

Interlopers

October 2020 Newsletter

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Autumn 2020 club newsletter: a veritable feast of tales from this peculiar year. Despite the restrictions and lack of orienteering events, members have been busy on their feet nonetheless, and in some cases from their armchairs. Did you notice that Loch Doon got cancelled just before Lockdown? [Storm Jorge not Covid..] Apparently a BOK event in the Test Valley went ahead but some people are still waiting for their results.

Having sworn not to get involved in producing a newsletter, it seems that, like Covid, it'll be with us for ever in some form or other and no escape however much one hides... This one has been produced largely due to your editor's knee being held together literally by bits of string and sticky tape, meaning a bit more time to waffle away on a keyboard. However, you won't find much news (see the weekly INTEResting email for that); is it a magazine, even? - and it'll be very much INTermittent. Given the evident enthusiasm to contribute, the omens are good for having another one some time this winter, so please do write for it! I've already been offered a couple of articles on adventures this summer; we'll all welcome inspiration for holidays that will surely be possible next year, won't we... You'll notice that the format here isn't the most sophisticated ever, so if anyone has graphic design skills and could help with the next, I'd be delighted to hear from you.

This edition includes, amongst other things: Paul's virtual marathon, William's virtual competitions, Ali's actual mountain marathon, all sorts of real and virtual running by the McIntyres, all sorts of café reviews by Ray, sage advice from Mike Stewart as 'a last word', and your usual favourites such as View from the Chair and Nippers' News. No Covid computer simulation scoops, but I'm still on an older version of Excel so maybe it's lurking there with another 16,000 or so contributions. There might be a Covid joke along the way, though that's risky; some people will probably never get it, and it might just end in tiers.

Enjoy!

Katherine Ivory



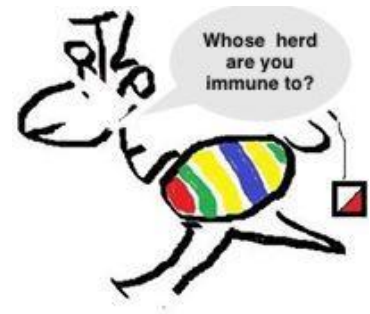
Nov 2020 <https://interlopers.org.uk/uploads/newsletters/NL35-8011.pdf>

These chillier, more wintry days provide some highly invigorating and enjoyable running and such were my thoughts as I neared the end of a jaunt around Holyrood Park, going at full tilt down the Radical Road. Here I whizzed past some less energetic members of the public, a man and his wife and two children. As the wind burned past my ears(!) I distinctly heard him say "Crackers!" and his wife reply "Aye, crackers!" Are we really just members of an elite group of nut-cases? However, onto newsletter business and I

Musings from the Chair – by Colin Eades

After the Interlopers AGM a few weeks ago, somehow, I have ended up in the chair. Firstly, I would like to thank Max for his hard work in trying to keep Interlopers together over the last few years. We have already hosted our first local event under Covid Secure guidance, many thanks to Katherine for taking on the Covid guidance role and to organising the Mortonhall event .

We are faced with a challenge to get the sport we love back up and running and whilst it is inherently an individual sport, good for social distancing, there are still plenty of challenges with before and after the courses. Looking forward we must still plan to put events on and fulfil our obligations for the Scottish 6 days and Scottish Championships and we are also planning to hold an event on Gullane in February as well as a number of local events so we have plenty of opportunities for planners, organisers and controllers. Please put your name forward to help with these events, mentors can be provided for less experienced, we all need to start somewhere.



Our next event will be a local event at Dechmont Law in Livingston in November with Robin Galloway organising and Lorna on planning detail.

Our Thursday evening training run has had a refresh with an online sign up to aid contact tracing etc.; thanks to the McIntyre household I believe for sorting that one. The routes also now have links to maps showing the routes so you can better prepare yourself for each run.

Looking to competitions we can only hope that some of the events do go ahead next year but unfortunately, we have already lost the JK from next year.

Lorna also has a box full of Interlopers kit that has been delivered so she will be in touch with the club to explain what is available, and hopefully we can get the kit out to those who ordered it shortly. I believe there will be a reasonable number of spares so be in touch if you had not ordered, but now realise what sought after items these are.

The minutes of the Zoom AGM on 24 September can be found here - <https://interlopers.org.uk/uploads/AGM/AGM45-2020.pdf>

See end for the new committee. With the peaceful and unanimous presidential nominations, whole countries could learn from INT!

Simply the Best: INT Elites – by Iona Dibber

A number of INTs went down to the UK Elite Orienteering League 'Lakes reloaded' races on 3rd/4th October. Results below.

Rusland Beeches Middle distance

Men's race

Pete Hodkinson 4th 36mins 21 secs - 1min 49 secs down on winner

Will Rigg 10th

Freddie Carcas 23rd

James Ackland 30th

Michael Adams (nearly a member) 31st
Alex Carcas miss punch
Woman's race - Pippa Carcas 15th (not bad for a W18 with injury issues this summer)

Graythwaite

Long distance

Pete Hodgkinson 3rd 97mins 19 - 5 mins 54 down on winner

Alex Carcas 4th (if only he hadn't lost 6 mins at no 2!!!!)

Will Rigg 10th (Showing he's still got it and on home territory)

Michael Adams 25th

James Taylor miss punch- first Elite race since 2014

Women: Pippa Carcas miss-punch (there were a lot of Butterfly loops - what a shame after 135 mins of running)



Nippers News - by Ma Prunner and Minnie Kite

Congratulations to: Laurence Ward (M14) and Fiona Eades (W16), who have been newly-selected to ScotJOS for the forthcoming year, alongside existing INT juniors David Ivory (M14), Angus Ivory (M16), and Pippa Carcas (W18).

ESOA training has now re-started, with the first session held successfully at Yellowcraigs on Sat 24 October. The next one is planned for Sat 14 November. Katherine Ivory is coordinating these, and if you're a junior member, you should get details from her. Any offers to help with coaching would be fantastic; please get in touch.

A number of INTs - Fiona, Angus, Pippa, and Mairi - went down to the Junior selection races in the Lakes at the end of August, with a sprint, middle and long events over the three days – see more from Angus below. Some properly challenging courses and tough competition. Well done to them: Fiona (3rd in Sprint) and Mairi Eades (4th Long), Angus Ivory (6th in Middle), and Pippa Carcas (6th Long).

Full results here:

<https://www.lakeland-orienteing.org.uk/events/junior-selection-sprint-race-28-aug-2020>

<https://www.lakeland-orienteing.org.uk/events/junior-selection-forest-races-29-aug-2020>

Graythwaite junior selection races – by Angus Ivory

Nothing like a good selection race to get back into orienteering! Kindly organised by Lakeland Orienteering Club, the first proper orienteering weekend since before lockdown took place around Graythwaite at the end of August. This weekend was juniors only due to restrictions, so for the three categories: M/W16, M/W18 and M/W20, and counting towards selection for the BOF Talent Squad and EJOC in Hungary, which was due to take place recently although unfortunately was cancelled again. With these goals in mind and after six months of no events, we jumped at the chance to run competitively again, with juniors flocking from around the country to the lake district. For me it was the first time



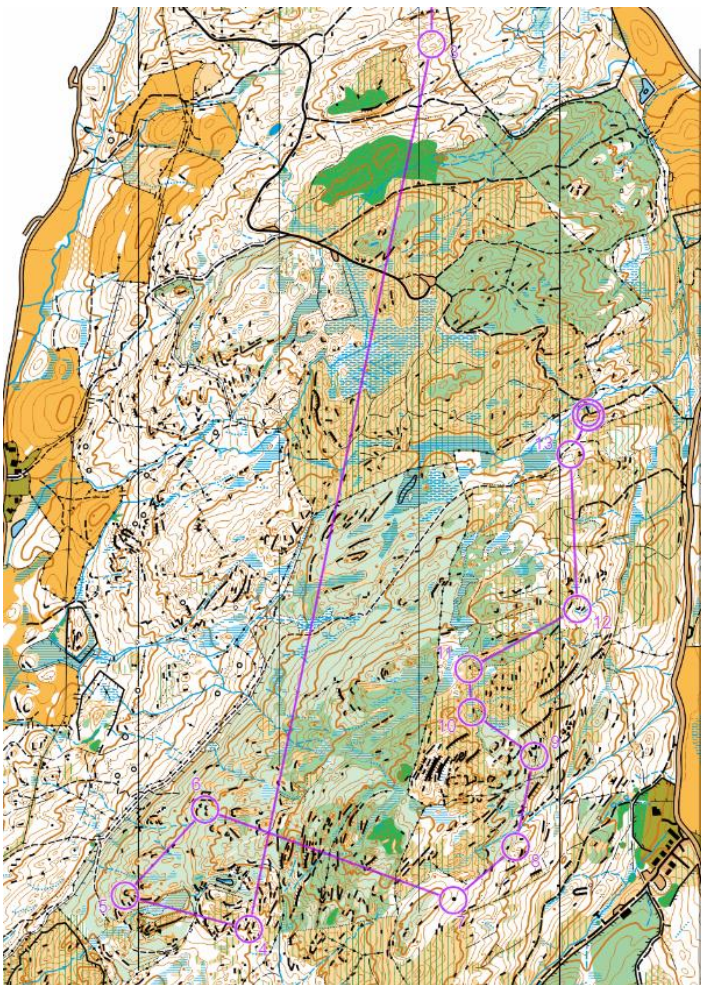
orienteering in the Lakes and despite the three hour drive, it was definitely worth it.

Friday evening saw us heading to Windermere town for a sprint race to start off the weekend. Some courses headed into the woods next to Windemere, but luckily for my age group we were spared the nettles and brambles of the forest in our shorts and t-shirts. Still in the town however there were two interesting longer legs, involving river crossings for those who dared! We're still not sure if it was actually faster to go round on the roads and stay dry...

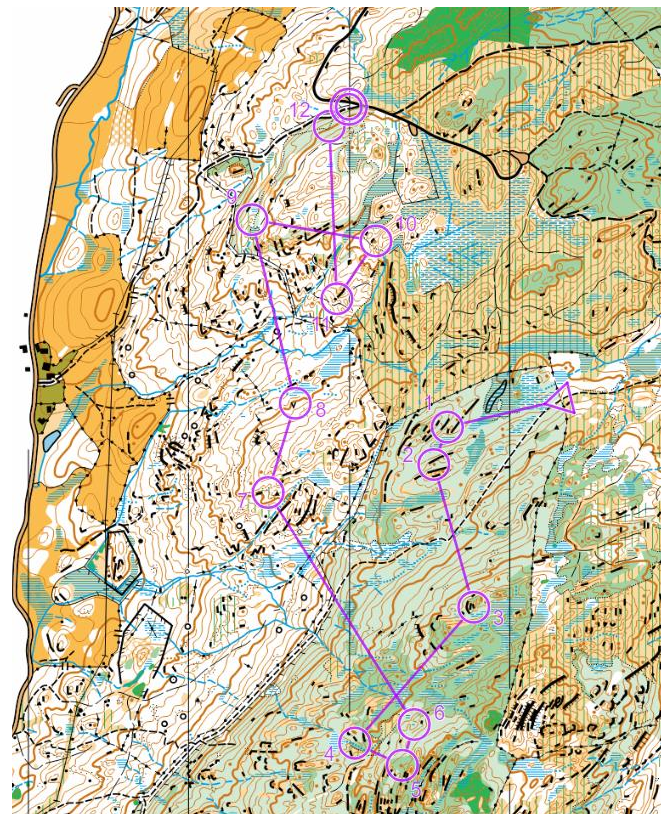
On Saturday, the highlight of the weekend – the long race at Graythwaite Forest. This was the first classic race I'd done since March so I was excited to be back racing again. Our course started off in the lovely white forest in the Devil's Gallop, at the north of the map, with a 2km long leg taking us to grim green forest reminiscent of Dalbeattie (from Scottish Champs last year). There were a few different options for the long leg (most of which I noticed after I'd finished...) shown below.

The middle race took place on Sunday at a different part of Graythwaite; the nice if bracken-filled area to the west of the map. This was a good technical challenge after lockdown and a good chance to make up for any mistakes the day before. We started off in a (slightly less) green part of the forest and then got into the more open forest, which made for faster and more enjoyable running.

It was great to get back to racing, even if a bit rusty!



Part of the M16 long race



From the M16 middle distance

Tech News - by AI Gorithm

Angus Ivory (coder for hire!) has been developing a results site that allows you to search for recent results from your club or age class. Try it out at <http://ozone.pythonanywhere.com/results>.

Feedback on user experience, suggestions for development etc very welcome – contact angus@tusks.org.uk.

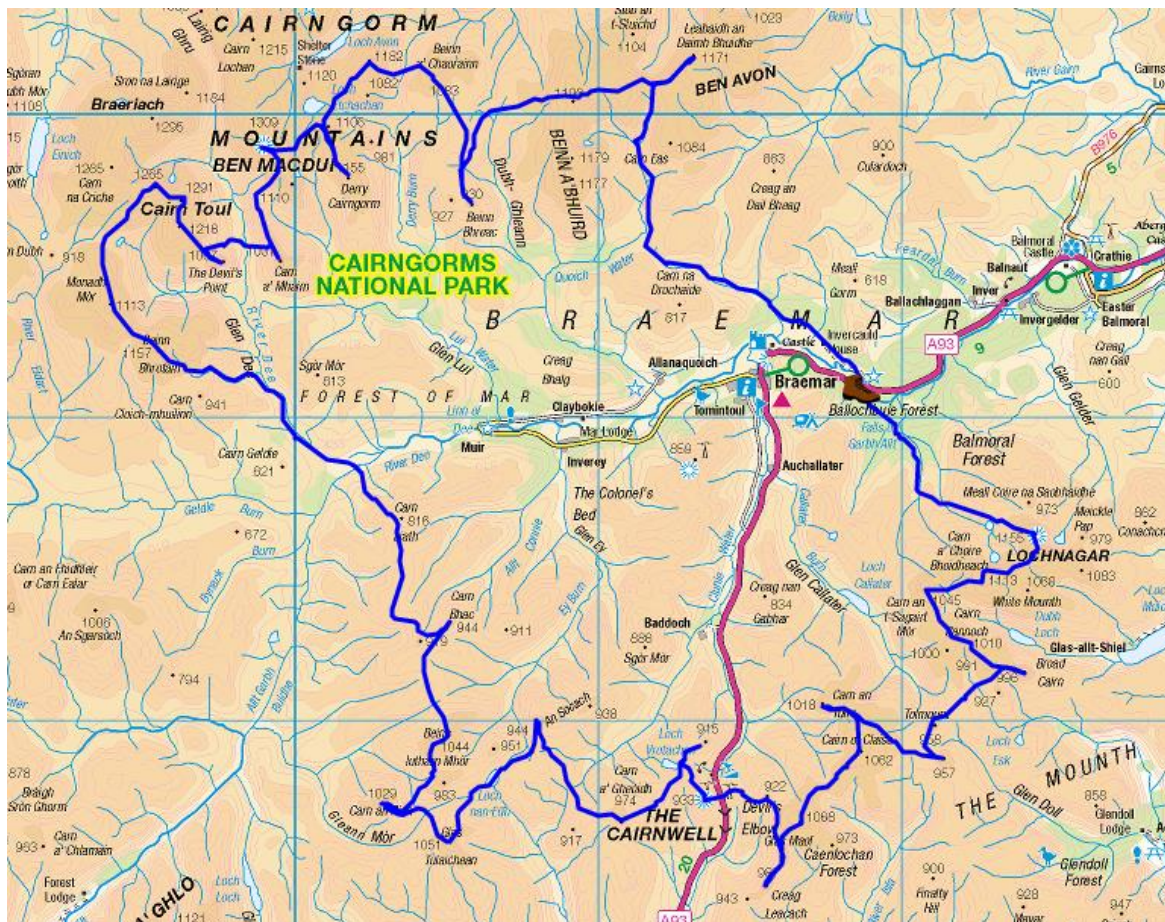
THE ‘PEOPLE DOING AMAZING THINGS’ SECTION

Epic Munro-Bagging

As you’ll know if you zoomed in for the INT AGM, Ali Masson took on “a fun little lockdown project” this summer with Sasha Chepelin, to have a go at the 24-hour Munro Record. Huge congratulations to them and their support crew on extending Jim Mann’s Munro Record to 32 in 24 hours. Given there 45mins left to play with, this might not be the final word on it!

Their start/finish point was the Linn of Dee, near Braemar, and their route traced an anti-clockwise loop starting out to the NW, continuing round via Ben Macdui, and back to the A93 just N of its summit, and making their way back via Lochnagar.

There’s a nice write-up in the Carnethy Journal, available here <http://carnethy.com/intro-club/club-journal/>





Going well



Ali and Sasha at the end

Virtual London Marathon – by Paul Caban

After 2019 had been an ‘urban orienteering’ year, 2020 was going to be all about the London Marathon. I had unfinished business after Manchester, and was intending to have one attempt at targeting “three hours. Training started at the end of October, and immediately didn’t go well: by far the worst cold I’d had in decades, lasted from the Club Coniston weekend until the middle of January, and then in mid-February, I tripped over a tree root, landed heavily on my right knee, and lost another week.

Amongst the Sunday morning marathoners, the talk was increasingly all about the Corona-virus: Iain only just escaped from his skiing holiday in Italy, and we all recognised that cancellation was likely. I carried on putting the miles in, but they weren’t ‘quality’ miles, and even putting in a second, mid-week long run, I knew that I wasn’t prepared enough, or sharp enough, even if London did actually happen.

Once ‘lockdown’ did come, my ‘new normal’ was a six mile lap of The Braids on roads (the bridle path was simply too narrow, and too busy). Forty miles per week – one day off, and one double loop - in daylight, actually seemed quite relaxed, and relaxing. By then London had been re-scheduled to early October, and I was gradually building up the miles again. Sunday mornings, in particular, were a time of adventure: leave the house at 9am, and head off exploring without a map: Penicuik, Lasswade (hopelessly lost on the King’s Acre golf-course, when the Right-of-Way signs stopped), Gogarburn, Balerno, Cramond, Duddingston. Almost like being on holiday ...

By the end of July, I was in really good shape, and then, it all started to go wrong. I didn’t even appreciate at first, what was happening, though I did notice that my virtual time-trials weren’t quite as fast, as they had been. But gradually, I realised that my left quad was really tight and painful, and that my left stride was shorter than the right one: that was really noticeable when going downhill. The twenty-two mile Sunday run, five weeks out, was particularly un-satisfying, but when the pain was there even when going uphill, then something had to be done.

Much too late to get a podiatrist appointment to get my orthotics looked at, instead, I got put onto Cath, a masseuse and – importantly – good EAC runner, with a string of age-class track medals to her name. Ever the realist, Cath didn’t even try to talk me out of London, and instead stated at the outset that she would be aiming to get me to the start line, rather

than diagnose the underlying cause. And a weekly hour of pain certainly did make a difference: along with the 'taper', I started putting in some heartening 10km times again.

Feeling more positive, I put out a request for "support": running/cycling alongside me at 7:15 per mile, passing water/gels, and generally keeping me cheerful. JaneC and Philippa responded immediately, saying, effectively "yes, just tell us what you'd like us to do", as did my work/swimming friend Hedwig, who offered to cycle the first stretch with me, and Pat who offered to get me home from wherever I ended up. In fact, Jane and Pip took on the task of co-ordinating volunteers, which was massively helpful, as it left me only having to worry about the actual run.

Meanwhile, I was agonising over where to run. The essential criteria – pretty flat, relatively traffic-free – led me to come up with four choices. Cramond loops were discounted, because there was already a virtual race on there that morning; Meadows loops – grim, although easy to support – were discounted once it became clear to me how busy it was going to be there, once the students were back. That left me with east to North Berwick, or west along the Canal to Linlithgow, both starting from home (because it seemed a nice thing to do). The choice was going to be mainly dependent on the wind direction, although I'd realised that North Berwick was always going to be easier on the support team.

The start of the final week before race day was carbo-depletion time. To give myself some distraction beyond looking longingly and forlornly at my Rice Krispie collection (Hedwig alone didn't realise this was true) I was monitoring the weather forecasts pretty closely. What, on the long-range forecast, had looked to be gentle south-westerly before changing to a stronger easterly, and with heavy rain too, was seeming to be improving again, with the front coming through on Saturday. With only a few reservations, I announced on Friday that it would indeed be North Berwick. It was on.

Saturday was ghastly, as all who went to Mortonhall will know. Sunday morning, was calm, and dry, and cool. Perfect marathon weather. Robin appeared spot on 8am, and the first surprise, GrahamMc on his bike too. With race numbers front and back, I started with a short uphill, pleased to have Robin's conversation to distract me. Robin handed over to Hedwig as planned at Mortonhall, and the first surprise of the day was KateK waiting for a couple of kms too. The next hour was spent zig-zagging gently downhill through south and east Edinburgh. Naturally, and despite Graham's time-keeping exhortations, I went of much too quickly. I knew I'd regret that later, but I was having much too much fun.

At Musselburgh, Max and Jane were waiting on their tandem, and Mary (another work colleague) also cycled past full of loud cheer. Hedwig and Graham carried on too, Ron Nolan cycled past, and someone looking suspiciously like Scott Balfour, once of this parish, ran past in the opposite direction. According to Graham, I'd settled into a fairly comfortable 7:30 per mile, and was feeling good. It was a lovely warm day by now, there were quite a lot of other racers out, most with supporters, and wearing a number meant that it was obvious that "something" was happening. Even passing motorists all gave the 'friendly toot' copyright Philippa, who, with Chris, were waiting at Seton Sands, roughly where Hedwig finally peeled off. Meanwhile, tour-leader Max was giving his own inimitable guide to East Lothian: Aberlady: the place where female Swedish pop fans come from

Not long after Helena Nolan went past (a coincidence), we picked up Angus and William just by Gullane, and Pat first appeared, it all started to crash'n'burn. Graham probably realised at the same time as I did, as he stopped give out mile splits, which was absolutely the right thing to do: I didn't want to know, and there was nothing I could have done about it anyway. The end, though sadly not the finish, came on the short, sharp hill into Dirleton. This is

notorious for breaking Edinburgh-to-North-Berwick racers, and did for me completely. It's actually not much of a hill, but cramp came on in both calves, and I simply had to walk. After that, it was all I could do to hobble (12 minutes per mile) the remaining few miles.

Although the marathon was complete somewhere on the drop down into North Berwick in just shy of three and a half hours, roughly where Lorna was waiting, I carried on a few hundred metres more to the sea-front park where the E2NB finishes. It was a nice place to congregate, with lovely sea views, plus – importantly - there was a bench for me to sit down on. All that remained to do was take photographs, appropriately socially distanced if not a little anti-climatically, eat something savoury, and then head off home, a journey which was involved a, er, pit-stop near Longniddry, where gels proved that they in fact could taste worse the second time.

In the days afterwards, I've slept really quite well, and my legs haven't been nearly as painful as previous marathons. I think this is because the last few miles were so slow that I couldn't do any damage to them. As others have also said, the day has caused me to rethink what actually makes a marathon, not that I intend to do another one any time soon. Maybe when I turn sixty. Meanwhile, I'm completely indebted to all those who helped beforehand, and most especially on the day: I couldn't have done it without you, folks.

For the full horror of my catastrophic breakage, please see the following link to Garmin

<https://connect.garmin.com/modern/activity/5631310939>



Paul before the Wall



Paul after the wall
(and some people clearly off the wall)



Marathon-ing by the Seaside: A supporters view – Philippa Ascough

Given the plan by Paul, our band of supporters engaged in high-level preparations with the help of Zoom and Whatsapp. Sections were laid out, laybys identified by satellite, and Professor Dibben made a spreadsheet. Kudos to William for realising early on we would need a Whatsapp group if we were all going to be in the right place in the right time! On the day this also made it quite exciting, with messages throughout to pinpoint the position of the determined runner in his green and yellow top. So, with gels and water bottles distributed, we all took our positions with baited breath.

In the end, although I'm not sure Dave Brailsford will be headhunting us any time soon, it all seemed to work very well indeed (at least Paul was kind enough to say so). For the road sections, having some supporters on bikes did seem useful, given the amount of traffic, as this forced cars to give a wider berth when passing. The vast majority of the tooting was, however, of the very friendly variety! A range of other Interlopers and friends were also positioned along the route to give a cheer and a wave, which gave a 'grand day out' feel to the whole thing. On the final run into North Berwick, the group swelled to include supporters from throughout the route, and ended in glorious sunshine with a view of the sea, a socially-distanced photoshoot, and treats provided by Paul. A great run by him, and thanks for having us along for the ride!

That full tour of East Lothian towns (ask Max for the answers)

- *well known for its pressed on saucepans*
- *the town by the sea*
- *named after the woman living there who was a big Swedish pop fan*
- *famous for a lane frequented by a lot of seabirds*
- *where a wicked bear lived with his cousin to the south*



Blinged'up back home

It's amazing Paul ever got there really!

COVID CHRONICLES: FURL-O!

Catching Features [or, 'Not Just for Nerds'!] – by William Ivory

Practising map-reading – relating map to real-life features, map memory, and reading a map quickly, ideally while running – is tricky to achieve. I've been known to take random maps out on my runs to practise the reading at (lack of) speed, but obviously the terrain doesn't usually tend to match up terribly well! So, one of my better discoveries during lockdown was Catching Features (CF) – a virtual orienteering game. CF is available to download at <https://catchingfeatures.com/>. It only runs on Windows, though apparently it will work with Parallels / BootCamp on a Mac. Cost is USD 40, though this gives you 4 logins for competitions. There was a discount available for competitors in the various Lockdown Orienteering events, which may be on offer again if and when future Lockdown Orienteering events happen (see <https://lockdownorienteering.com/>).

CF initially presents the user with the ability to enter some basic details (name and club), along with the option to choose from a wide range of different kits. During lockdown, many Scottish clubs' kits were added as part of the Scottish Catching Features League (more on this below). You can choose which hand you hold your map in, and there are 2 sets of key mappings to cater for both left- and right-handers (take a note of these!). You can also select first or third person view, though the former rather spoils the effect of choosing your kit, unless you meet other competitors out there in the woods.



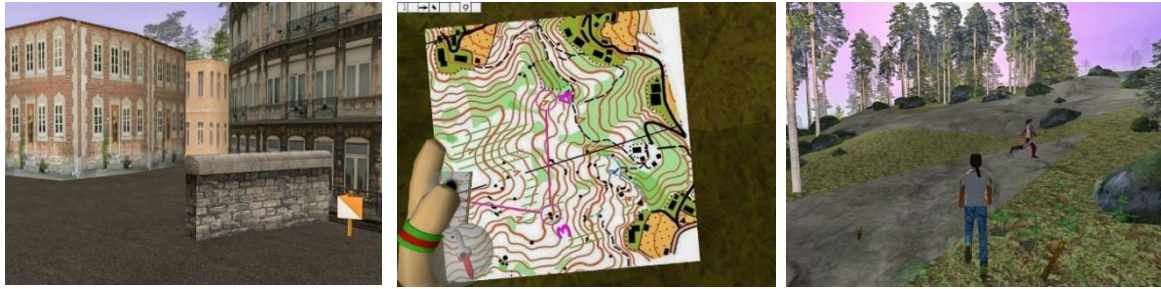
Creepily realistic

Now you're almost ready to go orienteering, and there are a number of options to choose from. You will need a map, so head to 'Competitions', but don't be put off by the title. This will show you a list of events for which you can download maps. Some will be for live competitions, but you can access historical events to get a very large set of possible maps. Select one and hit 'download'. (I sometimes found that attempting to download a second map didn't work, but exiting this screen and going back always worked.) You can now choose how to use the map (not all options may be available for all maps)

- Single Player: best way to start as you aren't competing with anyone.
- Multiplayer: this is for competitions where everyone is running at the same time. Great fun but requires someone to run a server for the event. The Scottish Catching Features League earlier in the year was an example of this.
- Competition: there are regular competitions set up on CF which you can take part in by selecting and downloading a map then hitting 'start'.
- Quick Course: takes an existing map but draws random legs between controls
- Randomizer: creates a random map and course (not an option I've tried yet)

Beep beep beep beep BEEEEEEEEEP ... hopefully you have managed to get a map, and the right 'start' button, and your countdown has completed. Press M to view the map (you should be pointing straight at the first control). It takes a bit of time to get used to the controls, but you'll eventually get the hang of moving and turning, and manipulating the map. I'm still working on the moving and reading the map at the same time bit ... I suspect those more used to computer games may get the hang of the keys a little faster than me.

There are key presses to align the map for the current or next leg, along with zooming in and out. You can also set an option in the top-level 'options' to highlight the next few legs. This is good for sprint events where maps can get quite busy, but worth turning off for forest events as you can then see if you are in an area of the map you were previously in more easily which may (or may not) help with the navigation. The map rendering is pretty fast though you can tweak the settings ('options' again) if you find you are running faster than the trees are growing (though as the controls seem to be drawn first, in a flattish area you might gain an advantage here!). Scenery is realistic enough, though ditches and streams are more grey than blue and can initially be mistaken for paths (sound effect will keep you right though as you splash through them). Map designers have the option to customise tree types along with most other features, so you will find some maps are rather better than others. One point common to all maps though is that there should be no mapping errors given the map and the scenery should be generated from the same source – so no blaming the map when you can't find a control.



(All images © catchingfeatures.com)

There are one or two gotchas to beware of. Occasionally what looks like a gap is not actually wide enough and you can find your way blocked, or even seem to get stuck. Be patient and you can normally work your way out. You can also run off the map which can be terminal.

I've really enjoyed playing CF over lockdown, and plan to carry on (though I never quite seem to have the time). Once you have mastered the keys, it is great fun, and a really good way to train. Obviously you can't use pacing, so distance estimation becomes very important, but for map memory it's really good. Regular competitions add further interest – the Scottish Catching Features League ran earlier in the year, and a second league has just started (early October). While it's too late to join this, you can still access the maps. See <https://twitter.com/CatchingLeague> for more information. This also gives the chance to run on familiar areas, though how much you will recognise in the virtual world will vary from map to map!

For further twists, you can run events in Night-O mode, and even set the weather in some cases. Lastly ... beware of the gorilla!

EVENT REPORTS - by R. Number

Thwarted for much of the year, the club finally re-started this autumn, with two events under its belt now and a third (Dechmont Law) in the pipeline for November.

The first re-start attempt was the Colinton Dell (level D) event, with courses originally planned by Chris Dibben and Phillipa Ascough for the start of May, but luckily reasonably transferable to the end of the summer vegetation-wise (some areas would have been impossible on that count alone). We were hoping for an actual event, and had rehearsed all of the Covid-requirements newly set-out in SOA guidance, before having the stoppers put on by City of Edinburgh Council which wasn't minded to give permission for an event (and in fact is only just starting to consider requests now). So the courses were put into MaprunF (if you've been living under a stone and haven't yet heard about this, see <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/get-involved/pocs/>), using the model for Sprintelopes this summer, with a week to 'compete' in one's own time (without kites or SI). This worked pretty well, especially as it meant that orienteers from other clubs could also do courses without breaching the SOA guidance at that point. The Sunday evening featured an INT Zoom social to chat about the course and take part in an awesome quiz somewhat tenuously linked to the event but great fun – definitely an innovation to continue with for future events.

The second, and 'real' event, was Mortonhall on Sat 3 October. Somewhat experimental all round, given the need to get our heads around the latest SOA Covid requirements, as well as having a novice event planner, and a map somewhat in need of updating.

However, despite the torrential all-day rain, we were delighted to actually go ahead, and welcomed around eighty runners from a range of clubs for light-green, orange and yellow courses. Many thanks to the ever-helpful Andy at Mortonhall Camping & Caravan Park for granting us permission, and even allowing use of the games room and toilet.

Covid meant no on-the-day entry, and no standing around chatting. Everything was done online in advance, with a Google form, and Zoom introductory chats for newcomers (which worked really well and worth offering again). 'Social-distancing' was the watchphrase, and everyone was allocated a start time to avoid gatherings at the start. Hand sanitiser was provided at registration (simply entry-fee drop-off and and dibber collection if required) and download, and runners were asked to hand-sanitise before picking up their map and running. We also kept our volunteer count to a minimum to reduce the number of people on the ground. Once again, to compensate a bit for the lack opportunities for event-chat for club members, we had a post-event Zoom social and quiz the following evening.



Given the wet weather, kit-drying was very much required – but quarantining it for 72 hours as part of our risk-management measures provided an excellent excuse to simply dump it in a corner and relax on Saturday evening! Post-event, all three courses were put into MaprunF (Edinburgh O folder in the app, and on the SOA webpage at <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/get-involved/pocs/to>) to allow those who had to miss the event to still run the courses in their own time.

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in our first event since lock-down, braving the weather and mud for some orienteering again! As usual, this was a true club endeavour with a large number of Interlopers volunteers (a (socially-distanced star-laden cast of thousands!)) working behind the scenes and on the day to make it happen.



Socially distanced starts



Boat-O



What it should have been like!



Running and cycling through 2020 – Graham McIntyre

The 2020 Lockdown has been an opportunity to look at what is local and to focus on what one can do. As an orienteer time in forest and competition has been limited, but this was a real chance to work on physical fitness and strength without the regular competition cycle.

We have done several projects that would not have happened in a normal year, including the ones below.



Local cycleways: numerous routes – e.g.

- Route 76 past Musselburgh and Longniddry to Haddington, returning on route 196 on the Pencaitland railway path
- Colinton Dell railway path up to Balerno, then over Red Moss to Loganlee and back on the Roslin railway path
- To Penicuik on the Dalkeith railway path, a lap of Penicuik estate, then returning on the Roslin railway path

For inspiration I recommend a few minutes studying the National Cycle Network map at:

<https://osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/ncn/55.90310,-3.17398,10>

or website <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/find-a-route-on-the-national-cycle-network/national-cycle-network-routes-in-edinburgh-the-lothians-and-scottish-borders>



Making the most of Strava: I have particularly enjoyed Strava this year, taking the monthly half marathon challenge as motivation to get some longer runs in – next month's will be the Virtual 7 Reservoirs <http://www.pentland7reservoirs.org.uk/>

It has been particularly good to see the photos people have taken on their escapes, feels like sharing the experiences.

Not Parkrun: I have enjoyed Parkrun as a regular fix and a chance to be part of the running community. Not Parkrun is a chance to join in without the early Saturday morning and being in the throng on the start line.

Carnethy Pandemicap (Virtual): this has given us 6 great local runs (and reccies to check the route). *[More from Mo in her article]*

MapRun: I have lived and run in South Edinburgh since 1979 and yet never been on the local golf courses. The MapRuns were good exercise and an eye opener to what great oases of green and tranquillity these are in the midst of our city. Many thanks to the intrepid planners who made this possible!

London Marathon: it is now many years since I ran the London Marathon. Cycling with Paul on his virtual performance was different but in its own way a unique experience. Well done Paul on your endeavour. On the day there were many other athletes out with their London numbers on, the shared experience that spread so far beyond the confines of the normal course. This really felt like athletes and the running community finding a way to express themselves in these Strange Days.

Virtual Running (Tiree and other things) - by MORAG MCINTYRE

The beginning of April saw me resting up for 3 weeks or so to try and shake off some persistent hamstring and achilles niggles. However, I was soon itching to pick up the pace on my daily walk, and so began a series of virtual events and races.

In May Graham, Cal and I had started to do some interval training in the Liberton Golf course grounds once we realised we could access these. At around the same time people had started to put up MapRunF courses also taking advantage of access to Prestonfield, the Braids, Craigmillar and Liberton golf courses amongst others, until they reopened to golfers. It took a couple of attempts with MapRunF to get the hang of hearing beeps from my phone when I was passing controls that weren't the next on my chosen course (a quick visual check of the screen to see what had registered helped here).



Given that the course planners were experimenting with MapRunF as well, I would say the courses were of a pretty high standard, especially given the maps were not always spot on (moving bunkers, cleared shrubs).

On the running front, myself and Tricia, along with Ali Cunningham and Rachel Fawthrop from ESOC had secured a team entry for the Tiree Ultra marathon (35 miles round the island) which was due to take place in September. By May it had been cancelled, and Will Wright who organises the race (mostly individuals, but with a limited number of places for pairs and an even more limited number for teams of 4) devised a virtual event (35 miles over 4 stages in 4 weeks). The 1st stage was to be 13.5k with an elevation of 180m to simulate the first leg of the actual ultra (not too many hills on Tiree, but the first leg includes the Wall to West Hynish – a steep grassy hillside ‘not far but a leg burner’, and an up and down for Kenavera climb). Graham and I picked the Braids for this one. We exceeded both distance and elevation somewhat but enjoyed the 2 steep climbs (to the top of the Braids from Mortonhall and the top of Blackford from the Hermitage). The last stipulation from Will was to listen to a tune of the week to get us in the Tiree mood, starting with ‘Walking on the Waves’ by Skipinnish. Part of the fun was to see other folk’s routes on Strava, with people all over Scotland (including on Iona), and further afield: Quebec, The Netherlands (‘do you know how difficult it is to climb 180m in the Netherlands’), South Africa.

The ‘team’ were unable to run these first stages as a group, but Ali’s stage 2 run (‘Way out West’) was a cracker, and inspired Rachel and Nigel to go and run the same route (from Cramond along the shoreline to the Dalmeny beaches). The instructions were to pick an almost completely flat 13.8k, run the first 5k easy, next 5k at tempo pace (to simulate the headwind on Tiree). Graham and I ran out to Cramond from Craigleith and then did the Edinburgh parkrun route for our tempo section.

When it came to doing stage 4, the lockdown rules were starting to ease so as well as Graham and I doing the required last 13k as an out and back from Joppa to Prestongrange, our ladies team of four also met and, with appropriate distancing observed, ran from Torphins Road out to the Water of Leith following a broadly similar route to Interlopers training route 18B Torphin and Currie Kirk, but stretching out South West to Balerno and Harlaw Reservoir.

The first weekend of September we 4 ladies decided that although we couldn’t be on Tiree, we would run the full 35 miles (i.e. 4 x 14.2k, run together). We did this from Balquhiddy, up the Kirkton Glen past Rob Roy’s putting stone. It was a Saturday afternoon start to a long weekend, which also entailed imbibing a little Tiree gin which we found goes particularly well with a well known mixer brand’s Mediterranean tonic!



During the last week of June I had started to do the odd 5k timed run to enter onto the ‘not parkrun’ site. I haven’t done too many of these at pace, but Graham and I managed to slot one into our stay in Llanberis, along the shore of Llyn Padarn, when we there not doing the cancelled Creoso event. Best time so far is 23.03. My average looks very slow though as during October I’m logging every 5k I run, including those run as part of longer, hillier runs, for ‘Parktoberfest’.

Carnethy Hill Runners decided to do their handicap (or 'pandemicap' races) virtually, allowing a 2 week window for folk to go and do each of 6 runs. This allowed for multiple recces if needed and once you were happy that you'd nailed the course and taken the selfie at the required check points, you had to enter your elapsed time onto the Google sheet and upload your Strava route. The first of these was Braids and Blackford. I had been very leniently handicapped, and beat my predicted time by 12m04s after a couple of recces. This put me in a strong position as I scored 48.33 out of a possible 50 points putting me in 4th. The second event was dubbed 'Once Upon a Time in Holyrood' and presented an interesting variation on hitting Nether Hill, Whinny Hill and Haggis Knowe. Credit to the handicapper here – I missed my predicted time by 1 second and scored 42.94. We only had one shot at the 'Swanston Summits' following our week in Wales. It wasn't my favourite – slogging through cattle chopped mud through Boghall and picking your own route round Allermuir (but not allowed over the top) to reach the selfie point at Green Craig. From there though it was a lovely fast drop back to Swanston round the edge of the golf course. Fortunately, it was best of 3 that counted for the championship so I was able to drop this one.

It was event 4, the Carnethy 600, which first saw me to the series lead position. Strong on the uphill, and determined to stay in front of Graham on the downhill resulted in 47.14 points. I loved the 'Bonnallez-Oop' course but I was well down on my predicted time (which is adjusted throughout the series). But the clincher for me was the revisit to Holyrood Park and the 'Arthurs Seat Classic route'. It did take 2 recces to establish which Carnethy consider Whinny Hill East and Whinny Hill, and also an email to the course planner to ascertain that the top of Dunsapie hill is the clear highest point, and not 'Dunsapie Crag' as per Strava. The time I entered was 57 seconds inside predicted time, gave me 46.67 points thus improving on my previous Holyrood Park effort, and securing the championship win. I needed that improvement or the number 2 placed runner could have taken victory as there were only 1.54 points separating us over the best 3. Had the points over the 6 events counted I would have won by somewhat more of a margin – a little more than 30 points.

July saw the start of the Sprintelope MapRun urban races and again huge thanks must go to the planners of these. The ones we managed to take in were Hunters Tryst, Niddrie, the Inch, Prestonfield, Caiystane and Braidburn, Bughtlin, Kirkliston and ELO's Haddington East SprintELOpes.

Whilst on the Isle of Lewis and the North West Coast on our family holiday in September, I finally started to gather 'turf' zones, having heard various ESOC members talking about this virtual treasure hunt. It is rather compulsive, and frankly interferes with a good cycle or run, but it is quite fun to see who else is out there, and to revisit your local zones to grab them back off somebody. There are some world leaders amongst the ESOC contingent and so I'm sticking with just picking up the zones that happen to be on my route (oh, and occasionally sneaking out to pinch one or two back off Graham!)



So I've probably managed to orienteer and run 'virtually' as much as I would have any other year! I'm so grateful to have had these challenges to help us through 2020 with sound bodies and minds.

Friday Brunch Club and other dalliances – by Ray Ward

Earlier this week the Editor very kindly suggested that I might like to pen a few words on the virtual West Highland Way race for the club newsletter. Strava confirmed that I did participate in this event back in June but the pain associated with the over-ambition of 95 miles and 14,000 feet of climb over 9 and half days has done a very effective job of erasing all recollection of it from my memory. With very little else of interest happening in my life in these restricted times I was left with nothing else to write about other than an interim update on a small bit of research I am currently undertaking.

Some of you will know that I am lucky enough to be on a period of extended parental leave with Bertie; and a big focus of our day is the “daily outing”, which gets us out of the house in the fresh air and generally improves our demeanor for the rest of the day. It was early on that I realised the vital role that cafés would play in this routine, providing a safe venue for emergency feeding and for dealing with one of the inevitable consequences of feeding (sometimes an even bigger emergency). From here the idea for the research project was born.



19 August, Victor Hugo, Meadows: Coffee and Pasties de Nata. I was halfway across the Meadows and the screaming started, it was early days and I was still learning Bertie's routines. A dash to VH and I was fortunate to know a couple of ladies sat outside (I later found that free tables were quite hard to find). Rishi paid half and I think both the drink and pastry were fine, but as I said, it was early days and the stress of feeding was filling my thoughts. Would I go back? Almost certainly due to the convenient location, but it will never be such good value!

Friday 21 August, Kilimanjaro, Southside: Shrooms (balsamic mushrooms, poached eggs, spinach, grana padano, toast) and coffee. The first official Friday Brunch Club! Claire doesn't work on Fridays and with the (older) kids at school we realised that we had a rare opportunity to venture out into the world without feeling like the moderators of a full contact US presidential election debate. Our mission was to sample and review a different brunch every week until our own little utopian situation ends in December (or earlier full lockdown), while doing our small bit to support the struggling hospitality sector. Anyway, excellent coffee and a very nice brunch. I could have eaten two. And it was definitely a return venue, with subsequent visits including a scone and a sausage and scrambled egg bap.

Friday 28 August, Fountain Café, Fountainbridge: Full Scottish and coffee. A surprise find on Grove Street. I'd popped in earlier in the week for an emergency feed in the pouring rain - there seems to be a dearth of cafes round these parts and this was the only place I could find a seat, on the basis (I presume) of it not being in with Rishi. As I sipped my coffee on that visit I noticed the other customers happily clearing big plates of food. A small place with a very friendly owner and food that exceeds its greasy spoon appearance.

Friday 4 September, Castello Coffee, Bruntsfield: Sweetcorn fritters, poached egg, avocado and coffee. This was perhaps our most sociable outing, meeting Doug Tullie and Bex Harding for breakfast. Sweetcorn fritters always sound massively appealing to me but this

dish was let down by the rather bland avocado. This is the last time you'll see avocado mentioned in this research. A shame.

10 September, The Beach House, Portobello: Raisin swirl and coffee. I needed a seat after a test jog with the running buggy to Portobello. I didn't need a pastry after a big breakfast, but felt under a bit of pressure as I was taking up a table when everyone around me were ordering full meals. Anyway, it was a bit stale and effort to get through. An off day? There was, however, a great view sat outside looking out to sea.

Friday 11 September, Project Coffee: Bacon and mushroom bap, coffee and cake. Where did that come from? I had no plan to order that, but I was stood at the counter and just heard it come out of my mouth. But what a revelation! Mushrooms are an almost perfect vessel for soaking up fat and this is one of the vital nutrients for any aspiring orienteer. Project Coffee is basically the same as Kilimanjaro so again the coffee was excellent. In fact this brunch was so good that I took Laurence back for an identical order (minus the cake) when I dragged him out sofa shopping on the school holiday 10 days later.



Friday 18 September, Word of Mouth, Leith Walk: Quiche and coffee. This was a nice place but we mis-ordered. All the tarts and pies looked enticing on the counter, but every single other customer after us ordered eggs benedict and clearly they were in the know. Good coffee. Also, another little positive is that we left to find that we were actually on Albert Street – the first time Bertie had visited the street of his name!

22 September, Terrace Café, Botanic Gardens: Coffee. OK, this probably shouldn't make the list but it is interesting the way that different venues are dealing with Covid guidelines. The Terrace café was full on, so all drinks were taken outside and the toilets were closed. This meant Bertie had his first changing experience on dried leaves hidden in a bush. Quite a traumatic experience for his father as changing generally means a full change of clothes and I was scooping dried leaves out of his mouth for ages afterwards. The outing wasn't a complete disaster though as I discovered that my companion used to be a Botanic tour guide, so my great idea for a day out was something of a buswoman's holiday for her.

Friday 2 October, Karine, Morningside: Croissant and coffee. Disappointing! After waiting a very long time to sit down while the proprietor had a 20 minute conversation in French we sat down with high expectations to a rather stale croissant. To be fair, the lady was very friendly but I won't be rushing back.

5 October, Pentland Plants, Loanhead: Vegan soup and coffee. A snack with my Botanic tour guide friend to follow my new Loanhead Monday swimming trip with Bertie. Nice food and good value. Went back the following week for a much more brunchy sausage butty once I'd established my vegan friend was fine with this.

7 October, Deans Modern Art Gallery Café: Mixed salad and coffee. High level Covid restrictions (and wind) meant our plastic cutlery and cardboard containers kept blowing away, but the salad was very nice if quite expensive. Annoyingly they only had baby changing facilities in the female lavatory which meant another alfresco full body change, but the gallery was very good, particular the Katie Paterson exhibition – I recommend a visit!

Friday 9 October, Roseleaf Bar Café, Leith: *The Big Yin (Full Scottish for £12.95) and coffee.* The picture probably says it all - a lovely, high quality brunch. Very keen to go back later in the day to check out the bar and teapot cocktails!



11 October, Clubbiedean's Coffee Shop, Clubbiedean Reservoir, Pentlands: *Coffee and Bakewell Slice.* A small shack serving coffee and cakes, you'll see the queue first if it's not pouring. The Bakewell slice was lovely and good coffee, but this might have been enhanced by the fact that I was 4 hours into a 5 hour ride with Laurence and the Mowbrays. A small gem in a barren area for cafés so definitely worth a pause if you're passing.

16 October, The Colony Gourmet, Tollcross: *Coffee, Pasties de Nata, a chocolate twist, more cakes, more coffee.* We were struggling. Anywhere with a license was closed and everywhere else was full as a result. Wandering through to the back of what appeared to be predominately a takeaway, we squeezed into a space between students drinking all day coffee in a small Brazilian paradise. Did I want cinnamon on my custard tart? ...this guy was clearly a connoisseur. A real find!

Overall leader (SO FAR): The Colony Gourmet – Every pastry hit the mark!

Best everyday cafe: Project Coffee / Kilimanjaro – Great butties, great coffee, good value!

The place I want to spend all day at: The Roseleaf Bar Café – Wouldn't it be great to follow a delicious brunch with quality beer and cocktails in a teapot? One day!

***** VERY IMPORTANT: Please can club members send any recommendations directly to the author to ensure that the final report is as comprehensive as possible. ******

FILM REVIEWS by Sir Q. Itbreaker

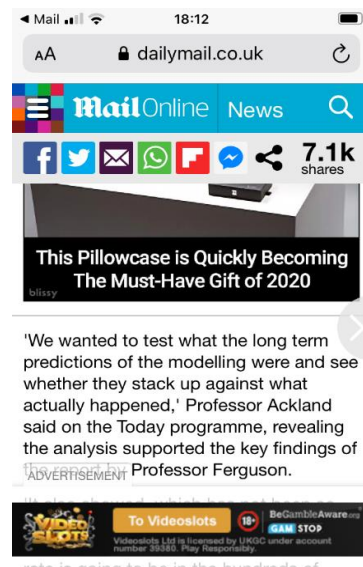
McFarland USA – true story of cross-country coach Jim White who transforms a team of fruit-picking high-school boys in a small California town into championship contenders through graft and determination. An intelligent, thought-provoking film, well worth a watch.

House of Flying Daggers – lots of running around in awesome forests; remarkable cinematography.

The Martian – resonates with anyone who's ever got hopelessly lost on their course as closing time passes ... And what contour features! For more on those, see Walter Clark's excellent article on orienteering on Mars. <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/news/escape-into-score-april-2020-orienteering-action/#more-13778>

Covid Science by Hans Anitiser

Some people just couldn't wait for the INT newsletter. Pillowcase demand would seem like more the Daily Mail's thing though.



Great GECOOTS of our Time - Hal O'Ween

It wouldn't be an Interlopers Newsletter without a GECOOT, would it? ESOC are still suffering from a lack of permissions for their areas so events have only been virtual to date, hence a retrospective – this one from September 2000 seemed appropriate given the time of year!

great esoc controls of our time

666 Co(r)pse, by thicket



If I didn't know better that this one was from the ESOC event at Transylvania West I could have sworn this photo showed me at Loch Vaa looking for the boulder at Control No. 2 and asking any W50 or over who would take pity on me and tell me where I was. Don't think much of the new ESOC O-suit, do you?

This looks just like a typical straightforward ESOC find the thicket control when in fact it's a scare the living daylights out of you one. The tricky thing about this thicket was it was actually on the map and in the right place. So when you actually realised that the map was correct you then had to circumvent the ring-wraiths, poltergeists, phantasms and the living dead. Despite appearances this was not a night event. It's just how long most competitors took on their courses. Needless to say the crosses mark the graves of hapless Interlopers who have in the past searched for the Holy Thicket and failed. Courses close at dawn!

How Not to Be Last – by Mike Stewart

Where does one start. A few of you who know me may have noticed I am not the fastest bunny in the warren these days. It will come to us all one day, so enjoy the purple periods while you are in your prime.

Remember those days, auld yins? When one could leap like a stag, twist like a rabbit and gallop like a Grand National winner? One's memory fades over time of course! That does not mean that us slow coaches do not enjoy the challenge of beating who we can whilst out on a course. This article applies equally to those who still possess physical prowess.



You may be as fit as a butcher's dog but find yourself sitting uncomfortably near the bottom of the results list! There is more hope of improvement if one can run at pace of course - speed over the ground being a major element of how quickly one gets around an orienteering course. If you are slow then eliminating other factors becomes even more important.

SO, how?

Select a course that fits in with how long you care to be out for. 60 to 70 mins suits me and that fits in nicely at my pace with a green course. A green course is a TD 5 format so if you are not that proficient yet, you may wish to choose a light green or an orange whilst your technique improves. The same suggestions that follow apply equally to all, regardless of ability, fitness and the course technical difficulty.

Best Route Choice. What does this mean? A reasonable summary of this would be the fastest route, based on your abilities, between two controls. This can vary dramatically depending on terrain, route options, technical difficulty and your speed over the ground.

Terrain: On open parkland, with few obstacles and low TD, the straight route is usually the quickest. I walk, so why wouldn't I simply take the shortest route? You still must go in the right direction and have some idea of distance covered like any other navigational challenge. I know from experience that when walking I am likely to do around 15min per km, so it is useful to know how far the leg is. It helps to wear a watch! If visibility is open and I can interpret the map, I would normally sight a recognisable feature I have identified from the map on my line of vision and set off. One can also take a bearing etc and aim for an unmissable feature. One makes one's choice. (Did you know that magnetic north lines are normally 250m apart on a 1:10000 O map?)

As the terrain becomes tougher and more technical, I would change technique to suit. Straight is still a preferred option for me, but if the footfall is rough and tough then one must weigh this up against an easier path option with simpler, navigational demands. As I personally walk these days, as a rule it is a walk whether on a path or a direct line. I seem to average around 20min per km on tougher terrain and 15min per km on easier ground. That is a simple bit of arithmetic for me to work out how far it is worth straying off the straight line to an easy path.

Technical difficulty is a major consideration as well. My navigation is probably good, so this would not perturb me too much in choosing the direct option. If yours is not, then you may wish to route plan your legs to accommodate your individual ability.

Route Choice: A huge subject, so best I offer you my own individual technique! I have covered terrain and the speed one can travel over it. This is a major factor. Your speed

comparison on a straight against the longer option is going to vary a lot with fitness and age as well as terrain. "A man needs to know his limitations" as Harry O once said! Get to know yours.

TD on a leg is especially important. Orienteering should be about navigating between controls and not so much about finding the kite in the circle. The latter is important but if you have made all the right choices and you are in the circle, you are only 30m away from the feature! That assumes you are where you think you are of course. Did you know that the diameter of a control circle is normally 60m? It will be less on a Sprintelope, but this is the standard at 1:10k with 6mm circles.

If you are going for a high TD route choice, then this is where technique becomes particularly important. You need to understand your speed over the ground, the distance you need to travel and how much further you need to go to hit a feature. A subject in itself. I always try to stay in contact with the map. Easier said than done sometimes! That requires being able to relate what is on the map to what is on the ground. Remember that mapping quality is variable and is a factor in decision making.

Practice people, practice. If you have lost contact with the map, then best advice would be to re-establish it. That may well involve a deviation to pick up something you will recognise. It is always useful to have a handrail, or to aim for a feature en route that you will not miss.

Speed over the ground is a major factor in route choice. If one is walking, then navigation becomes so much easier! It is a balancing act between speed and risk.

Attack point: You are probably still outside the circle yet. A whole subject again. A summary would be to choose a known feature or handrail on your line of approach to the control site. That may bring you within 20m of the control; it might be 200m away! The farther away, the more important technique becomes. Know what feature it is you are trying to find, how big it is, what side it is on and what the CODE is. E.g. Boulder, 1m, NE side, code 123, etc. If it is on the blind side, you may wish to consider your angle of approach.

Finally, do not stand at the control site working out what you are going to do next! It is wasted time and directs others to the control. Know what you are doing next *before* you reach the control feature.

Other points: Unless you are first off, you will see others out there. They might be going to your control. They might not! Even if they are, they might be making a mistake. It is useful to see others and note what they are doing. It can guide you into a control, but remember, they could be leading you into oblivion! Know what you are doing for yourself.

The finish: Yippee! I picked the optimum route all the way round and found everything first time. I even remembered to punch the finish unit. I did not even go into daydream mode and ended up missing out a control! I have downloaded successfully.

Who else on my course DNF'd? Who took 18 mins on the third leg? Heavens forbid, I was not last!

Have fun out there in the forest.

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>.

