

# THE WRITE TRACK

## Newsletter of



# Orienteering

## Newcastle and Tyneside

*Navigating from Tyne Banks to Tweed*



Issue 2015/2

March 2015

### Editorial

Welcome to this latest edition, which has different perspectives on the CompassSport Trophy round, a recent recruit's memories, notice of some important organisational issues and news of some forthcoming events.

**Peter Firth**



### Returning to the Sport

Like Brian Davies (writing in The Write Track Dec 2014), I too have recently returned to orienteering. After some early outings during the Club's time as Knightsbridge Orienteers, I went off to college, joined Heriot-Watt University O Club and enjoyed some great events around Scotland. I also accompanied my team-mates back to Northumberland when the JK was based here in 1985 – we all slept on the floor of St Michael's Church Hall in Alnwick – I think I prefer a little more comfort nowadays!



So after a gap of some years I'm back and enjoying every minute. I've found that a few things have changed - I am learning a new language of dibbers and SiEntries, and familiarizing myself with IOF symbols again. At least I no longer need to remember a red pen to draw my own route from a master map.



South Beach, Blyth

I was very warmly welcomed by Peter Firth at my first event at Exhibition Park in December, and since then have enjoyed events at South Beach/Hartley Links (bit tricky in the dunes), Blyth Valley (lovely run if a bit muddy – grateful to those who helped push the car out!), Bolam Lake, Watergate Forest Park, and most recently the Acorn Event at Hutton Mulgrave where I challenged myself with some more technical map-reading.

Thanks to everyone at NATO for your friendly welcome back to orienteering!

**Anne Simm**

Thank you and well done to everyone who took part in the Compass Sport Trophy competition. It was a real team effort and, for the first time ever, we are through to the final in the Lake District in October. In the end, the results were close and we narrowly beat CLARO. Points scored are listed below – the best 13 count, but there were also several NATO competitors who had good runs and beat CLARO scorers, which reduced their points. In addition, of course, the more runners we field on the day, the better our chances of success.

It just shows that EVERY run counts and I hope as many club members as possible will keep the date free to compete in the final: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at Heslington Barrows near Kendal.

**Tricia Davies (Club Captain)**

**Club results: points counting highlighted .**

|                       |            |                  |            |                        |            |                        |            |
|-----------------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
| <b>BROWN</b>          |            | <b>BLUE (M)</b>  |            | <b>GREEN (W)</b>       |            | <b>GREEN (JM)</b>      |            |
| Nick Green            | <b>99</b>  | George Hare      | <b>100</b> | Sue Metcalf            | <b>100</b> | Thomas Athey           | 98         |
| Chris Stafford        | <b>98</b>  | Patrick Smyth    | 97         | Jane Malley            | <b>97</b>  | <b>SHORT GREEN(JW)</b> |            |
| James Boyd            | 92         | Chris Bradford   | 95         | Mary Rack              | 96         | Roxanne Siadat         | <b>99</b>  |
| <b>SHORT BROWN</b>    |            | Paul Jameson     | 91         | Elisabeth Sidebotham   | 94         | Aoife Lakey            | 98         |
| John Phizacklea       | 97         | Jeremy Lakey     | 88         | Ann Lakey              | 93         | <b>ORANGE (JM)</b>     |            |
| Paul Boyles           | 96         | <b>GREEN (M)</b> |            | <b>SHORT GREEN (V)</b> |            | Joseph Metcalf         | <b>100</b> |
| <b>BLUE (W)</b>       |            | Alasdair W Crow  | <b>99</b>  | Andrew Nicoll          | <b>98</b>  | Kian Siadat            | 98         |
| Joanna Abbott         | <b>100</b> | Adrian Barnes    | <b>98</b>  | Patricia Davies        | 97         | Joseph Green           | 97         |
| Kirsty Davies-Walters | <b>98</b>  | Charlie Wilson   | 95         | Annette Egan           | 95         | <b>ORANGE (JW)</b>     |            |
| Philippa Graham       | 97         | Fred Miller      | 93         | Peter Firth            | 94         | Alexandra Hare         | <b>100</b> |
| Katherine Crosby      | 93         | Steve Beverley   | 91         | Helen Rafferty         | 89         | Hannah Brown           | 94         |
|                       |            | Bob Richardson   | 90         | Carole Firth           | 88         |                        |            |
| NATO                  | 1285       | CLARO            | 1279       | NN                     | 969        |                        |            |

### My experiences at the Compass Sport Trophy – Joseph Metcalfe

On Sunday, my day started with crawling out of bed, packing kit, almost forgetting breakfast, and leaving my house within half an hour of reluctantly waking up. This could be seen as a fairly normal Sunday to any orienteer; most other people might take two hours. This, of course, was the preparation for an hour long drive, running for half an hour, selling cakes for another two hours, and going home (followed by lots of sleep).

On the way there, Mum and I picked up Chris Stafford from one of the entrances to Exhibition park, pulling onto the A1 10 minutes later. We reached somewhere vaguely near Hamsterley about an hour later, and in true orienteer fashion, took a wrong turn. When we finally reached the car park, I only had half an hour to get to the start (I think my mum went by her start time, which was 20 minutes after mine), so I rushed to get on my kit, only briefly stopping to drop off my cookies at the cake stall, and ran to the start. It only occurred to me that I had badly miscalculated when I got to the start ten minutes early, and had to wait for a bit.

My Orange run (I usually do a Light Green) started at 10:40, a fairly early time since my family had asked for times around 11:30. After pausing briefly at the start to put down the wrong map and pick up a new one, I ran roughly in the direction I thought I should. Luck appeared to be on my side, and I stopped right next to the control from going in an almost perfect straight line, in a bog. It had looked a bit like moss while I was running, but luckily it wasn't a muddy bog, and I continued through the thick, annoying, heather. I really hate heather. My run from one to five was simple. They were all in a straight line on obvious features. The only things slowing me down were the fact I had a bad cold, and a literal ton of annoying, energy sapping heather. By the time I reached control five, I had caught up with two other people on my course who then followed me up my path up a hill through evil, waist deep heather.



Control seven was the only control that I was partially lost on, misjudging the location three times. I knew I had lost about five minutes of time, and with that pushing me on, I found the control, that had been hidden by a clump of seriously annoying heather. I then found eight in good time, but on the way to nine I developed a stitch that made me walk for about a minute, allowing the two people following me to catch up, and then mysteriously slow down a bit?



The sprint to number ten was filled with amazing, heather destroying sheep that got a bit too close to me for my liking. I then found eleven within seconds, hidden in a heather ridden depression, and sprinted for the finish, in a sprint weirdly like the way to control three on a

course in the middle of a hail storm in the Lake District about a month ago.

As soon as I finished, I gasped to catch my breath, before quickly turning down the opportunity to sit down, considering I was in a sheep field. The walk back to the start to pick up my cagoule was longer than I thought it would be, and that preceded the long walk back to assembly, which was mercifully down hill, to go and download. I was in the queue for download for about ten minutes as both of the people in front of me had problems with their dibber, but my final time was 29:10, a time that got me second in my class, but was eight minutes off first place in the end (Cough cough number seven)

Within five minutes of downloading, I was eating my lunch behind the table for the cake stall to raise funds for the North East junior squad that I am part of. The stall was making some money, but when some more NEJS members and my mum were around we thought of moving the tables where more people could see them, which turned out to be a brilliant idea as we had started to bring in lots more money. Another idea that turned out to be a success was my idea of me going around the car park with a tray of cakes. Within five minutes I had sold out and tried to repeat this with flapjacks, but they didn't sell as well so I returned to the stall. In the end we made £87.10 from the stall to go towards covering the costs of our training weekends, which I recently found out were quite high!

After a long drive home we got home at half three, with still enough time to celebrate Mothers' Day, well for everyone but me as I was half asleep on the sofa.

**Joseph Metcalfe M14 NATO/NEJS**

## Brown for Beginners

There's no greater feeling in orienteering than representing NaTO for the first time, which for me was at the Compass Sport Trophy. As an enthusiastic recreational cross country runner, distance is not a problem. Over the last year and a half I have been doing my best to pick up orienteering skills, symbols and marks on a map to a point where I am happy orienteering, and happy even if I get things slightly wrong.

When asked to represent NaTO at the CompassSport Trophy at Hamsterley, I immediately said yes. Brown courses are longer than I'm used to but that shouldn't be a problem. I'm in!

It's Thursday night. Only a few days before the big day (CST...I wasn't getting married). As the last minutes of daylight passed by, I arrive at a Silverlink car park for the last of a very enjoyable Night Owl series. Discussion of Hamsterley starts. I admit my nervousness but stay confident. After taking part in the British O Championships last year I have some experience of running in Forests; so Hamsterley shouldn't be too much of a worry. At that moment that Paul Boyles informed me that the car park was in the forest...the actual course was on the moor.

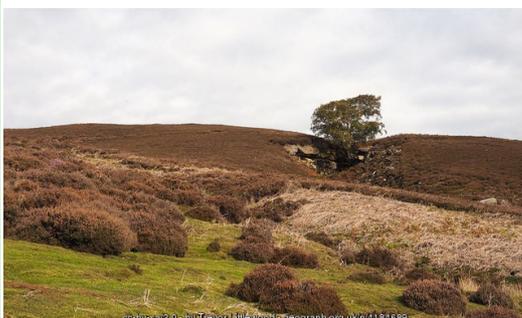
Alarm Bells Ring!!!

On my last walk over a moor there weren't many trees, paths or iconic features. I now realised exactly what I had signed up for. Immediate reaction?...don't forget the whistle!

After a long drive I arrive at Hamsterley Forest at the incorrect entrance meaning the navigation challenge has already begun. I try and find my way to the car park by taking the Forest Drive and once there exit the car to open the boot only to realise I've left my fell running shoes at home. I look down at my spotless work trainers. The ones you wear to look sporty but take part in no sport with them on. Coaching trainers I called them when I coached cricket. They looked up at me knowing what fate lay ahead.

I walk to the start with a rather untalkative gentleman from another club. Only two things: He was in sport mode trying to psych me out; or he was amazed at how clean my trainers were.

At the start literally seconds before I have to start standing in bizarre marked out squares that only I can enter during that specific time. Ahead: Adrian Barnes running into the distance, Fred Miller two boxes in front and Chris Stafford warming up. A quick hello to Chris, GPS on (to record distance) and I'm off into the most unmarked landscape I ever orienteered in. I reach for the compass for the right direction. Still not able to judge map distances, I arrive at a flag but with the wrong number so continue along the edge of a slope to find another. Another wrong number, but I notice something I've never noticed before. The numbers are in an order! I judge them go up along this ridge. Two more and I reach mine. This proved true and was a real help to taking part. This only applied to a few controls though. For the others, mayhem breaks loose.



An hour in and I'm ready to call it a day. With no idea where control 6 is, I'm wandering around in dense heather. The only clues on the map: a collection of rocks and some shooting butts. After 15 minutes of my wandering, Chris Stafford runs past. Looking at the course I realise that despite starting 20 minutes after me, he is now in fact (going off my future times) 41 minutes ahead of me.

Things are looking bad and I do the unthinkable. Out with my phone to text my girlfriend informing her of how badly the day is going. Her words of encouragement result in me spending the next 10 minutes stomping around in any direction looking for any clue to help.



Then an uncommon stroke of luck. Two orienteers, of similar looking age, one following the other both heading in the direction I'm supposed to. I join the convoy. About 100 metres between me and the front runner, I notice him momentarily disappear in the heather. Only to reappear and continue running. I thought nothing of it. Then the second runner, about 70 metres ahead, also disappears for a couple of seconds and then reappears. I assume they both trip. I assume wrongly. Thirty seconds later I plunge knee deep into a bog. As if things couldn't get worse. I use my o and ther leg as a foundation to pull myself out of the bog only for that to sink in too. I must admit I've never been in this kind of situation before. Both legs in a bog with my trainers getting dirtier by the second. I use my hands to slowly push myself out, trying not to lose a trainer in the process. I'm out. I'm out and I'm running to catch up the other runners. We make it the flag. Only it's not my flag. A quick look at the map though and I'm in a better position to be able to pin point my location and find 6. Great, only 16 to go!

I would like to tell you it gets better after that. Unfortunately, much of the same then follows including falling half way down a hill, tripping over more times than ever and losing my sense of humour. Three hours after setting off I reach the finish, thirty minutes before the course was set to close. I get out my phone and turn off the GPS. The marshal at the end enquires as to whether I used my phone to track where I was on the course. I answered, 'Would I really have been out there for three hours if I used my GPS to guide me?'. He laughed, understanding my point. It was a long walk back to the car park. A long walk. Longer than this article!

I arrive, dreading the download. As I near the van I spot members from our club. As they notice me, large smiles appear on their faces. They know how long I've been out there for. Also in the car park, I was reunited with my sense of humour (which I lost out on the course). I smile back at the NaTO members.

They all knew I was punching above my weight but I sensed they appreciated the contribution I made to the club. It wasn't much on record; but for a new person to the sport it was a big contribution. In the end we won! And I played my part. And I would do it again! Having missed lunch, I return to my car, scoff my face with food and energy drinks and return home.

**What a cracking day!**

**James Boyd**

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**THE TYNESIDE TREBLE**  
11th & 12th July 2015

Plans are progressing for this weekend on Tyneside and the event now has its own website at: <http://tynesidetreble.wix.com/tynesidetreble>



## Notes for Event Officials

I have written this article to inform event officials of various pieces of information that have recently been sent out by British Orienteering. Many of them relate to the insurance agreement and clarify points raised by the Insurers.

### “Indemnifying”

Organisers should not agree to sign an indemnity clause in any access agreement without first checking the wording of the clause with the Club Secretary or British Orienteering.

### Risk Training

The moratorium of event officials receiving Event Safety Training has now ended. This means that henceforth all event officials must have received this training. I have run such a course on one Club Night recently. The current plan is to run this again at Morpeth (or nearby) after the Gathering Race in April.

### Night Events

The Insurance have stated that “mandatory” in our rules means just that. Consequently the rules for night events (4.10) are to be enforced. This means competitors must carry a whistle and back-up lighting; also if the event uses roads they must wear high visibility clothing. Clubs should check that they do so.

A standard warning should be added to all flyers for night events:

“Please note that British Orienteering have confirmed that every competitor must carry a whistle and a backup light and that the organising club must physically check at the start that a reasonable percentage of participants are complying with this rule. Please bear with us while this kit check is performed.”

### Risk Assessment Forms

A reminder that these forms need to be returned to the Club Secretary within 7 days of the event. There have been occasions where they are requested by the Insurers. If they are unavailable the Insurers may assume that they have not been completed and therefore the Organiser may become liable for any claim.

### Participant Record Sheets

A similar reminder to the previous one. The same timescale and same reasons!

If you have any questions about any of the above please contact me  
(patricksmythATlineone.net)

**Patrick Smyth**



## Thrunton Wood

### MTBO & Score event

NATO is running its tenth cycling event on 19th July 2015. It will be at Thrunton Wood as used for last year's British O Champs. This year Adrian is planning a linear mountain bike event through the woods alongside a score event on forestry roads.

Registration will be from 10:00 to 11:00 with starts from 10:15 to 11:15. Entry forms can be ordered and submitted by email or can be collected from Registration on the day. You may enter as a pair on the score event.

This event will be suitable for all competent cyclists aged 15 or over. Children under 15 can still take part in the score event if accompanied by an adult (aged 18 or over). The event will use mini kites and SI, with dibbers available to hire.

Entry fees will be **Adults** £7 and **Youth** £3 (under 21) on 31 December 2015). **BMBO** adult members should bring their membership cards to qualify for a discount.

All entrants will receive a full colour map (1:10,000) on waterproof paper, adapted from the orienteering map of Thrunton Wood and Callaly and pre-printed with the course, the description list and emergency numbers. Dimensions 39 x 32cms. In addition Score event maps will show all sites, the description list (showing points values), penalties and emergency numbers.

Please contact Richard by 11th July to reserve a map.

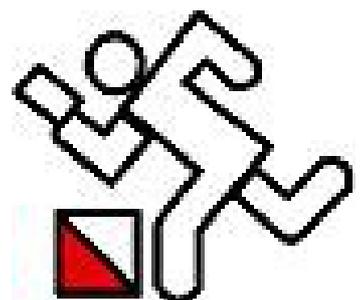
Planner: Adrian Barnes

Organiser: Richard Field 33 Kestrel Drive, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 8JS

Telephone: 01670 855975 Email: richard.field33ATgmail.com

## News from the Permanent Courses

A new stock of up to date Permanent Course maps has been delivered to Bolam Lake Country Park. Stocks are reportedly good also at Rising Sun and Plessey, but if you intend to train or take family or friends there you can check for latest information via the club website. See the website events page for a full listing of operative permanent course sites.



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Presents

# Saturday LOP

## Series 2015

A programme of low key events based around the Newcastle area. Ideal for beginners as well as established orienteers who can use this as a training exercise. All participants will score league points at each event.

| Date                   | Location                                       |
|------------------------|--|
| 28 <sup>th</sup> March | Rising Sun Country Park. NE12 9SS              |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> April | Havannah Nature Reserve. NE13 7AS              |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> May    | Silverlink. NE28 9YB                           |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> May   | Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham. NE46 3JB  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> June   | Newburn -Tyne Riverside Country Park. NE15 8NL |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> June  | West Newcastle (Denton or Great Park) TBC      |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> July   | Leazes Park and St James' Park. NE2 4BJ        |

Each event will have the following courses:

Yellow 1.5 - 2.0 km

Orange 2.0 - 3.0 km

Long Orange 3.5 - 5.0 km

Seniors £2

Juniors/Concessions £1

Starts 10.30 - 11.30

Further information available

Contact Tricia Davies

info@hazon1.freeserve.co.uk

Full details at : <http://www.newcastleorienteering.org.uk/flyer/Lop15.html>