

Interlopers

September 2024 (NL195)

Welcome to the end-of-summer club newsletter! Many thanks to everyone who has sent contributions whether text or photos. This edition includes some great pieces, including contributions from:

- Ann Haley – Scottish Champs 2024
- Lucy Ward – Lagganlia JROS summer camp
- Tricia Alston – World Masters in Finland
- Paul Caban - WOC Controlling
- Claire Ward – O-ringen in Sweden
- Morag McIntyre – Coasts and Islands
- Colin Blackburn – Biathlon Champs in Denmark
- Graham McIntyre – orienteering in Norway

Great photos, map images etc to enjoy too. There is also a summary of the AGM with the Club Chair's annual review, and other snippets of club news.

The next newsletter will be our end-of-year round-up, so please send me material on your autumn exploits to include in that. In the meantime, happy reading and happy orienteering.

Katherine Ivory
Newsletter Editor



INTERLOPERS CLUB AGM 2024

The Club AGM was held on Thurs 26 September at our traditional venue of The Charwood in South Edinburgh.

Out-going Chairman Colin Eades gave a summary of the club's year since the last AGM. This has been a particularly eventful time given heavy involvement by club members in WOC 2024 for which a small army of around fifty Interlopers contributed support across a full spectrum of volunteering tasks. In addition, four club members took part on the world stage as competitors. Exciting times for the sport, bringing it to the very heart of Edinburgh. WOC aside, a number of club members were selected to compete for GBR at international events, including Euromeetings, World Cups, World Students, European Champs and European

Youth Champs. On the domestic scene, Interlopers individuals and teams continued to perform at a high level and bring home medals as well as development experience and an on-going love of the sport. Congratulations to everyone for their achievements and doing the club proud.

Events organisation is of course the bread-and-butter of the club, and Interlopers has continued to run a busy calendar of local competitions, come-and-try-its, and more informal urban races. Many thanks are due to a number of volunteers who stepped up, particularly those whose work has yet to deliver the benefits of some enjoyable orienteering challenge at Calder Wood (sadly the planned SoSOL had to be postponed due to gale-force winds). A new club development project has now got underway, focused on widening our engagement and encouraging new interest, with the hope that in time that will grow our club capacity and capability to do more to deliver quality orienteering experiences. Colin ended with thanks to the Committee for its support, particularly out-going members (Lorna as Social Secretary and Fiona as junior member), and stepped down as Chair with a promise that he will be continuing to support the successful running of Interlopers and orienteering in other ways going forward.

You can read Colin's full report on the club website [here](#)

After signing off on amendments to Constitution to update it, postholders were nominated and voted in, with the new committee as below. The new committee will continue work to identify a new Chair as soon as possible, as well as a junior member.

Chair:	(currently vacant)
Secretary:	John Barrow
Treasurer:	Robin Galloway
Social Secretary:	Mairi Eades
Comms Manager:	Katherine Ivory
Club Captain:	Rob Lee
Events Coordinator:	William Ivory
Junior Member:	(currently vacant)
Ordinary Member:	Mike Stewart
Ordinary Member:	Ann Haley
ESOA Rep:	Lorna Eades

Finally, Graham McIntyre was nominated by John Barrow, Secretary, as this year's recipient of the Interlopers' Gullane Rock Trophy, for his sterling work around coaching for most of his time with the Club, and also his wider contributions through high-level competitions roles. In recent years, he has coordinated the Club's Off-Road Training sessions on Thursday evenings at a wide variety of venues around Edinburgh.



CLUB PERFORMANCE NEWS

- **Sprintelopes** had another good season of Wednesday evening lighter-touch runs and concluded in August. Well done to Colin Ledlie (2nd), Tricia Alston (5th) and Colin Inverarity (7th) on the short course, and to William Ivory (2nd), Graeme Ackland (6th), Robin Galloway (7th) and Max Carcas (9th) on the long. This year, 'Sprintelope Extra' followed on as a series of a further six Wednesday evening urban events, following the format of the WOC Extra events organised by ESOC, i.e., meeting in a local hostelry and with short or long MapRun courses on offer (before, during or after your beer!). Discussions are underway about whether this format might be continued, under the Orienteering Edinburgh umbrella as a joint ESOC-Interlopers initiative with SOA support.
- **Scottish Champs:** see Ann's article below on a good end-of-May weekend in INVOC and Moravian areas. More here too: <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/news/>
- As detailed in Colin's Chair's annual report, a number of Interlopers were selected for GBR squads (see also <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/news/scotland-well-represented-in-the-gb-teams-this-summer/>).
- **Luke Fisher M21** made his team GB debut, travelling to the **European Orienteering Champs** in the Vértes Hills in Hungary (15-20 August), in very hot conditions, and coming 58th in the long distance. [Photo credit Rob Lines]
- **Laurence Ward M18** travelled to the **European Youth Orienteering Champs** (EYOC) in Szczecin, Poland, 22-24 June. <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/news/silver-medal-at-european-youth-orienteering-championships/#more-54119/>. In the sprint, Laurence Ward (M18) was the best placed Scot, with 18th place.
- **World Biathlon Orienteering Championships:** Congratulations are due to members Dominique Lazanski of [Chigwell and Epping Forest Orienteering Club](#) and Pippa Ascough, from [Interlopers](#), who won Bronze in the W95 relay [nb not their individual age class!! perhaps a joint-age class)] for Team GB at the World Biathlon Orienteering Championships in Denmark! Well done ladies!



SCOTTISH ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 25-26TH MAY 2024 – ANN HALEY

Lead up - trying to keep up the running!

On our holiday to Ireland in our campervan, we toured the coast of Ireland, travelling from Larne round to County Clare, along the Wild Atlantic Way. I was never quite sure if our base for the night would be a suitable venue for a run. Camping pitches varied along the way from campsites to 'Aires': free or low-cost places offering parking or basic facilities. The latter might be harbour carparks (with facilities for harbour occupants), office blocks, sports centre or pub carparks. Runs took the form of running round the harbour, sightseeing the local town, running to the caves (used for Game of Thrones apparently!), heading to the local nature reserve or simply running round the campsite. However, two of my runs stood out from the rest.

Near Belmullet our chosen camp spot (on top of a cliff) was a little windy and the skid marks in the carpark encouraged us to relocate to a lake nearby. On arrival we spotted a 'Start' sign for the 'Erris Parkrun, the most Westerly Parkrun in Europe'. Being Friday evening, this was excellent timing, although the information provided was particularly ambiguous regarding the exact start location and the direction of the run (which way you ran around the lake). Previous results listed around 29 competitors.



The following morning participants began to arrive...and kept arriving....It was a case of going with the flow! This run was part of County Mayo day and drinks were offered part way round! With the perimeter of the lake being >5km, Graham had to find the finish (over the sand dunes somewhere), where participants were given goody bags and hot drinks were available! 130 runners was an excellent turnout!

A few days later we found ourselves at Doolin. From there it was possible to run along the coastal track towards the Cliffs of Moher. This was a stunning 9km run with a slight incline all the way out, making for a particularly enjoyable return to the campsite.

Individual Championships Venue: Craig Leach and Craig Dunain

With three of the top W60s missing (one being the assistant controller), the competition was thrown open. The weather was fine and with the assembly being adjacent to a farm park, it was great for families too. The start was a long way off, but smaller children, or older people, or those who were at the bus stop at the right moment had a lift up the slope with a level walk to the start. It was the area in the vicinity of the start that had me confused. The small ridges were difficult to identify and I was relieved that this area was bounded by paths and a road. Controls 2-6 were steady before a big route choice to 7 (across the heather or round the road) - I went across the heather as there was a big marsh to aim for. With a minor route issue going to 11 and then aiming for the wrong hill on 13, I knew I was beginning to tire. I was slow on the road sections leading to Craig Dunain. The longer courses had some serious route choices and some serious climb on this hill (going over the top twice) among

the many mountain bike trails. I knew I would have to keep alert for my last few controls. I tended to have kept in close contact with the map throughout and it seemed to have paid off. I was really pleased with my result (3rd W60), but also chuffed to bits at beating all the W55s on the same course (just a bit competitive)!

There were some other great Interloper results!

Relay Championships Venue Roseisle

Roseisle was always going to be a great challenge, but one that I knew I would enjoy. Graham McIntyre had an excellent first leg, returning in 5th in the 20+ class. It was technical from the start. I lost concentration towards the end, and, like so many others, tripped over that root by the last control, but managed to bring the team into 3rd place. With Claire Ward on the final leg, we finished in 2nd, with the 1st team too far in the lead to be caught. It was a shame about the rain as the final leg competitors came in, but Interlopers did well with several podium finishes (3rd in the 14+ class, 2nd 20+ class, 3rd in Women's Open) including Lucy Ward who competed as a mixed club junior team to come in 3rd in the 11+ class, and our Men's open team finished 4th.





CLUB LOCAL EVENT – KINNEIL WOODS, 8 JUNE

Thanks to Chris and Pip for planning and organising this with some enjoyable courses (including a longer easier 'Red' course, taken up by some members of Lothian Running Club). Thanks to various club volunteers for helping on the day (Robin, Lucy, Colin, Rob, Lorna, Paul, William and Katherine), and to Roger Scrutton for organising East Area Juniors' training before the event.



SENIOR HOME INTERNATIONAL 2024 – MAIRI EADES

Interlopers had a strong turnout representing almost all the nations (need to adopt a Welsh person next). After a brutal long and hot course at Edinchip, we had some great results with special mention to Laurence Ward 5th on M20 and Scott showing the young ones how it's done in 8th on M21.

INTs present:

Scotland – Laurence Ward, Scott Fraser, James Ackland and Mairi Eades

England – Luke Fisher

Ireland – Aoife McCavana



Team Scotland pic (i would have included the English team pic but Luke managed to avoid being in it)



Scott showing how it's done in the men's mass start

Also a shout-out to the men on the Black SOL course: INT can lay claim to 4 of the top 5!

Then the Relays the next day saw some great battles on every leg. Final results were

Scott's team 3rd, Luke's team 4th, Laurence & James's team 6th, Mairi's team 3rd and Aoife's team 7th. Scotland took a strong win this year compared to the closeness of last year's. England will have to come back stronger next year.

Future SHI athlete greeting Mairi after her relay run



Spectator control

MY TRIP TO LAGGANLIA BY LUCY WARD

This summer I attended Lagganlia, a selective JROS (Junior Regional Orienteering Squad) training camp held in Lagganlia, Speyside where juniors in my year from all across Britain come and stay at Lagganlia and go out every day and train in the excellent nearby train.

I was lucky going into Lagganlia as I knew most of the people there (including the coaches) so I wasn't as nervous as others but even so everyone was very friendly and we quickly became good friends. They put you in dorms with people you know so I was with the Scots. They also put you into coaching groups which are with people you don't know but with all different levels of skill and you get designated 3 coaches per group of 4, so you can try grow a really close bond. These are also the groups we did chores in too.



The first full day we were there we started off with a tour meeting where we were told that day we were focusing on bearings and got shown a few videos on how to do them before setting off to the forest. We did some exercises and a relay before leaving and when we got back we went into our groups and looked at past races such as the big selection races, we did this every day. The next day was simplification where we got given a course with no map and had to draw on the most important features and then use that to do our course. What I thought made it hard was that we made them an hour before we got to the North Granish the forest of the day so all our thoughts had gone. Along with that we did some other exercises and a relay.



On day 3 we had a longer drive out to Roseisle where we focused on not getting distracted so we did normal exercises in the morning but there were no paths on the map. But then in the afternoon we did a distractions race which was also 3rd leg relay simulation. Where we had

coaches running about in wrong directions, camera men chasing us cheering fans, music, spectator run through and controls not working. I think the coaches had a lot of fun with this one. Roseisle is a lovely area but we were unfortunately mainly in the vague green.

Day 4 was the “rest day” where we had the tour sprint champs, knock out sprint champs, night o and we were also let loose in Aviemore for an hour. The sprint – which was held at Badaguish - was also a qualifier for what semi-final you got into and you also got to choose what gaffle you got and it was a mass start in each of your semis. There was a running camera again which seemed to only be on me as I was off the front of the pack in both semi and final. After this the coaches had a race and we did the Badaguish rings before going to Loch Morlich and then into Aviemore. That evening at 10:30-ish we went to do the night-o which was chaotic. The next day was in Loch Vaa and again not in the good bit. The final day was tour champs in Nethy Bridge; a not very runnable area with lots of paths. After this we got back and did Micky’s map memory monster relay and the coaches all dressed up with water gun and took part too. So afterwards we obviously had a water fight.

In conclusion Lagganlia was a new experience, fun and I learned a lot.

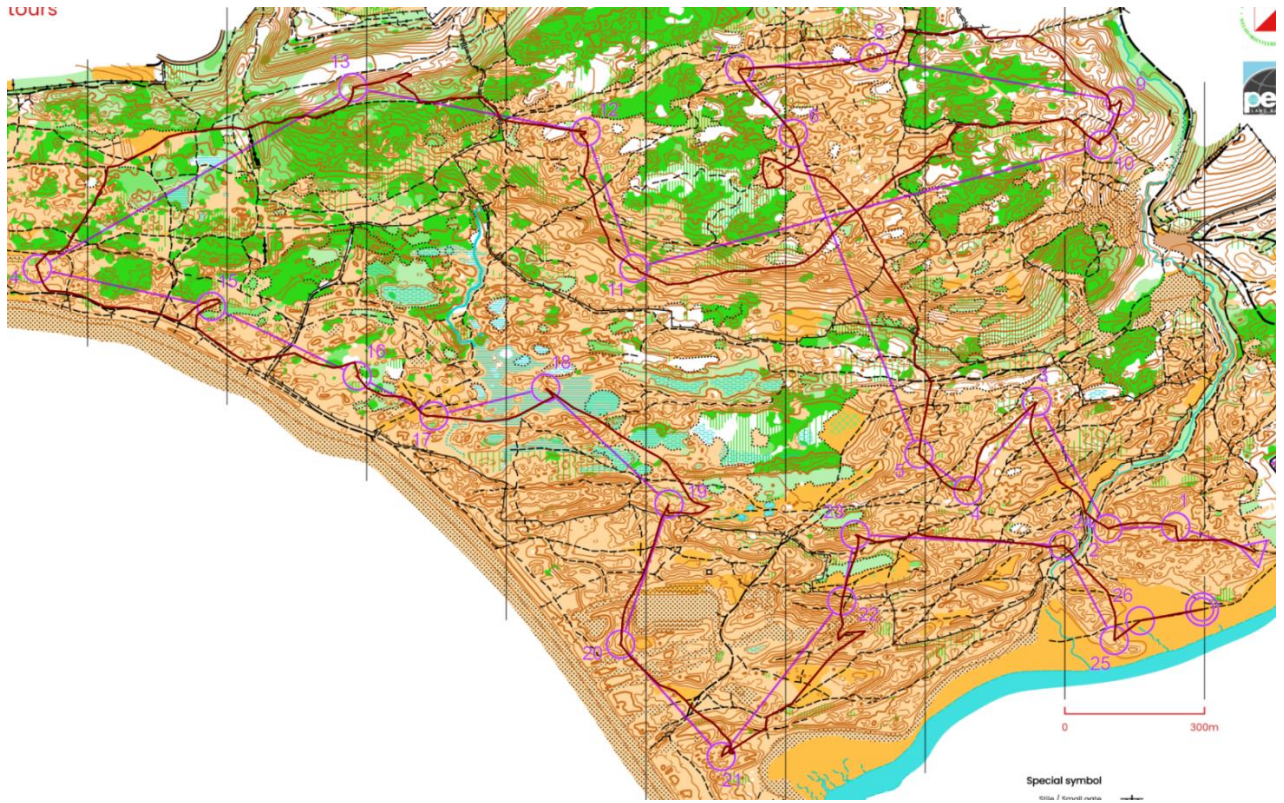


CROESO 2024 - BEN STEVENS

The Welsh 6-day event (Croeso) took place from 21-27 July in the Brecon Beacons. I stayed in an Airbnb with my family, which included my parents, my brother and sister and their partners, plus two babies and a toddler, so it was quite busy.

The event itself was probably one of the best organised I’ve ever been to. Three of the days required busing from the car park up to the mountain, and the buses ran like clockwork every 10 minutes with no delays (as far as I’m aware).

Day 1 was a very sunny day on Merthyr Mawr, an open sand dune area on the coast just to the south of the Brecon Beacons. I was looking forward to this because I really like open sand dunes (although I’m not particularly good at them) and I’d been there before so knew it was good. Unfortunately, it’s got quite overgrown recently (like a lot of the open sand dune areas in the UK it seems), especially with summer vegetation. It’s still very good, but I was very glad I had a late start (which was probably worth almost 10 minutes, given the amount of tracking-up). We started with some tricky short legs in intricate contour detail, then had a longer leg up the steep slope onto the higher slightly more vague plateau, at which point my navigation stated to fail me, then another long leg back off the plateau where I missed the indistinct path and instead followed a distinctly brambly almost-path, then we ended up finishing in the less overgrown sandy part of the dunes, where I made several more mistakes.



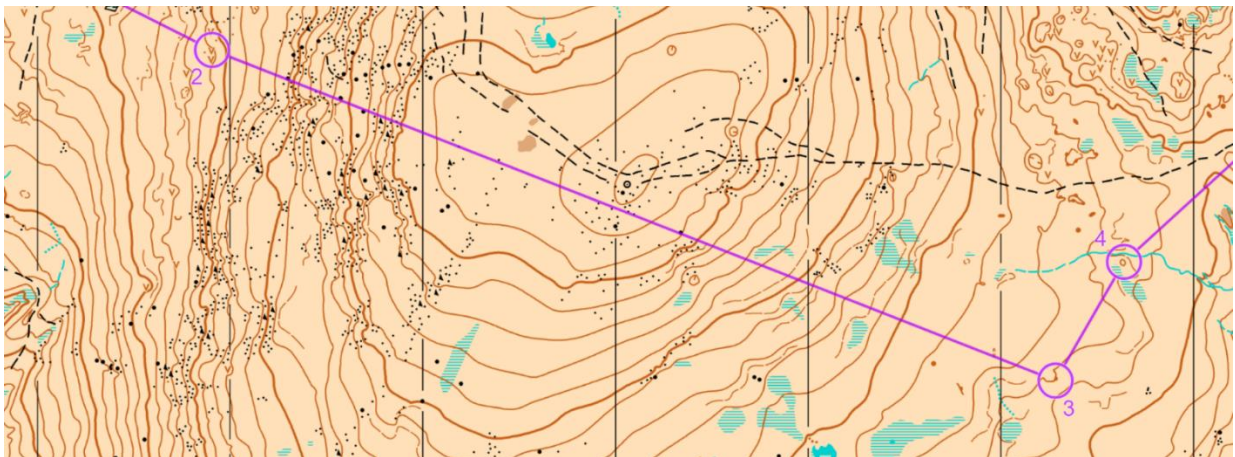
Merthyr Mawr M21L, with my mistake-strewn route (approximate)



View of Merthyr Mawr start/finish

The other days were actually in the Brecon Beacons, which is mostly moderately sloping open fell with lots of pits and depressions and a few crags, stony ground and areas of open rock. These areas vary in technical difficulty according to the density of the pits and depressions. They were mostly on the fairly easy side, apart from the final day at Merthyr Common, which was quite tricky. Some people prefer more of a navigational challenge, but I actually really like these sorts of areas. I like the mixture of just being free to run towards some obvious different feature, but then having to stay focused when approaching the control, and the terrain was just the right level of roughness to keep the running interesting.

I had a terrible run in the middle race on day 2, which was actually trickier than it looked (at least for me), but I managed to have near-perfect runs on days 3 and 4, and to be honest 2 good runs (to get some ranking points!) was basically my goal for the week. Day 4 was actually in the cloud, so I was somewhat apprehensive at the start, but you could still see about 100m or so, and a combination of luck and staying focussed got me through, especially on the long leg 2-3 (pictured). I took the highly risky slightly-right of straight route (to avoid some climb but probably not worth it) and managed to do a perfect arc straight to the control, in spite of the quite thick mist at that point, without ever knowing exactly where I was on the leg. Rob Elston, who was following me at the time, was particularly impressed/pleased.

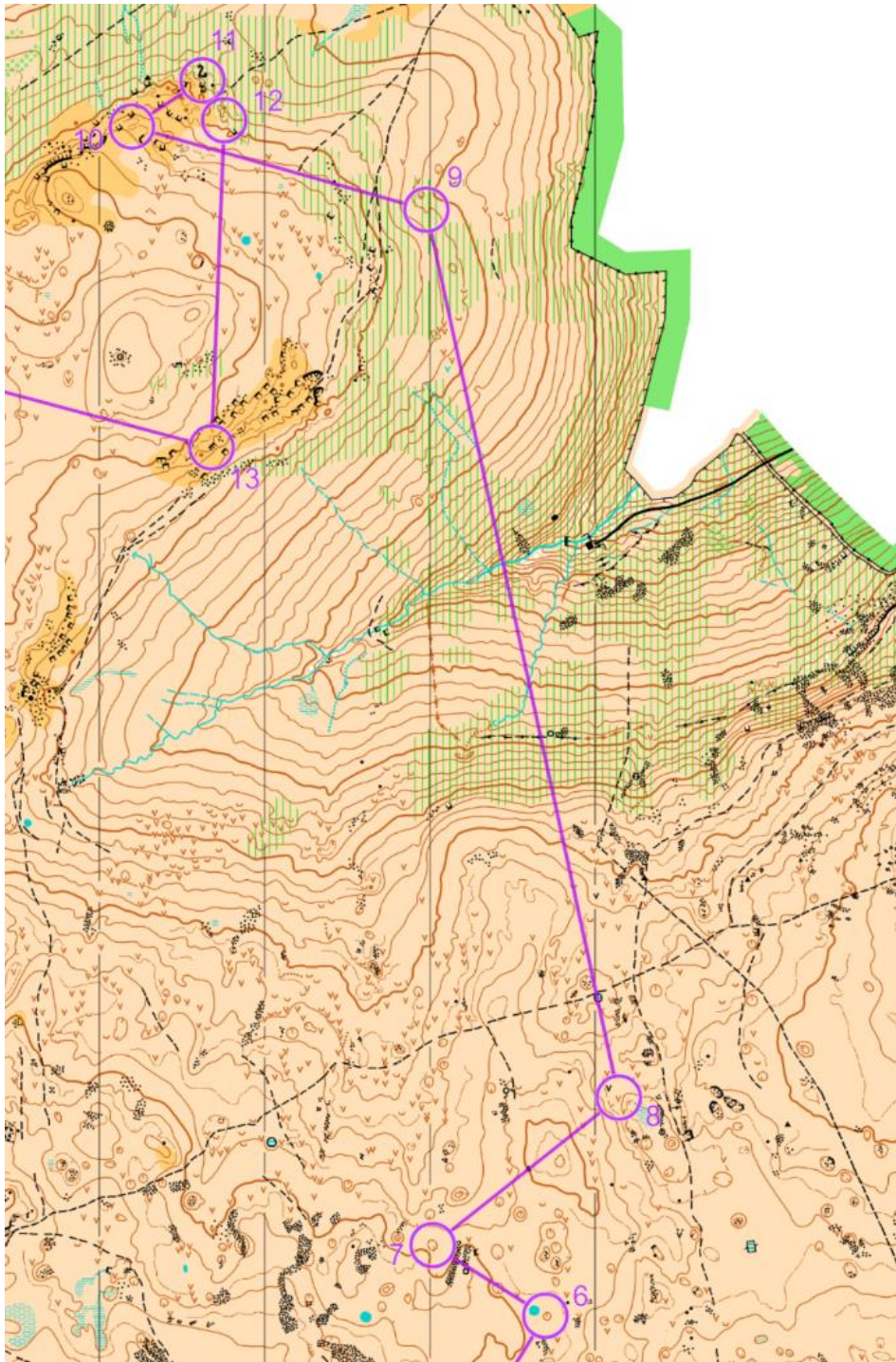


Day 3 M21L leg 2-3 (in the cloud!)

I had a mediocre run on day 5 with quite a few mistakes, but it's worth mentioning to look at the route choice leg across the valley which also featured (via a similar leg) in the JK a few years ago. I decided to go straightish, but ended up going quite far left, partly to avoid the climb and partly because I got carried away following a sheep track before turning down the hill. Unfortunately, it turned out that the valley was very rough, especially on the other side which was actually covered in low gorse (probably even worse than the mapped bracken), so going all the way around the top and picking up the track, or even going a straighter route through the bracken, would probably have been better.

The less said about day 6 (Merthyr Common) the better. It is a great area, but I was tired and apparently I can't do middle distance races, managing to make two 6-minute mistakes, amongst others! Having 4 days to count out of 6 meant I did OK overall (they use the old Scottish 6 Days style scoring system with some sort of standardised score). I think everyone in my family who was competing came either 7th or 8th. I managed to beat old rival Tom Bray, but other old rival Iain Harding was just too consistent!

Overall, it was a great event, and I'd definitely recommend going in 4 years' time (in Snowdonia I think), as long as you don't mind some more running-focused legs and the lack of trees!



Day 5 M21L route choice leg (roughness of terrain in the valley not reflected by the map!)



THE WARD'S TRIP TO THE O-RINGEN – CLAIRE WARD

The Wards weighed up the orienteering summer holiday options of OO cup (clashed with WOC) and Croeso (please no more UK holidays) and headed to the O-ringen in Oskarshamn, Sweden (half way between Stockholm and the bottom of Sweden, on the east coast).

The next question was how to get there. Train and ferry would have been fun, but lugging camping gear across Europe was not tempting. We try to avoid flying, and again camping gear / baggage allowance dilemma would not be tempting either. So we drove the 870 miles each way, broken up with the excitement of the overnight ferry Newcastle to Amsterdam, the 45 min ferry trip Puttgarden – Rodby and the Oresund bridge. Laurence didn't join in this adventure, opting to fly with his friends. The ferry was fun, the long drive through Germany less so, the stop off campsite in Denmark was lovely. As we neared Oskarshamn the long convoy of caravans on single carriageway Swedish roads heralded our arrival at the O-ringen.

The O-ringen campsite is a thing to behold. Mile after mile after mile of caravans and tents. A bit like Glastonbury probably – but not. The Brits all get put together with the other foreigners, and the Scandinavians are put in club order. We were initially wedged in between IFK Gothenburg and another Swedish club, but the O-ringen soon saw sense and put us next to our friends after I sent them a polite email stating my case repeatedly every half hour throughout a day. Camping with friends at orienteering events is great, as your kids soon make friends and are constantly having fun. Laurence was camped about 100m from us all week, but we didn't see much of him. I don't think socialising with your parents when you are 16 is the done thing.

We set off to the training day on our bikes, and had fun shambolling around trying to remember how to orienteer. I was trying out a contact lens (courtesy of Helena Nolan, ESOC & PA Eyecare, Marchmont Road) and it was all a bit woozy. I also remembered that I hadn't orienteered for ages as I had dodgy ankles. Great. Lucy warmed up with pairing up with Oscar and Nathan Peel of SYO and another for the kids sprint relay which followed the opening ceremony. Very exciting. 200 teams haring around quite a compact area but the courses were fun for a fairly standard Swedish town.

The event format is 2 short-ish long courses, rest day then long, middle, long. D45 featured multiple world champion Simone Niggli who topped the leader board by about 5 minutes most days. She is still one of the best orienteers on the planet. The first few days were rolling and intricate, but didn't get to the truly tricky areas that M45 did. It was sunny and fun though. The outdoor mass participation showers are always quite hard to beat. Bertie enjoyed the Mini-Knat courses, which were like a string course but with fun little challenges and games at each control.

Laurence ran an M18 sprint on the rest day, and enjoyed the break from the forest. Day 3's arena was situated on a beach, which made the apres-o refreshing, but the forest was vague and tricky with there being quite a lot of times where I had no idea where I was. The last two days were around the outskirts of the town which made for simpler orienteering. I still managed to make some hefty mistakes. Rushing I think, and not being fit enough to think properly.

The last day was a chasing start, which is always a fun way to try to move up the rankings by taking a tow from some Swedes and nipping past them at the end. I managed to overtake two by going from 43rd to 41st, Lucy from 32nd to 29th. Ray from 150th to 132rd, Lucy from 32nd to 29th and Laurence from 96th to 85th. Ward family winners!

The O-ringen is a must do for any orienteer. I am inspired by getting beaten by so many people – the competition was fierce and as a result I am keen to get training (after I have shaken off my current injury...).. It reminds me that women in their 40s can be warriors too. The terrain was challenging, the weather was warm, the provision for Bertie was fun, all things that Britain often lacks. We'll probably be back in two years' time for O-ringen 2026, but could really do with the Newcastle - Gothenburg ferry restarting...



TRICIA ALSTON - WMOC 2024 Turku

Having hatched a plan with Ali Cunningham of FVO in darkest January - everything fell into place very easily: direct flight from Edinburgh; train on super-efficient railway system to Turku; and gorgeous scandi minimalist style flat near the centre. The location was cleverly selected (total fluke) on the edge of the model event urban area; had we been on the other side of the street we would have had an embargo from 6am for the sprint qualification!

Turku to the south west of Finland also sounded an interesting historic town to visit, sited at the mouth of the river Aura , part of a vast archipelago, and with aspirations of being carbon neutral by 2029. So, with little persuasion, we decided to visit Finland again: a country of great design (Marimekko/ Litala etc); gorgeous chocolate (Fazer's): daft Moomins, super saunas and of course very tricky orienteering.



Entries were booked and we opted for being bussed to the out of town events, which was a nice relaxing and super-efficient way to travel. It also, very conveniently, dropped us at the event beer garden at the end of the day!

So off we went to WMOC in August. The first race was the urban qualifying sprint, the result of which placed us in an A, B or C race for the final the following day. In a nutshell it was a very straightforward, easy urban race - I simply mucked up - no excuses. For information, 10% of the entrants in our class were disqualified, many for crossing an out of bounds road on the way to the race, but also many for what seemed very minor infringements – which made us both very nervous for the race the next day. Unfortunately, I also made a very simple elementary mistake in my final race - ran the wrong direction to the first control- oops- which you can't afford to do in a sprint - but the rest of the course was fine. Anyways, aside from all of that, the best was that Ali won gold - which was absolutely fantastic. Superstar. She did it in a margin of 18 seconds and had to pull herself back from 7th position at control 3 (hit a dead end). A lucky route choice backtracking up a hill pulled her back into 1st place and win. The finish was so exciting!

Afterwards we went to the prize giving which was held in the town square with lots of cheers despite a major thunderstorm downpour. Great to see Ali take the podium and just such a happy event. My only disappointment was that, apart from the fabulous gold medal presented, the content of the mysterious box prize was liquorice and chocolate (not Fazer's but still totally delicious!).

After the sprint race excitement, we had the 'model' forest outing- which was lovely. The forest was beside a rickety old wooden ski jump surrounded by isolated red ochre farmsteads and ripening fields of oats and barley.

The woods contained the typical Finnish bare, glacially smoothed rock, spongy lichen, lots of fungi and many scattered boulders which when combined made the orienteering so much fun. Anyway, on qualifying race day I managed to get round, which I was quite chuffed about as I don't think I had been forest orienteering since the previous year in Finland (Venla). The middle final race was again challenging, very intricate but I finished smiling. Ali did very well - finishing 23rd in the A final - and interestingly the Finnish commentators seemed rather surprised as seem to view urban and forest orienteering as completely separate specialities. The long final was in a different area on the archipelago and was a fast forest with a superb intricate map - super fun and good finishes from us both. Phew! Ali again 23rd in the A final but disappointed to have dropped from 5th at the



halfway stage. This was the only day that we got absolutely soaked out in the forest, but the sun shone after!

In summary it was a brilliant week of orienteering and a super relaxing holiday- I would always recommend Finland as a country to visit- if only to see the robotic supermarket delivery wagons- so sweet. 😊



FIVE GO MAD IN ULFBORG – COLIN BLACKBURN

Chris Dibben and I got into the sport of biathlon orienteering a few years ago when we decided ski orienteering just wasn't niche enough, though we've yet to try ski biathlon orienteering (at night) or even moose biathlon (no moose are harmed). Last year we persuaded Pip and our XC ski and biathlon friend, Dominique, to give ski orienteering a go. And then we got Dominique into biathlon orienteering. She'd never orienteered before, now she's a member of CHIG. This year, after some biathlon training at Glenmore Lodge, Pip was recruited to the British Biathlon Orienteering team. So, what better start for Pip than the world championships!

This year Denmark hosted the four-day world champs of this mainly Nordic sport just outside the small town of Ulfborg in Jutland. As we prepared to travel out via Legoland's Billund airport we found another Brit had registered, Andy Snell (SOC). It was his first event, though he had some experience of rifle shooting from his army days. And then there were five. And we all got to wear the very smart kit Dominique had sorted for us!



Andy, Dominique, Pip, Hans, Colin and Chris

I should mention Hans at this point. Hans Mandahl is chair of the International Biathlon Orienteering Federation. His support has been essential in each of us getting to take part in this sport from helping us practically with rifles and ammunition and to his positive encouragement and desire to expand the sport outside of its Nordic base. Without Hans there would be no Brits at the world championships!

The first day comprised training and the opening ceremony. We don't usually get to train before events and so this was really helpful, if only to introduce the bizarre sport of location orienteering to Pip and Andy. You run around following tapes through the terrain, every now and then you stick a pin through the map where you think you are or where you think that kite over there - up to 500 m over there - is! We also got a feel for the terrain, described as:

“The terrain consists of coniferous forest including some open moor land in between. Inland sand dunes form the contour lines of the terrain. Some vegetation is open, giving good visibility, with some scattered thicker parts with low visibility and slow run ability.”

That’s a very fancy way of saying it was tough running and tough navigation! We also got time to familiarise ourselves with our rifles and zero them, adjust the sights so that we were roughly hitting the centres of the targets.



Colin zeroing while Chris checks the fall of my shots through the scope.

Later in the evening we took part in the opening ceremony in the nearby city of Hostlebro. Each nation’s team marched out into the town square to their national anthem followed by some speeches. I got to be the flag bearer, by default I think.

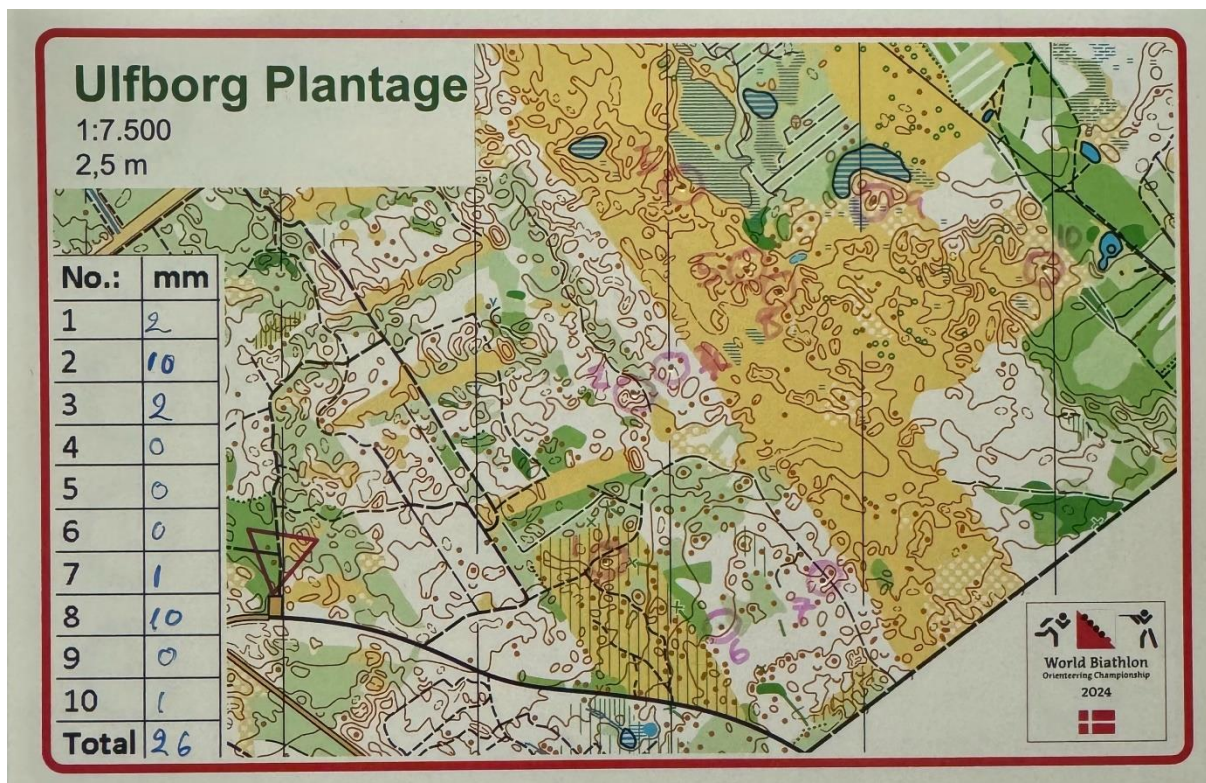


Photos: Sweden, Poland, Iraq, Great Britain, Germany and Finland (Denmark out of shot!).

Chris’s shooting (possibly staged).

The second day was the classic event: location orienteering, standard orienteering and then shooting, with mistakes in the location stage and misses in the shooting incurring time penalties.

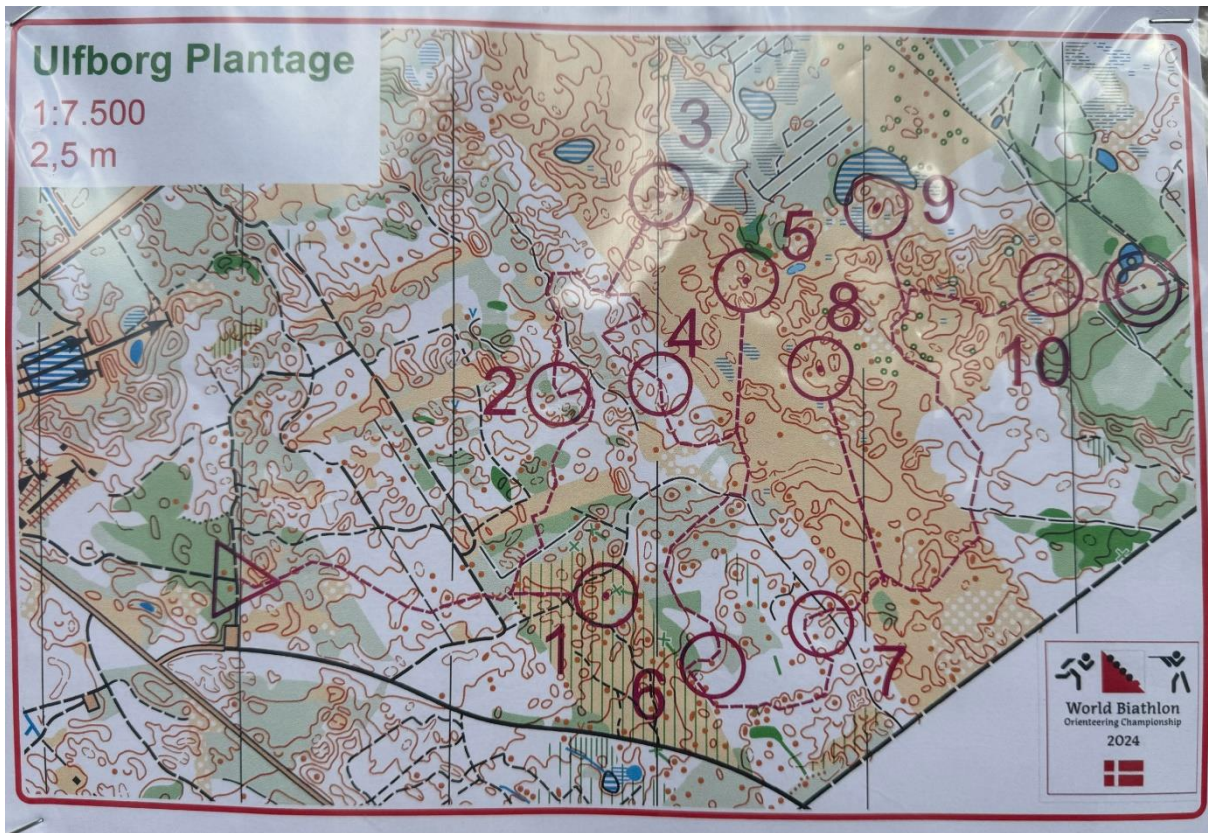
I took the location orienteering very slowly and managed to get the lowest number of penalties I have ever managed. The penalties are 1 minute for every 1 mm a pinhole is from the actual location, up to a maximum of 10 minutes per control.



My map with my pinholes circled afterwards. The 2s are adjacent similar features, the 1s are just not accurate enough, the 10s are miles off!



After pushing a pin through the map, it is marked with the pencil at that control.

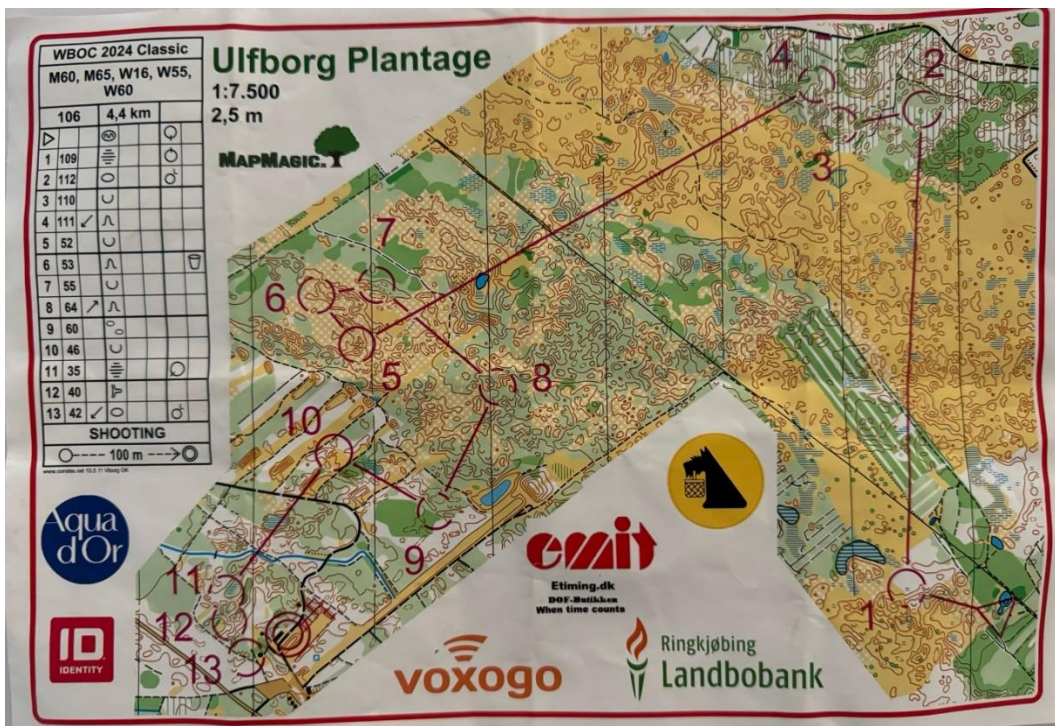


Thankfully a master map is provided afterwards, the main dashed line is the taped route.



A yellow box means where is that control over there, sighting rods and a control description to help. It's not easy.

After an hour in the terrain sticking pins through a map you get to pick up your standard orienteering map and begin the long slog back to the shooting range. Unfortunately for me, and three of the rest of the team, it was a slog too far. It was hard running and with the heat four of us retired and just headed back to get some shooting practice. Andy did complete his course.



The third day was the sprint, a much simpler and, thankfully, shorter event. It's made up of two short orienteering legs (in my case 2x2.5 km) each followed by a shoot, one prone, one stand, any misses are punished with a short penalty loop. We all managed to finish despite the heavy showers that day. Andy picked up the first medal for TeamGB with a bronze in his class.

The evening after the sprint was the banquet and the prize giving, mainly to the Swedes, some good food and good chat!

The final day was the relays. The format is pretty much the same as the sprint but with two biathletes, the second running after the first has completed their whole course. The one added feature is that for each shoot you carry three spare rounds to be used if there are any misses, but these must be hand loaded into the rifle and so take time and break position. The relay was a middle-distance event (2x3.9 km) and so quite tough. Chris had a tough time out there; I had an even tougher one and got us DSQed!



Chris hand loading a spare round after getting three down with his first five shots.



Chris handing over to Coin.

The highlight of the week, though, was Pip and Dominique's performance in their first ever world championships, first ever relay and Pip's first ever event. They completed a very tough relay course to get bronze in the W95 class!

And that was it for another year. Ah, other than the world cup event in Sweden next month? It's a very addictive sport!

[Photos by Colin, Chris and Matthias Thiel (used with permission)]

See also <https://ibof.org/biathlon-orienteeing/wboc-2024-competition-day-3/>

Results and more photos at: <https://www.biathlon.dk/index.php/vm-i-bo-2024/>

WOC 2024 - CONTROLLING – PAUL CABAN

I'd agreed to control the WOCTour day at Riccarton fairly early on. Riccarton was fairly close to home, and it was somewhere I was pretty familiar with, having controlled the last event there. And the one before that too, when planner Helen had been the planner too. Also, I'd controlled at big events before – the SixDays, in particular – so (say it quietly) I was expecting a relatively easy ride for the planner and I, whilst a big team around us made all the organising happen.

What I hadn't counted on was just how "special" – strange! – WOC itself would make everything.



The clues started to come early on. Helen, who works at Heriot-Watt, kept talking mysteriously about permissions and accesses, and then everything would go quiet for a while. The use of Oriam for the base was an early confirmed fact, but then there was no information about routes in and out of it, or where the start could be. Or more properly, where it couldn't be, as WOC naturally took preference.

Easter, and the "first draft of courses" deadline loomed, and Helen finally had enough knowledge to deliver me something to look at. The courses were utterly fantastic, and she'd got some very similar opening legs to the WOC ones. But then I asked questions like "how do competitors get to the start without walking past the last control?" and "do we really want competitors crossing the main road into the campus so close to the entrance?". Helen went off to have a rethink.

At some point during the spring, I'd discovered there was going to be a maze inside Oriam. I also discovered, by accident, that there'd be pop-up bushes for WOC. This came about when I sent in map corrections, and was told that this wasn't our map, it was the WOC one. A-ha.

Helen's next – and last – set of courses appeared. They were basically the same as the first set, only with tinkering to take account of the start moving to the other side of Oriam. I had one last meeting with Helen – at the British Sprints in Coventry; sadly expenses weren't going to be paid – and the courses went in for printing. At that stage, I hadn't seen the final map, but we both trusted it'd be fine. Also, neither of us knew what our "special features" were actually going to be, how big they were, or whether the control description need to specify size, position etc, but hey ho, we figured no-one would notice. Or remember to care.

I was on holiday for most of the next fortnight, and only got back to Edinburgh on the Monday of WOC week. I checked email sporadically – thanks, Tesco and/or Morrisons – and though there was no unpleasant news, the message that said "entry numbers are bigger than expected, so we've changed the start times, and you've only got 45 minutes to get all the controls out and checked" did cause me some disquiet

Sunday was The Day. Helen had a team of three thoroughly competent control putters, to which I was able to add Rob and his visitor Lecky, but I was still a little concerned that I was going to be having to check everything that five people were putting out. In truth, there were a few controls outwith the WOC area that would be going out early, but that still left around fifty controls to go out in the 45 minute window, and I'm not as fast as I was a couple of years ago.

I didn't see much of WOC itself, though I did see Freddie run past me pretty damn quickly, leading the chasing pack. Then all too soon, we got the "all clear" and I was suddenly very busy. As expected, I'd check a couple of controls, and then overtake the person putting them out, so needed to divert. My Garmin track of the activity shows me zig-zagging across the campus, out of necessity getting faster and faster. I also had to divert to the start to give them the OK (people were just going into "-5") before going out again to check the last few controls, hopefully ahead of the competitors.

Everything was fine, although there were a few close calls. The second start unit never materialised, so Margaret Dalglish's start team improvised. I finally was allowed into Oriam, and discovered what the special features were (animal statues). More concerningly, there were no trestles for the last controls, which were simply sitting on chairs. I didn't have time to stay, but simply had to trust it would be fixed (it was). The "pop-up" bushes had gone (correctly), but some of the barrier tapes hadn't been moved properly. I collared random people – no idea who - and said "please do this, now", and everyone simply said "OK". In fact, one barrier did end up slightly in the wrong place, but it had no impact on route choice whatsoever. Oh, and for one control, both Helen and I forgot to put the trestle out, so the unit and kite simply sat on the tarmac outside the HWU Security office. It was fine.

And then it was all over. I'd only heard nice comments about Helen's courses (I could take very little credit), everything had been in the right place (apart from the tape which no-one should have got close enough to notice anyway), and no-one seemed to be fussed that one of the trestles wasn't there. I went home to bed, and marvelled how Lindsey could control five consecutive days and still retain sanity.



CLUB SOCIAL – Sheep's Heid, 8 September

Bowling and beers. Some more competent than others!



MORAG MCINTYRE - COASTS & ISLANDS 2024 – 3 DAYS OF R&R IN KNAPDALE

What would be a great way to recover from the excitement and long hours of volunteering at WOC 2024? Going orienteering of course!

Graham and I checked in at Lochgilphead Caravan site beside the Crinan canal at lunchtime on day 1, and headed to the Joint Campus from where the buses were to leave each of the 3 days in order to manage traffic and parking in Knapdale. It was great not to have to worry about manoeuvring the van into/out of tight parking spaces, and to chat to fellow competitors on the bus.



Martin “Bilbo” Bagness was responsible for the mapping and planning, so we were assured of some excellent maps and testing courses. I was lulled into a false sense of ‘actually I’m not SO bad at this’ on Day 1. I had opted for the short courses all 3 days and with Crinan Wood being middle distance that meant I had just 2.5 km (well 3.7 for me) to stay focussed on the 1:7500 map. The walk to the start was along the shore of the glorious Crinan Harbour before heading into the wood. The area was billed as having “plenty of contour detail, including steep, chunky ridges, all with a strong NE-SW trend”, and eye protection was advised due to low dead branches. I managed to avoid injury and stayed largely on course to finish in 6th place out of 26 entrants and only 24 minutes behind Martin Dean in 1st place (believe me, this was a success in my book!)

Day 2 was also a middle distance, with the village hall at Achnamara being the event base. This was welcome as we arrived in very wet weather. The start was 2km away and I took the decision to keep my waterproof on and leave it there. I hadn’t really considered how I might retrieve it, but the ever-helpful Mairi was on the start and brought any remaining clothing back to base once the last starter was under way.

I had more difficulty with judging distance on this map - still 1:7500 but I overshot my first control, got to # 2 and had to go back (a knoll and then a re-entrant on NE/SW ridges with only 100m or so separating the two controls fortunately). Similar confusion arose on another 2 ridges, where I just didn’t manage to match ground to map along the ridges. The second half of the course I managed to reduce the kinks and knots in my Strava route a bit, as I was able to pick out paths and ruined walls which always assist. So, no covering myself with glory here – I finished just under halfway down the field on short.

However, did this prepare me for day 3 - the long distance (albeit still short course for me) and 1:10000 map? No, it did not. I had a very tough time and ended up taking the safety bearing (due West) off the area. The results do show that some other participants also took an unusually long time to navigate themselves through this terrain, and a few other bailers. The winning time on short (3.7km with 130m of climb) was 56m 21s, medium (5.9km and 330m) was 80m 24s, and long (8.4m and 440m) was 85m 13s, with Interlopers Luke Fisher just 0.16secs behind and Doug Tullie in 3rd.

We were based back at the Achnamara Village Hall for day 3, and again the locals had outdone themselves in the provision of endless cakes and beverages for a suggested £3

donation or £1 if just having tea or coffee. We were able to take these out to the picnic benches though as the rain had stopped and the sun was out.

Graham and I caught up with all the excitement of WOC on his laptop in the van on evenings 1 and 2, and the Friday evening we went out to the Tayvallich Inn for a lovely seafood dinner.

Scale 1:7,500 - Contour interval 5m - 178000

Crinan
Knapdale Forest

0 metres 300

MASTERPLAN ADVENTURE
www.masterplanadventure.uk

	short	2.4 km	120 m
	▷	≡	○
1	119	○	○
2	118	○	○
3	114	∞	
4	110 →	⊙	
5	111	∩	∥
6	116	● ●	∥
7	117	∩	
8	112	∩	
9	113	∩	

120 m

mapping by
martinbagness@aol.com
survey Feb 2024

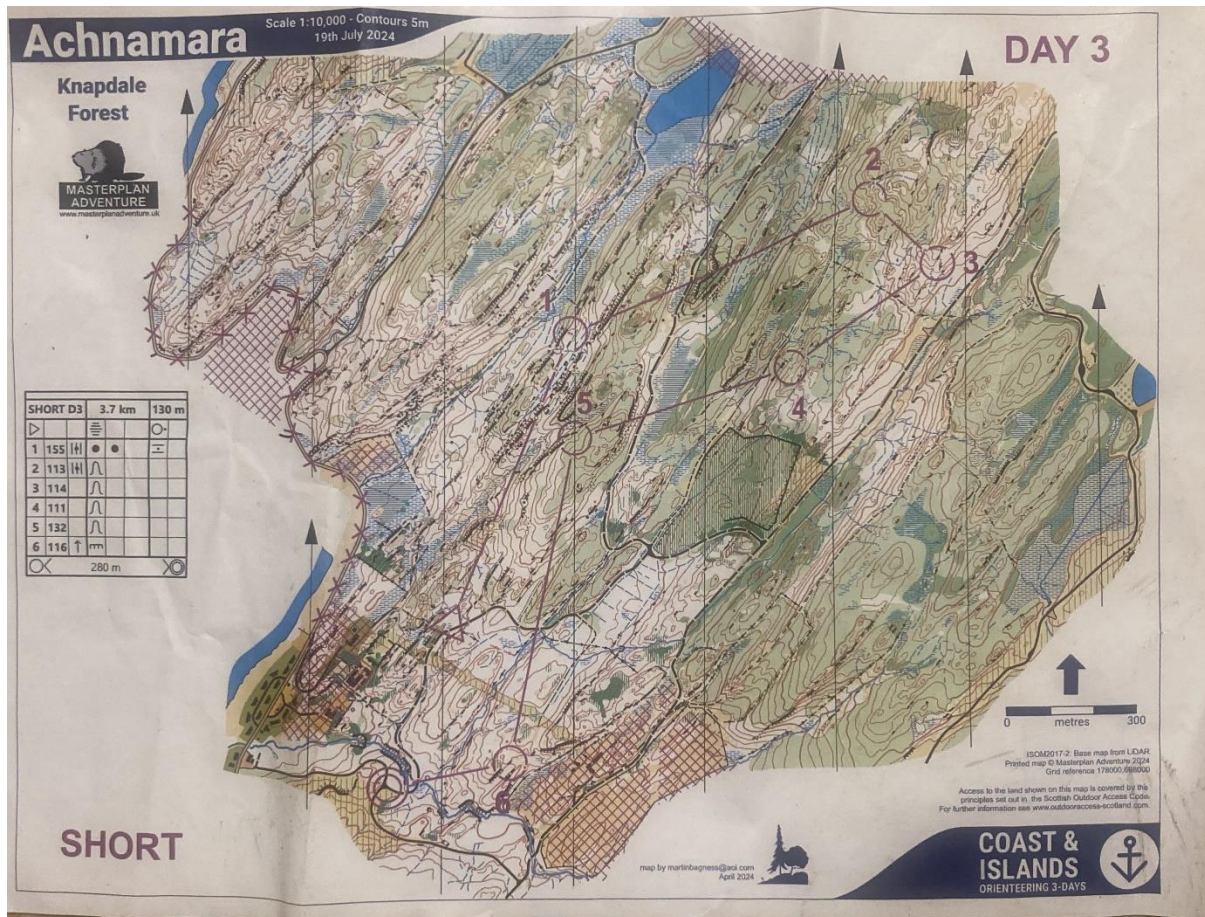
ISOM2017-2: Base map from LIDAR, satellite and OS data
Printed map © Masterplan Adventure 2024 Grid reference 178000694000
Access to the land shown on this map is covered by the principles set out in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.
For further information see www.outdooraccess-scotland.com.

SHORT

COAST & ISLANDS
ORIENTEERING WEEK

We stopped off at Barnluasgan Car park after dinner and took a stroll round the Dubh Loch and Loch Collie Bharr in search of beavers. We got back to the van just before dark and had maintained our record of never seeing beavers here – though we did see much evidence of lodge building.

Saturday morning allowed enough time for a leg loosener jog along the Crinan Canal between Oakfield Bridge in Lochgilphead to Cairnbaan bridge and back before heading back home.



GRAHAM MCINTYRE - Family visit to Bergen

Colin and I had discussed an orienteering trip this summer, possibly World Masters or... Looked around and found the Fjell O event at Bergen which had the bonus of the two day Hav-O event (translates to big ocean or edge of the big sea) which is low key, high quality with no frills and a small entry.

So we travelled to Bergen and had a few days at Telavag on the coastal archipelago for Hav-O which turns out to be more like Harris than anywhere else I have been, lots of lunar landscape small features, low vegetation and very much on the edge of the world. Great

orienteering with plenty bogs, granite and juniper. Between events we had a day in Bergen catching up on culture – Grieg, Munch, Hanseatic League and the Euros.

Fjell-O was split between two days of typical Bergen, then two days among the ski resorts 25 miles inland on the high plateau. Day one and two were big hills dense vegetation and more bogs, really rather tough. Days three and four were a joy with sparse vegetation and less hills.

Of the orienteering Colin did well and I got maximum enjoyment out to the terrain and challenges, navigation was great but progress slow. It was 1983 when I last visited Bergen, so a great surprise to find some of the old timers I recognised still hanging in there. We also found a small contingent of BOK runners, old team mates from all the years ago. A lot of memories being revisited.

An AirBnB looking out over the harbour followed by a ski lodge in the hills gave Colin and I plenty chance to put the world to rights – while watching a lot of football. Would really recommend Bergen for a visit but check out the orienteering as this can be among the toughest terrain in Norway.







AND FINALLY

**Interlopers Club Committee 2024-25
(as from 26 September 2024)**

Chair: (currently vacant)
Secretary: John Barrow
Treasurer: Robin Galloway
Social Secretary: Mairi Eades
Comms Manager: Katherine Ivory
Club Captain: Rob Lee
Events Coordinator: William Ivory
Junior Member: (currently vacant)
Ordinary Member: Mike Stewart
Ordinary Member: Ann Haley
ESOA Rep: Lorna Eades

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.