



L ONDON O RIENTEERING K LUBB

# LOKation 148



Five Go ~~Marshalling~~ Orienteering

May 2008



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## Chairbound chatter - Glen J

Summer at last! After what seems like an eternity of grey, we finally emerged into summer weather this week (c. 9 May) with temperatures in the mid 20's and sunshine. Wonderful!

The last few months have been busy for the Klubb. At the AGM back in November we welcomed Graham Williams to the committee as Klubb Captain taking over from Andrew Redington who had done a sterling job over many years. We followed up a week later with the Klubb Christmas Dinner, happily revived after being absent last year, and around 20 members enjoyed seasonal fare at the ever popular Fleet Tandoori.

Boxing Day saw the usual Score Event at Trent Park, with attendance up this year at 95 from an average of 75-80 in previous years. For many people this event has become an institution, so should we change? Now that we have Hyde Park mapped, we could look at moving to there this year, variety being the spice of life and all that, but there may be some who feel that TP works well and we should stick with it - let me know if you have a strong view either way.



In February we ran our second Regional in 51 weeks on Holmbury, having got special dispensation to cut short the usual 1 year minimum gap because of the JK having 'pinched' our other great area there; Leith Hill. Happily the weather was a lot kinder to us this year (not difficult as those who stood in hours of heavy rain last year will testify) and the event was a great success. Once again entries were up significantly (from 481 in 2007 to 608 in 2008): a little of this may have reflected the better weather, but the imminence of the JK and the dearth of other events probably contributed to the good turnout. Feedback was good and a vote of thanks is due to the small band of LOK volunteers who worked hard to make the event run smoothly, led by the planning of Ronan and Julie, controlling of Tim Pugh, and

organising of Neil. With this second event on the area we have been able to cover all of the costs of the remapping which took place in 2007 so we now have a 'free' map from which the Klubb can benefit in future years.

Not long after Holmbury, the clarion call went out once again for volunteers: this time so that we could play our part at the JK organising the car park on day 2 at Leith Hill. I planned this (with some concern given the large number of cars we were expecting to have to fit into a limited space!) and the forward-thinking paid dividends as we only just managed to get everyone in! The weather was truly grim, with wind and sleet for a good part of the morning, but notwithstanding this everyone remained good humoured and LOK performed splendidly. No-one queued to get in, everyone was parked efficiently, and everyone was got out (with a bit of pushing and towing here and there). Not only that, but after a morning of standing in the sleet waving at cars, Pete Sacares even went on to win M40S on the day (perhaps that

should be your new training routine, Pete?). Many intended to go to day 3 at Ashdown Forest, but after the ardour of day 2 several (myself included) decided that a good lunch at home sounded more appealing than another stretch in a cold muddy car park!

Barely back from the February and March exercise, we were in action again in April, putting on the Score Event in Hyde Park on 17<sup>th</sup>. The idea for this had initially come about when we were approached by ActivityMix to run a corporate challenge event for them. This proved an ideal spur to get us going, David Rosen very kindly re-mapped the park (and St. James and Green Park too even though we didn't use them this time), I planned and Ronan and Julie controlled with Neil doing the IT. We actually ran 2 events in parallel - first off at 18.45 the Open event which attracted an excellent 103 runners for a 45 minute score -and then at 19.00 the Corporate Challenge when another 96 people (running as pairs) headed off on the same course but for 60 minutes.

Although HP is clearly not very challenging orienteering, the dilemma of which route to take and which controls to try for in the limited time available was one which provided some food for thought and there was a good spread of results with only 2 runners managing to get all the controls in the time allowed. We were fortunate with the weather: a beautiful Spring evening with blue skies albeit pretty darn chilly! (brass monkey comes to mind). A memorable moment for me was as I was giving a pep talk to the Corporate people on the bandstand: we turned and watched the open race as the whistle blew for the start, and watched as people ran off in every conceivable direction ("Right you lot, all clear what you have to do then?!"). Once again the volunteering was first rate and many Lökkies helped ensure a rapid clear up in the gathering gloom.

As we head into the warmer months we have a couple of 'small O' races on Hampstead Heath (one last week planned by David Rosen and one in early June planned by Pete Sacares) and then we'll be into the annual Frolics challenge with Greg marshalling our endeavours towards a glorious victory I earnestly hope.

Turning from day-to-day matters to a more long term view, I raised at the AGM (and in previous Lokations) the challenge we face to grow participation and membership if we are to reverse a long-term trend of declining membership. I am pleased that we have made some progress. After kindly offering to get involved, Glen Slade has been co-opted onto the committee in the new role of Publicity Officer and has come with some good ideas which you can read about elsewhere in this issue. His influence was immediately felt at the Hyde Park Score where the corporate competitors were all sent away with a specially designed leaflet.

In a similar vein we opened the email distribution list a few months ago so that instead of it being just for members, it is now open to anyone who wishes to subscribe, either via a link on the website or by filling in their email address on an event entry form. The idea of course is that if we can spread the word on events more then perhaps that will convert into more participants. We now have 86 non-member subscribers and very few people choose the unsubscribe option which is at the top of every email.

So there has been some good progress, but the next step is for us to look at our events calendar. Since growth in membership and participation necessarily means bringing new people into the sport, we need to consider how 'beginner friendly' our events are. Holmbury Hill and Leith Hill may be fabulous places for experienced orienteers, but they are perhaps less appealing for potential beginners unless they happen to live pretty close by. And at big events like these, paying attention to and helping a 'newbie' can often be overlooked in the effort of making things run smoothly for 500-600 competitors, especially with a limited number of volunteers. Smaller events, in accessible places like the London Parks, with a special cohort of volunteers just there to help newcomers could be a way for us to raise early-stage participation. I don't think they necessarily have to be heavy on the organisation, quite the contrary really: a small informal event is probably more appealing for a beginner learning the ropes anyway. Nevertheless our limitation is (as ever) finding people to organise events like this.

This is of course the perennial problem, but surely there is potentially a virtuous circle here - if we run more events like this, we can attract more participants, and if they turn into members then potentially we have more helpers at future events so we find it easier to put on more events....

I want to explore this a bit more in coming months, but with 4 up-to-date maps of Hampstead Heath, Trent Park, Alexandra Park and Hyde Park we have the opportunity *now* - so if you would consider helping put on something of this sort please email me ([chairman@londonorienteering.co.uk](mailto:chairman@londonorienteering.co.uk)).

And finally, can I pass a big vote of thanks to our star Editor for putting together yet another splendid edition of Lokation at the same time as contributing to the growth of Klubb membership by bearing our youngest member - Hebe.

See you somewhere in a forest (or park) soon.

Glen



From the thicket - Camilla

Clearly certain members of the klubb have had enough of my puzzles! I was delighted to receive a deluge of articles for this edition and so I do hope you, dear Reader, enjoy the magazine. First, Klubb business and an opportunity for Glen Slade to introduce his ideas for publicity for the club - do send him feedback and encouragement afterwards. Then there is a range of experiences on offer: from Ian Bullock's novice view of the JK (and feedback to those who undertook to prepare him!) to Greg Birdseye's litany of pitfalls in score events. Nick Vass has produced some timeless advice - and a bedtime story. Thank you very much to all the authors who put pen to paper. May this inspire more of the same in late summer, ready for the autumn edition.

By the way, we now have two Glens. I have used: Glen J= Chairman, Glen S=Publicity Officer.

As for my orienteering recently? After walking at October's events to try to encourage labour to begin, unsuccessfully, I began again with a walk in the woods in December with my three-week-old daughter Hebe in a (baby) sling. She did a few more Orange courses with us before getting too 'grown-up' (aka 'heavy') to go by sling. Andrew and I have now graduated to 'split times' for events while we wait for her to master walking and the string course! In the meantime, Andrew is starting her education early, as shown in this picture on a volcano walk in the Canaries. Hebe is the youngest Lokkie by 9 days. Congratulations to Grace French, the second-youngest member, born just a bit earlier in November last year.

Camilla

*Start as you mean to carry on...?*



## Klubb Business

### ⊥ Future events

- As usual, here is the calendar of LOK events. As Glen's article records, we have had a very busy time recently and put on many successful events. One big and two smaller events to go before we hit 2009, a notionally 'fallow' year. Please consider whether you can do your bit to help out in these remaining events - especially in the **major** roles. You can be encouraged by knowing how strong the club's volunteering has been for supporting roles recently. Contact Neil or Glen if you want to discuss the roles available.

Event / Date		Planner	Organiser
2008 July 13 <sup>th</sup> Frolic	Alexandra Palace	John Hardy	
2008 Oct 12 <sup>th</sup> District	Hampstead Heath	Paul Todd	
2008 Dec 26 Score	Location TBC		
-			
2009 – Frolic	Location TBC		
2009 – Sept 27 <sup>th</sup> District	Hampstead Heath TBC		
2010 March Compass Sport Cup	Leith Hill or Holmbury		

⊥ **Julie Cleary's fundraising - a note from Ronan**

- Two years ago Julie suffered a brain haemorrhage which at the time left her paralysed on her left side. With the support of friends, family, professionals etc. and her own steely determination and sheer hard effort, she has made a tremendous recovery and is now back competing again.
- Among the support structures that helped Julie greatly in her recovery was a charity called **Different Strokes**, which helps younger stroke sufferers in the UK and Ireland. To acknowledge their help in a practical way, Julie has decided to undertake a challenge during May to raise funds for Different Strokes: she plans on completing 50 kilometres of orienteering races and is seeking sponsorship for her efforts. To facilitate donations and to provide updates on her progress, she has set up an online fundraising page under the auspices of Bmycharity. If you would like to support Julie in her challenge and donate (or even just read more about it), the link is <https://www.bmycharity.com/juliecleary>. Don't be put off by the amounts which are already listed - they are from family! All donations welcome no matter how small: you can sponsor her per km or as a lump sum. If you don't want to donate through the website, you can give me cash at an event sometime and we will pay it on. Thank you. Ronan

⊥ Congratulations to Anne Power for taking on the South East Badge scheme.

⊥ **Are you getting it regularly?**

- The LOK email circular goes out approximately every fortnight, packed full of latest breaking news and fixtures info. If you haven't been receiving it for some reason, email me ([chairman@londonorienteering.co.uk](mailto:chairman@londonorienteering.co.uk)) and I will ensure you are added to the list. Glen J



## Introducing Glen Slade - LOK's Publicity Officer

I am very excited to have been appointed Publicity Officer for LOK.

I joined LOK about 3 years ago, when I had started training for the London Marathon and was looking for some variety in my running. I had done a bit of orienteering at school and knew I enjoyed the countryside runs plus a bit of brain engagement.

I have always been intrigued by the nature of LOK as a club. While very welcoming to the navigationally incompetent such as myself, it is quite clearly a club run by die-hards for die-hards. I think it's a phenomenal achievement that LOK stages as many events as it does, often engaging up to half its membership in organisation.

By background I am a strategist and an entrepreneur. I've been asking myself for some time what it would take to make LOK more successful - to reverse its declining membership and reward the hard work of members with significantly expanded participation. So when Glen J suggested that the club needed a Publicity Officer, a quiet word afterwards soon translated into my formal appointment to the role.



I believe that LOK has two fantastic assets. The first is its (die-hard) members who have an expert knowledge of the sport and the ability to stage events for all levels of participant. The second is London; we own the brand, the catchment and the running areas that make up this great city.

The opportunity for the club is amplified by the national mega-trend towards healthier lifestyles, with people looking to keep their bodies fit through exercise and healthy eating, plus their minds active through everything from Sudoku to Brain Training games.

So my first question to the LOK committee was: what do you want to achieve with these assets? Is our first priority to build membership, increase participation or bring in money? The answer was that we should above all increase participation in the sport, which will ultimately lead to more club members and better club performance in competition. Money is at this time a secondary consideration as the club finances are healthy and events are usually profitable.

These answers, which I fully support, tell me where we need to look for new participants. We need people with a reasonable level of fitness that we can engage over an extended period to first try orienteering, then improve their skills and eventually seek to become competitive in the sport. That means we're looking at people who already do other sports, who use a gym or who are at least interested in building their fitness to the point where they can run for an hour and call it fun. Conversely we are not prioritising groups such as ramblers who like the outdoors, but who might not be able to run a mile, nor people who are generally inactive.

Engaging with our target groups should be relatively straight forward - I plan to focus on running clubs, health clubs and corporate event organisers. An example of the latter is ActivityMix, for whom LOK organised the Hyde Park score event in April. They brought 47 pairs of competitors, while our parallel event attracted over 100 orienteering regulars.

The Hyde Park event demonstrates some of the issues that I want to address as we move forward. Firstly we need to recognise that different groups of participants have different motivations and requirements from an event. This translates into different communication messages and channels.

So the 'regular orienteers' were given a Frolics flyer that described the inter-club competition, gave grid refs for the venues and described the courses by colour code. The ActivityMix participants received a flyer that challenged them to improve their skills by coming to further events, including the frolics series, and to visit the LOK website for more info. Our messages will be different again for communications with running clubs, health clubs and the general public.

The corollary of the different messages is that we need to be aware of the need to adapt our club and its events to fit better with our new participant groups. We need to make sure that newbies get sufficient support with navigation so their enjoyment of orienteering isn't ruined too often by the frustration of being lost in a forest. Also, we will need over time to expand the number of events and when they are held - not everyone can make Sunday morning.

The next event of special focus for our publicity drive will be the LOK leg of the Frolics on 13th July at Alexandra Park. I'm particularly keen to expand our circle of volunteers so as to provide optimum support to newbies. You don't need to be a star, just know the ropes so you can help them register and get to the start, perhaps explain the basics of map reading, or even head off round the orange course with them. If you're willing to help (after doing your own run competitively) then please let me or Glen J know. Thanks.

If any readers have comments or suggestions on any aspect of this article then please do contact me at [publicity@londonorienteering.co.uk](mailto:publicity@londonorienteering.co.uk).

Glen S



## Summer orienteering in London - Pre-Frolics!

Branch out from the Thursday night on the Heath. Or, if that isn't convenient for you, see if these locations are better. For up-to-date information/directions/prices etc check [www.sloweb.org.uk](http://www.sloweb.org.uk) or the named website. Everyone is welcome to all events!

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DAY/TIME</u>	<u>VENUE</u>	<u>TYPE OF EVENT</u>	<u>FURTHER DETAILS</u>
20 May	Tuesday evening	Crystal Palace (provisional)	tbc	
26 May	Monday morning	The Nower, Dorking	Surrey Hills trail races (& orienteering)	<a href="http://www.sloweb.org.uk/events/20080526">www.sloweb.org.uk/events/20080526</a>
27 May	Tuesday evening	rest!		
3 June	Tuesday evening	Putney Heath (provisional)	tbc	<a href="http://www.sloweb.org.uk">www.sloweb.org.uk</a>
5 June	Thursday evening	Hampstead Heath	Medium Race	<a href="http://www.londonorienteering.co.uk">www.londonorienteering.co.uk</a>
10 June	Tuesday evening	tbc ***	Medium Race	<a href="http://www.sloweb.org.uk">www.sloweb.org.uk</a>
17 June	Tuesday evening	Mole Valley - tbc	Score	<a href="http://www.mvoc.org">www.mvoc.org</a>
24 June	Tuesday evening	Ham Riverside	Trail Challenge	<a href="http://www.sloweb.org.uk/trail">www.sloweb.org.uk/trail</a>



## Standby for the Frolics - from Greg Birdseye

It's coming round to Frolics time again folks. Well prepared after those training events at Leith Hill and South Ashdown over Easter?... Fully relaxed after that holiday in Inverness? Forget about the Croatia Open and the Gotland 3-days. Cancel those plans for APOC in Seoul. We're talking about the big one, here in London!

There are five events again this year: our own LOK event at Ally Pally again (helpers wanted of course) and several old favourites as well as a completely new area near Epsom discovered by Mole Valley with a memorable name, Nork Park.

The usual format with the cunningly devised handicap system to make it even more exciting. For the last two years, it's gone right down to the final event before the winner won (although the handicap system is obviously not quite cunning enough as SLOW sneaked through on the rails last year). We need at least 6 runners at each event - please turn up and be counted!

More information is available on the LOK site (<http://www.londonorienteeing.co.uk>) and as usual look out for the individual club flyers nearer the time.

June 29	Wimbledon Common OS sheet 176 TQ 216723 ( <a href="http://www.sloweb.org.uk">www.sloweb.org.uk</a> )
July 6	Addington Hills, nr Croydon OS sheet 177 TQ 355643 ( <a href="http://www.dfok.co.uk">www.dfok.co.uk</a> )
<b>July 13</b>	<b>Alexandra Park OS sheet 176 TQ 296897 (<a href="http://www.londonorienteeing.co.uk">www.londonorienteeing.co.uk</a>)</b>
July 20	Nork Park, nr Epsom OS sheet 187 TQ 236593 ( <a href="http://www.mvoc.org">www.mvoc.org</a> )
July 27	Whippendell Woods, nr Watford OS sheet 176 TQ 091978 ( <a href="http://www.happyherts.org.uk">www.happyherts.org.uk</a> )



## Emit or SI - Which do you prefer?? by David Rosen



v.



Recently Emit electronic punching was used at the British Championships in Inverness and in 2007 we used Emit at the JK in the Forest of Dean. In the South-East, most events use SportIdent (SI), but venture into South Central and you could well find that it is an Emit event.

So what are the pros and cons of the two systems?

### **Emit Pros**

- You just put the Emit "brick" in the unit and lift it out again - no 'waiting' for feedback
- Has a backup in the form of a paper card that clips in the back. When you place the Emit brick in the unit, it gets a pin prick in the card in a unique position which can be used to prove you visited the control if the electronic punch is present. You can choose to just touch the end of the brick on the control unit, in which case you won't get a backup pin prick.
- Version 3 bricks have a display which tells you which number control you punched last (both sequence number and code).
- Bricks have a long battery life (about 5 years)
- For the organiser, the control units are very small and simple. They require very little maintenance.

### **Emit - Cons**

- The brick is relatively large and sits in the palm of your hand. Therefore many people find that it cannot be held in the same hand as the compass. If it is in your map hand, it makes punching more difficult.
- Many people find the punching process slow and awkward. To punch properly (and get the backup, the brick has to be put in the unit in the correct orientation. Of course, 50% of the time, you seem to be approaching the unit from the wrong angle so you have to orientate yourself in order to fit the brick in the unit. In particular, old people and very young children can find it tricky.
- The backup is not reliable - many people choose not to bother to punch properly and so don't get a pin prick. Also, the card can fall out.
- The backup card is tricky to interpret.
- There is no feedback on Version 2 bricks.
- Bricks have a battery in which will eventually run out. Batteries cannot be replaced.
- The display on Version 3 can be tricky to interpret. If you mistakenly punch an extra control, the sequence becomes confusing.

### **SportIdent Pros**

- The SI card (dibber) has no battery so its life is essentially unlimited and they are extremely reliable.
- The dibber is very small and fits on a finger so it does not stop you carrying something else in your hand.
- The punching operation is very easy and well-defined - put the card into the unit and wait for the feedback (beep and light) to confirm that the punch has been recorded in the card.

### **SportIdent Cons**

- There is no physical backup. There is an electronic record of each punch stored in the control unit, but normally that is not allowed to be used to verify a punch.
- The beep may give away the position of the control flag (though normally if you can hear the beep, you can also see the competitor punching)
- At a busy control, it is possible to confuse the beep with that from another competitor punching at an adjacent unit.

- In bright sunlight, the light may be difficult to see. In noisy conditions, the beep may be difficult to hear.
- There is no indication of how many controls you have visited so far.

Each system has its supporters. For some LOK members, the punching system can be a major factor when deciding which event to go to.

On a world-wide scale, it is good to have competition in the e-punching market. But within one country, I think that having two systems is a significant negative factor. It confuses newcomers and annoys experienced orienteers. However, it is difficult to know what British Orienteering can do to improve the situation, given that the two systems are now quite well established. Anyway, most people would agree that Emit and SI are better than the old paper cards and pin punching!

David



## A Learning experience - by Ian Bullock

Having taken part in the Thursday evening trainings session for a few months, I signed up as a fully paid-up member of LOK. I then decided to take the next step and sign up for my first competitive orienteering event. The Easter JK was a few weeks away and was usefully located near London so I enlisted the advice of my new friends in the Stag Pub after training to make sure I didn't make any disastrous mistakes.

How to get there? Having printed off the road directions I was pretty much ready for this, though Matt took much amusement from the fact that I would be plugging the nearest Intersection position into my newly acquired TomTom: apparently SatNav is not standard equipment for Orienteers!

Which course? David suggested the M21 Novice race which I duly signed up for.

Anything else? No not really, just good luck and hopefully see you there!

So the day of the race came and the SatNav performed grandly to get me there on time. Well, saying that, having checked my start time was an hour after my arrival I praised my luck when I discovered that the start times had in fact been available on the internet the preceding day. My first stroke of luck got me to the event at the perfect time.

I purchased a compass and received my dibber and some friendly words of encouragement from the registration tent. All going smoothly so far, but why was I the only one wearing shorts? I answered that myself: clearly everyone else was put off by the driving snow and they were all a bunch of Southern Nancys!

So I arrived at the start with a couple of minutes to go, met by a bunch of hopping Orienteers trying to keep warm before their start. I meandered to the front and asked a

marshal where to go, he directed me to clear my dibber. The blank expression on my face obviously registered to him that I was a debutant and he frog-marched me rather impatiently to a little plastic machine which is apparently what the controls look like (thanks for warning me, guys!).

On my return to the start I was then a minute late and the man in the tent could not have been more annoyed to see me, his papers needed turning and plastic covers refolding to tick my name off. But I was ready to go....

... But I wasn't. It was then that the marshal noticed my hairy legs and informed me that I couldn't participate! "No problem" I said, "I've got a pair in the car!" so off I jogged the half mile back to the car (which was diligently parked on the edge of the gravel track, facing downhill towards the exit, more on that later). The snow was coming down even harder and I realised that the thick cotton sweatpants I had were probably not the most suitable attire, but it was all I had so on they went on and I returned to the start, to join the front of the crowd and move into the pen area.

I moved to the correct map tray and picked one up to have a little check of the course, "PUT THAT DOWN" is all I heard from another Marshal. Great, I was now the centre of attention for the 10 keen orienteers and was flagged immediately as the cheat! Also I am sure that there were a few smirks at my trousers that were now rapidly collecting several kilos of water from the Snow.

Anyway, we set off and the first 2 controls came easily. The third took about 20 minutes and I was cursing the nice lady who obviously sold me a dysfunctional compass. It eventually came into view and the next 8 controls came without so much as a hitch. The scenery was beautiful with the snow settled on the trees and I was warmed up now so all was good in the world.

The heavy trousers were becoming a bit of a hindrance by now - I think they cost me a couple of minutes - but my lack of speed on the downhill sections probably cost me more time. Apparently a pair of Brooks white road-running trainers are not the best footwear to provide grip on muddy, wet steep surfaces (again, thanks for the exhaustive, guys!).

So I got all of the controls and got to the finishing line in what I thought was a pretty good time, until I realised that my 25-minute delay at the start was included!!! Gutted, I think that moved me from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> in my class standings (though there were only 4 starters!!!)

I bumped into David, who spotted the trouser error immediately but graciously congratulated me on a good performance. Now just the stricken cars to navigate past as their wheels span in the muddy field. My sensible parking choice worked wonders as I was off and home for a slap-up Sunday Roast!

All in all, a great day and a great experience. I have bought the trail shoes and the running trousers now so I'm all set, but forgive me for not buying the plastic visor quite!!!!

Ian



## The Hyde Park hiccup (and others) by Greg Birdseye



So who was the very experienced orienteer who thought the Hyde Park score event was 60 minutes not 45? (Well, grown-up score events are *always* 60 mins, aren't they?). But of course I knew it was really only 45, at least right up until the exact moment when the start whistle blew. And then an overstressed brain had me checking my watch and counting down from 60.

Confidently heading towards the finish with a few minutes to spare to be on the safe side ("let's not take any risks going for that way off control behind Wellington Arch"). I'd had a good run so far, albeit rather slower than the sprinters on such a fast open area (memo to mapper: where were all those white bits?). With hindsight, might it have been a little puzzling *not* seeing lots of other people converging on Miriam and Nick guarding the finish flag? And at the tents, everybody just standing round chatting, not gasping for breath? Slow dawning (or perhaps it was the

sun setting at nearly eight on a mid-April evening?) on reaching the download table: Oh, \*\*\*\*\*!!

And could this be part of a worrying trend? At Downley and Naphill Commons in February there was a similarly total mind-blank having punched control 7, and actually going rather well I thought. It may have been the sight of the nation's M60 nemesis, Mike Murray, cruising past but I immediately started navigating from control 8 to control 9. I even thought it a bit strange when he ran off in what I thought wasn't quite the optimal direction - never mind, ignore him, always have confidence in your own decisions. Oh, vanity!

Not surprisingly, given I was starting from a different place, it took quite a while to find control 9, including several attempts at relocation. And again not the slightest hint of an inkling that the decision-making might not have been perfect until the download supremo said the fateful words: "missed control 8." I even started to walk along the table to the Queries end: Oh, \*\*\*\*\*!!

But then there's nothing new under the O sun is there? Even discounting all the times the compass has been set the wrong way round, failing to see the blindingly obvious path, running uphill instead of down, forgetting to check the scale, running off the edge of the map, punching the wrong control, and even losing the control card (remember those?) ....., there are the ones that are permanently etched into the memory. Picking up the course 5 map

instead of course 6 at Long Valley in around 2000 (an intentioned choice, not simply bad aiming in the grab and dash) and not realising until the code for control 1 didn't quite match the one I'd carefully navigated to. And then taking longer to get back to the start than it did to find the wrong control.

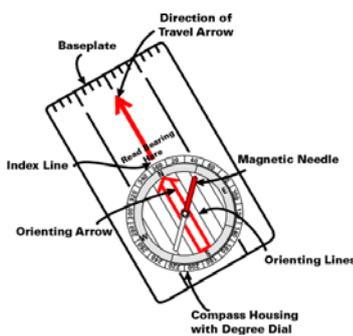
And another score event, long ago in the 1980s at Mytchett/ Windmill Hill. Just before setting out in the snow, a deliberate decision to take my watch off and leave it in the car so it wouldn't get wet. A quick glance at the (absent) watch after some minutes and a decision to carry on regardless. A negative overall score on that occasion, so perhaps Hyde Park wasn't quite that bad after all?

Ah well, back to the drawing board; can't win all the time I suppose (although once in a while would be nice, or even just once....).

Greg



## Extreme Orienteering - wisdom from Nick Vass



Source: [www.Princeton.edu](http://www.Princeton.edu)

Let's face it, we've all done it at one time or another - you've arrived at an event and found, quelle horreur, you've left your compass at home!

**DON'T PANIC.** With a few simple items you can swiftly make one for yourself.

You will need: a piece of iron or steel like a 3" sewing needle; a float e.g. a piece of cork or polystyrene cup; a sandwich box with a see-through lid, big enough for the needle to float and not touch the sides; water; a marker pen; a short stick; two small stones; a magnet.

If you do not have a magnet you may also need: a battery; a length of wire; matches; a hammer; tongs; a large flat stone.

**Method.** You need to magnetise the needle. The easiest way is to hold it by one end and point it away from yourself, then stroke it continually with the magnet in one direction for a minute or two. If you do not have a magnet then the next easiest way is to take a length of wire and, working from one end to the other, tightly coil it around the needle leaving a bit free at each end so you can connect it to the battery. Connect the wire to the battery and leave for a few minutes.

No magnet? No battery? No problem! Build a small fire and create some hot embers. Place the needle in the embers and blow on them so that the needle gets as near to red-hot as you can get it. Remove the needle from the embers with the tongs and hold it on the large flat stone so that one end is pointing north (don't know where that is? don't worry, read on) and hammer the south end until the needle has cooled down.

Now that you have a magnetised needle you need to fix it to the float, fill the sandwich box with water and put the needle and float in the water. Let it settle and, when still, the needle will be pointing north-south.

Before putting the lid on the box you need to mark the end of the needle that is pointing north with your marker pen.

To find north you will need your short stick and two small stones. Place the stick vertically in the ground and mark the tip of the shadow on the ground with one stone. Wait 20 to 30 minutes and mark the tip of the shadow on the ground with another stone. Take the box with the floating needle in it and place it between the stones, then position yourself so that the first stone you put down is to your left and the second stone to your right. When the needle stops swinging the end farthest away from you is pointing north. To find north more accurately you need to carry out this procedure as near to midday as possible, at an equinox and as close to the equator as you can get.

Take your marker pen and mark the needle. Put the lid on the box and you now have a fully functioning compass.

Enjoy your run. Nick



## Janet & John Go Orienteering - donated by Nick Vass

*Along the lines of the books you read to children at bedtime, over and over again!*

Here is Janet.

Here is John.

Janet and John get up early on a Sunday morning.

They drive a long way to a small wood.

Janet and John pay a pound to park their car in a muddy field.

How odd!

Janet is wearing tight shiny trousers and a gaudy top.

So is John.

They *do* look silly.

Janet and John queue-up at a draughty tent.

They give a man money to let them run around the woods.

This *is* fun.

Janet and John walk to the woods.

There is a big flag that says Start.

Janet has a map and a plastic finger.

A fat man in a wooly hat blows a whistle and Janet runs away.  
She is not frightened, she is racing.

See Janet run. She is fast.  
Janet finds a flag.  
Janet puts her plastic finger in a box that goes Beep!  
What fun!

Janet runs more. She finds another flag.  
And another box that goes Beep!  
She does this a lot.

At last. Janet finds a flag that says Finish.  
She stops running.  
Janet is smiling and talking to her friends.  
She *has* had fun.

The fat man blows his whistle again.  
John has a map and a plastic finger.  
John runs away. He is racing too.

John finds a flag and box.  
Beep! Hurrah!!

John runs and runs.  
John falls over a tree root into the mud.  
John is muddy.  
John says a bad word.  
Oh dear. Bad John.

John finds more flags and boxes.  
Beep! Beep!

Then John finds the flag that says Finish.  
John is smiling.

Janet and John look at the results.  
Janet has beaten John by 30 seconds.  
Janet laughs. Hurrah!

John has stopped smiling.  
John says the bad word again.  
"Bad" John. Bad, bad John.

Janet and John get in their car and go home.  
Janet is smiling. John is not.  
Just like going to the supermarket.

Aren't Sundays "fun"?



## Draft of your article (or doodle) for the next edition

*Two pages to give you a chance to edit it a bit - Ed.*





## Fixtures

Orienteering Fixtures are available via the following websites:

**LOK webpage:** <http://www.londonorienteeing.co.uk/>

**South-east:** <http://www.seoa.org.uk/>

**BOF:** <http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/fixtures/fixtures.htm>



## Club Meetings

The last Tuesday of every month is the club meeting held in bar at the Royal Free Hospital Recreation Club, Fleet Road, Hampstead, London NW3. (See below for directions.) Kick off is **8.00pm**. Everyone is welcome; fresh views on club/SEOA /BOF business are always needed.

Dates are as follows:

June 24

July 29

August - none

September 30

October 30

November 20 +AGM

December - no meeting



## Club Training/Drinking

A group of members meet on a Thursday, at 6.30pm, at the Royal Free Hospital Recreation Club in Fleet Road (near the junction with Pond Street) Hampstead NW3 for a training run, sometimes technique training, and afterwards for a beer and to plan the arrangements for attending the coming weekends orienteering (lifts, timings etc). This is usually about 8.15pm in The Stag pub on the corner of Fleet Road and Lawn Road, NW3, and good food is served until 9pm.