

Interlopers

September 2023 Newsletter

Welcome to the September 2023 club newsletter! Another jam-packed edition given a veritable tidal wave of contributions – many thanks to everyone who has sent material (no ChatGPT content creation required this time!) There's a rich diversity of articles reflecting just how active the club and its members are.



This edition includes:

- coverage of the Scottish Six Days (William and Ann)
- reports on our local club events, both Saturdays and Sprintelopes (William and Ann)
- an update from Lorna on WOC (and a call for volunteers to fill key roles – definitely read),
- Jukola 2023 (Max),
- the IOF Young Leaders' Academy (Mairi),
- EYOC 2023 (Laurence),
- Coast & Islands (Paul and Morag),
- the Zagreb Four Days (Pat)
- a farewell from Phil.

Lots of lovely sunny photos of nice orienteering places too! Thanks all, and please keep sending me material for the next newsletter at the end of the year.

Happy reading.

Katherine Ivory, Editor.



RAMBLINGS FROM THE CHAIR – Colin Eades

Interlopers has been busy over the last few months with a number of events, the lifeblood of our sport, being held. There has been our usual offering of Sprintelope events which occupy summer weeks. Many thanks to all who have helped and put on these events. We have also put on a couple of Saturday local events at Kinneil and Almondell, and a SOSOL at Dechmont Law. Again thanks to those who have stepped up to plan and organise these events. These events are part of our offering every year, so we need volunteers every year to put them on.



An addition to our usual offering this year was our involvement in Orienteering Edinburgh events which were on Thursdays early evenings, these events were held in conjunction with ESOC and EUOC as a unified approach and targeted people who would try orienteering in work groups being centrally located and timed to suit workplaces. This series will also run again next year. The thread of all the rambling above is we need to put on many events throughout the year and we need many members to volunteer to plan/organise etc. We would love to see some new faces as planners and organisers and support and mentoring can be given to any kind enough to give it a go.

The Scottish 6 Days occurs only every two years but adds to our workload and many thanks to the folk who took leading roles for this event and all those who gave their time to make the day happen as smoothly as possible. Surely the best day of the week.....

Looking ahead we have a SOL at Loch Vaa fast approaching, which again will require a good turn out of volunteers to make it happen, and closer to home, a Saturday local event at Braidburn Valley which similarly needs volunteers to support.

The purpose of all the ramblings above however is to give a heartfelt thanks to all those who have helped put on all these events and ask everyone to reflect to see if they could volunteer to put any of these type of events as we all need to do our bit to ensure there are events for us all to enjoy. Anyway enough of this but please consider what you could do and put your hand up to help when you can. See you in a forest/street/country park or wherever.



CLUB STUFF

- Big hearty welcomes to new members Joy Hodgkinson and Niall Inverarity
- Congratulations on various selections to GB teams.
 - Colm Moran represented Ireland in the Long Distance at the World Orienteering Championships in Flims, Switzerland
 - Pippa Carcas was back in action for the Junior European Cup 2023 held at Virton, Belgium in the beautiful forests of Wallonia, 18th Middle and 19th Long
 - Congratulations to James Ackland, Aidan Smith, Mairi and Fiona Eades for selection to the Scottish team, for the Senior Home International to be held in Wales on the 9/10th September
- Our ad-hoc relay team (Lucy, Laurence and Colin E) won silver at the British Championships relays. Thanks to Lorna for [this report](#) from the weekend
- The Scottish Sprint Championships took place in Kirkintilloch, and a few Interlopers made it across. Well done to Murray Strain (3rd on Men's Veteran course) and Laura Kitchin (3rd on Women's Young Junior course).
- Well done to everyone who took part in the Sprintelopes. Tricia Alston was 3rd (1st WSV) on the short course, Pat Bartlett 6th (1st MSV), Colin Inverarity 8th (1st MUV). On the long, William Ivory was 5th (2nd MV) and Graeme Ackland 6th (1st MSV).
- Scottish Schools Championships: We had 10 juniors from Interlopers representing their schools, 3 individual medals and a team medal as follows: P 5/6 girls Laura Kitchin 2nd; S1 girls Eilidh Mowbray 9th; S2 boys Matthew Hartman 6th; S3 boys Ben Ross 3rd; S3 girls Bethan Kitchin 4th, Lucy Ward 5th and Freya Mowbray 8th, giving them the team prize for James Gillespie's. S4 boys Laurence Ward 1st; S5/6 boys Sam Kitchin 8th, James Hartman 9th.
- Club members contributed significantly to a good Sprint Scotland (not least Graeme Ackland as a Planner for a very technical Urban). Results at <https://www.elo.org.uk/latest-results/>.
- A long time ago now but what a fabulous JK! Well done to everyone for some brilliant results! Special shoutouts:
Relays: Men's Trophy 1st - Aidan, Pete and Sasha ;
Women's Trophy - 6th - Roanne, Louise and Claire
JK overall podium:
 - 🏆 Sasha 1st M21E
 - 🏆 Bethan 1st W16B
 - 🏆 Matthew 1st M14B
 - 🏆 Jane 1st W55S
 - 🥈 Lucy 2nd W14AWell done to Fiona 3rd who smashed the Sprint and Long in W20E to get two bronze medals 🥉 Congrats also to Laura 4th Sprint W12 & Laurence 4th Sprint M16. A very successful JK indeed 😎



- James Ackland came 6th (so gaining a diploma rather than a medal) for 6th place in the European University Orienteering Champs sprint relay in St Gallen. Max Bloor's Imperial College team would have been 17th but for a mispunch.



- World Mountain and Trail Championships (GBR team): Sasha Cheplin along with Kris Jones, Jon Albion and Thomas Roach won team gold in the Short Distance Trail Championships (45km, 3000m climb).

- The Coast and Islands on Lewis and Harris was apparently a great event, and you can see results and a report on the Coast and Islands website: <https://coastandislands.com/>. Well done to Mary Ross (6th, medium women), and on the medium men's course to Paul Caban (12th), Graham McIntyre (14th), Graeme Ross (15th) and Thomas Ross (16th)



British Champs / Sprint Champs (photo credits Lorna Eades)

SCOTTISH SIX DAYS 2023 – William Ivory

The first week in August saw the highly anticipated Scottish 6 Days event take place in Moray, centred on Forres. This was the first full event since COVID, as the 2021 event was 2 x 3 Days in the end. Mind you, it was 5 forest events plus rest-day sprint making up the 6th, so some have questioned whether Scottish 5 Days might be more accurate. Regardless of that, the event was a great success with 5 excellent forest areas, and mostly dry weather with very few midges. Interlopers were organising club for day 3 at Roseisle, with Robin Galloway lead organiser, ably helped by Max Carcas. Thanks to all our volunteers, everything was put out on time, including during a wet afternoon the day before. All went well on the day, including sunny weather all day, and rounded off by a club party on the beach in Burghead after courses had closed.

From Robin and Max: *“A huge thanks for all your hard work at the Day 3 event– yet another great club effort with everyone mucking in. Lots of positive comments about the day – not just the great courses but also the slickness of the starts (!), the quality of the string course, the degree accuracy of the Finger signage, the optimisation of the toilet configuration, the empathetic competitor support at the info tent and many other aspects. The weather of course really helps (but then set up on Monday was a bit damp). Well done all and thank you.”*



Roseisle Start and Arena (Photo credit Robin Galloway)

A quick round up of each day:

- Day 1 - Lossie Forest (long) - this was a tough start to the event, with long walks to the start and back from the finish in very hot conditions. Terrain was a mix of sand dunes and vaguer open forest, the latter catching some out after the dune intricacy earlier on.
- Day 2 - Darnaway (middle distance) - different terrain for this day, away from the coast, with starts close to the arena, and the run-in right next to download, allowing live commentary to note incoming runners.
- Day 3 - Roseisle (long) - back to sand dunes, with lovely open running in the pine forest. Courses set by Tim and Zoe Griffin from GRAMP met with almost universal approval

(apart from one control hidden behind a bush!) and of course INT organisation was perfect!

- Rest Day Sprint - Forres - and MTBO kept those who weren't exhausted busy.
- Day 4 - Culbin East (long) - classic forested sand dunes again, with a mere 3.5km walk to the start and 2km back from the finish. This allowed for Culbin to provide 2 days, with the arena hosting the finish on the final day ...
- Day 5 - Culbin West (middle) - more classic sand dune terrain for a middle distance race to finish off the week

Plenty of Interlopers made it up for some / all of the week, and the following club members were in the top half of their age class (top 3 finishers in **bold**):

- W12A: Laura Kitchin 6th
- W14A: Lucy Ward 8th
- W45L: **Claire Ward** 2nd
- W50L: **Heather Hartman** 3rd, Mary Ross 4th
- W55L: Lorna Eades 6th, Ann Haley 14th, Jane Ackland 16th
- M10A: **Inis Chepelin** (3rd)
- M14B: **Matthew Hartman** (2nd)
- M18L: Laurence Ward (17th); M18S: **Thomas Ross** (1st)
- M21E: Sasha Chepelin (5th), Scott Fraser (7th), Aidan Smith (15th), Col Moran (17th), Oleg Chepelin (24th)
- M35S: **Steven McHarg** (2nd)
- M45S: **Ray Ward** (2nd)
- M50L: Ben Hartman (10th); M50S: Graeme Ross (4th)
- M55L: Colin Eades (14th), Andy Kitchin (16th), Robin Galloway (34th), Max Carcas (46th), Paul Caban (53rd)
- M60L: Rob Lee (8th); M60S: Ian McIntyre (20th)



Event Report - ESOC Ultrasprint – Ann Haley

Each year a different venue is picked for this event. This year it was based at Saughton with three short courses (1.5-2k) taking competitors around the playing fields and into the formal gardens. The fun part was that each course also visited a circular maze twice! Participants can do any or all of the courses in any order. An overall time is calculated for those who do all three courses. The Kitchin family featured heavily here with Bethan coming 16th overall. Mary Ross was our best performer taking only 46.40 for all three courses. There was also the opportunity to do a 'maze only' course, if you haven't gone round in circles enough!

Having achieved his first string course at Roseisle (Day 3 of the Scottish 6 Days), James Haley completed the Ultrasprint maze, with the help of Mum, Laura, and Grandad Graham Haley. Running under the tapes was solved by giving James a shoulder carry between the latter controls! Definitely a Junior to watch 😊



James Haley (not quite an INT member!) - credit Stephen Haley.



INT Local Events – William Ivory

Thanks as ever to all our planners, organisers and other helpers. Without you, we wouldn't be able to put on any events. If you haven't yet planned or organised, it's never too late to start (or too early) and there's lots of help and support available for first timers. Just get in touch at events@interlopers.org.uk.

Kinneil Woods, Saturday 1st April (65 people)

Despite the weather not looking promising, the rain held off and Colin Ledlie's courses made great use of the area. It's an interesting mixture of open grassy areas, open runnable woodland, some steep slopes and thicker woodland with higher fences giving route choice decisions. You could even run right past Kinneil House. There was also an added twist with the map memory course – thanks to Max Carcas, event organiser, for assembling the necessary map sections and pieces of string for this! For more see https://interlopers.org.uk/kinneil_results_20230401



Photo credit: Katherine Ivory.

Almondell, Saturday May 13th (45 people)

A fantastic day to be orienteering – blazing sunshine and woods carpeted with bluebells and wild garlic. Chris Dibben's courses proved suitably challenging, mixing in urban and forest sections in quick succession. Anyone not checking their control codes carefully will have been left rueing the extra climb up and down from the various bridges, though no trolls at least. Pip Ascough's organisational skills ensured the event ran smoothly, with an ice-cream shop at the finish as an added bonus. For results and more photos see https://interlopers.org.uk/almondell_results_20230513



Photo credits: Katherine Ivory



Dechmont Law SoSOL, Sunday 4th June (75 entrants)

Another great day, this time at Dechmont Law in Livingston. Mike Stewart's courses went down well, with Paul Caban providing on the day organisation and co-ordination.

Sprintelopes

Interlopers provided five Sprintelopes this year as part of the series:

- Moredun, 10th May: 35 entrants, planned by Katherine Ivory using our new(ish) map from lockdown. At least there were no disqualifications for running through solid black lines this time!
- Little France, 24th May: 72 entrants, enjoyably sneaky courses planned by Graeme Ackland and organised by Jane Ackland. One casualty due to low flying barbed wire; fortunately A&E was a short hop away.
- Mortonhall, 5th July: 47 entrants, planned and organised by Ann and Stephen Haley. Great mix of urban and woodland to keep you concentrating, and bonus refreshments afterwards (thanks!)
- Buckstane, 19th July, 46 entrants, planned and organised by Robin Galloway. Some good route choice legs where you could have gone a very long way round if not paying attention.
- Grange, 16th August, 75 entrants, planned by Graeme Ackland, with Jane Ackland, Paul Caban and Rob Hickling helping to organise on the day. Long courses reached the new primary school complex before rejoining the short course to zig zag through the beautiful grounds of the Astley Ainslie hospital.

Well done to everyone who took part in the series.

Congratulations to:

- Short course: Tricia Alston, 3rd (1st WSV), Pat Bartlett 6th (1st MSV), Colin Inverarity 8th (1st MUV)
- Long: William Ivory 5th (2nd MV, sneaking in the requisite 7 events before taking a tumble after the Dunfermline event) and Graeme Ackland 6th (1st MSV).



Sprintelope at Little France. Photo credit Lorna Eades.
Moredun view; Photo credit Katherine Ivory



WOC Organising Committee Update – Lorna Eades

All members of Scottish orienteering received an email from SOA regarding some of the financial and technical problems with WOC and this was followed up by an open online meeting. Since this meeting a number of key roles have now been filled (some on a temporary basis) and key stake holders have agreed some additional funding.

We now have a new Event Director in place and he started last week and Alasdair Pedley is providing administration cover for SOA (2 days per week). Jon Cross is leading a major push to recruit volunteers in some of the strategic roles so I thought I would try and summarise those who are currently involved, note some are marked as interim as they have other main roles but are progressing an area that needs work on to keep/get back on programme and finally some key roles that are needing filled urgently:

Event Director: Andy Mitchelmore (Professional event Director) (Paid)

Assistant Event Director Nikki Howard (Interim) (Paid)

Technical Director: Jon Hollingdale (MOR) (Paid)

Arena Manager: Iain Smalls (Professional Arena manager) (Paid)

Administration: Alasdair Pedley (Paid)

Finance director: Bob Dredge (WCH)

IT Director: Mark Stodgell (WCH)

Volunteer Manager (Interim): Jon Cross (FVO)

Sponsorship (Interim): Graeme Ackland (INT)

WOC Office: Rona and Jonathon Molloy (FVO)

Quarantine: Alasdair McLeod (FVO)

Start: Andrew Yeates (FVO)

Arena Day Manager: 1. Andy Llewellyn (FVO) 2. Martin Ward (SYO) 3. Still vacant role

WOC Tour: Lindsay Knox (RR)

Training Coordinator: Ian Maxwell (RR)

Planners: Graeme Ackland (INT), Ross McLennan (FVO), Jon Cross (FVO)

UK Controller: Tony Thornley (AIRE)

TV Presentation: Lorna Eades (INT)

Graphics and Bulletin: Fiona Eades and Bridget Khursheed (RR)

Merchandise (Interim): Lorna Eades (INT)

Walter Clark (ESOC): Community engagement.

Key missing Team leader roles: a) Media and Marketing and b) VIP team leader

For my own team I am keen to recruit people with video editing skills/interest and people to help look after and manage cable routes (TV and IT cables) that lie outwith the arenas.

**** Please contact me for further information if interested in any of my roles or any of the roles above marked interim.****



Jukola 2023 – Max Carcas

This was my third Jukola. The first in 2016 was wet and rainy where we finished 513th, the second in 2018 was hot and dusty where we finished 571st in Jukola and 646th in Venla – what would the third in 2023 in Porvoo (lovely place by the way) hold out for?

This time we had one Venla team and two Jukola teams which turned out to be a little ambitious and left me scrambling to find some, er, interlopers to join Interlopers. Fortunately Jukola operate an online ‘Runner Bank’ where either teams looking for runners or runners looking for teams can post details about themselves and their phone numbers – a sort of Tinder for orienteers...

Eventual teams were:

Jukola - Interlopers 1	Jukola - Interlopers 2	Venla – Interlopers 1
Freddie Carcas	Eddie Narbett	Lorna Eades
Luke Fisher	Max Carcas	Jane Carcas
Alastair Flynn	Colin Eades	Trica Alston
Finlay Todd	Ben Goodwin	Lorna Eades (again!)
Ivan Kumzin	Nils Lundgren	
Graham McIntyre	Henrik Forsberg	
Kathryn Barr	Jacob Knoef	

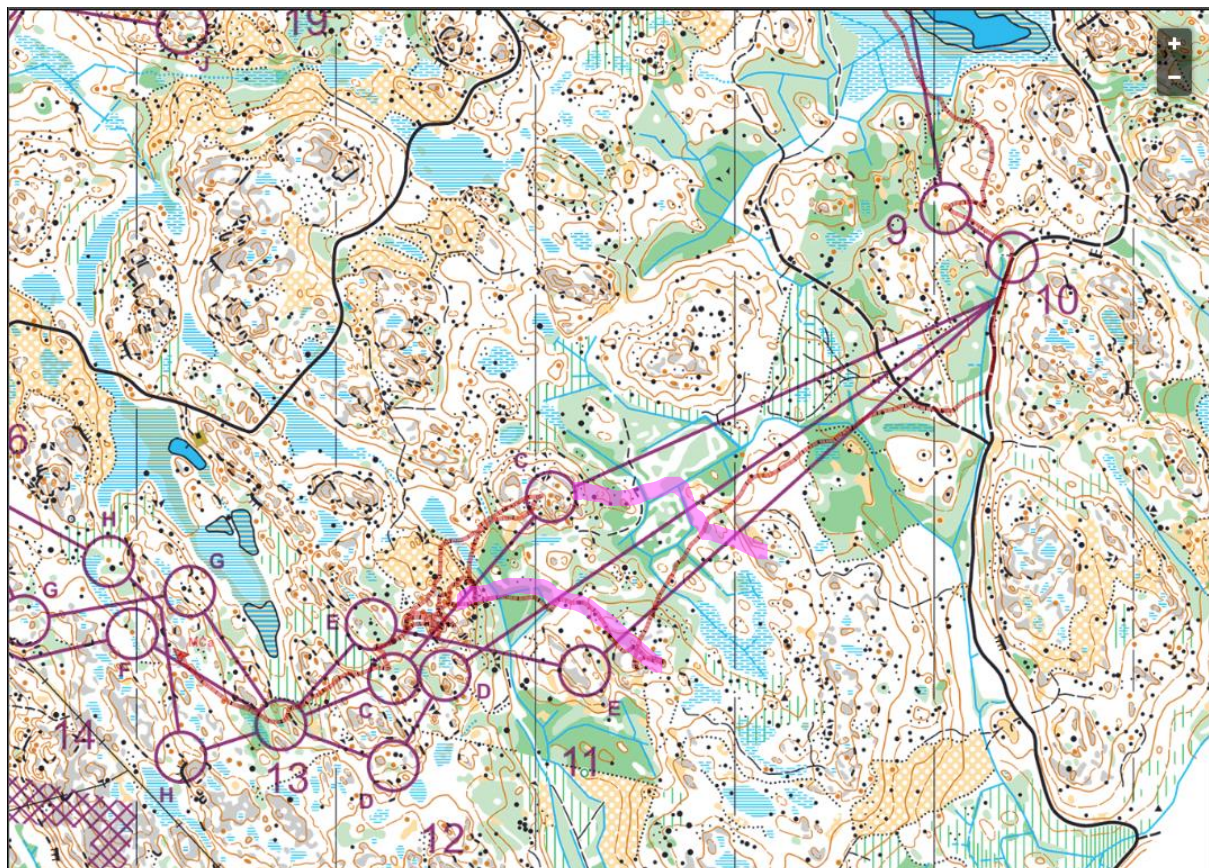
And so the day dawned... weather was fabulous, almost too hot! Sadly Mo McIntyre had had to drop out of the Venla team due to breaking her wrist (what is it with Interlopers breaking their wrists in 2023? – three this year... so far...). This left Lorna to valiantly run twice and bring in the team in 992nd on the final leg after 761st on the first leg.

For Jukola we took a decision to mix it up and give the first legs to Eddie and Freddie to thrash it out. Our teams included a five-time World Champion ski orienteer, Ivan Kumzin who also founded the Mount Elbrus Mountain Marathon Race (112km long...). No pressure then!

I'm not really sure how they did it but Eddie and Freddie went from position 1271st to 77th and 1228th to 78th after just 3.5km to the first control - rather impressive running!

As the second leg runner I went through the checks before the 'wailing wall' to wait for Eddie's return. This is where I encountered the first problem as for some reason I was shown on the system as 'Johanas Knopfberg' or something similar and my card wouldn't work to show where Eddie was on the electronic display. Eventually I managed to sort that out and Eddie handed over to me in position 188th. This was somewhat daunting and I was fully expecting to be trampled on the way to the first control but fortunately this didn't happen. In fact the first part of the race went well and at control 10 after 58 minutes running I'd only dropped 200 places to 380th.

However this is when it all started to go a bit pear shaped... see exhibit A (the map below). I'd decided to take a cunning route from C10 where I'd just left the track a little too early. Bizarrely I was leading a pack of runners who all promptly followed me into the dark green with much flailing, thrashing and cursing in scandwegian. Then as I came down a slope I made my first parallel error, thinking I was coming down the slope to the North... you can see my course banana-ing south as I head to the hill, where I thought C11 was. Of course there was a C11 there but not mine. I then assumed I was on the hill to the NE (along the southern straight line from C10 to C11. The relocation plan was to go NW following the ridge and then down until I hit the rectangular ditches – then follow the ditch left from the ditch T-junction and bam – straight on to C11!



Unfortunately the terrain had other ideas – as you may observe from the pink lines above I was unlucky to have very similar parallel features so as a consequence I spent quite a while faffing about on the wrong hill slope until I eventually just ran back against lights coming the other way to eventually find it.

I was now on a part of the course about the furthest from home. A combination of the heat earlier in the day, going out for a training run that evening (but after going the wrong way to the training area adding a few more km, oh and a swim in a lake) and failing to bring anything useful like gels now meant I got cramp which reduced me to a hobble... suffice to say it was not going well! However I persevered and despite falling into a bog over my waist and having to be pulled out by a fellow orienteer I eventually made it back, in er, position 1156 having run over 16km in a time of too-long-to-mention to hand over to Colin. Fortunately the rest of the team pulled us up and Interlopers 2 eventually finished 719th and Interlopers 1 finished a very impressive 430th!

Now I had the best bit of Jukola which is of course the shower, sauna and swim in the pool that they had constructed in the forest followed by food and drink.

Despite the tough time of it there is something very special about Jukola – I'm already looking forward to the next time!

Interlopers interloping...





Photo credits: Max Carcas

SIX DAYS 2023 / SCOTJOS FUNDRAISING – Ann Haley

The Scottish Junior Orienteering Squad fundraising activity during the Scottish 6 Days was to produce and sell a pack of cards with images of orienteering maps from around Scotland. Many thanks to those involved in coordinating this, with special thanks to Judy Bell. Apparently all Scottish clubs were asked to contribute maps to this venture. I was pleased to hear that all 225 sets of cards produced sold very quickly!

Alongside the sale of the cards there was a competition to identify the areas. The image used to advertise the cards acted as a taster, with one that was easily identifiable as Dean Village. The challenge was clearly appealing to members of Interlopers.

Having had an initial look, I really hadn't confirmed very many, so I put the cards aside. However, on the Tuesday evening, Stephen and I then started looking at routegadget – both 6 day areas and viewing areas from the bigger events, Scottish Champs for example, as well as areas suggested by Graham as he browsed the cards or thought where we had attended events. We then thought of clubs or regions where we felt we hadn't had many answers. We were not particularly methodical, and felt we might have missed some as we didn't have the 52 areas in our heads to spot relevant patches of maps. It was addictive! Being at a campsite where there was no wifi, it also used a lot of data! We had made a significant impression on the 52 but there were still many outstanding.

On Wednesday we bumped into Paul Caban in Forres, and as Jane Carcas and Jane Ackland cycled by, they were recruited! Graeme Ackland then joined us at a picnic table before we had to abandon. Apparently the Ward family had only 4 outstanding (missed Culross, Balmedie and Dunnotar) – we now had 9! That evening Graham, Stephen and I had another go and got another 3! Then just before putting in our entry we asked those present in the club tent for ideas (Lorna Eades and Rob Lee). With a few more suggestions, between us we got another 3...and then the entry went in.

Of the 11 results that were announced, the Interloper entries were:

- Ward family scored 49 – 1st
- Haley family (Ann, Stephen, Graham, with credit to Paul, Jane, Jane, Graeme, Rob and Lorna!) 49 – equal 1st. We missed Plean, Dunnotar and Balmedie - none of which A, S or G Haley had been to.
- Ross extended family 38



Great fun was had by all! For those who bought the cards, the answers are listed on the Scottish 6 days News pages.

IOF Young Leaders Academy Italy 2023 – Mairi Eades

In July, I attended a camp organised by the IOF to bring together people aged 16-25 from all countries to discuss all things orienteering and development. The camp ran concurrently with the Italian 5 Days, held in the stunning mountains around Tai Di Cadore, where we were also tasked with helping at the opening ceremony.



We had a variety of workshops throughout the week including course setting, SI, and how to start developing orienteering in an orienteering-less place. We also had guests speak about their experiences with map making, maze orienteering, major event organising, and orienteering in Canada, and Emil Winsted and Megan Carter Davies hosted a Q&A to allow us to pick their brains. Some of these talks were better than others, but they were potentially more valuable for those with less orienteering experience and/or from a country where the sport is not so big.

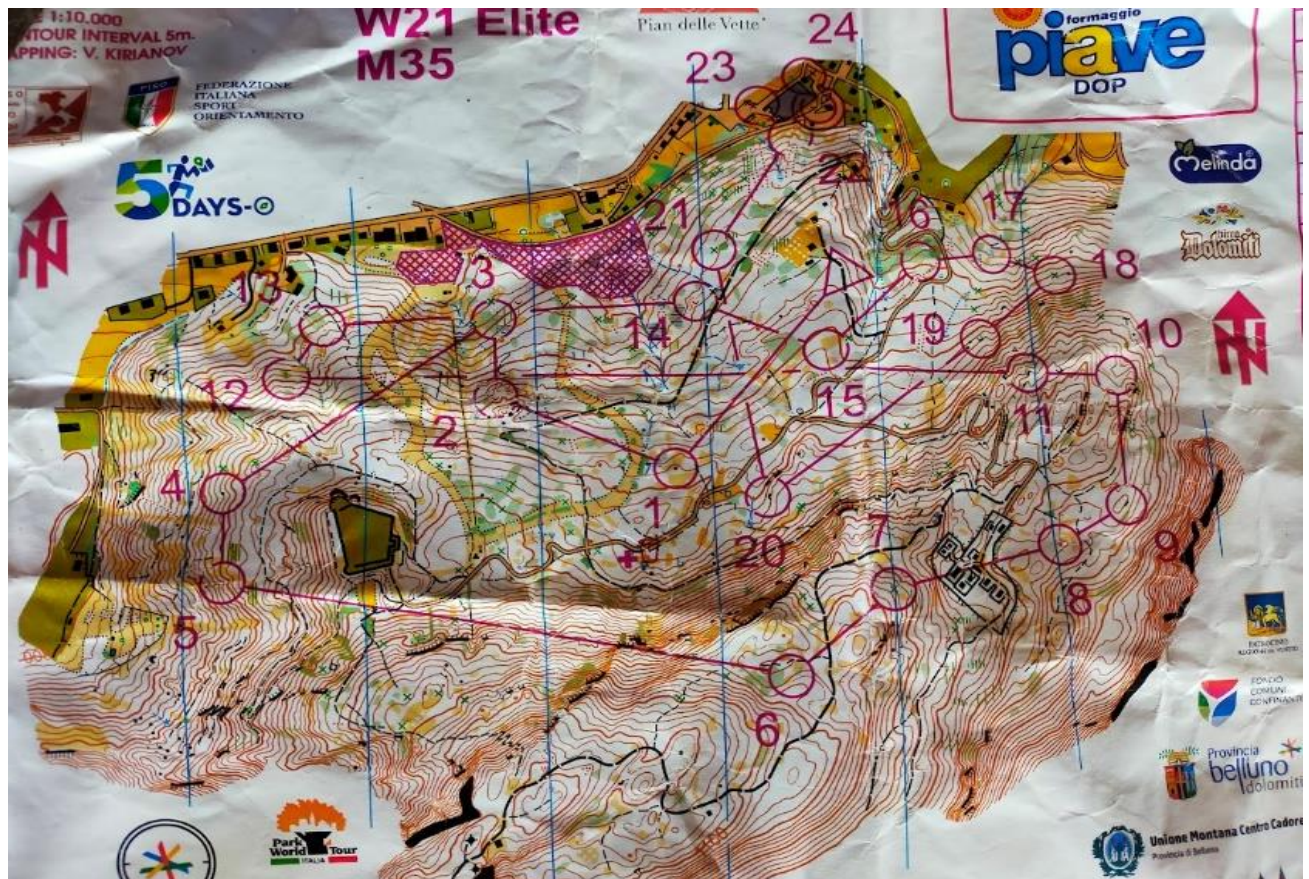


The main benefit of the camp was the opportunity it gave us to connect with a new group of orienteers from across the world where we were able to discuss and debate all things life and orienteering while making new friends! As we all know, it can be very useful to have friends in various locations providing accommodation and company while traveling. Since the trip, I have already met up with one of the Czech girls while I was coaching on the JROS tour to Czech this summer!

It would be a shame not to write about the orienteering competition itself as well! My main take away is that they like to put sprint into their long-distance forest races and steep slippery forests into their sprint races. The mountain terrains had plenty of contours to offer (Check out leg 5-6 below) along with some intricate rock detail. The organizers presented us with five very cool areas with absolutely stunning backdrops. The vast mix of nationalities in attendance made it so much more exciting racing against different people. I still had the familiar faces of Megan and Grace to compete alongside, and they thought they were safe from me until the last day where I managed to sneak 8 seconds in front of Grace and only 1min27sec down on Megan claiming a 3rd place 😊



The food at the accommodation was great, although at breakfast the staff caught on to some of our croissant-eating habits and we were henceforth limited to one a day 😞 Our typical dinner was classically Italian with a pasta appetizer starting us off, followed by meat entree and occasionally a yummy pudding. The Young Leaders Academy stayed an extra day, so we decided to hike up a mountain with a nice café at the top, and the views were incredible! Since the camp, we have all been tasked with a small developmental mapping project, which we will present back to the rest of the group in October. I'm most likely going to do this with a local school, and I am looking forward to getting started!





EYOC 2023 - Laurence Ward

At the end of June I was fortunate enough to go to Velingrad, Bulgaria to represent Great Britain in the European Youth Orienteering Championships (EYOC). I had been selected based on performances at the British Long Champs and the JK. We flew out to Bulgaria a few days early to acclimatise and get some training in to get used to the local terrain. It was very mountainous and runnable forest with patches of intricate and open rock. On the hillside there was shelter from the heat but in the valley where the sprint race was and where we were staying it was like a sun trap.



The sprint race went quite well for me, I came 20th (1st Brit) but felt I could do better. The long race the following day I struggled in the heat and made small mistakes that spiralled into big ones and ended up having 15-20 mins worth of mistakes. I finished 59th but was 3rd Brit so I had made the Great Britain Relay team. In the relay, Tommy Rollins (SN) handed over to me in 9th. I had made up a few places to make it up to about 5th/6th at halfway. Unfortunately the next section of the course I made a decent size mistake and dropped down to about 12th but managed to pick it up to hand over in 10th. Third leg was a fellow Scot, Finn Duguid (TAY) who had a good run and due to a few disqualifications found himself in a sprint for 6th (diploma position). The sprint ended in a diving photo finish where 2 of the 3 officials crowded on the finish line voted the other teams way.

Overall I really enjoyed the experience and it has motivated me to go for more international selections in the future.

Maps etc here - <https://eyoc2023.eu/> <https://events.loggator.com/2023EYOClongM16>

Photo: Laurence on the Long. Credit Kell Sønnichsen



Coast & Islands 2023 - PAUL CABAN

After a tour across the northwest Highlands in 2021, and Kintyre and Arran last year, the Coasts & Islands (C&I) this year was in the Western Isles. The plus points were a very compact holiday – five of the six events were within five miles of Tarbert on Harris – and very, very few trees. The slight downside was the two hours plus ferry to get to/from the islands.

There were fewer of us INTs this time around than the previous two years. I *think* that was because the SixDays followed straight afterwards. As well as me, there was Graham&Mo, four-fifths of the Ross Family, Mairi both helping and competing, and Heather&Michael entered only on the two sprint races. After last year's performance – being out for more than two hours on a couple of occasions – I'd made the tactical decision to move down to medium, in the vain hope of saving my legs for the SixDays. And looking at the start list, many others seemed to have had similar thoughts.

The first day was billed as the most runnable. In C&I speak, we all took that to mean anyone MW21 and younger might be jogging maybe fifty percent of the time, whilst the rest of us would be plodding purposefully. The area was flat-ish (all things are relative) moorland overlooking the Calmac ferry terminal at Tarbert. An uphill start meant we couldn't see what was to come, which was ... a **lot** of rock features – boulders, crags, Scandinavian-style bare rock - and a lot of boggy tussocks. Boulders less than a metre didn't seem to be mapped; that took a while to get one's eye into. And rock that wasn't vertical wasn't marked as a crag. The map was 'small and perfectly formed: the long course went round twice. I don't remember making any big mistakes, but there was certainly a lot of hesitancy. The outcome was that I took around ninety minutes for what was (notionally) a long middle-distance event. That was around twice the course lead. Ho hum.

The next day, Sunday, was the 'rest day'. For the uninitiated, religious observance means that virtually nothing is open on Sunday, and there'd have been zero chance of permissions being granted for access. Even the local playground had a sign "No playing on Sunday". It's another world. Instead, I went for a long point-to-point run, thanks to an obliging lift by Bob Daly, which included the "Postman's Path" to Rhenigidale, which prior to the road being built in 1990 was the only overland access. The path was well made and easy to follow, but the monstrous zig-zags threading down through the crags would have meant that the Postie's thrice-weekly round would have been some undertaking.

Monday we were on the Isle of Scalpay, now connected to the Harris mainland by a bridge. We'd been discouraged from driving, and to use either cycles or a bus, which made the day seem even more of an adventure. Terrain was different too: less rock and less bog than the first day, and even some real actual runnable grass in places. The courses were a little shorter too, which all made for quicker runs for everyone.

Tuesday was another day of rock and bog, as were the next three days. I think I'd finally got the hang of the mapping by then, and was having (for me) a pretty good run, despite a first start, until ... we had a long diagonal downhill (to oblivion) leg. It was hard to keep to a

bearing, as there were some massive, sloping patches of bare rock to cross which was only feasible to do by going straight across following the crack network, or straight down the aptly named fall line. The outcome was that I had no idea whereabouts on the slope I was, there was no-one else around, and the tucked-in crag just wasn't making itself visible. After a pretty forlorn search, all I could do was abandon up the hill to something obvious, and then attack again on a bearing (and even then it was hard work). Ninety minutes again. Sigh.

Wednesday was a sprint distance, with a late afternoon start block, and fabulous weather, so most everyone treated it as a rest day to do holiday-type things with first. For me, that was a couple of hours jogging (definitely not running) around Scalpay on the Heritage Path, followed by a trip to one the Harris's best beaches, Luskentyre, for an open-water swim. Mo&Graham, meanwhile, had taken a boat trip out to the Shianta, which made an unadvertised landing. I was very jealous. The sprint itself was mostly more rock and bog – flat at least – followed by a few urban controls taking in pretty much the entirety of Tarbert. Michael didn't have a compass with him, which would have been tricky, and I'm betting that when he and Heather had entered a 'sprint' they were expecting something very different from what they got.

Thursday was another moorland day, but with the difference that the wet mist was down. This made the navigation much harder: the tried'n'tested technique of being able to run towards something prominent in the distance wasn't an option, sadly. Lots of people came seriously unstuck, particularly on the long legs, where it became very difficult to identify whether you'd gone far enough up or down any given rocky slope (of which there were many). All credit to the people who were game enough to make their route public.

Friday, the final day, was another sprint distance in the grounds of Lews Castle by Stornoway. This allowed people to get the early afternoon ferry back to Ullapool, and onwards to the SixDays. This sprint was a lovely mixture of paths, grass, formal gardens, open woods and some greener stuff. There was also some OOB, with one leg in particular catching people out, causing them to subsequently self-DSQ. I was quite out of sprint practice, so didn't distinguish myself particularly – running through the start on the 'DSQ' leg wasn't great, but certainly wasn't the worst – but it was still my best run of the week. Maybe I should stick to forests after all.

The ferry back was rammed with orienteers, and had a helicopter simulating a ship to air transfer, plus dolphins doing their thing. A great week, with great courses and fabulous weather. Apparently, next year the plan is for a week in Snowdonia/Anglesey.



Ben at the Tarbert urban/mountain sprint day (Day 4) Photo credit: Rhona / Mary Ross

Mairi manning the start on the same day (Day 4) (+ Phil Smithard?) Photo credit: Rhona / Mary Ross





View from Day 1 start, just above Tarbert (ferry below) (Photo credit: Rhona)



Beautiful Luskentyre beach (Ross-dog Rosie enjoying a swim) Photo credit: Mary Ross



Picturesque start on Isle of Scalpay Day 2 (credit Sarah Clough)



A Boat Trip to the Shiant Islands - Mo & Graham McIntyre

Having got the first 2 events of Coasts and Islands 2023 under our belts by Monday, we started to think about what we might do on the Wednesday during the day, since the orienteering was to be a semi-urban event out of Tarbert in the evening. Our start block was 4.15 to 4.45 so – what about a boat trip?

We had a look online and found a couple of options. One was full already and one cancelled due to low numbers – but wait – what was this? A ‘non-landing’ trip to the Shiant Islands with Isle of Harris Sea Tours. 12 of 12 places available – leaving Tarbert at 9.30 and lasting approximately 5 hours. We put our names down and hoped that the weather would be suitable and that more people would think this a good way to spend a day (and circa £100 per head).

The forecast was good, and on Tuesday evening Graham got a call to say the trip was on (8 others had booked). Terrific!

So what was my excitement based on? About 20 years ago I read 'Sea Room' by Adam Nicolson (owner of the islands at the time having been gifted them by his father for his 21st birthday, though the plan was to give them to his son Tom on his 21st so Tom is the current landowner). Adam's account of spending a year in the house (or Tighe) of the largest of the 3



islands Eilean an Tighe captured my imagination, with his stories of wild seas, dangerous rocks and tides, millions of seabirds, island weather, local people and customs, and Roman treasures dredged up by fishermen. So yes, I wanted to go and see for myself (even though a bit disappointed we wouldn't be landing).

We set out from Tarbert, passing the cottage we were staying in for the week on our way to the Scalpay Bridge (day 2 was on Scalpay so we'd cycled across the bridge, and also revisited for a walk to the Eilean Glas Lighthouse after running at Creag na Bunaig). Under the bridge and then heading East into the Minch.

On seeing a large flock of diving gannets, the captain headed over towards them, in case the fish they were catching were being sent up by whales. No whales in sight, but the gannets put on their world class diving show! Next excitement was more and more puffins whirring over the water, some with beaks full of sand eels. The seabird population here in the Minch seems to be doing comparatively well. As we neared the cliffs of Garbh Eilean, a juvenile sea eagle launched into the air, beleaguered by gulls. There are apparently a few of the eagles who nest here but the smaller birds make life difficult for them, ganging up and harassing them. We were then delighted to be told we would put ashore in the tender, for half an hour of exploring the rocks of Garbh Eilean with their myriads of nesting puffins, shags, guillemots and razor bills – we couldn't believe our luck! Perhaps the tour is billed as non-landing as that would be the norm on any day when it was too rough to get to the shoreline. There were already 3 or 4 folk ashore, and these turned out to be RSPB people ringing some of the birds. The islands are grazed by sheep and the shepherds visit at key points during the year, and the Nicolson's also allow free access to the RSPB, naturalists and other visitors. I spent the 30 minutes sitting quietly up on the rocks, with puffins popping out of holes in the rock all around me.

There were a few other boats anchored close to the islands, and some had people diving and snorkelling from them. Once back aboard we motored across to Eilean and Tighe and yes! We were to have an hour to roam around, eat our lunches, take photos! Graham and I decided to walk to the highest point on the island (of course) and had been advised to put our hands above our heads if dive-bombed by the pair of great skuas that consider the top their territory. Whilst I practised making myself into a skua aerial, Graham got some good photos of the skuas, with their handsome white bars on the under-wing. We descended

and had a look round the outside of the bothy – not sure if anyone resident, but there was a tent pitched on the ground behind it – possibly where the RSPB cohort had decided to stay. On arriving back at the narrow isthmus of land between Eilean an tìghe and Garbh Eilean, we were entertained by an eider duck and her flotilla of ducklings. By now the waves were building and getting aboard the tender to go back out to the boat was tricky.

On the way back to Tarbert we passed fairly close to the East coast of Harris, and saw some farms and homesteads on Bhalamus, abandoned as recently as the 1960s.

We got back in plenty of time to get changed and do the terrain/urban sprint around the “cracking area of rock and contour detail” immediately adjacent to Tarbert, a little sunburnt and very pleased that everything had fallen into place to allow us this extraordinary day out.



The Zagreb 4 days- Pat Bartlett

Three Bartlett/Twissells (myself, Su and Sam) decided to go for an overseas orienteering event, rather than the Coast and Islands. Looking at the options in that week, we selected the Zagreb 4 day, which could be combined with a few days holidaying on the Adriatic coast of Croatia.

The format of the event was middle, middle, long, urban; with the forest events all close to Zagreb and the urban/extended sprint in the centre.

We arrived in Zagreb on the Wednesday, ahead of the orienteering starting on the Thursday. Before arriving the news was warning of a 38⁰ heatwave – but as we checked into our accommodation a storm was raging, with horizontal rain and it was very windy. Our Airbnb owners assured us this was not normal for the time of the year!

On Thursday we arrived in good time for the first day's event which was in woodland on the outskirts of Zagreb, and received our numbers and large goody bag. Unfortunately the organisers were waiting to tell us there had been an 'apocalypse' with blown down trees across the area. The event was able to go ahead but with some controls altered (there were quite a few controls planned to be on rootstocks which were not now so prominent!). The area was a lot more tricky and physical with all the paths obscured and a bit random due to some routes not being passable. We all got round albeit taking longer than we'd expected for a middle.

No problems with spiders either....

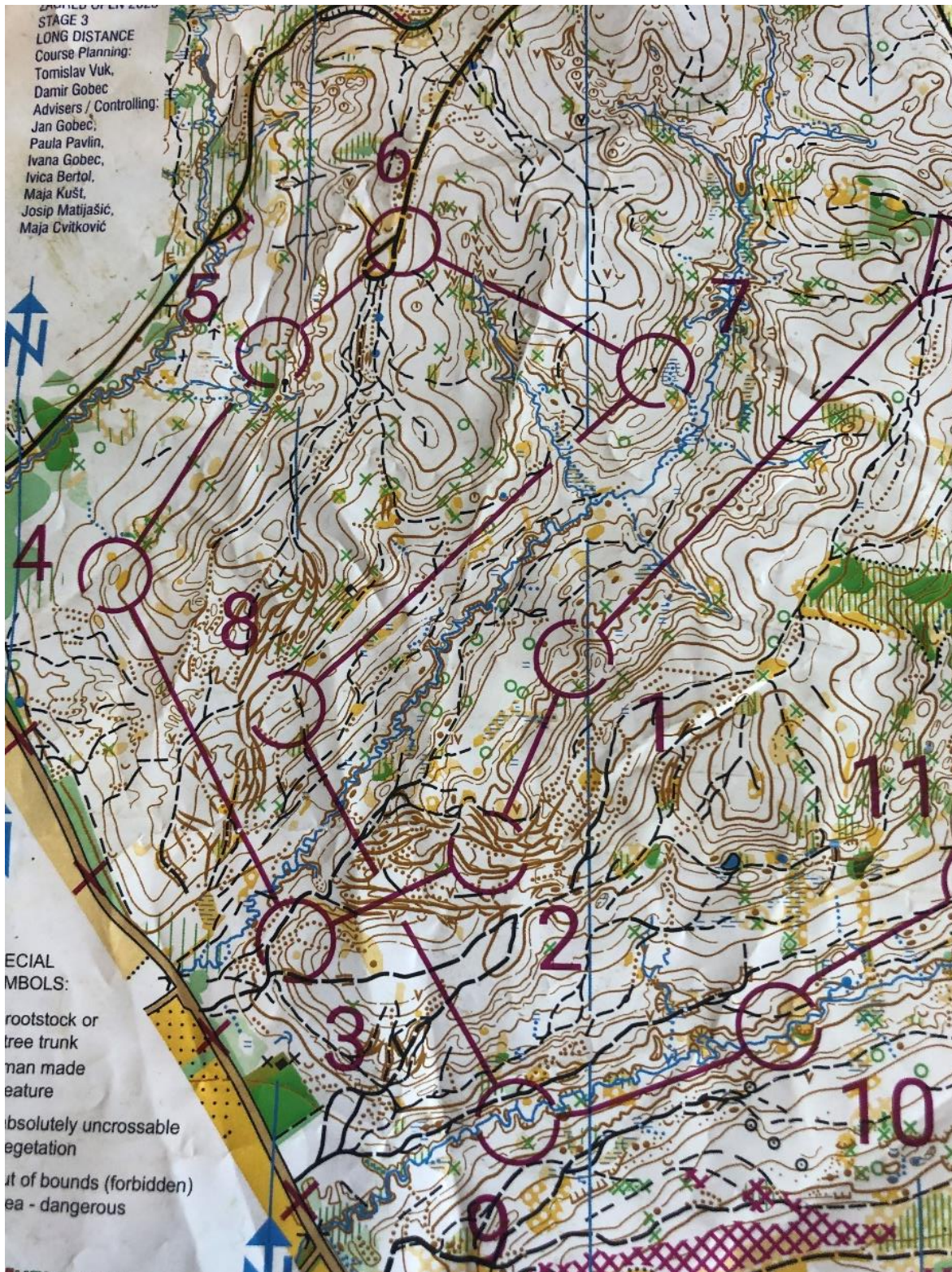
SPIDERS

Due to dry season it can be that you **will have a lot of small spiders** on the courses! They are making a lot of nets in the forest. Don't be afraid of them. They are too little to bite, and they will not bite you. You are not their food, you are not their enemy. They don't attack. They are not interested in you at all. By the end of the race you will be covered in spiderwebs, but it is harmless. When you run into a spiderweb (and you will!) just continue running without paying attention. It can be a little annoying but just ignore it and keep on running!



Fortunately the apocalypse did not have the same impact on Days 2 and 3 – which were both enjoyable forests with good running and plenty of contour detail.

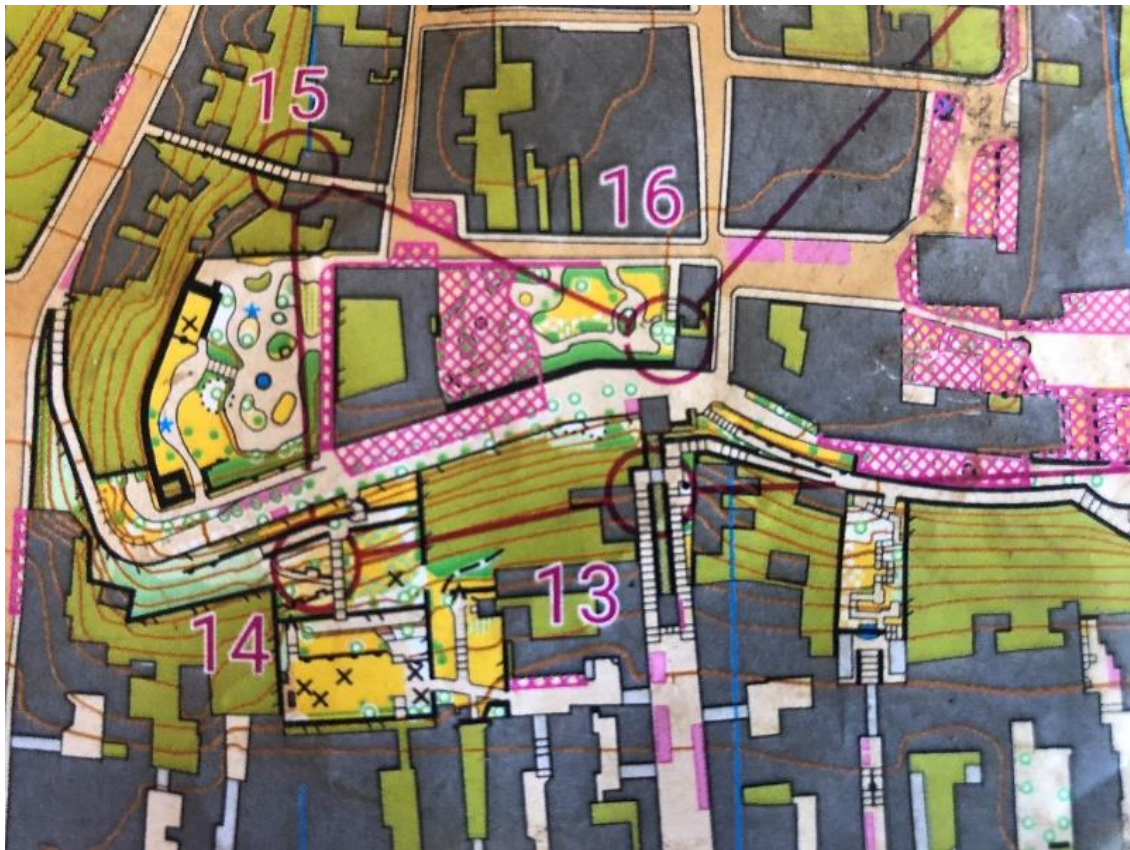
The map shows an extract from M55 on Day 3.



Day
4 the

urban/extended sprint was in the very centre of Zagreb, which was great. Some tourist

dodging was needed! This is an extract from M18 – control 13 is underneath a short funicular railway – a top tourist attraction of Zagreb.



The local club, OK Vihor, put in a huge amount of effort to stage the event and were very welcoming. There were just c200 competitors of which c100 were from overseas (4 from the UK, including the 3 of us). We would definitely recommend Croatia as a place to visit for an orienteering holiday!

Sam finishing Day 4 Dangerous and always hungry!



Farewell from Phil Murray (now SPOOK)

Hi all, after 2 years living in Scotland, I have recently left for good & sadly had to stop orienteering indefinitely.

On arrival in spring 2021, in top form, I quickly gained silver in the Scottish champs at M55L (my first time at Craig a Barns!) - followed by helping INT win Gold at the Mixed Sprint relays in Skelmersdale, with Jane and Paul. But my finest hour was my silver at the BOC Long at Braunton Burrows in October 2021 - a concentrated effort when in full fitness (I had just run my fastest half marathon since my 20s in the Great North Run).

Sadly, a (mild) virus just a few weeks after BOC Long led to an immediate and severe postviral decline (*). I tried to "fight it"/"not give in", which proved a foolish move. I was ill, daily, for the first six weeks.



Attempting a park run early in 2022 led to months of disability (I do not use that term lightly), and losing my WFH desk job. Whilst I felt I was on the way back by autumn last year ([winning an ELO "Blue" course](#)), I overdid it in December (a "steady 5km run") and was promptly ill for 3 months. At this point, I decided it was crazy to even try again. So: I have stopped all "running"/jogging/ O events - indefinitely.

I now reside in Sheffield, my old university city. You won't see me running in SYO colours, as I won't be running/attending major events. I will be focussing on my "recovery" & activities that do not hurt me (hiking! Climbing!)

Now - 2025.... who knows? We can but see. Never say never..... (An article on my plight was published in Compass Sport in early 2022 - the piece ended on an upbeat note; but, sadly, that wasn't my reality this time). I wish all INT members a happy & successful year! It was good getting to meet so many of you during my short stay. *Phil, now SPOOK [SHUOC Alumni] – NOT SYO!*

[VHI M55 individual winner](#), Pentlands, 2019 (racing for England! Eeeek.)

(*) as those who know me well know: I was extremely sick with ME/CFS for seven years in my 30s. I had gained a decent remission, and had 15+ good years before it struck again.

Photo: Phil, leg 1 one Mixed sprint relays, 2021 - INT 1st. August 2021.



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
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.

