k as we sometimes do. This turned out to be a good decision, given that the rain was back on almost as soon as we got in the car.

Last week we were back at Harlaw, this time for the run that goes SW to Red Moss, then up through Bavelaw and the side of Black Hill before again crossing Black Springs Causeway/Dam. The contradictory route advice between the training page and Graham's email had been spotted by Paul, and he and Graham stayed in the Car Park for a while whilst the rest of us set off. Paul left Graham dealing with work issues on his phone and still no sign of Max when he eventually set off. We regrouped with Graham before the climb up the flank of Black Hill, and Max eventually joined us at Black Springs having done the clockwise route. Again, let me emphasise that we have never lost anyone on a training run. (Oh wait! There was the time when I got lost in Colinton Dell! But nobody went home until I turned up somewhat red faced).

I am now reminded that Katherine originally asked whether I would write something about 'turfing' for this newsletter. I have, however, done little of this for the past couple of months for various reasons (including not wanting to hold the group up unnecessarily on training runs). In March Team Scotland was formed to rise to a challenge issued by Skane region in Sweden for a Regional competition. I know little of the fine detail of how this worked, but was given the good advice that as I wasn't a member of Team Scotland, it would not be

helpful to them if I went around bagging turfs of an evening. However, if I bagged them earlier in the day a TS member could then come round and reclaim them.

In addition, I am now attempting to get a bit quicker on tarmac ahead of the EMF virtual ½ marathon that Graham and I will be running on 30th May, and stopping for the time it takes for GPS to register and 'claim' a turf zone is definitely not part of the training plan!

Anyone who has not yet discovered turfing, download the free app and give it a go! You can get as competitive (or not) as you like. It is very simple to get started: <https://turfgame.com/>

Here are reports from both Skane and Scotland team captains following the Regional head to head:

Region Battle: Scotland vs Skåne

In March Region Scotland was battling Region Skåne during four weeks, and the battle could be followed at [Turfportalen](https://turfportalen.com/). At first it looked like Skåne would win, but then it turned around and in the end Scotland won with a landslide, the Region battle ended with the score of 11-4 to the Scots. Very well done, mates!

I was checking the score at regular intervals during the battle, as I am sure the following turfers did ;) First out is Kingslayer with his account of the battle, from the point of view of Team Skåne:

"And that's the end of the first intergalactic turf challenge ever! Or at least that's how it felt for us in Skåne. Despite a day with snow we started out good with a 2-1 win first week, we even won on takes which is unheard of! Second week we got to see what the Scottish turfers are made of when they crushed us 3-0. Third week we came back again after great team work the last hours before the Sunday week break which gave us 2-1 again. Down 4-5 before the last week. Last week we "just" needed win on takes **and** round unique to win the whole competition.

The week started pretty good for us, we got a distinct lead on round unique and played even on takes up until the Horrible Saturday. The last 48 hours the Scots decided sleep is for the weak and kept turfing through the nights. We had one man - Tveskågg - who was determined to meet them head on in the darkness, but one man alone cannot stop a horde of Celtic warriors... The Scots were unearthly in the end and beat us fair and square 11-4. Congrats to the fighting Scottish men and women who made this a memorable event for us. As usual we have gained personal bests, new medals and generally overachieved. And we have had fun at the same time. Just as a regional competition should be."

CSL has written Team Scotland's account of the battle: "Well, that was a surprise! Never in our wildest dreams did we expect to beat Skåne. Week 1 brought Skåne 2 points to Scotland's 1 point, and we thought that would be the shape of things to come. But then in Week 2, we had much better weather and won all 3 categories, making it Scotland 4, Skåne 2. In Week 3 we worked very hard, but we couldn't quite match them, and the score moved to Scotland 5, Skåne 4.

The final week saw much debate about strategy – should we concentrate on takes and give up on round uniques? Opinions varied, and some continued to seek round uniques. The Easter weekend meant that more people were free, and some very effective hamster wheels were set up in several places, which worked very well. Although there were some exhausted Turfers on Sunday morning, they were still chasing round uniques, and overtook in this category in the very last minutes. Thanks to Skåne for being such formidable opponents!

Most of the people in Team Scotland didn't know one another beforehand, but we've exchanged lots of chat and certainly feel as though we know one another now. The competition was exciting and fun, as Kingslayer promised us, and everyone seems to have enjoyed it, winning many medals, and most people moved up several ranks too. I asked some people from different parts of Scotland for comments, and here's a selection:

BradC, Stirling: "Dunblane has been described as 'the Västerås of Scotland', in that it is a small area so over-stuffed with eager Turfers that PPH is meaningless; if you can hang on to a zone for a whole hour in Dunblane, it is a red-letter day! This did mean that there was never a problem finding zones to take, and our newness to the sport meant that our zones still had high enough take points to allow us to punch above our weight. If only it wasn't so hilly. We were proud to boast several of the busiest zones in the world during the competition. The fourth-busiest zone, TheLostZone, only existed for three of those four weeks!"

Jarv, East Lothian: "Our area was managed by a small team of walkers and cyclists including an additional non-team Scotland member who cleared zones frantically. Initially the plan was to 'take some zones and then take some more'. However, strategy evolved significantly over the month. WhatsApp was used heavily to arrange zone clearances, routes and hamster wheels, to share photos and to provide massive encouragement. As time went on, Turfing hours increased significantly. Medals, including World bronze medal for our very own Cruachan, accumulated at an ever-increasing rate, and were celebrated by all. All in all, the team survived the month largely unscathed and are looking forward to the next time!"

Finreir, Scottish Borders: "The Covid restrictions on travel hampered Borders Turfers, and the rules on essential and allowed travel into other areas were assessed and utilised continuously. We soon ran out of easy uniques. Team efforts were centred on the Tweed valley around Peebles, and the Border Abbey towns of Melrose, Kelso and Jedburgh were also raided regularly. Zones were hard won on the steep heights of Glentress and Cademuir forests and wheels performed on the flatter valley floor at Peebles, with great team work achieved."

tunahunter, East Dunbartonshire: "In areas, like ours, where Turf is less well-established, the contest encouraged us to broaden our horizons. Each of us explored new areas (often in darkness), either first thing in the morning or last thing at night. We connected with nearby Turfers, discussing teamwork and strategy. And thanks to the advice and support of more experienced Turfers in Team Scotland, we really honed our Turfing skills, culminating in a triangular hamster wheel around our town in the final week. It was a great experience to play our part in Team Scotland's victory. One of the keys to our success was the camaraderie in the team. There were WhatsApp chats full of encouragement, determination, and help with solving problems like how to get to specific zones or where to get best GPS signal!"

klepto7up, Aberdeen: "The Turf match was a wonderful journey where I discovered great places, made new friends and discovered the camaraderie, support and team spirit in the Scottish team was phenomenal."

CaleZONEian, South Lanarkshire: "Taking part was a great experience and it allowed us to meet new Turfers (virtually and in person). We had to work together to defeat a more experienced and established team. Turf is very popular on the east coast but less so on the west so we didn't have the numbers playing in our area but we did work together and support each other. I cycled over 1600 km during the contest and more than doubled my points target for the round."

Hodge, Midlothian: “We had a very keen band of local Turfers. We generally kept most areas in Team Scotland hands through the month, no mean feat when you consider distance between the main areas. As the month progressed, we also had a lot of other visitors, seeking round uniques. This has left our TP position down for April with adjusted PPH too, with a number of zones now at +6/110, particularly around Penicuik (where we had 3 very active town residents), something which will no doubt settle down as we take it slightly more gently than during the competition.”

Personally, I quite miss sitting down at 9 pm to plan my evening trip round zones held by non-Team Scotland Turfers. I saw quite a lot of wildlife on these forays too. Roll on September!”



OTHER INTERESTING THINGS PEOPLE HAVE GOT UP TO

The Joys of Rubber Shorts - Paul Caban

“My name is Paul, and I think I’m developing a rubber fetish.” This is probably a sentence more appropriate for a therapy session, rather than an article for a family orienteering newsletter, however; this would be a very short piece if I wasn’t about to ‘fess up. I’d like to think no-one will think badly of me, though.

It all started five-ish years ago, when I decided that I really should try to learn to swim, again. I never learned as a kid – neither of my parents could swim, and there was no local pool – and my attempt at teaching myself at University wasn’t successful or fun (thrashing across the way doing widths, as everyone else tanked up and down ...) So I, er, took the plunge, and signed up for lessons with Debbie, whose hubbie sometimes ran cross-country with me. We soon discovered that my runner’s legs were prone to sinking, and breaststroke was a disaster. Front-crawl was a little better, though not much initially. Eventually, I started to get the hang of breathing, and I got to the point of doing lengths, though with a good rest at each end, and going to Gracemount once a week with Ann.



The breakthrough was a conversation with Tim Brand, once of this parish, and who we may well see at Ardchattan next year. Timmy, although a fantastic cyclist and a pretty nifty runner too – good enough to be in the GB age-class duathlon squad – also used to be a fully paid-up member of Interlopers Team Driftwood. But after lessons, also in his fifties, he also learned to swim, and recommended rubber swimming shorts (actually ‘longs’: they come down to just above the knee). So I ordered a pair, and they were – are – fantastic. All that

lower-limb “sinkage” I was used to, suddenly turned into floatation. I got more confident, and got faster, and in turn got more confident. Say it quietly, but I was actually quite enjoying my by now two sessions per week at Gracemount, and had even graduated to the 50m Commie Pool occasionally.

Lockdown put a stop to all swimming, until a chance conversation with JaneA about open water swimming got me thinking. It was really warm this time last year, so when she phoned me up asking if I wanted to go for an outdoor swim, I couldn't think of a reason not to. Jane promised to look after me, and – unexpectedly – it was fantastic. OK, I wasn't actually in the water for long, but for a first time, I was pretty damned proud of myself. Two further trips with Jane followed, both to Bonaly. Bonaly was more of an effort to get to, so less people around, but also the water felt 'nicer'. I'm not sure I can explain it. And I'd by then expanded my rubber wardrobe to include a hat.

Pools reopening and colder weather got me back indoors again. But then the tipping point into mania came from an unexpected direction: Lidl. Other supermarkets are available, but probably not ones that sell wetsuits. OK, the Lidl ones weren't the greatest quality, but one of my work colleagues mentioned he'd got some for his kids, and better ones for him and his wife. That led to a conversation with Hedwig (Gracemount, the odd Thursday evening, Marathon support), and I became the proud and somewhat nervous owner of an orange'n'black two-tone number. We made plans to go to Seacliff, just beyond North Berwick, and Mo loaned me her rubber swimming gloves. Unfortunately, the waves were monstrous, so all we really did was play around in the shallows, sporadically getting turned over by the breakers. But it was again fantastic, and not even slightly cold.

I'm buying rubber boots next ...



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Photos from Colin Inverarity. Quiz time: who, what, where, when?





Club Committee, as of the AGM on 24 September 2020

Chairman – Colin Eades
Secretary – John Barrow
Treasurer – Robin Galloway
Social Secretary – Jane Carcas, assisted by Lorna Eades
Communications – Katherine Ivory
Club Captain – Rob Lee
Junior member – Angus Ivory
Ordinary member: Ali Masson
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.

Newsletter archive (from 1972!) available here - <https://interlopers.org.uk/membership/newsletters>.

