

SCORE

The Home of Scottish Orienteering

June 2014



INSIDE
SSOF

LiDAR Mapping

**EVENT
NEWS**

**ScotJOS
Update**

PLUS
lots more



magazine of the
**SCOTTISH ORIENTEERING
ASSOCIATION**



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editor's intro

Scottish Orienteers,

HELLO again – hope you've been enjoying some of the great orienteering opportunities that we've had since the last issue of SCORE.

This issue contains news and views from these events, plus other interesting articles, including an explanation of what LiDAR means and how it's used, a piece about the Solway summer coaching initiative, an interview with Robin Strain (electronic systems guru), and all the usual features.

As ever, thanks to all contributors – for the next issue, I'd like to include some accounts of experiences at summer multi-day events. Are you going to the Italian 5 Days (WOC spectator races); the Swiss O Week; the O-Ringen; the OOccup; the Lakes 5 Days; another multi-day event? If so, I'd love to hear from you. (And even if you're not going to one of these, your contributions will be very welcome!) The next issue will be in late September.

I don't have any recent photos of me in action, so here's one from last year's JK.



Picture: Wendy Carlyle, AIRE

At the JK Sprint (2013), Reading University

Hope you enjoy the summer, wherever you may be!

Sally Lindsay
Editor

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Cover pic - Claire Ward victorious in W21E at the British Championships.
Pic courtesy Crawford Lindsay, ESOC.

ABOUT ORIENTEERING

Information on orienteering or any SOA activity can be obtained from the Association Secretary: secretary@scottishorienteering.org

Addresses of clubs, details of groups and a short guide to the sport are available from the: National Orienteering Centre Glenmore Lodge, Aviemore PH22 1QU.

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president's piece

by Roger Scrutton (ESOC)

SOA President

email: president@scottish-orienteeing.org

It has been a very busy couple of months since the last edition of SCORE. This period has been sandwiched between an SOA Board meeting in March, at which we discussed the challenge of re-establishing membership growth, following the sharp decline when the new GB-wide orienteering membership structure was introduced in 2013, and the 2014 SOA AGM in May, at which the same challenge was discussed.

In-between, there was the SOA Club Development Conference, at which the same issue was also discussed. For now, I think we have discussed this issue enough. The membership is not keen on the SOA making any structural changes here in Scotland to help with a return to growth, but the SOA will support clubs in what might be called a 'membership drive' in the context of the current structure.

The 2014 Scottish Championships were held in beautiful Perthshire. The original venue for the Individual day was the western part of Linn of Tummel, but we ran into a number of technical difficulties that made it necessary to find a new venue. Terry O'Brien stepped up to offer Dalnamein, which had been scheduled to host STAG's Scottish Orienteering League event, but then a new venue for SOL2 had to be found. Terry stepped up again and offered to organise this at Faskally.



Picture: Wendy Carlyle, AIRE

Roger on the run-in at the British Individual Championships

All of this was just a few months before the events, but everything worked out well, thanks to the efforts of Terry, STAG (with the help of ScotJOS) and the East Area clubs organising the Scottish Championships weekend. Following the Individual day at Dalnamein, I heard a lot of compliments on the area and the course planning. There was some surprise at how good the area is for competition, and of course planning and other arrangements had been put together in a hurry.

Now the GB Strategy Group is due to meet for the first time, in mid-June, with representation from England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. I am looking forward to the discussions and expect to be seeking the views of clubs on a number of issues

The Relays at Newtyle Hill also brought a pleasant(?) surprise in the form of a figure-of-eight loop on the longer courses, which was a thoughtful use of an area that can be physically tough (hills and heather). Congratulations to all the Scottish Individual Champions and Relay Champions 2014.

To return to a topic I have mentioned before, I'm pleased to say that British Orienteering is now in the process of convening a GB Strategy Working Group. British Orienteering is sensitive to the fact that it is seen as an 'English' organisation, so a couple of years ago it embarked on a committee restructuring exercise, to make sure that all Home Nations are represented in developing and putting into practice its strategies.


Several groups are already up and running, e.g. Events and Competitions, Coaching, Talent and Performance. Now the GB Strategy Group is due to meet for the first time, in mid-June, with representation from England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

I am looking forward to the discussions and expect to be seeking the views of clubs on a number of issues. Another topic on which the

SOA will be seeking the views of clubs in the coming months is its own 4-Year Strategy. The current Strategy is for 2012-2015, and will need to be revised in time for our next application for funding from sportscotland for the 2015-2016 year.

A very enjoyable aspect of being President is that you are invited to do various interesting orienteering things. I'll mention just a couple. I was recently invited to the 2014 Perth and Kinross Schools Festival Final at Scone Palace, where over 300 pupils from across Perthshire took part, 1000 having taken part in the Heats.

At this event the 10,000th pupil, over the ten years the Festival has been running, was participating and I was delighted to present mementoes to mark this milestone. And then I was invited to present prizes at the recent Scottish Championships, in a ceremony that threatened to last a very long time, but in the event was very efficiently and timeously completed.

It's June, and schools break up in a few weeks. You may well take your holiday during the school holidays, or you might try to avoid the school holidays, but whatever you do, have a great summer. 

by **Hilary Quick (BASOC)**

SOA Development Officer

email: hilary@scottish-orienteeing.org



The SOA Club Development Conference on 17 May saw some 25 people from clubs as far apart as INVOC and SOLWAY coming together for wide-ranging discussion.


Murray Strain gave an insight into the athlete's perspective on the World Orienteering Championships (WOC), which led on to consideration of what clubs need to be doing to make the most of an increased interest in the sport in the build-up to, during, and after WOC 2015.

This linked with a challenge to state 10 qualities of a good orienteering club – what do YOU consider important? We also considered aspects of skills transfer – how do we extract expertise from the “old hands” and infuse it into newcomers? Summaries of group discussions are on the website:

<http://www.scottish-orienteeing.org/soa/page/soa-club-development-conference-2014>

SOA President Roger Scrutton is continuing to lead discussion of issues around membership and event insurance, and we are reviewing the Junior Incentive Scheme documents, as well as putting together a short information pack to entice newcomers to join a club. We're keen to hear from you with your views on how the SOA can best support your efforts to recruit members.

Chris Fitzsimons has now taken up the post of Admin Assistant for the SOA, based at Glenmore Lodge. He is working 2 days a week – currently quite variable from week to week – largely providing support to me and already making a significant contribution.

He will also be doing other occasional tasks for the SOA Board and for Colin Matheson (SOA Professional Officer), and will gradually take on specific projects. 

Would you like to receive future issues of SCORE on paper?

If you're reading the electronic version, and would prefer a paper copy of SCORE, please contact Hilary Quick at the National Orienteering Centre at Glenmore Lodge. Please state your name, BOF membership number and address.

By email natcen@scottish-orienteeing.org

By phone 01479 861374 (has an answerphone)

By post National Orienteering Centre, Glenmore Lodge, Aviemore PH22 1QU

Thank you

patrons of scottish orienteering



Scottish Orienteering has three Patrons:

Jamie Stevenson – former elite orienteer and double world gold medallist

Karen Darke – London 2012 Paralympic handcycling silver medallist and Trail orienteer

Cameron McNeish – mountaineer, walker, author, broadcaster and editor.

There's more information about them all on the SOA website:

<http://www.scottish-orienteering.org/soa/page/patrons-of-scottish-orienteering>

Here's some news from Cameron McNeish:


It's been a busy year for me so far, and that looks like continuing. In January I had a few days in Cappadocia in Turkey, walking through one of the most amazing and bizarre landscapes I've ever seen. We were filming for a future Adventure Show.

In the next few weeks, I'll be starting our big television project for this year, for two hour-long programmes at Christmas. This year I'll be walking from the Mull

of Galloway to Fort William, taking in the Ayrshire coast, the isle of Arran, Kintyre and Cowal. We'll be looking at the legacy of Robert the Bruce and Robert Burns, amongst others.

In between the filming, I've been trying to get as many miles under my bicycle wheels as possible. I have two or three bike sportives this summer, starting with the Etape Loch Ness in May. Later that month, I'll be heading off to Ireland to cycle between Mizen Head in the south and Malin Head in the north - Ireland End to End.

I daresay I'll also be practising my navigation skills on Scotland's hills and mountains as the year goes on. I'm also planning a couple of television walking routes in Latvia and Sweden.

Cameron wrote this a few weeks ago, and you can read all about his latest activities, including cycling through Ireland, as well as some changes of plan, on his interesting blog at www.cameronmcneish.wordpress.com 



There's been a feast of orienteering since the last issue of SCORE, starting with the second SOL (Scottish Orienteering League) event of the year, on 6 April at Faskally – a small area with a lot of variety, and enough contours and features to provide fun for all.

The JK, at Easter in South Wales, featured challenging terrain, and good weather on 3 out of 4 days, as well as some long walks to assembly for the individual events. There were plenty of good Scottish results – the JK website <http://www.thejk.org.uk/jk2014/> gives full information about the weekend.

Back in Scotland, SOL 3 was at Dunrod Hill, near Greenock, and enjoyed fine weather and glorious views over the Clyde. This is an open moorland area, with tussocky grass and heather, many small hills and marshes, and some impressive times.

Scottish orienteers were well-represented at the Northern Championships weekend, in the southern Lake District at the start of May. This offered 3 events: technical orienteering in intricate terrain for a Middle Distance race and the Northern Championships

event itself, followed by an urban race in Kendal on Bank Holiday Monday. The surroundings were very scenic, with spring flowers everywhere.

The next diversion was the fourth bto SOUL (Scottish Orienteering Urban League) event of the season, in Glasgow city centre on 11 May. Andy Paterson (Urban League Coordinator) reports:

"With Glasgow City race being coincidentally Race 4 in the NOPESPORT (UK) urban orienteering league, and with Glasgow being relatively easy to get to, a decent turn out of over 150 competitors enjoyed the delights of a sunny Glasgow Green assembly area; the Victorian winter gardens provided catering and toilet facilities. The map for the Glasgow City Race was conceived by Terry O'Brien (STAG) by converting existing government mapping data into OCAD, thus providing a huge base map of the centre of Glasgow. Terry then had to visit all the nooks and crannies himself to fill in the detail – hats off to him for the hours, days, even weeks of work he put into this. On the day, a delay of 15 minutes to the start window due to a couple of late problems with controls in the park didn't seem to trouble



anyone too much. There was robust banter from locals around the first control on some courses, which most people seem to have taken as an occupational hazard for urban orienteering. Hopefully nobody was too offended. No controls went missing, which was a relief for an event in a busy city centre. Overall a very enjoyable day in the sun - the rain came down just after the last controls were taken in!"

The following weekend saw Forth Valley Orienteers win both the men's and women's trophies at the Harvester overnight relay race, which took place way down south in the Surrey Hills (scene of the 2013 British Championships). There's an excellent account of the races on the FVO website, at: <http://fvo.org.uk/news/2014/may/20/bumper-crop-forth-valley-harvester-competition/>

The Scottish Championships weekend at Dalnamein and Newtyle Hill on 24/25 May was a busy one for East Area clubs, who were organising. Janet Clark (weekend coordinator) reports, "The 2014 Scottish Champs is best summed up by extracts from the two Controllers' Reports:

- 'The 2014 Scottish Individual Championships will be well remembered for a great venue, fine courses, impressive organisation, superb weather and two outstanding practitioners of our sport in Claire Ward & Graham Gristwood!' - Terry O'Brien (Individual event Controller)

- 'Many congratulations to Crawford for nailing the course lengths; to the various juniors who producing the most exciting relay finish in my memory (on 36), rapidly followed by an even
Continued over page >>

SOUL 4 start, outside the People's Palace

Continued from previous page



Picture: Crawford Lindsay, ESOC

Spectator control site at Scottish Relay - the very top of the small hill

more exciting one on 44-; to Alex Carcas on winning men's open aged 16; to Andy Dale on passing 12 other C class runners on the last leg to win the handicap. Brilliant stuff.' - Graeme Ackland (Relay Controller)

Full details of these reports, as well as results, can be seen on the SOC2014 website, at: <http://www.scottish-orienteering.org/championships/scottish-championships-2014>

A full list of the Scottish Champions will also appear here.


Every major event (and minor one too) has its problems to solve, and almost always the competitors are unaware of these. Other people's events usually

appear as if they had been easy to organise.

This Scottish Champs, especially the Individual Day, had more than its fair share of problems, so even more thanks than usual are due to the officials who solved them and gave us all a great event."

Just one week later, it was the British Championships, in Northumberland on 31 May – 1 June. The individual event was near Rothbury, and proved to be rough and tough, with some very long times.

There were panoramic views of the Northumberland countryside for those with time to admire them. The relay, near Bellingham, was more runnable, mostly short grass on some complex old spoil heaps, and there were good spectating opportunities from assembly. The whole weekend was sunny, and there were outstanding Scottish results – too many to list here, but full details are available on the BOC2014 website: <http://www.boc2014.org.uk/>

By the time you read this, there will have been yet more exciting events, with the Jamie Stevenson Trophy and the Moray Mix weekend both coming up as we go to press. 

cautionary tale

by Janice Nisbet (ESOC)

A struggle at the British Championships

I came heavily to grief at the British Championships this year.

I had orienteered at Callaly before, but too long ago to remember much about the terrain except that it was a bit rough. It hadn't changed much! Though mapped as runnable woodland, the undergrowth in the area used for my course was a physically demanding mixture of fast-growing bilberry bushes, old and new bracken, and brashings, while the courses were planned so that using paths resulted in lots of extra climb. I soon realised it was going to be a long haul. It is also relevant that it was a warm day with not much of a breeze among the trees.

The first half of the course passed reasonably well, but I wasn't much over halfway at the 50 minute stage, when I would normally expect to be near the finish, and was slowing down. I made a mental note to detour past the drinks station after the next control.

This involved a slog up and over a wide spur to reach a dot knoll. I realised I couldn't picture the ground from the map and ran on a rough compass bearing, hoping to pick up the control. I didn't. I was completely thrown by an unmarked park bench, and (wrongly) decided that I must be nowhere near where I thought I was. Ten minutes later, I decided that I probably had been where I thought I was, but by this time I had lost all idea of where I was now. Luckily I found a path and relocated, but ran up and down aimlessly until I was saved by spotting someone dropping into the control site.

I then ran straight off to the next control,

without giving the drinks station a thought. I reached it quite quickly, but took ages to work out that it was my control; I had been looking for a crag and the control was on a thicket. I'd been out for over 80

minutes by now and was thinking longingly of the finish, but didn't want to give up after so much effort, so carried on the next control, a re-entrant beside a very obvious craggy area – where I stood for ages wondering where the re-entrant was.

That was the last control I found. I have no idea where I got to on the next leg, as I thought that I had taken a very careful route, but found no trace of the crag I was looking for. Relocation was completely beyond me by this time, and I eventually decided to head straight for home. This in itself proved problematical, and it was a huge relief when I eventually emerged from the forest at the final control.

It wasn't until I had downed a bottle of water that I realised how badly dehydrated I was. Though I had known something was wrong, I hadn't felt thirsty at any time during the run, and if I had been asked would probably have said I was a bit hayfeverish. In retrospect, I probably wasn't well enough hydrated at the start of the run, and the combination of a longer than usual course and unexpectedly hot weather didn't help. But it was scary how quickly I lost my reasoning skills without realising what was happening. ■



Janice at the 2013 British Relay Championships

Picture: Rob Lines, SO

experience - in pictures

by
Ailsa O'Donoghue
(SOLWAY)

In the March issue of SCORE, I invited everyone to send in stories of interesting orienteering experiences, offering a small prize for the best one. Here are two unusual entries.





by
Isla O'Donoghue
(SOLWAY)

A word of explanation (from Isla's Dad): At the end of Day 3 of Oban 2011, there was a sharp rain shower. One group of competitors took shelter by getting under their tent and then walking it to the car park, hence a walking tent went past the string course area, with numerous feet visible under it.

Outcome of the map scales debate

In the March issue of SCORE, the 'talking point' article explained a proposal that was being made at the British Orienteering AGM (held on 18 April at JK 2014). This applied to the rules for Level A and B events, and proposed:

- giving event controllers and planners the responsibility for deciding whether map enlargements should be used, instead of the Map Advisory Group deciding this.
- allowing the event officials to give younger runners (except the elites) 1:10,000 scale map enlargements and older runners 1:7,500 scale map enlargements, if this was felt necessary due to complex terrain.

At the AGM, there were questions and discussion about the proposal. The minutes of the AGM report that

when it was put to the vote, the outcome was as follows:

Total votes for = 205 (75.4%);

Total votes against = 67 (24.6%);

Abstentions = 4

[Votes in attendance:

For = 29; Against = 25; Abstain = 4

Proxy count:

For = 174; Against = 40; Abstain = 1; Chair = 7]

The proposal was therefore adopted.

The minutes of the AGM are available on the British orienteering website:

<http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/images/uploaded/downloads/AGM%202014%20Minutes.pdf>

an interview with...

Robin Strain (ELO), SOA Electronic Systems Coordinator – the driving force behind the introduction and use of SI electronic systems in Scotland.

Robin, can you tell us about your involvement in orienteering before the SI electronic punching system came on the scene? What motivated you to become so heavily involved in electronic timing?

My involvement in orienteering is all Murray's fault! When he came along, we discovered that orienteering was something we enjoyed and we even, sometimes, did quite well. Murray and Kirsten were both good enough as juniors to be involved in Regional, Scottish and British squads; they continued in the sport and it became something we could all do together – and still do.

When SPORTident electronic punching appeared at Highland '99, I thought it looked interesting and offered to help. A few months later, I was caught at a weak moment as I set off for the Start at a SOL when Brian Porteous, now President of the International Orienteering Federation, asked if I would oversee its introduction in Scotland. As we all know, the use of SI has grown massively to the point where it has become routine to use it at local events. It has significantly enhanced people's enjoyment and interest in the sport. It is a major attraction for school pupils. I have continued to be involved because of the immense satisfaction it gives me to provide a service to get the best out of our sport. After all, the SPORTident strapline is, "Make the best of your sport".

What do you remember about the introduction of SI? Were there teething problems? Did the pros immediately outweigh the cons of pin-punching?

Initially we had to rely heavily on the Swedes, who came over to support the 6-Days in 1999, 2001 and 2003. Early problems were unreliable hardware, batteries with a short lifespan and non-intuitive software. For the runner, an early problem was that a lot of people who recorded a mispunch were convinced they had visited the control and were much more likely to blame the system than accept that they had made a mistake. A very obvious pro was the removal of pin-punching (which also raised a few mispunches in its time). Having split times made a runner's race analysis much more interesting, and the rapid turnaround on results added to competitors' enjoyment.

What advice would you give to volunteers who are interested in learning how to use the SI software to set up events and process the results?

I would say, just get involved. The offer of help (no matter how small at first) before, during or after events is always much appreciated. Ask questions and make it known that you are interested. The software we use now, AutoDownload, is much more user-friendly than the earlier programs, and the hardware is more reliable. There is a certain amount of documentation that can be of help, as is the case with all technology, but no shortage of people who will answer questions. It is possible to borrow kit and set up a trial event to get some hands-on experience before committing to help at a real event. Building experience is important, because planners and runners seem to conspire to introduce unexpected complications.

Should the SOA have a more structured programme of training courses, like those we have for controllers and coaches?

Training has been provided on an ad hoc basis when clubs or groups of interested individuals have asked for a course. It was also included at the Volunteers' Activity Weekend at Glenmore Lodge last September. If a small group of interested individuals wanted to get together and request some training we could arrange a time and place to have a session.

What stage are we at with touch-free punching? Is there any prospect of it becoming the norm in, say, five years' time, or is it just too expensive for clubs to invest in?

Although touch-free punching has been used regularly in some mass participation sports, initially it was not reliable or accurate enough for orienteering. Both Emit and SI have worked on systems to overcome the problems of reliability. Having used both of them, I am happy with the experience as a competitor, and if we were starting out now it is possible that touch-free would be the technology of choice for foot-O. However, at present it is an expensive and unnecessary enhancement for most events.

For international events (and MTBO and ski-O) it has major advantages, in that it speeds up the visit to a control and looks better for TV. For a while yet, it is most likely that it will be hired when it is appropriate. I expect that more events will use it, and hopefully the price of the units and SI cards will come down. Perhaps, after a particularly successful 6-Days, we will be able to invest in new kit.



Picture: Kirsten Strain, ELO

Robin & Sheila Strain looking over results at Tay 2009

Turning to Highland 2015, and the timing systems used there, do you envisage any departures from the norm for the 6-Days event? Will it use any of the enhancements that will be available to the World Orienteering Championships, such as athlete tracking?

With respect to the last question, there is the possibility of the use of touch-free in the WOC Sprint Relay. However, in general there are challenges with providing enhancements for the 6-Days that would use the expertise that is being used for WOC. For example, our experience is that commentary and following competitors in the field is not appropriate for a mass participation event so athlete tracking in 2015 will be reserved for WOC.

The 6-Days will have access to improved local Wi-Fi for results and probably better internet access, so that the presentation of results, which up to now has been on paper sheets pasted to a board or pinned to a fence, will definitely move into the 21st century. I am very keen that the 6-Days functions as well as possible and that its competitors get the best possible systems.

Thank you, Robin. We are all most grateful for what you have done up to now and look forward to future developments. ▣

scottish schools' orienteering festival

The 2014 SSOF was held at Drumpellier Country Park, near Coatbridge, on Friday 6 June. The terrain included flat open grassland around the loch, mixed woodlands and lowland heath.

Lorna Young (TINTO) writes:

"The Scottish Schools' Orienteering Festival had its 20th Anniversary this year. If you visit the SSOA website <http://www.ssoa.org.uk/> you'll see all of the previous venues. At its peak we had 650 competitors. The Festival replaced the Scottish Schools O Championships, which were held at a weekend, and the idea of the Festival was to encourage children who were introduced to orienteering by their school.

On Friday, we had 33 schools and over 270 competitors from all over Scotland. The event was returning to Drumpellier for the second time, and with superb weather the scene was set for fast orienteering. The largest team was Gargieston Primary School from Kilmarnock, led by their teacher, Ms Harvey, who is probably the only person to have attended all 20 festivals. We were pleased to welcome Cairneyhill Primary School, Fife, and Earlston High School, from the Scottish Borders. Overall school winners were Gargieston in the Primary section and Banchory Academy in the high school section. We were delighted to have World Championship competitor Tessa Hill to present the awards to the successful athletes.

SSOA, as always, were very grateful for the support given to us by the growing band of volunteers from Scottish clubs."

The competition classes are based on academic year, from P5 upwards. There are team trophies for each class, worked



Picture: Max Carcas, INT

Racing to the finish at the SSOF

out from the total time of the best 3 results for the same school. There were wins in the individual and team classes for various junior members of SOA clubs. Full results, Routegadget and other details about the event are available on the SSOA website.

Here are some thoughts from P6 competitors:

"It was a brilliant experience for a first time and I look forward to next year."

- Heather

"I had a great time trying out orienteering and I will definitely be doing it (Scottish Schools) when I am more experienced next year." - Eve

"It was a lovely day. This year our team came 2nd but next year I hope the team comes first." - Pippa

"It was great fun and I would definitely do it next year and maybe try to get a better place." - Mia

"Fun but could do better, definitely doing it on my own next year!" - Cara

And some comments from S5/S6 competitors, at the competition for the first time:

"We were nervous heading down with a forecast of heavy rain. But a rare Scottish heatwave meant the shade of the forest was a luxury. Thoroughly enjoyable despite difficulty finding some controls." - Pat and Ali

Scottish Orienteering and the Scottish Independence Referendum

In the beginning (according to Bob Climie's book), Scottish Orienteering was offered IOF membership on behalf of the UK, but this was later adjusted to a 50:50 partnership with the English Orienteering Association in a union called BOF. Wales, Northern Ireland, and many English regions then had little or no activity.

The BOF constitution was subsequently adapted for funding reasons to include the 9 English regions and the 3 other nations in a 12-part structure, rather than the 4-nation structure preferred by many other sports. The latter has been advocated by various BOF review bodies (I was on one in 1993/4) and is used for Home Internationals, but both the Northern Ireland and Welsh Orienteering Associations, as recently as 2013, have expressed no interest in taking on the extra administrative burden involved, and a 2012 BOF Governance review pointedly avoided the issue. This results in the SOA seeing a JK, BOC or BOF AGM at best once a decade, and feeling under-represented in British Orienteering decisions, not least because the British Orienteering Board has had no Scottish officer or Board member in recent years.


Given that Scotland is about to host the World Orienteering Championships for the third time in Britain, and that its world class 6 Days Festival is so well established, it might be thought that Scottish Orienteering still represents nearer 50% than 8.5% of the UK sport. Another anomaly comes with sportsScotland and Sport England setting different (conflicting) targets as conditions for funding the development of the sport. Also, some lifelong Scottish orienteers are

not joining local clubs because of the extra cost of compulsory British Orienteering membership.

The late John Colls, in his 2012 Governance Review research paper, wrote, *"There is NO obligation even for the SOA to be part of BOF. In fact, the SOA's objects include (3.(i)) 'generally to advance and safeguard the interests of the sport in Scotland and those of the Company [i.e. the SOA] and to do all such acts and things as may from time to time be deemed necessary or expedient for or in connection with the Sport in Scotland and the Company'. This could be interpreted as an obligation NOT to join BOF if such an action were thought contrary to the best interests of Orienteering in Scotland."*

The Independence Referendum exactly mirrors the working dilemmas within our sport: "Better together with British Orienteering", or: "Do you believe that Scottish Orienteering should be an Independent sport?" There are much smaller, less active members of the International Orienteering Federation (IOF), and a "Yes" vote in September would lead inevitably to an application to join. However, according to Brian Porteous (IOF President), there is no level of enhanced devolution (as opposed to independence) that would lead to SOA eligibility to join the IOF separately. But having operated semi-autonomously for decades, the challenge posed by a "Yes" vote is not an impossible one.

We run in interesting times, so:

- 1) Use your vote wisely.
- 2) Be prepared to help, if we all suddenly need to change up a gear. 

guest coach article

by Helen O'Donoghue (SOLWAY)

Solway summer coaching

In early 2013, Solway Orienteers hosted a UKCC Level 1 coaching course, and at the end of it we had 4 new coaches in the club. This created the enviable position of having 6 Level 1 coaches, and the challenge was on to make good use of their skills (and to create enough opportunities for all of us to gain enough coaching points to keep our qualifications up to date!)

We started by reviewing the club's typical calendar of events (the winter monthly Saturday morning series and the Wednesday evening Summer Series in June). How was coaching going to fit into the existing programme? We came up with the idea of holding a series of 4 club/coaching nights in May. This would give our local orienteers the opportunity to learn new orienteering skills, and/or sharpen up existing ones, before putting them to the test in the June summer series. This also had the added advantage of increasing the orienteering related activities available locally.

Then we turned our attention to planning the coaching sessions. On the coaching course, Lynne Walker had advised us to seek ways to get experience working together, so we decided to split each session up into several activities. Rather than a single coach doing all of the work for a coaching session, one coach was responsible for running the warm up, another for the first main activity and so on. The coaches not involved with the delivery of any activity were there to support and assist as needed.

Next we looked at who was likely to turn up, and concluded that we had to expect anyone from the complete beginner to the

experienced orienteer. Now the task seemed impossible! How were we going to keep everyone happy without preparing masses of resources for each week? We resolved this problem by choosing our activities carefully, so that either everyone could do the activity and gain something from it, or the activity was easy to adapt for different levels of technical ability. We chose activities such as Naughty Numbers, Paper plates, Odds and Evens Relay, and putting out a control followed by drawing a simple map and then challenging a partner to bring back the control using only the hand drawn map. We spent time learning about distance judgement and pacing before using that skill on a short course. The aim was to keep the activities and evenings fun, as well as informative, and to have a balance of teaching, practice and an opportunity to do some orienteering.

In May 2013, we duly held our 4 sessions, and were encouraged to have around 20 people at each evening. Most attended all the sessions and the feedback was positive. So this year we decided to repeat the 4 evening block, again in May. As I write, we are half way through this batch and are attracting similar numbers of participants. We have a mixture of seasoned orienteers and people who are relatively new to the sport, ranging from juniors (8 years +) through to retired adults.

This year we are also using some coaching sessions as an excellent time to trial new ideas, so the last session will include a course which incorporates a maze. This will provide lots of scope for coaching and will be a fun activity to finish on. The

club will also gain valuable experience in planning and running this type of event, experience that will be put to use very soon; Solway have been requested to showcase orienteering at a "Sport for All" day in Kirkcudbright in June. There is no readymade orienteering map available, but by using a small park which is relatively easy to map and combining this with a maze, an interesting and challenging experience will be provided for the public.


A further change for 2014 has been to link the June summer series events in with the May coaching. The summer events follow on from the coaching sessions, offering orienteering related activities every Wednesday evening throughout May and June. The link arises from choosing the event locations so that the challenges provided by the terrain increase as June progresses, and also using areas/event structures early on that reinforce the messages in the coaching sessions. First up in June is an event at the Crichton campus in Dumfries: this area is mainly parkland, with plenty of buildings. The key to getting round is to set the map and maintain the setting at all times, which has been the topic addressed in two of the May coaching sessions. The second of the June events is at Hills Wood (an area that was long ago used for the Scottish Relays), where the fences around the area prevent people from getting too lost. Less experienced orienteers will be encouraged to try the Score event option, and the controls will be set up as described in an article in the Spring 2014 edition of Focus (on page 10-11). This involves setting out Yellow standard controls



Picture: Helen O'Donoghue, SOLWAY

A recent Solway club night

and adding in (with higher scores attached) some additional controls at Orange/Light Green standard. One or more Yellow standard controls will be clearly visible from the vicinity of the more difficult controls, to limit options for getting really lost. The aim is to encourage people to try out the next TD level up in a simple manner and without the penalty of disqualification should they not find the controls.

Once June is over, we will consider the next steps for coaching in Solway. The May splurge is getting well established, and as long as our coaches have the time and retain their enthusiasm, then this will be part of the club schedule in future years. But this does leave a lengthy period in any year without coaching being run – we will recover from the exertions and then see if the concept of 4 session blocks can be extended to another time in the year. 

coaching corner

by **Lynne Walker (BASOC)**

SOA Coaching Coordinator

Picture: Crawford Lindsay, ESOC



Are you paying the right tax?

This article is going to be a bit different from the ones in the past. First of all, Helen O'Donoghue took up the invitation to be the first 'guest coach' to write something - thank you Helen! There will be future 'guest coach' articles in this part of SCORE: volunteers are welcome; please get in touch with me by email.

The information below should be read by club committee members as well as coaches!


There is the question of "Are you paying the right tax?" Most of us are volunteer coaches, giving our time to coach athletes; we might be able to claim travel costs from the club / squad / whoever. The coach and the club / squad should know where they stand with regard to payments and tax.

To ensure that you are keeping on the right side of the law (and British Orienteering have had to provide HMRC with details of all coaches and other volunteers like organisers) there are a few online resources you can benefit from. HMRC have created a self-learning package specifically for sport. It is free and relates to self-employment, tax and National Insurance. (see websites below)

If a club employs a coach - for example, a club might employ a coach with more experience and qualifications than their own coaches to run a session for their adult improvers - then the club should ensure that the coach is declaring earnings for tax. If someone is self-employed they will have a UTR (Unique Tax Reference) and this would be on their invoice.

sportscotland have also produced a range of guidance and resources about the employment and deployment of individuals (including volunteers). This is part of their comprehensive pages 'Help for clubs' which backs up the workshop 'Supporting coaches' (a free workshop, ask your Community Sports Hub officer or sportscotland regional sporting partnership manager).

http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/clubs/help_for_clubs/employment_deployment_homepage/

I am bringing this to your attention so that you can make yourself aware of the implications of receiving payments. If anyone can add to this information, please contact me, and the additional information will be placed on the SOA website. 

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/courses/syob2/ris_sport/index.htm

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/gift_aid/rules/vol-expenses.htm

<https://www.gov.uk/volunteering/pay-and-expenses>

in praise of...

by Lindsey Knox (RR)

Routegadget

Routegadget is a Web application for drawing and comparing orienteering routes. When introduced several years ago, it was cutting-edge (well for us non-techies anyway) and people put on their routes and comments in large numbers. Those numbers have dwindled, which is a shame when several people have put a lot of work into developing the free program.

Without going into the possible reasons for the decline, here's why I like to put my route on, in no particular order:

- It's a lasting reminder of where I went (as long as the files are kept available in the future).
 - The comments box allows me to get things off my chest – varying from despair at how bad my run was through to praise for the planner. I occasionally make comments, hopefully constructive, about small aspects of the course or map, because I suspect that most planners read the comments.
 - I can check my splits and routes against other people and see how much time I really lost.
- *Sharing is good (especially if it involves chocolate!) I think the post-event results are much more interesting with the addition of RG, but this obviously depends on lots of people sharing their experience.*
 - *It's good for swotting up on forthcoming events.*
 - *It lets me play with my Garmin and see exactly where I went (sometimes I'm not 100% certain!) RG1 could be a bit of a faff, so I generally just drew on my route but RG2 so far has been much easier to get right.*
 - *I like to read the comments; here's a selection:*
 - o *This person was out for over 2 hours and was obviously not happy with their performance - "#\$@%&%\$&*!"*
 - o *Another with a succinct message - "not good".*
 - o *After a very wet and windy event - "Wearing glasses made it a challenge, great for blowing out the cobwebs."*
 - o *Someone with a slow time for the first control - "Was 4 mins late for my start"*
 - o *Excuses for other bad splits - "Great course, caught me out at 5 where I thought the knoll was*




An extract from Routegadget for SOL2 at Faskally

down slope, not at the top."

o A bit of praise from one competitor - "Great fun thanks – nice mix of micro navigation and route choice."

It's easy, why not join in and put your routes on in future?

There's lots of information about Routegadget, including a user guide and videos to show you how to use it, on the Routegadget UK website: <http://www.routegadget.co.uk/index>

My favourite function is the replay, which allows you to choose a set of people and start an animation running (mass start or real time) to see their progress round the course, who passed who, and when. - Ed 

behind the scenes

by **Colin Matheson (MOR)**

SOA Professional Officer

Picture: Crawford Lindsay, ESOC



LiDAR Data and the Holy Grail

Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) is now a well-established technology capable of creating superb data for use in orienteering mapping. Lasers are fired in very rapid pulses, thousands of times a second, and essentially the processed data of millions of 3D coordinates can be joined up to form 3D models of the landscape.

When LiDAR is used over a light-porous surface, such as a forest, some of the laser energy is reflected back from the canopy and some is reflected off the forest floor. Two sets of data are normally derived – a Digital Terrain Model (DTM) that accurately picks up the ground surface, and a Digital Surface Model (DSM) that shows the vegetation (in the case of a field or other open area these two surfaces are coincident).

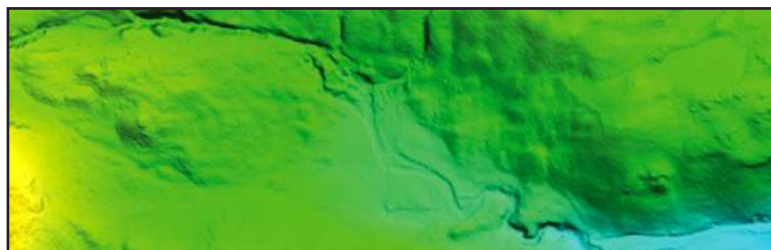
Mapping packages, including up-to-date OCAD, can process the LiDAR in different ways, for example creating detailed contours or subtracting one layer from another to determine tree heights. Line features such as paths, ditches and streams show up clearly but typically have to be on-screen digitised rather than just pressing a button to create a base map.

LiDAR has been flown at various resolutions (i.e. level of detail), but

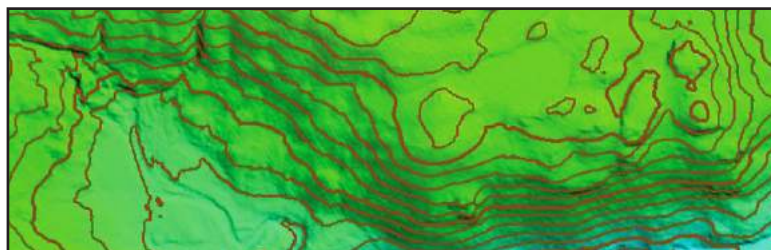
only in the past couple of years has suitable LiDAR been available for Scotland. An initiative by SEPA (the Scottish Environment Protection Agency), Scottish Water, the Scottish Government and Local Authorities has led to something like 17% of Scotland being captured by LiDAR. The percentage cover is nearly 100% in the Central Belt, and river valleys and coastline prone to flooding are well covered. Following rather protracted discussions with the Scottish Government, and with major assistance from sportscotland, it has been agreed that the Scottish Orienteering Association can have access to all existing data free of charge. Usual conditions apply – e.g. not for commercial gain, not to pass on to third parties.

The complete data set will be held by the Professional Officer (a 2 TB disk purchased for this) and site specific data will be extracted using software called Global Mapper. LiDAR has already been successfully used for the new Faskally map, and the SOA paid for LiDAR to be flown for Highland 2015. The results are impressive, and Stirling Surveys and Deeside Orienteering & Leisure Maps have incorporated this data into new and updated mapping very effectively.

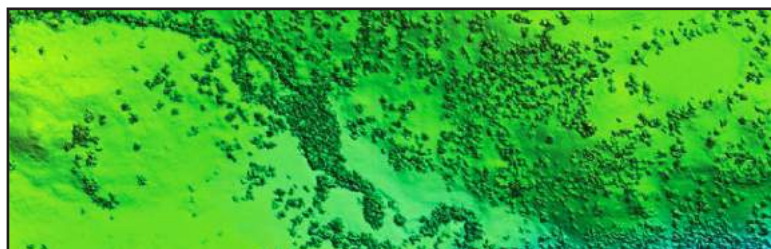
As with any data collection, caution must be exercised – I am



Typical DTM showing tracks, streams and other detail



5m contour generation in about 10 seconds




Typical DSM showing scattered trees and small afforested area in stream valley

not sure if sheep and/or deer have been picked up as boulders, but experience in Glen Strathfarrar highlighted a couple of issues. In one area, the birch saplings were too thin and not in leaf and what appears as a fairly substantial area of light green forest is nowhere to be seen on the LiDAR DSM. In another area, the trees were too thick and though the DSM is well represented, the DTM was incomplete as the laser energy failed to hit the forest floor – an

indication here that this area is best avoided? There is still no substitute for good field mapping, but LiDAR is making a significant difference to the way we can map areas.

British Orienteering funded a pilot scheme in 2012 and details can be found here: http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/images/uploaded/downloads/mappers_digitalelevationproject.pdf

Enjoy running on some superb new maps in 2015! 

by **Maureen Brown (ESOC)**
ScotJOS Squad Manager

Juniors in Scotland have been having a busy time over the spring. The Scottish Junior Orienteering Squad (ScotJOS) had a training weekend in Moray at the beginning of April, where we were joined by members and coaches from local club Moravian, and for part of the time by coaches led by Hilary Quick and Lynne Walker as part of their Continuing Personal Development (see report on next page by ScotJOS member Kathryn Barr).

ScotJOS members have their own training camp in Sweden in July, helped by their sponsors Apache, which takes in the prestigious O-Ringen competition, including an inter-district junior relay at which Scotland will be represented. There are several other training camps and competitions which are available to aspiring juniors if they do well enough in the various selection races, and some juniors will have a busy summer.

As I write this, the Scottish and British Championships are yet to come, but a number of selections have already been made, based on results in the JK, and Scots are well-represented. The British Orienteering website has already announced the teams for the Junior World Orienteering Championships (including Sasha Chepelin and Chris Galloway), and European Youth Orienteering Championships (including Andrew Barr, Kathryn Barr, Alex Carcas and Emma Wilson, reserve Daniel Stansfield). Emma, Alex, Andrew, Daniel, Matthew Galloway, Sam Galloway, Ross McMurtrie, Jenny Ricketts, Callum White and Thomas Wilson have all been selected to attend the British Orienteering Talent Development Camp in the Lake District.

The JROS (Junior Regional Orienteering Squads) camps for M/W14s to Lagganlia and



Picture: Maureen Brown, ESOC

ScotJOS and friends at Roseisle (Moray coast)

M/W16s to the Trossachs will be announced after the British Championships, but the team for Stockholm (organised by Nick Barrable) has already been selected and includes Sasha, Jenny, Alex and Thomas.

Also yet to come (taking place as SCORE goes to press) are a training weekend on Deeside at the beginning of June, and the annual Jamie Stevenson Trophy inter-club competition for juniors which is taking place at Deuchney Wood, near Perth, on 15 June. Will MAROC win for the 7th time in succession? Rumour has it that some of their top juniors will be taking part in the Jukola Relay in Finland over the same weekend, so it's possible that there will be a new name on the trophy this year! As ever, it promises to be a fine day out.

The Ward Junior Home Internationals will be held near Oban this year, at the end of August, organised by ECKO. The Scottish team plus reserves has already been announced on the SOA website. Team members please note that Creag Mhic Chailein and Ardnaskie are embargoed. 

ScotJOS training weekend – Moray

by Kathryn Barr (MOR)

ScotJOS had their second training weekend of the year in Moray on 12-13 April. On Saturday, we met at Roseisle Forest. Whilst we waited for everyone to arrive, we had great fun sand-dune jumping, but it was really windy so sand was blowing everywhere making it a bit challenging.

The focus for the afternoon's training was simplifying the map, to practice for the JK competition. I was in a group with the other W16 girls and Fiona Berrow as the coach. We had a fun afternoon and I was running quite well, hitting the controls bang on. This might have been partly from my knowledge of the area, however I did concentrate on the parts I often make mistakes in and got them right, which I was pleased with.

In the evening we stayed at Duffus Village Hall. We had a session of strength and conditioning with Hilary Quick which was interesting, and then we had a great meal cooked by some of the local Moravian mums. The hall was excellent as it had hot showers and a great park outside to play in.

On Sunday, we started off the day by doing some sprint training in Lossiemouth. I had quite an accurate run but it was quite slow. I lost a bit of time at the furthest



Picture: Mike Rodgers, MOR

control but other than that it was all fine. After that, we went back to Roseisle and did a "talk-o". I was with Rosie Getliff and we took it in turns directing each other to the control and we tried to be really accurate.

The final exercise of the day was a clock relay. There was an odd number of people, so Fiona Berrow joined in and I was in her team which was great fun.

Overall we had a great weekend. Our normal ScotJOS coaches were joined by Ian Maxwell, Kirstin Maxwell, Ross McLennan and Fiona Berrow, and also other local ones, which meant that we could have fairly small groups and got lots of useful feedback which was helpful just before the JK competition. It was also really good to catch up with all my friends again, and I am already looking forward to the next training weekend in June. 

Fiona Berrow and Kathryn Barr (on right) at Roseisle



Picture: Jess Tullie, BASOC

Murray Strain on the run-in, as Interlopers win the Men's Open at the Scottish Relays.



Picture: Wendy Carlyle, AIRE

Claire Ward, on the way to winning the Grand Slam: JK, Scottish and British Championships

A lot has happened in the world of the Scottish Elite Development Squad since the last edition of SCORE! I will try to pinpoint the main successes, but rest assured there are many more exciting results and training weekends going on too.

The World Championships selection races were hosted on limestone terrain in the Lake District, the most similar terrain to Italy (and the World Champs) that Britain has to offer. Following on from the weekend, SEDS are well represented at the international races this summer. (See listings below)

The European Championships took place in Portugal in April, with many SEDS members racing for Great Britain.

Most notably, Claire Ward finished 34th in the Long race, Murray Strain 20th in the Sprint and Hollie Orr 25th in the Middle. Murray and Scott Fraser were joined by Ralph Street to take a

brilliant 5th place in the relay.

Scott has been showing some early season form; he had a great run at Tiomila*, to help his team, Södertälje-Nykvarn, to a 3rd placed finish.

Doug Tullie also had an amazing run on his leg of Tiomila, finishing in 3rd place, however his team had some problems throughout the long night and finished back in 24th position.

In other news...we've enjoyed some beastly 'Lochnagar' burgers in Deeside; Midge (the SEDS puppy) herded up any stragglers in the Pitlochry training before the SOL event at Faskally; Murray Strain is still posting a photo of every day's training on Twitter (@murraystraining) and last but by no means least, Doug Tullie has been spotted back in the homeland planning some mighty courses near Inverness! 

* The Tiomila is an overnight 10-leg relay held annually in Sweden.

World Orienteering Championships - 5 to 12 July, Italy

Scott Fraser: Sprint, Mixed Sprint relay pool, Relay pool
Murray Strain: Sprint, Mixed Sprint relay pool, Relay pool
Hollie Orr: Long, Middle, Relay pool
Claire Ward: Long, Middle, Relay pool
Hector Haines: Middle, Relay pool
Douglas Tullie: Middle, Relay pool

World Universities Orienteering Championships - 12 to 16 August, Czech Republic

Kirstin Maxwell: Sprint, Mixed Sprint relay, B team relay
Alan Cherry: Long, Middle, B team relay
Scott Fraser: Long, A team relay
Rhona McMillan: Long, B team relay (still a junior, but hopefully a future SEDS member!)

veteran news

by **Janice Nisbet (ESOC)**

Veterans Team Manager
email: janicenisbet@btinternet.com




Pictures: Crawford Lindsey, ESOC

Scottish veterans in action. Clockwise from top left: Eddie Harwood (M60, MOR), Hazel Dean (W50, FVO), Hilary Quick (W55, BASOC), Graeme Ackland (M60, INT) and Martin Dean (M55, FVO)

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable “O” season so far.

For everyone who is doing well – and that means **you**, if you have been in the first three or four in your age class over the recent SOLs and Scottish Championships – please remember the date of the VHI, on the weekend of

13/14 September in the Forest of Dean.

If you haven't made enough of the selection events but think you are still a contender, please also get in touch, as we can't consider you if we don't know about you. The team should be announced in July. 



Janice receiving her SOL 2013 trophy

future events rota

by **Terry O'Brien (STAG)**

SOA Operations Director

email: operations@scottish-orienteing.org

SOA Area/Club Events Rota 2015 > 2024

This is the final year of the present rota where Areas/Clubs were devolved the responsibility for hosting Scottish events. The current arrangements have worked very well for the majority of competitions, and with the support of the orienteering community it is intended to draw up proposals for similar allocation from 2015 to 2024.

As well as the Scottish Championships Weekend (Individual & Relays), the events currently included are the Scottish Night Championships, the Scottish Score Championships and the Scottish Inter-Club Team Relays (8/11 Person Relay). The Scottish Sprint Championships was introduced a few years ago, and Clubs have been invited to bid directly to host this new championship event. Should this event now be included in the rota?

Scottish Championships Weekend

Area committees coordinate with their Clubs.

Scottish Night Championships

Area committees seek a volunteer Club to run the event.

Scottish Score Championships and Scottish Inter-Club Team Relays

Clubs are assigned this event directly on an Area rotational basis, e.g. STAG (West) > ESOC (East) > BASOC (North) > CLYDE (West)

2014	Scottish Championships	Scottish Night Championships	Scottish Score Championships	Scottish Inter-Club Team Relays
	East Area	East Area	BASOC (North Area)	AYROC (West Area)

If your Area or Club committee has any comments, please send them to me in an email marked "Proposed Scottish Events Rota 2015 > 2024", to be received by 30 September 2014.

The March of Time

Many years ago, I was scanning the results of a big event and noted that with every age group beyond M55 there was a 50% reduction in numbers competing. I checked other results and found similar figures. Why was this?

Then I realised that as a young sport we had not yet built up a spread of age groups. Surely by the time I was M55 & beyond, I and my many rivals would swell the numbers?

Move on 10/15 years, and I still noted there was still a significant drop-off with each age group. Why was this? I was still feeling good about running and competing. Where were my rivals going? Surely they had less pressure at work, and kids should have flown the nest. What was happening?

Move on 5/10 years - now I know! As my father used to say, "Old age doesn't come on its own". First it was a calf muscle strain, which kept recurring. Then it was a chronic ankle ligament strain and a torn hamstring. As I compared injuries with others, it was to find that my problems were not unique: "my back", "my knee", "my eyesight". The list got longer and longer. Often it was not so much the injury, but that recovery took so much longer, and that meant that fitness was lost


Picture: Crawford Lindsay, ESOC



Neil McLean in action

and difficult to regain. Of course, loss of fitness quite naturally leads to more mistakes. Most of us in orienteering take part for the challenge and/or the competition. It gets frustrating if you can't compete, or you make the sort of mistakes you wouldn't have made 10 years ago.

But you can compete with anyone you choose, especially at local events. My current 'rival' is a nice 13 year old girl with whom I compare splits at Moravian events. At Grampian and Maroc events, I have other rivals, and at SOLs the other survivors in M70.

50 years ago I worked as an apprentice surveyor in the coal mines. When underground, the miners often referred to us as 'survivors', and that is now what I am. One of the lucky ones whose general health and relative freedom from injury lets us enjoy the sport I've loved for over 40 years. 

woc & highland 2015



SCOTTISH 6 DAYS
ORIENTEERING
HIGHLAND 2015



Signs of activity on the ground, and over the water

Because of the World Orienteering Championships, preparations for the Scottish 6 Days 2015 are further advanced than for a typical 6-Days. There are a number of challenges, and Colin Matheson (SOA Professional Officer) has been tackling them with his usual energy and enthusiasm.

Access arrangements are progressing well, maps are almost complete, and planners and controllers are heading out into the forests. And ambitious plans are being made for both a permanent and temporary footbridges. But then, we would expect nothing less of a former Royal Engineer. Colin's words describe progress far better than I can:



Picture: Colin Matheson, MOR

Mind the gap – the River Farrar

“An 18-metre-long permanent footbridge will span a river in the Glen Affric competition area and offer orienteers access to prime orienteering terrain. The bridge will be fabricated from sections of an offshore crane, with safe working load capable of supporting dozens of runners trying to cross at the same time. Negotiations are ongoing with 71 Engineer

Regiment (Volunteers), who will provide manpower and suitable equipment. Work will progress this September and will include improvements to access tracks in the area, including better drainage and surface grading.

“In Glen Strathfarrar, plans are now well advanced to build a 36-metre-long bridge. This bridge consists of three 12-metre-long

walkways with suitable floats, hopefully anchored to the bank to avoid drifting downriver. Thanks go to Marine Harvest for their kind offer to lend us this equipment.

"The crossing point is just downstream of a major hydro scheme, and excitingly the river level rises and falls by half a metre or more in a short space of time. Deep within the bowels of the University of Glasgow, one of the country's leading geographers and hydrologists (a member of FVO) is building a scale model and subjecting it to 50 miniaturised W and M60s crossing the bridge during peak flow in a wave tank.

"Hopefully the results will prove encouraging. Once again, we hope for assistance from the Sappers (Royal Engineers). One section of the bridge will be redeployed to Glen Affric, and will be rolled into place using methods pioneered in the building of the pyramids.

"The mapping of the areas has been greatly assisted by use of LiDAR, with first releases of the maps looking really good. GPS tracks where athletes appear to walk on water (with the exception of bridges) should be a thing of the past. Discussions continue with a plethora of landowners for access to areas, Keppernach perhaps the most complex.

Picture: Colin Mattheson, MOR



Landowners in Strathfarrar are two sides of the Spencer-Nairn family, and their assistance is greatly appreciated. At Darnaway we have the good fortune that Lord Moray accepted our invitation to become WOC Patron, and he and his wife Kathy have been very supportive as we made more and more outlandish requests.

"Look forward to the grand entrance to the Estate next August! In Glen Affric, the Forestry Commission Scotland has also been very supportive, holding back felling plans and new extraction lanes until the competition is over. Private landowners have also been most helpful, and hopefully will see a long term benefit of the new footbridge, which has the full support of the local Residents' Association and Community Council." 

Strathfarrar

event preview

Many people will be looking forward to multi-day events in far-flung places over the summer; nearer to home, the Scottish fixture list has plenty of local events to choose from in July and August, continuing into the autumn.

The first orienteering weekend after the summer holidays is the **Purple Thistle**, on 23/24 August. Jess Tullie reports: *"The Purple Thistle is back! SEDS are organising the event, and this year it's heading to the banks of Loch Ness, a beautiful part of the country that will host the World Orienteering Championships in 2015. Competitors will get the chance to orienteer on two great Scottish areas, Battan and Abriachan; the former offering typically challenging highland terrain, the latter providing stunning views across Loch Ness and maybe a chance to spot Nessie! The areas are only two miles apart and are fantastic settings for barebones orienteering."*

"For those of you who do not know of the barebones concept, it is all about taking the fuss out of event organisation as much as possible, while still providing an event of the highest quality, with a great atmosphere and enjoyment for all - including the organisers! So what's left for you is the things that matter for a quality orienteering experience (maps, courses, controls and



Picture: Crawford Lindsay, ESOC

electronic punching), and a bunch of likeminded people out to enjoy a weekend away from it all, in a beautiful part of the country."

bto SOUL 7, the penultimate Scottish Orienteering Urban League event of the year, is on 30 August in Aberdeen, organised by GRAMP, and there's an opportunity to make a weekend of it by staying on for a colour-coded event at Glen Dye on 31 August.

A couple of weeks later, AYROC are hosting the **Scottish Inter-Club Team Relays** on Saturday 13 September, closely followed by ESOC's **SOL 5** on Sunday 14 September at Craig a Barns. This is a classic technical area (used at the 2012 JK), on a steep craggy hill, so should be a terrific event. It's also the Junior Inter-Area competition that weekend – look out for more details about this.

There's another great package of events at the **BASOC WOLF** weekend on 27/28 September, including SOL 6 and the final

Looking up the Spey valley near Alvie

SOUL event of 2014. Jenny Clarke, weekend coordinator, says: "The Highland WOLF is returning, after last year's success. A Weekend of Orienteering in Lovely Forests, it is organised and hosted by Badenoch & Strathspey Orienteering Club, in one of the most fantastic areas in Scotland for orienteering. The weekend will consist of a Middle Distance event on the Saturday morning, followed by an Urban Sprint in Kingussie in the afternoon. Sunday's event will be held in Alvie forest, near to Kincaig, an area which has not been used for a number of years, and will be the 6th event in this year's Scottish Orienteering League. More information will be posted shortly on the BASOC website."

See: <http://www.basoc.org.uk/>

Probably the most exciting series of the autumn will be **Race the Castles**, on the weekends of 11/12 and 18/19 October, incorporating the Senior Home Internationals, and SOL 7, the final event in the 2014 league. With events in Edinburgh, Stirling, Balmoral and Forvie, there'll be great orienteering in some of the very best Scottish areas. Graeme Ackland, event coordinator, writes: "Race the Castles is a new International event launched as part of EventScotland's Homecoming 2014. This higher profile gives us the chance to get into places normal events couldn't. These areas may never come round again!"


Graham Gristwood (Stirling elite organiser) explains: "The Stirling

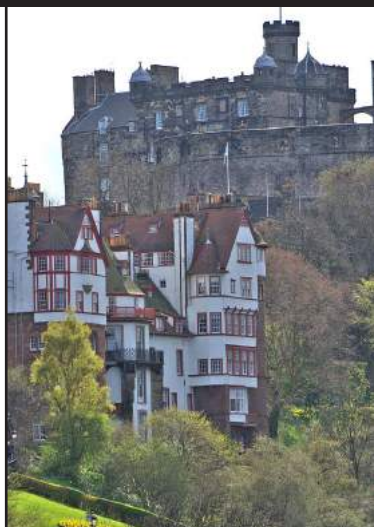
race offers the rare opportunity to run through one of the largest and most important castles in Scotland dating from the 1100s. Most of the existing castle walls and buildings have been added since then of course! The castle has been mapped

for the first time and will be used in conjunction with the historic city centre and other newly mapped parts of the city offering complex route choice, narrow alleyways and areas of parkland."

Jon Musgrave (Balmoral mapper) reports: "Balmoral is a great area for long distance race - mostly runnable pine plantation with varying areas of contour and rock detail and great views to Lochnagar and the central Cairngorms (if the runners lift their eyes up!). A great car park and arena area will help add to the excitement."

Ian Searle (GRAMP) adds: "Forvie Sands provides over 6 sq km of complex and intricate terrain. The mixture of low and high relief dunes will provide challenging navigation for all competitors on the SHI Relay and SOL courses."

See the Race the Castles website for full details: <http://www.racethecastles.com> 



Edinburgh Castle from the east

Picture: Crawford Lindsay, ESOC

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<input type="checkbox"/>	29.06.14	St Andrews	ESOC
<input type="checkbox"/>	30.08.14	Aberdeen	GRAMP
<input type="checkbox"/>	27.09.14	Kingussie	BASOC

Check website for details of start times/entry fees

For more information visit:

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