



Website: www.wimborne-orienteers.org.uk

WAFFLE

July 2009

Chairman's Column

The last couple of months have been pretty busy ones for the club. The fact that we have limited access to some of our forested areas during the spring and summer months has brought about considerable innovation and diversification in the events we offer our membership.

After a quiet period since the event at Gore Heath in February, we've mounted six events during May and June and used our home base of Moors Valley fairly thoroughly as we relaunched the updated permanent course there with the Dorset Schools Championships followed by the Moors Valley Challenge events the following day.

Three of the events we've put on have been Mountain Bike Orienteering events, two at Moors Valley, and one, organised jointly with WSX, which became a British Championship. All have been successful and the two Moors Valley ones in particular attracted family groups and cyclists who had no previous history of orienteering. We've also held one urban orienteering event on a new map of Gillingham town centre and there are more such events coming shortly. After missing last year, the Furrow Hoppers relay will also take place later this month, around the woodlands and campus of Bryanston School.

The news that we were to stage the British Long MTBO Championships race came as a surprise to many of us: indeed the first I knew of it was when I read the announcement in the Spring edition of Focus!

What had been originally intended as a low key joint event with WSX to mark the beginning of National Bike Week ended up as a major undertaking, on a specially produced MTBO map, incorporating two WSX areas, Sugar Hill & Coldharbour, together with our map of Gore Heath to give an area large enough to set courses of the requisite distance and difficulty. WSX provided the mapper, in Bill Brown, and the planner, Jon Brooke, the indefatigable Trevor Bridle organised the event whilst on the day, officials were drawn from both clubs. Competitors finished exhausted but full of praise for the event. The following day, SARUM organised a Middle Distance MTBO race and the two events were used as selection races to pick the GB MTBO team for the World Championships in Israel in August.

2.

Chris Branford has been instrumental in co-ordinating a programme of regular local events in collaboration with our neighbouring clubs, and this has included producing new maps of Gillingham, Blandford and Dorchester, all drawn to Sprint race standards. That Gillingham was such an interesting area and provided excellent and challenging urban-O came as a pleasant surprise to many, and I hope that even more people will take up the challenge at the Blandford event in July and at Dorchester in August, which all leads up to the SW Sprint Championships around Bournemouth University in early September.

We continue to offer monthly coaching activities at Moors Valley and we've recently been awarded a grant from British Orienteering which will enable us to expand these activities.

Some of you will be going on orienteering based holidays over the summer. I know many members will be in Scotland in August, except for those who will be in Switzerland instead. I shall again be in Hungary as we prepare for the World Trail-O Champs there in mid August.

Wherever you are, may you run in sunlit forests.

Dick Keighley

Elite competition in Finland

The Nordics Open orienteering championships were held in Salo, ~150k west of Helsinki early this June. It was a tough set of races in tricky Finnish terrain with a very high standard of competition since the Nordic nations can enter 10 runners per race. The long was fun and I was very excited to pick up the map and see the long leg to number 1 across lots of grey indicating bare rock. The terrain was fantastic, a good mix of intricate areas, especially on the sides of hills, and fast flattish areas with lots of open rock. The relay and middle used the same assembly area but different sections of the map. The relay was my best run and I brought my team back in 6th on 1st leg.

The sprint was in the town centre and was an interesting mixture of park, streets and a steep forested hillside. Me and Sarah were the only Brits to get through the tough qualification (top 11 out of 27 in my heat and a margin of only 46s down on the winner to go through!). I was quite pleased with my 27th place in the final and it was good to see Sarah get in the top 20.

After the sprint and a night of karaoke and Finnish dance music we headed off for what is the biggest relay in the world, Jukola. We arrived to find half of the inside of a race track covered with military tents (for club accommodation) and the other half prepared for club tents. The preparations were well underway and lots of areas of the surrounding forest were taped off for camping.

Following a long discussion about the merits of flat ground, fircone density, proximity to the arena and number of midges we eventually chose a grassy spot by the perimeter fence to pitch our tents. It was at this point I discovered I'd neglected to pack any tent pegs. Luckily Oli, Pippa and Duncan are more organised than me and could offer me spares.

By Saturday thousands of competitors had arrived, our encampment had been engulfed by a Russian contingent, music was blaring out of the speakers, the big screen TVs were up and

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running, the sun had started shining (as is usual for Jukola) and I was starting to get nervous about the prospect of running 1st leg for my Swedish club. Lining up on the start line with 1000 other girls I was grateful for our start position near the front. I was very surprised by the speed of the start (way faster than I'd start a 10k road race) but half way round the race track (with another ¼ to go to reach the start kite) things settled down to a fast but reasonable pace. I was near the front the whole way round and really enjoyed the race and was pleased to come in to the changeover in 21st, 1.35 down.

The terrain wasn't as beautiful as the Nordics but was varied and interesting and generally very runnable. Our team ended up 30th and after the 3rd team from the club had finished we all headed off a shower and sauna (all built outside by the organisers) before watching the boys race which started at 11 and continued through the night. Daniel Hubmann got past Thierry with a different route choice (followed by everyone on the big screen) near the end of the final leg to bring Kristiansand (with GBs Jon Duncan in the team) to victory at about 7 in the morning.

Helen Bridle

(Congratulations to Helen on the continuation of her excellent results both in the UK and abroad. She has just been selected as a member of the British Team competing in the World Games in Taiwan later this month. We are delighted to see that she still puts WIM after her name when she competes here. Ed.)

Dorset Schools Orienteering League

The League has been running for over 10 years now, and although numbers have dropped a little in recent years from an initial high, they have remained fairly stable over the last couple of seasons.

This year, Swanage Middle School retained the League title they won last year. They also won the Primary and Middle Schools class at the Dorset Schools Championships held at Moors Valley on Friday May 15th with Burgate School taking the Senior trophy. Entries reached the 100 mark for the first time in a few years although school minibus problems eventually reduced competitors below that number.

WIM juniors Fraser Smith, Katherine Hodge and Elizabeth Reynolds were amongst the class winners on the day. These three together with Rebecca Whittingham also won their age group classes in the league competition.

At a national level, Clayesmore School again won the small schools class at the British Schools Championships, whilst at international level, Jack Benham (Burgate), Lucy Butt (S Wilts), Tom Butt & Sam Giles (Bishop Wordsworth), all represented England in Spain at the ISF World Schools Championships.

The 2009-10 league season begins with an event in Hurn Forest on Saturday 26th September.

Dick Keighley

4.

Mountain Bike Orienteering

Having organised a number of Mountain Bike Orienteering events over the past 3 years Nigel Benham and I decided we would like to have a 2 day MTBO event in this area to hopefully attract some of the devotees of the sport from the Midlands and the North.

Having eventually obtained permission to use Wareham Forest and Gore Heath on Saturday 13th June and with Nigel Benham having obtained permission to use Hamptworth on Sunday 14th June we were informed that the events were to be designated the British MTBO Long and Short Championships respectively. No pressure with regard to these events then!!!

We were extremely lucky to have had Jon Brooke (WSX) who has a wealth of experience of MTBO events to plan the courses and Bill Brown (WSX) to amalgamate and amend the Wareham Forest and Gore Heath maps to that of Mountain Biking standard. Those who took part including several of the GB team were full of praise not only for the planning of some excellent and challenging courses but also the superb A3 map.

With Wessex having provided the planner and mapper for the event that left Wimborne to provide the organiser, the equipment and arrange entries and provide the SI. I am extremely grateful to all those willing WSX and WIM members who rallied round to ensure that the event ran like clockwork. MTBO courses use control sites on tracks and paths and I was concerned that we may see some vandalism of controls in areas that are extensively used by the public. Controls were therefore placed after 11am with the starts scheduled from 1.00pm to 3.00pm and luckily all controls remained in place.

Winners were as follows:-

A Course (27K 28 Controls)	Andy Conn	CLOK	84.51
B Course (21K 20 Controls)	Emily Benham	SARUM	74.16
C Course (17K 17 Controls)	Peter Bray	SN	
71.37			
D Course (Score Event)	Roger Crickmore	WSX	85.05

I have since had a number of emails thanking us for a great event and can I again thank the following for the invaluable help in making the event such a success.

Planner Jon Brooke Mapper Bill Brown Entries and SI Dick Keighley and
Cris Tween

Control Placing Sue Hands, Peter Fale, Trevor Bridle, Bill Brown, John Shucksmith, Ian Sayer and John Tilsley
Registration Di Tilsley and Judith Bland
Car Parking Kay Sayer and Roger Moore
Start David Bland, David & Bernice Tonge, Richard Arman
Road Crossing Richard Brightman, Ian Sayer and Sue Spillar
Setting up Madeleine Bridle, Roger and Tracey Crickmore, Richard Brightman, David and Judith Bland
First Aid John and Di Tilsley
Control Collecting Tim Houlder, Rob Hick, Chris Branford, Trevor Bridle and Roger Crickmore

Another excellent example of Wessex and Wimborne working together using both clubs' maps and personnel.

On the Sunday the Hamptworth event was also well received and our own Kirsty Staunton won the D course.

Trevor Bridle



MTBO appeals to a wide age group at Moors Valley

6.

Urban Orienteering and Sprint Races

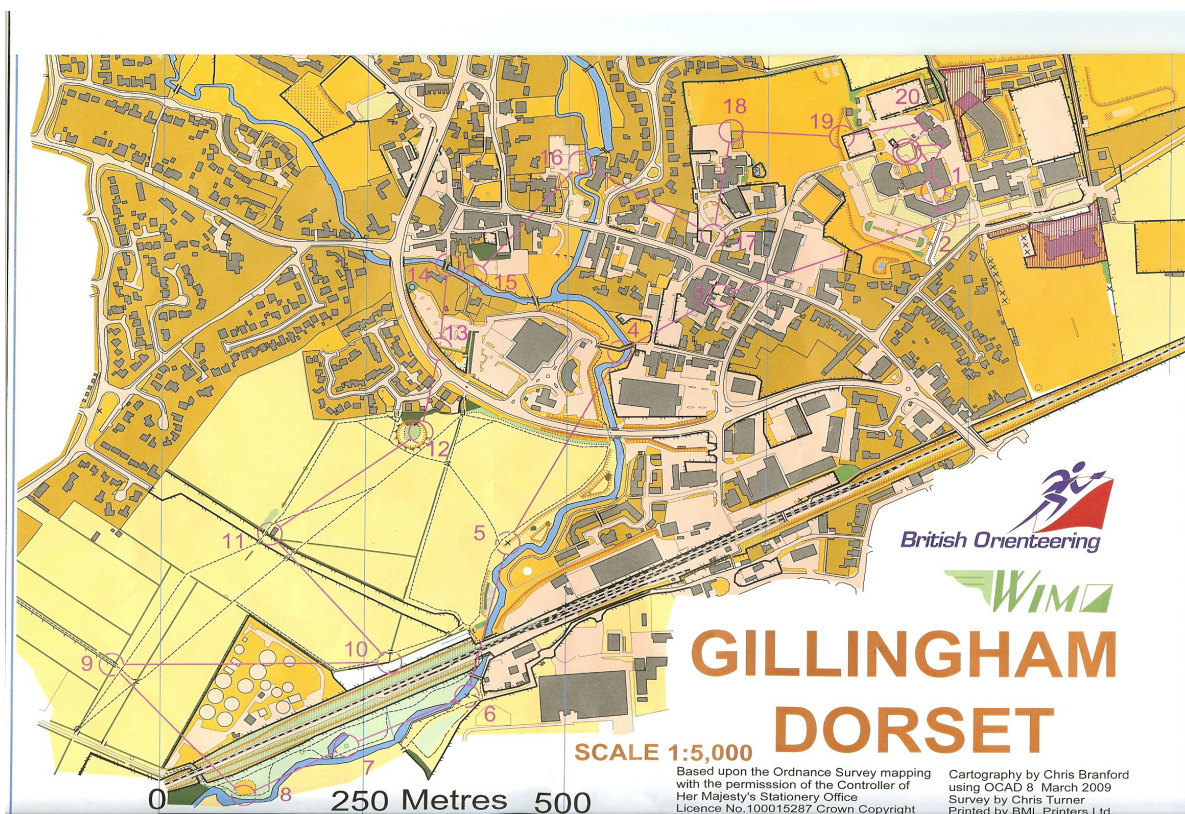
(With thanks to Simon Errington – Maprunner.co.uk and Nick Barrable - Compass Sport magazine from whom I have taken most of this information)

You might think that urban orienteering and the sprint race are just more of the same, but experience has shown it probably needs a lot more care, certainly when looked at in terms of effort per kilometre of race!

Terrain Suitability: The British Sprint Championships guidelines state that “the planning should emphasise map reading, map interpretation and route choice in complex environments and at very high speed” and that “the nature of the terrain means that courses are likely to be of technical difficulty 3 or 4, but the speed of the event adds extra pressures which compensate for the lack of technical challenge”.

Sprint races need to be about running speed and map reading. You’re looking for something reasonably flat, reasonably open and with a fair amount of small detail but little traffic.

Experience to date shows that university campuses, city and town centres and ornamental city parks are ideal.



Sprint Maps and ISSOM: ISSOM, the IOF specification for sprint maps, introduces a number of modifications to the more familiar ISOM standard used for most other races and maps. The main differences relate to the representation of paths in urban areas, the introduction of extra symbols for small but significant objects (such as trees, bushes, staircases and building pass-through), and the use of symbols to define whether fences, walls, standing water and vegetation are “passable” or “impassable” - harder to read and interpret. The recommended scale is 1:5,000 or 1:4,000 with 2.5m contours. For our races in Dorset we are using 1:5,000.

Course Length: The recommended winning time for sprint races is 12 to 15 minutes but for urban orienteering it will be much more in the order of 30 – 40 minutes depending on your age group. On a typical UK park area the top men will do just over four minutes per kilometre and the top women will be 10 to 15% down on this (but still under 5 minutes per kilometre). This means that most courses should probably be somewhere between 2.5km and 3.5km. For urban orienteering it would be much more of the order of 3.5 to 6 km depending on the course you choose. In both sprint and urban races no allowance is made for the distance to get round building and so the actual distance run can be considerably greater.

Course Planning: The planner's aim is to do everything possible to put pressure on the competitor. Given the easy nature of most sprint areas this almost always starts with a high control density to force constant map reading. An average leg length of less than 200m per control with a number of legs of 50m or less is the norm.

In an ideal world you'd make the course complex throughout. An almost equivalent technique is to start off in a complex area, run through the less interesting parts of the map in the middle of the course, and then finish in a complex area. Another trick often used is frequent changes of direction and going in and out of any blocks of woodland or groups of buildings. Also using groups of three or four controls quite close together to force direction changes, followed by longer legs to get to the next good bit of terrain. The layout of start and finish is given particular thought, and it is common to have them within sight of each other. Many sprint events often have a 'spectator' control as well.

This year in the Dorset area WIM have three events which are urban orienteering on 1:5,000 maps at Gillingham (already run), Blandford and Dorchester. In addition WSX are running a sprint race at Bournemouth University with heats and finals. I hope that you will give these events a 'go' and add to your experience of orienteering.

Chris Branford

A challenge at Moors Valley

At the re-launch of the Moors Valley Permanent course 11 runners took on the 'Moors Valley Challenge', running from the Start to visit all 50 permanent posts and get back to the finish as quickly as possible. Congratulations to Dale Paget(WSX) who got round in 78-20, followed by Steve Horsler in 82-50. The route that Dale chose to take has a straight line distance of 13.4k which means that he was running at 5.8mins per km. When you make allowance for running round many of the tracks he must have run at least 15km, which is quite an achievement.

The 'Challenge' isn't just for runners, you can walk it as well or any combination of the two, but how about having an unofficial league for the best times. All you need to be is honest with yourself. Start by touching the Start/Finish post and visit all 50 posts in any order touching each one before returning to the Finish. If you'd like to admit your time let me know and I'll keep a list.

John Warren

8.

Not just 1 but 2 events in two weeks

As many of you will know the week from 13th June to 20th June was Bike Week and in conjunction with Travelwise WIM was asked to provide a further Mountain Bike event at Moors Valley. Having relaunched the MTBO Permanent Course in May it was decided to hold the Moors Valley MTBO Challenge on Saturday 20th June and this was also widely advertised by Moors Valley as part of their Bike Week activities. Travelwise were very supportive in covering the costs of the event and providing Medals and water bottles for all who took part.

Again a small number of very willing helpers were on hand to ensure that all ran smoothly on the day and we were very pleased to have 46 entries and of those exactly half were families with several riders going out together. We therefore estimate that we probably had between 70 and 80 competitors taking part.

The weather was again kind to us and it was great to see so many youngsters involved and proudly wearing their medals after they had finished. Philip Eeles of SOC won the Challenge visiting all 28 controls in 38.16 whilst Jon Brooke was in second place in 38.44. Of the 46 entrants 31 managed to collect all 28 controls.

MTBO now seems to be well and truly established by WIM and I am hoping to put on a further low key event in the morning of our Dorset Schools League event at Hurn Forest in September. Why not get your bike out during the rest of the summer, ensure it is in full working order and come along to the Hurn event.

Finally WHY CYCLE:-

Cycling keeps you healthy and makes you feel better.

Cycling means a less polluted journey.

Cycling helps you lose weight.

Cycling saves you money.

Cycling is quicker and offers more flexibility.

Cycling is cool.

Cycling is enjoyable.

Cycling helps to combat climate change.

Trevor Bridle

Congratulations to Tom Staunton

Is there a doctor in the house? No, there are two. If you phone for Dr Staunton expecting to speak to Eamon you may find that you are talking to Tom, who has just become a qualified doctor.

Congratulations to Tom from us all and best wishes for the future as a Royal Naval doctor.

Harvester Relay – Brecon Beacons

9.

The longest day of the year, superb weather, the high moorland of the Brecon Beacons, what a night for the Harvester Relay! Two teams of WIMs took part in this year's event enjoying the exciting race atmosphere (head to head in the elite) and the camaraderie of this over night event. Lightweight, almost free range camping, a supportive social atmosphere and a constant competitive challenge kept everyone on their toes. From the mass start late on Saturday night to the final leg at 5.45am next day everyone had a significant technical and physical challenge across some of the best mountain terrain in South Wales. The organisers had advised everyone to be aware of potentially dangerous crags and to carry mobile phones which shows that the competition area needed care.

The verdict, a great weekend for all with runs rated from 'Really Great' to 'Value for money'.



Images from the Harvester Relays in South Wales

10.

Orienteering – a beginner’s experience

It all started last August. Summer holiday boredom had set in and a quick bit of internet surfing revealed an ‘Orienteering Training’ event at Moors Valley. ‘That should fill a couple of hours’ I thought, so off I went. I was met by a chap called John who seemed pleased by the fact that I could identify the large black block on a map as the visitor centre, marched me up and down a few times to check that I could count and pointed out the little orange and white flags that I would have to look for. Basic training over, I was handed a dibber and sent off on a Yellow course. No sooner had I completed my first 100m (or 55 steps as I like to think of it now) than the heavens opened. They remained open until my soggy but satisfied return some 30 minutes later – I was hooked!

There have followed 10 months of discovery. Orienteering, like any activity, has its own jargon and peculiarities which seem perfectly clear to those who have followed the sport for years, but can look a bit daunting to the newcomer. The acronyms, the symbols, the range of events; long, middle, sprint, score, relay... how could I possibly know whether I was qualified in any way to take part in these events? Not a problem! Orienteering is, I have discovered, a very inclusive activity - I have just turned up, confessed my ignorance to the redoubtable teams manning the information tents and, thanks to their friendly and generous help, have soon been sent off to enjoy another session of ploughing my way through the best that the countryside has to offer.

Every event has provided its own rewards and learning opportunities. The main reward, for me, is the realisation that you are making progress in your orienteering – from the simple skill of choosing the correct track at a junction to the first time that you follow your compass heading through a seemingly featureless wood and emerge within a few feet of that rootstock next to your control. As for the learning ... I now know that marshes are NOT limited to the areas where they are marked on the map, the direct route is not always the quickest – particularly when you find yourself stuck in a bog watching others trot along the track that you had dismissed as ‘too long’, and the green areas should be treated with caution unless you really enjoy being smacked in the face with branches.

Another great reward of Orienteering is the vast range of countryside which you get to experience. From splendid New Forest heathland, to stunning bluebell woods, to vast, seemingly empty, expanses of Dartmoor. More recently I enjoyed a wonderful weekend at the ‘Springtime in Shropshire’ event. Another opportunity to develop my navigation skills - and my leg muscles! Three days of friendly, helpful company, challenging routes and views that seemed to go on forever, all set in glorious sunshine. It seemed a long way from that rainy day in Moors Valley last August. My targets are now to improve my times, try an urban event and build up enough stamina to tackle some of the longer courses without needing a week to recover afterwards. So much for just filling a couple of hours!

Kath Pike

Rapid Progress

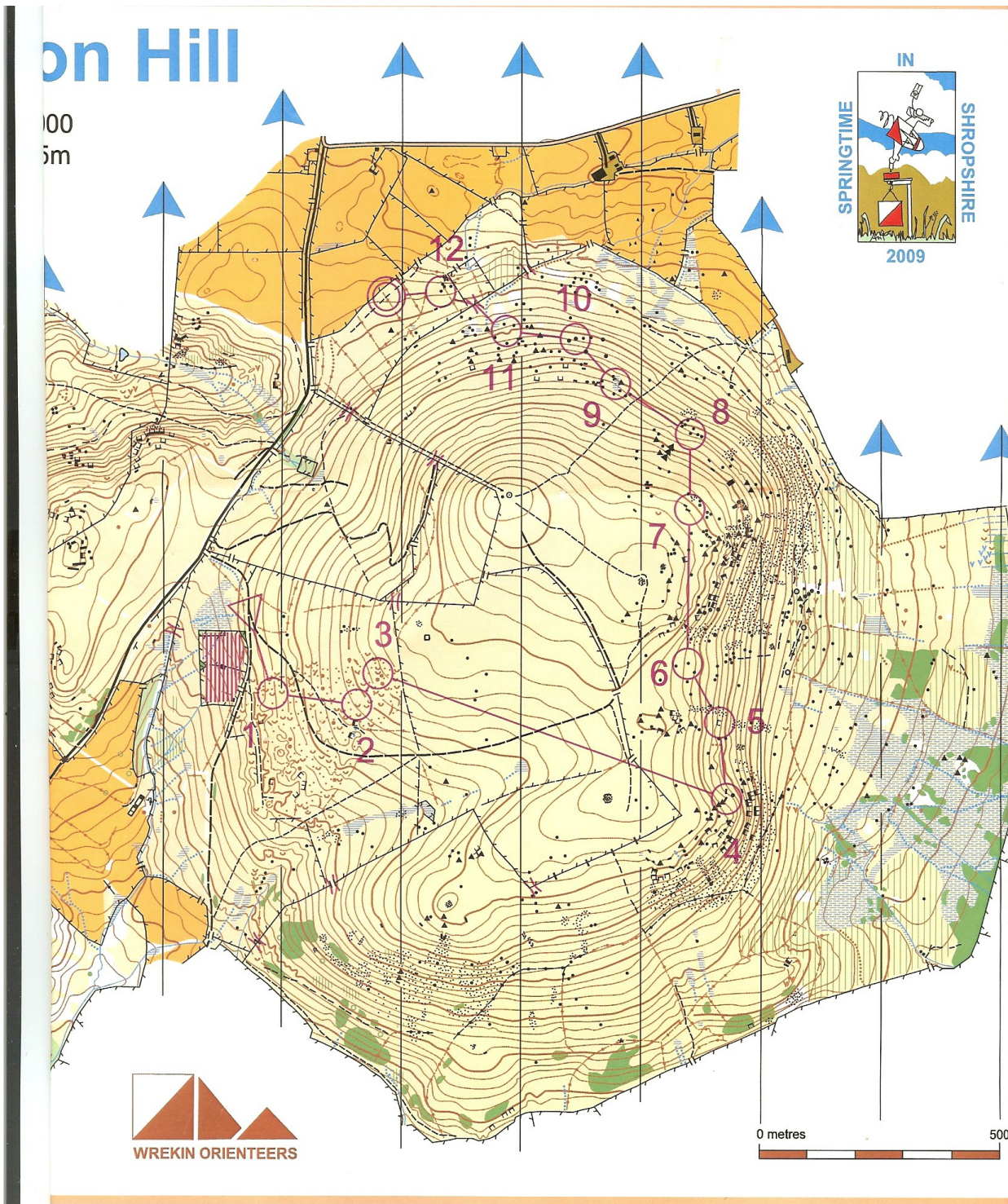
My thanks to Kath for her article. John and I were among the small group of WIMs who were with her at Springtime in Shropshire, but I had first heard about Kath last August. John came back from a Moors Valley training afternoon to say that he had met a very nice lady. (I wonder whether Kirsty and Hilary went home saying they had met a very nice man?)

From that exceptionally wet afternoon, Kath progressed rapidly over the ensuing months and her enthusiasm led her enter the three day Shropshire event in May. We had told her of the lovely countryside, the splendid long distance views, the interesting old towns and villages,

and the traditional pub meals which are such a part of multi-day event evenings. What we didn't emphasise quite so much were the demands of top quality terrain, boulder fields, crags, lots of climb and the probability of well planned and therefore challenging courses.

The map shows my course on day 3 at Corndon Hill. Kath's course was similar but a bit longer. Believe me, she is definitely NOT a beginner now!

Barbara Warren



12.

Forthcoming Events

July

- Saturday 4th WSX Informal - Heathfelton - GR: SY 858875 Signed from A352 east of Wool. Starts 11am to 12.30pm Yellow, Orange, Light Green, Score. Contact: 01202 692833 to reserve a map.
- Saturday 18th WIM Urban 'O' Blandford Forum - Blandford School GR: ST882068 Long, Medium and beginners courses. Starts: 10am to 11.30am. Courses close 12.30pm . Senior £4, Junior £2. Juniors under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Contact: Chris Branford 01258 - 453716 to reserve a map.
- Sunday 19th WIM Introductory event - Kingston Maurward College - Dorchester GR: SY715910. Follow O signs from A35 roundabout. Do not enter College by main entrance. Courses: Red, Orange, Yellow and 45min Score. Starts 1.00pm to 3.30pm. Senior £4, Junior £2 Contact: John and Di Tilsley 01305 - 889495 to reserve a map
- Wednesday 22nd WIM/MLS Summer series training event - Moors Valley Country Park Please note access is NOT via the Country Park main entrance. Signed from B3081 Ringwood - Verwood road at GR:SU124063 A variety of short courses to test your skills. Bring a picnic.! Courses available from 12noon to 7pm. See website for flier. Contact: Chris Branford 01258 - 453716
- Sunday 26th WIM Furrow Hoppers Relay - Bryanston School - Blandford GR: ST 884059. An 'Age Handicap' Relay with base time at 12noon Courses may also be run by individuals. See WIM website for flier with team details. Pre entry@ £17-50 per team by Monday July 20th Contact: Trevor Bridle 01258 - 454811

August

Sunday 2nd to Saturday 8th Scottish 6 Days event - Perth

Saturday 22nd WIM Dorchester Urban Race - Poundbury - Dorchester
For details see WIM website www.wimborne-orienteers.org.uk

September

Saturday 5th WSX Urban Sprint Race - Bournemouth University GR: SZ074937
Signed from Wallisdown Road. See WSX website for details.
Entry fees Senior £7-50, Junior £3. Pre entry via Fabian4.
Contact: Sian Rixon 07876 - 796094

Sunday 6th SOC District Colour Coded event - Dibden/Marchwood - New Forest
GR: SU 400055. Watch for details

Saturday/ Sunday 19th/20th

Devon Caddihoe Chase weekend – Hound Tor and Haytor – Dartmoor
GR: SX740793. Regional event and Chasing Start events. See Devon Website for details. Pre-entry required.
Contact: Jill Green 01392 278512

