

Berkshire Orienteers

Newsletter

May 2016



Andrew Graham
at the start



David Jukes at the start



BKO members at the SARUM Warminster Urban
Sunday 17th April
(Credit: photos taken by Shane Wilkinson of SARUM)

Route Choice at Speed

You've been sprinting hard for over 15 minutes. You have time for one brief map look-ahead while completing leg 14-15. Now plan and execute the correct sequence from 15-18: you only have time for one or two brief map-reads on each leg.

Extract is from Danish Spring Cup sprint race attended by Martin Wilson. See page 12 for his suggested route.

15	82		☼			○
16	78		↗			┌
17	87		Ⓜ			└
18	79	←	■			└
19	51		↗	○		
○ --- 75 m ---> ⊙						



Vapnagaard, Helsingør, Denmark

Editorial

It has been a busy start to the Spring orienteering schedule this year.

The club can be proud of its participation at the CompassSport competition event in March. Led by Martin Wilson, there was a large contingent of BKO members participating - Martin's report on the event appears later. But we have also had both the JK Festival at Easter in Yorkshire and the British Orienteering Championships at the end of April in Shropshire - see below for details.

But there is still more to come - in particular the British Sprint Championships at the Olympic Park and the British Middle Championships on Leith Hill in Surrey. Both are being held on the weekend of 11th/12th June. Entries are still open for both events!



David Jukes

Club Notes

Keeping you informed about the club and its members

Level A Events

*25th March - 28th March: Jan Kjellström
International Festival of Orienteering 2016 -
Yorkshire*

All JK2016 maps and courses can be accessed
from: <http://www.jk.routegadget.co.uk/rg2/>

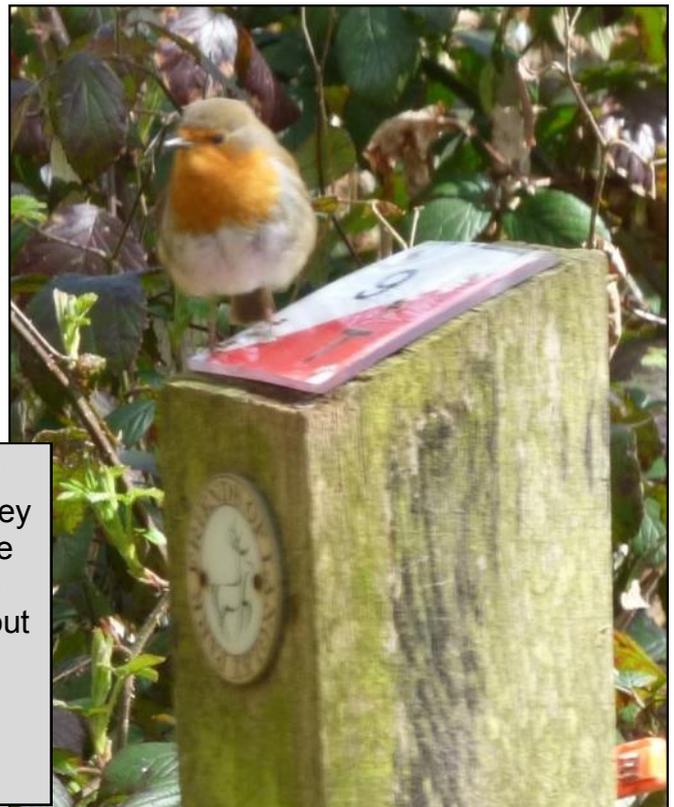
A journey to Yorkshire for the early Easter weekend appears not to have attracted many BKO members with only a small group taking part this year. For the sprint/urban enthusiasts, the Leeds University provided a very challenging location for the first event on Good Friday. Day 2 took competitors onto the edge of the North Yorkshire moors. The selected forest, Wass, had a poor reputation but most reports suggest that people were generally pleased with the planners' courses and the use of the better areas of the

Cover Picture:

We had an excellent turnout for the CompassSport Cup heat event in the New Forest on the 13 March. The picture shows **Jess Miller** (W16) at the penultimate control on her 'Junior Short Green Women' course.

[Members may recall that her brother Finn was our cover star for the March issue.]

*For a report on the event with more photos,
see pages 8 -9*



Although not showing any of the action at the event, your Editor could not resist using this photo taken at the Langley Park Saturday event on the 23 March. Langley Park is the location for one of our permanent orienteering courses (a 'POC') which allow people to have a go at the sport without having to attend an actual event. As shown here, permanent markers are used to mark the designated control sites. On this occasion, a robin appears to have successfully navigated to a control

forest - although this did mean using some rather steep valleys rather than the flatter but less interesting plateau areas above the valleys. Day 3 was back into the Yorkshire peak district with a mainly open moorland area at Kilnsey. The fast open terrain led to some long courses but, depending upon the start times allocated to competitors, later competitors had to contend with a vicious hail storm which made going very tough and led to a significant number of retirements. With the smaller number of BKO members attending this year, no BKO teams had been entered for the relays on Easter Monday.

Top performers amongst the band of BKO members are shown in the table on the right. Best performer was **Ian Cooper** who had two good runs on Saturday and Sunday in M70 against tough competition. He was less than a minute behind the bronze position when the times for the two days were added together. However **Dick Rae's** performance (also in M70) in the sprint should also be noted.

JK2016 - Top BKO Results			
Day 1: Sprint – Leeds University			
M55	51st	Simon Moore	
M70	10th	Richard Rae	
W60	27th	Katy Stubbs	
Day 2: Wass			
M55S	13th	Simon Moore	
	22nd	Peter Wilson	
M65L	27th	Stefan Stasiuk	
M70L	4th	Ian Cooper	
	18th	Richard Rae	
Day 3: Kilnsey		Days 2+3	
M55S	9th	Simon Moore	7 th overall
	21st	Peter Wilson	21 st overall
M65L	27th	Stefan Stasiuk	26 th overall
M70L	4th	Ian Cooper	5 th overall
	31st	Richard Rae	24 th overall

30 April - British Orienteering Championships ('Long Distance') - Brown Clee Hill, Shropshire

It is likely that most of the BKO members at this year's BOC will have found the terrain surprisingly tough. Although there are some wooded areas on the eastern slope of the hill, the approach to the summit was rough moorland with large clumps of tussocky grass and areas of heather. However, for those who were able to take their eyes off the ground just in front of their feet, the views from the top were wonderful!

Once again our best performer was **Ian Cooper** who gained a podium place with a third place in M70L. At the other end of the ages, **Adam Methven** managed a very creditable 7th place in M12A.

1 May - British Relay Championships - Brown Clee Hill

Although using the same arena as the previous day's event, the BRC used the southern half of Brown Clee Hill whereas the Individual had only used the northern half (which included the main summit).

BKO had entered a varied selection of teams and, on the day, 5 teams participated. One of these was a team entered in the Men's Premier class - it must be many years since this last occurred. Well done to the team of **Alex Moore, John Methven** and **Mark Saunders** who took on this challenge.

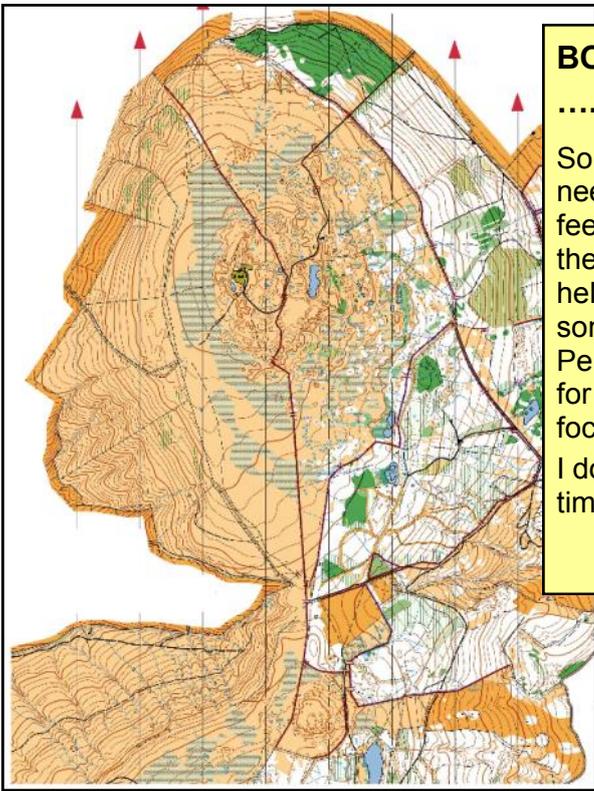
There are no significant results to report but it will be have been great for some of our newer members to have experienced this format of the sport for the first time.

For a report by first-time BOC attendee **Mark Saunders**, see page 18

Committee News

The new 2016-17 Committee met for the first time in mid-March and held its next meeting in early May. Here is a summary of a few of the items discussed:

- There have been complications over the permission and dates for a short series of park-type events which had been scheduled. These would have been targeted at newcomers in the Bracknell area. Despite attempts to resolve this, Fiona had not be able to identify mutually agreeable dates. Only a single one is now in the schedule with a second Summer Park/Urban event to be staged in Lower Earley.



BOC 2018 - Brown Clee Hill. My excuse for a slow time

....

So there I was in the start lane of the British Championships. I needed to focus. I had one minute to look at the map and get a feel for the area, the location of the start and mentally prepare for the challenge ahead. However, standing over the map I couldn't help noticing that the map looked like the head and shoulder of someone. I started to try and think who it most looked like. Perhaps Queen Victoria? Darth Vader? So when the buzzer went for the start, I cannot claim to have been correctly prepared and focussed.

I doubt if many people will have previously claimed that their slow time was due to the shape of the map!

David Jukes

At the BOC finish: **John Methven** comes in to finish his run in M45L in the Individual race.



- Emit equipment continues to be upgraded and suspect equipment and cards replaced. **Brian Sewell** has assembled a small team of volunteers who would be willing to run the results system at our events. The team will be trained on the new hardware/software and then be available to support our events. It has been decided that we would not take on the results processing at our forthcoming event at Bloom Wood and the Emit team will now run it for us. However in future we should be able to run this for ourselves at our Level C events.
- British Orienteering had encouraged clubs to consider organising events targeted at children for **World Orienteering Day** on the 11th May. This had been discussed with **Glyn Thomas** from St Andrew's and they were very willing to get involved. They will stage (*have staged?*) an event with children from other local schools invited to attend. Support on the arrangements is being provided by the **Denise and Eric Harper**.

- Unfortunately the Winter Saturday / Youth League event in March had to be cancelled due to a lack of an organiser. There is concern that it is becoming harder to get people to volunteer for official roles at these events. The task is relatively limited and provides a good opportunity to support the development of orienteering in the area. Please speak to any committee member if you need more information. Just to complicate matters though, from next January all key officials at events will need to have attended an Event Safety and Welfare workshop. The workshop will however provide key background information on the roles and responsibilities of organisers, planners and controllers.
- The club's summer training weekend in South Wales arranged by **Mark Foxwell** is going ahead in early June. It is still hoped to provide some additional evening training activities over the summer and autumn - possibly on a monthly basis.
- **Fiona Clough** has confirmed that suitable parking has been identified for future events at Bramshill Plantation. **Katy Stubbs** has agreed to map the area with the intention of holding an event there - possibly in Autumn 2017. It is possible that the mapped area can be extended into Heath Warren (to the SE of Bramshill) - options will be considered as work progresses.

Urban League Update

The 2016 Urban League season has started well for several BKO members. The current top positions in the Southern England Orienteering Urban League (SEOUL) are shown in the table on the right.

Mark Saunders has once again joined the leading contenders in the Open class continuing his excellent overall result in 2015 - this despite being an M35 and competing against younger orienteers. **Derick Mercer** and **Fiona Clough** are in a similar situation as they both lead their respective 'veteran' classes for those aged 40+ despite both being M/W50 competitors. Another leader is **Denise Harper** leading the Ultravet Women class. Of course this is still early in the season with only a5 out of the planned 19 events having been staged - see next page for some forthcoming events in the League.

It can also be noted that **Ian Cooper** and **Martin Wilson** have both won the only event in the SEOUL that each has attended so far - Ian at RAF Halton in January and Martin at Cambridge at the start of May.

SEOUL - Current Positions

Open Men

2 Mark Saunders (M35)

Veteran Men (40+)

1 Derick Mercer (M50)

4 Terence Hosking (M50)

Veteran Women (40+)

1 Fiona Clough (W50)

3 Annika Hermik (W45)

Supervet Men (55+)

5 Nigel Hoults (M60)

Supervet Women (55+)

10 Jane Courtier (W60)

Ultravet Men (65+)

6 Peter Bennett (M75)

Ultravet Women (65+)

1 Denise Harper (W65)

9 Gill Bennett (W70)



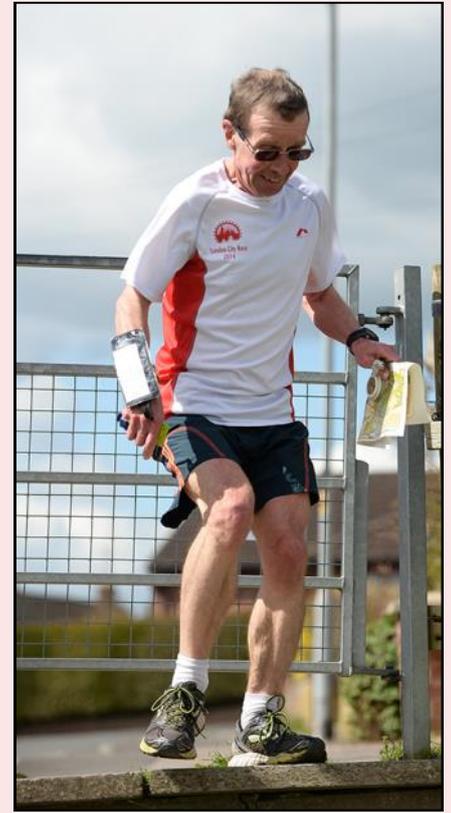
**Bloom Wood
Level C - SCOA League Event
Sunday 22 May 2016**

Join us for this regional event. A full range of courses is available from White to Brown providing opportunities for competitors of all ages and abilities.

Note: Blue and Brown courses have unmanned minor road crossings and are for over-16s only to comply with insurance requirements.

**Offers for help (allowing a reduced entry fee) to the Organiser - Colin Godbold:
events@bko.org.uk**

Details: <http://www.bko.org.uk/event/bloom-wood-22-may-16>



BKO members competing at some recent urban events:

Whitby Urban Event (UKUL)

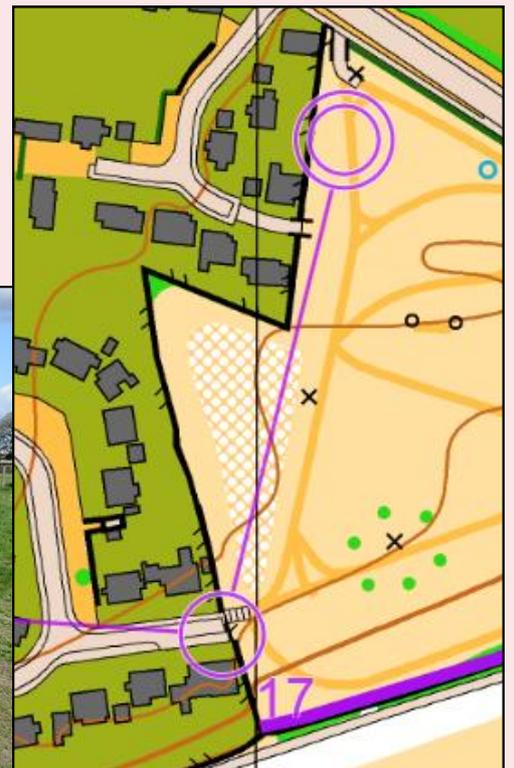
- **Martin Wilson** (above left) finishing at the event staged on the Saturday of the Northern Championships. Martin came first in the Men Ultra Vet class on a cold and blustery day with rain, sleet and hail. The event was the third in this year's national UK Urban League.

Warminster Urban Event (SEOUL)

- Above: **Alain Wilkes** (centre) and **Nigel Hoults** (right) can be seen at the penultimate control at Warminster. The map extract (below right) shows where the gate was located - at the end of the cul-de-sac before the open space used for the finished.
- Below: This can be seen more clearly in the photo of **Annika Hermick** who is about to head north across the field to reach the finish control.

Next few Southern England Orienteering Urban League (SEOUL) events:

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------|-------|
| • 28 May | Plymouth | DEVON |
| • 4 June | Poole | WSX |
| • 25 June | Milton Keynes | SMOC |
| • 2 July | Fordingbridge | WIM |
| • 16 July | Woking | SN |



CompassSport Cup Heat 2016

Almost 60 BKO members represented the club at the CompassSport Cup heat in the New Forest on March 13th. This was a huge turnout for us, a full team in almost all courses, including eight M/W14s from St Andrews School. The competition was extremely tough against SO, SLOW, SN, SOC, TVOC and WIM, all clubs with many good runners. Despite this, we hoped to beat at least one team with our large squad.

We tried our best, but fell just short of our goals. The competition was awesome, even fiercer than I anticipated. Our early results were very good, and we were leading the scoring after the first hour – a new achievement for us! However, we gradually dropped back as the best runners from other clubs came through later. Despite achieving a higher score than I thought we'd get, we still couldn't get above SOC or WIM. WIM in particular were very strong, with good runners in all classes taking them up the table, and we had to settle for a 'close seventh'.

Our final score was 2178, about 100 more than I'd expected, with our lowest counting score being 77, so we did ourselves proud. We finished 34 points behind SOC, almost exactly the same difference as last year. We had 5 excellent junior scores, averaging over 91 points, including three from St Andrews, so there's talent in our juniors now. Our seniors found it a hard challenge, and many of the women's team seemed to be not well or carrying an injury, which was unfortunate. Of our 20 senior



Our juniors played a major part in our improved performance this year. This is **Luca Hartley** (M14) on Orange Men.



Martin Wilson (M65) on the Green Men course.



Cheered on by a group of BKO members, here **Gill Godbold** (W60) sprints to the final control of her Short Green course.

scores, sadly 16 came from the Men and only four from the Women, not our usual mix at all.

The Captain's prizes went to:

- Heroes: **Nicky Godbold** (W21) and **Jess Miller** (W18-) for succeeding on courses beyond their experience, and each gaining counting scores.
- Exceeding expectations: **Adam Methven/Andrew Graham/Richard Rae/Eddie Whittle/Alex Moore/Rich Golding**. I also congratulate **Mark Saunders/Simon Turton/John Briggs/Sue Parker/Jane Courtier** on their very good performances.

Next year it is our turn to host the event, at Cold Ash, so we should get a good turnout of members. But to improve further, we need to fill every class. I hope some of our juniors may develop by then to step up to W/18- as there are good scores available in those classes, and this would reduce the number of senior scores we need to count.

Thanks to everyone for turning out for the club, and congratulations on a great team effort. Everyone enjoyed our day out with the club. We were definitely 'in the mix', showing a strong image of BKO. To be leading the competition for an hour in the middle was a rare experience!

Martin. - Club Captain.

This was the scoring at one point during the event with BKO leading the field, probably because we had been able to include a good number of juniors who finished relatively early in the day.

Compass Sport Cup	
<small>Participating Clubs: BKO, SLOW, SN, SO, SOC, TVOC, WIM</small>	
BKO	1890
SOC	1791
SO	1334
SN	870
TVOC	839
SLOW	769
WIM	463



Two BKO ladies finishing together. **Andrea Strakova** (left) (W21) was competing on the Blue Women course whilst **Fiona Clough** (W50) was on the Green Women course.



Simon Turton (M50) on the Blue Men course.

John Methven (M45) on the Short Brown course.



Know your sport: Post-race analysis

So you have finished your course, downloaded and got your overall time and a list of the time to each control. Perhaps you feel that you did okay. You wander across to the display of the course results or check the results later at home on the internet - and perhaps you feel disappointed that you were not higher up the results. So what can you do to assess your performance? Here are some suggestions.

Analysis at the event

The first thing that you can do is to talk to others and find out their opinion of the area, the map and the location of the controls. As every area is different and as planners have their individual opinions on the best location for controls, it can be illuminating to hear from others. Was a control easy (perhaps visible from a distance) when approached from one direction but less obvious when coming from an alternative route? Did others find a control marker in a pit set so low that it was only by luck that people found it? Or was the map not quite right at a critical track junction? These comments can help you put your own opinion into the correct context. Perhaps it was not so much your own error but a general problem with a particular control.

Analysis at home

Route choice analysis

The decisions you made when under pressure and running through the terrain may have seemed correct at the time but, in retrospect, better routes may become clear. Take time to study the map. Most people will draw their route on the map (if they know where they went!) and then look for better options. Would a more direct route through the wood have been quicker? Or could you have gone around a hill rather than over? For urban events, it can be particularly difficult to identify all the route choices when competing and new options will become apparent when spending time checking again when back at home. Of course the objective is for this analysis to make you more aware of the things to consider when out at the next event.

Rather than just doing this yourself, the website '**Routegadget**' greatly enhances your ability to assess alternative routes and is a great additional tool. The organisers can upload the map and the results (with the split times) to Routegadget and then competitors can find their own result and plot their route onto the map. When complete, the route is saved and then can be seen by anyone who looks at the event site. It also uses competitors split times to enable you to watch how people have gone around the course.

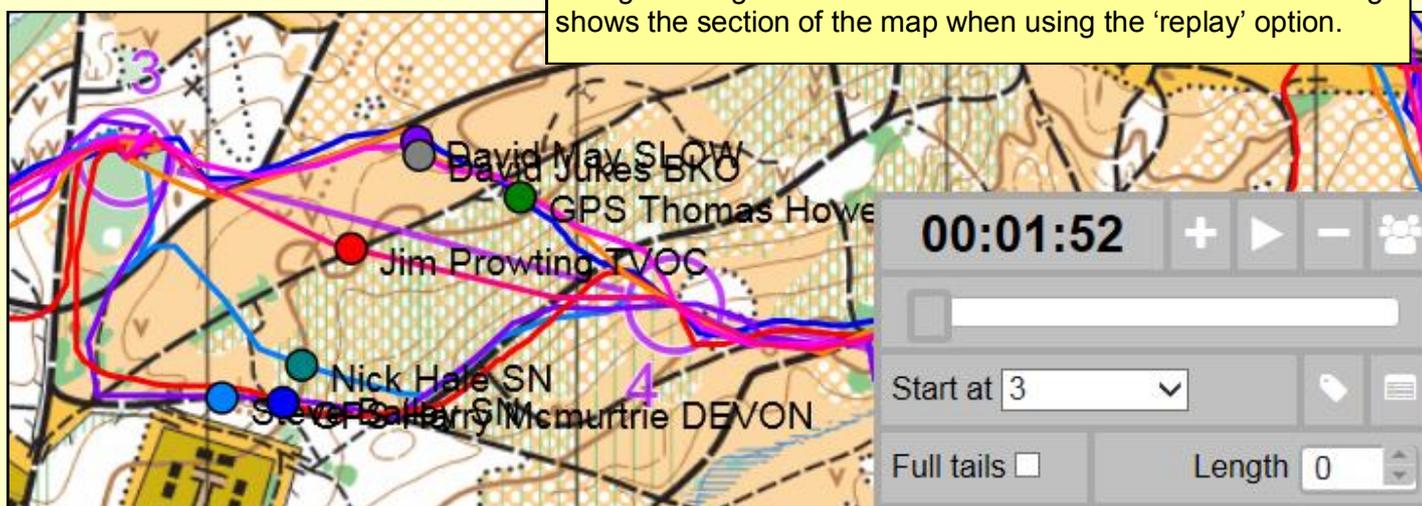
An extra 'replay' control panel becomes available when this is selected for some competitors as shown in this example...

To access this site, go to:
<http://www.routegadget.co.uk/>

Example: Concorde Chase 2016

Barossa - Blue course: controls 3-4

Here it can be seen that there were options of going to the north (the routes have obscured a minor path which made this an attractive option), going direct as chosen by Jim Prowting or taking the longer route round the tracks to the south. This image shows the section of the map when using the 'replay' option.

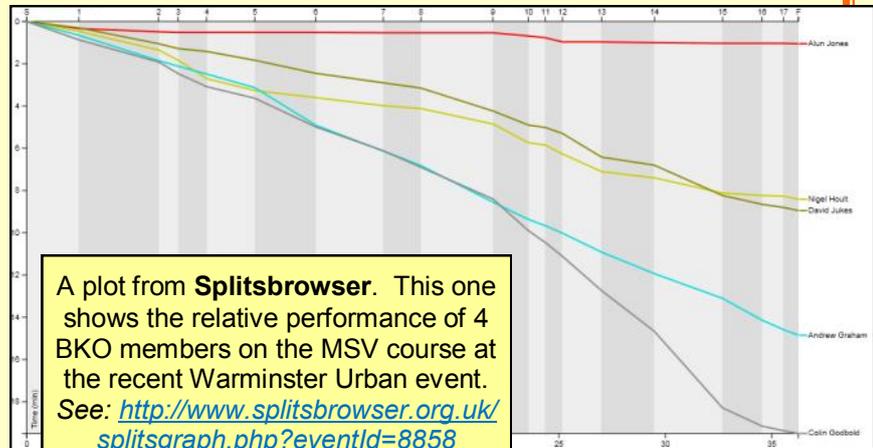


Split time analysis

As a competitors time is recorded at each control point, the organiser has available everyone's split times. This is also usually published which enables you to compare your own time for each leg with every other competitor. An analysis of your splits in comparison to those of other competitors will give you a much better idea of your performance.

You do not need to do this manually as, once again, there are tools available on the internet. The event organisers usually provide a link to these sites alongside the on-line results, but they can sometimes be accessed directly at the URLs shown below. The main ones are:

Splitsbrowser: Shows in graphical form how much time you were behind the fastest person on each leg. The graph shows you gradually slipping further behind the best split, dropping down the page as time plots from left to right. A 'glidepath' plot shows you were orienteering consistently, just not as fast as others (try speeding up, perhaps?). A 'staircase' plot shows you were fast, but prone to big errors (try slowing down a bit?). See: <http://www.splitsbrowser.org.uk/>



EMIT splits: These are numerical totals of all split times and positions, plus total race time and position at each control, plus an indication of time lost on individual legs. Unfortunately, they are not laid out very clearly, and can be rather turgid to work through. See: <http://www.emit-uk.com/>

WinSplits: Only used with SI events, gives excellent layout of split times and positions throughout the race. Also highlights your time in pink on any leg where you lost significant time ("a pinkie"). If you completed the course with no 'pinkies' then you've run well! Easy to see how race positions change throughout the race. Sometimes you can be surprised with a good leg to gain a top 3 split, highlighted separately. Look for and take encouragement from sections of the race where you had good splits in succession. This is the elusive 'flow' round a course that we all seek. See: <http://obasen.orientering.se/winsplits/online/en/>

Using GPS data

As technology has advanced so it has become possible to obtain data on your precise position at all times during an event. By carrying a GPS data logger, you can obtain much more precise information about how you have travelled between controls and not just the total time. You can assess much more accurately how much slower you travel through a 'slow run' area in comparison to a runnable forest, how long did you stop at a path junction as you decided which route to take or what proportion of your lost time was in the final hunt for the control itself.

You can find out exactly where you've covered the ground.

Sometimes we finish (or even retire) without understanding where we went wrong. GPS data never lies, but can be hard to believe! Major mistakes frequently start with one small initial error that causes a mis-read, which then causes another as we try to make the ground fit the map. GPS data helps us understand the initial error, and we can then seek to avoid that next time.

You can see inefficiencies in your routing, particularly on contoured areas. What seemed like a good line can turn out to be more distance or climb than you thought. When used on RouteGadget alongside GPS routes of your competitors, particularly good ones, you can quickly see how non-optimal your routes may have been by comparison. If so, consider revising your routing strategies.

Finally, GPS data gives a very clear indication of the accuracy of your compass technique. If you are not running close to your set bearing regularly, there may be weaknesses in your technique, so try to sort those out at training sessions. Alternatively, blame your tools and buy a new compass!

To help understand this technique better, Martin Wilson has provided a short example of GPS usage and review which can be found on page 19.

Important Note:

Although you are permitted to carry a GPS enabled device with you during an event, the rules of orienteering state:

11.5 The use of any artificial navigational aid other than a compass is not permitted.

11.6 Competitors are permitted to only use a GPS device to record data for use in post-race analysis.

Dragon Racing at Wokingham Waterside Centre 4th September 2016

Alain Wilkes

Many of you will be aware from a previous article that I am involved with a charity working with younger people with dementia (YPWD).

As well as direct work with YPWD and carers the charity also has a significant fund raising programme.

One venture which I thought might be of particular interest to BKO members is a dragon race – something I personally have always fancied but never known how to get involved.

Besides the races themselves (all entrants are guaranteed at least three races) there will be a full day of attractions and activities on shore to suit all the family. The day lasts from 10:00am to 16:00.

No experience is necessary and all equipment will be provided. Teams are made up of up to ten paddlers – and a drummer. Cost of entry per team is £100 and there will be prizes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd team. Plus additional prizes for the best fancy dressed team.

Proceeds will be split equally between the YPWD charity and the Waterside Centre, which is also a charity.

More details can be found on the YPWD website – www.ypwd.info.

Route Choice at Speed

See inside front cover before reading this suggested route.

Martin suggests the following: Go SE from 15 to paved path then E to small path heading S then N under the bridge to 16. Retrace steps back up onto bridge, head E across it, then S on path on E side down to 17. Then retrace steps back N up onto main path E then S round building on to 18. Then on to 19 and the finish. Phew!



Regional AGM:

South Central Orienteering Association

Thursday 2nd June - 7.30pm

This annual event is held in Newbury each year and all members are welcome to attend to see what SCOA has been doing over the last 12 months. There is also the opportunity to get involved in the work of the region with the election of the SCOA Committee - a key part of the overall structure of orienteering in the UK. This year the post of Treasurer is falling vacant but new people will always be welcomed to join and support the regional committee in other roles. For more information, contact the regional Secretary, Fiona Clough: ladybiker729@aol.com

Newsletter Distribution:

Our thanks to those who have indicated that they will be happy to only have the newsletter as a pdf file sent by e-mail as this does save the club money. If you are willing to only receive the newsletter by e-mail as a pdf file, please let me know and I will add your name to the list.

newsletter@bko.org.uk

Berkshire Orienteers is on Facebook !



Your 2016-2017 Committee

Chairman:

**** Vacant ****

Secretary:

Derick Mercer

secretary@bko.org.uk

Fixtures Secretary:

Fiona Clough

fixtures@bko.org.uk

Treasurer:

Peter Entwistle

treasurer@bko.org.uk

Development Officer:

Ken Ricketts

Membership Secretary: Ian Hudson

membership@bko.org.uk

4 Committee Members and 2 co-options :

Brian Burt, Andy Parry, David Jukes (newsletter@bko.org.uk), Brian Sewell, Mark Foxwell and Andrew Graham

Event Summary

This listing shows a selection of forthcoming events — most of the local events and some of the more important ones from further afield. For a full listing, look at the British Orienteering web site.

Date	Name	Level	Club	Venue	Town
Sun 22 May	BKO Level C and SCOA league event	Level C	BKO	Bloom Wood	High Wycombe
Mon 30 May	Tamar Triple Day 3	Level C	DEVON	Mount Edgecombe	Saltash
Sat 4 June	Poole Town Race	Level C	WSX	Poole Town Centre	Poole
Sun 5 June	TVOC Regional Event & SCOA League	Level C	TVOC	Kings Wood	High Wycombe
Sat 11 June	British Sprint Championships (UKOL)	Level A	SEOA	Olympic Park	London
Sun 12 June	British Middle Championships (UKOL)	Level A	SEOA	Leith Hill	Dorking
Sat 18 June	'Come and try Orienteering' / Summer event	Level D	BKO	Wildridings	Bracknell
Sun 26 June	Harvester Relays	Level B	NGOC	Cleeve Hill	Cheltenham
Sat 2 July	WIM SEOUL Urban Event	Level C	WIM	Fordingbridge	Ringwood
Sat 9 July	BKO Summer Event	Level D	BKO	Lower Earley (West)	Reading
Sat 16 July	SN Urban Event	Level C	SN	Goldsworth Park	Woking
Sun 24 July	Croeso 2016 Day 1	Level B	WOA	Kenfig Burrows	South Wales
Mon 25 July	Croeso 2016 Day 2	Level B	WOA	Kenfig Burrows	South Wales
Tues 26 July	Croeso 2016 Day 3	Level B	WOA	Margam Forest North	South Wales
Thurs 28 July	Croeso 2016 Day 4	Level B	WOA	Mynydd Llangynidr <i>(originally Pen Rhiw Wen)</i>	South Wales
Fri 29 July	Croeso 2016 Day 5	Level B	WOA	Craig Fawr, Margam Park	South Wales

Youngsters on right track

BRACKNELL pupils became the first to take on a new orienteering track in the grounds of South Hill Park last week.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 from St Michael's Easthampstead CE Primary and Binfield CE Primary took on the new course on its launch day with around 60 pupils navigating their way around the course.

Berkshire Orienteers were on hand to help the youngsters with map reading while Bracknell Forest mayor Cllr Dee Hamilton and Bracknell Town deputy mayor Ash Merry cut the ribbon to officially open the course.

Kath Moss, South Hill Park manager, said: "This is a fantastic addition to the facilities available for the public at South Hill Park and we are delighted to be able to offer this as another free resource for the community to be able to engage with the great outdoors."

Staff from GE Power also attended the launch after volunteering to help install the course.

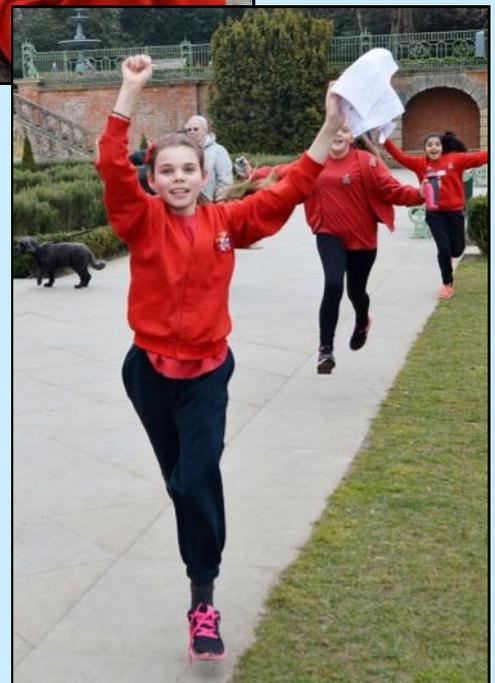
The maps needed for visitors of all ages to do the course will be available at South Hill Park initially in paper form at reception and will soon be available to download from the council's website alongside maps for courses at Lily Hill Park, Pope's Meadow and Ambarrow Court.

For more information about South Hill Park visit bracknell-forest.gov.uk/southhillpark.

St Michael's Easthampstead C of E Primary School pupils get advice from Denise Harper.



Binfield C of E Primary School pupils enjoying the event.



The Launch of the New South Hill Park Permanent Orienteering Course.

Denise Harper

The official opening of the permanent course at South Hill Park was held with great success during March. However, it came very close to being cancelled, and was 'rescued' at almost the last minute...

During the summer, Kath Moss from SHP contacted me to kick start the development of a POC in the park. I met up with her, we agreed the posts' locations, she managed to find a volunteer team for the installation and in January I went back to the park to produce the POC map. Kath was keen to have an official launch involving local schools, so we decided on the format, I produced the invite letters, then left it all in Kath's capable hands whilst I went off to South America.

So it was with some anxiety, that just before I returned, Kath emailed me to say that none of the invited schools had taken up the offer, so she had a launch arranged, with local dignitaries, the volunteers, the press all lined up to come ...but no children and the very real possibility that we would have to cancel. Quick action was needed, and fortunately an urgent email to one of my Bracknell colleagues to immediately email all Bracknell schools elicited positive responses from Binfield Primary School, and St Michael's Easthampstead School within 24 hours, and so the event was saved.

The launch itself went off very well. The dignitaries arrived, the press got their photos, the 60 children had a wonderful time exploring, running up and down the hill, and just generally being kids enjoying being outside letting off steam – the orienteering was almost an excuse to do just that. However, as a number of BKO members had kindly volunteered to come along and help, we did ensure that all the children received some help and orienteering instruction before they set out in pairs to find the posts and write down the answers.

Borough Mayor Cllr Dee Hamilton officially opens the new orienteering course



The POC is now available for use, with posts on both the north and south side of the park. Maps are available from South Hill Park reception, and should soon be available to download from the Bracknell Forest website – <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/orienteering>

Know Your Club Members — Eric Harper

Eric and Denise Harper have been members of the club for many years. Denise was featured in the November 2015 issue of the Newsletter. Here we find out more about Eric:

Age/Class :

- First year M65

Hometown :

- I was born in Singapore but have lived in England since I was 4 – London, Brighton, Newcastle and for the last 33 years, Caversham.

How did you start orienteering?

- I had played Rugby for many years until I was forced to give up after a serious knee injury in my mid 20s. I spent about 10 years doing not a lot and then Denise, who had started orienteering a couple of months earlier, took me to an event at Christmas Common in 1988. I took a long time to do a Red course. We were both hooked and pretty soon were dragging 2 small children all around the UK and abroad. For nearly 10 years all our holidays were based around Orienteering.

Clubs:

- ROC which then turned into BKO

Best achievement/success?

- The highlight has been M50S Champ at the British Nights (1st of 3 competitors). I managed to be Club Champion a few years ago as a result of having a very rare bout of fitness combining with a low ranking score through not having done many events and having a good run on an area I knew very well.

Most enjoyed event?

- Difficult question. I certainly enjoyed a lot of the Orienteering in the early days. Recently not so much, due to frustration because of bad legs and deteriorating eyesight. My most enjoyable event recently was an MTBO Sprint at Fontainbleau in France when I came back beaming because it had been so much fun.

Worst event/most embarrassing orienteering moment/biggest goof?

- Rather too many. 180 degree error ending up on the beach at Pembrey. Running off the map in Kerry in the Shamrock 'O' Ringen. I crested a rise to be confronted by a flock of sheep who all turned to look at me. I was obviously the first person they had seen for a long time. Discovering that it is not a good idea to put a spare battery in the map bag at a night event. I couldn't understand why my bearings weren't getting me to the right place – it took me until half way around my second event to realise.

International experience:

- Have Orienteered in France, Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal, Ireland and the USA

Biggest cheat:

- In the days when we had split starts I went second. At one event Denise got back early so I got my start changed - about 15 mins early. This was pre-internet, electronic punching etc. I had a reasonable run, about 20 mins down on the winner which was normal when I ran 40L. When the results came out a week or so later my early start wasn't taken into account and I was 4th, I think only a few minutes down. I never said anything.



Eric can be seen here competing at our Ashenbury Park event in July 2015

What have you put back into the sport:

- Done a lot of planning – the pinnacle of which was JK 2013 at Cold Ash - controlling and organising. I was club fixtures secretary and also SCOA fixtures secretary for a few years in the 90s. Denise thought it would be a good idea as I would find out in advance where events were going to be and so she could start planning holidays. I had 2 stints at being Club Chairman – 8 years in all. I have done a bit of mapping, mainly urban – Great Hollands, Wildridings, Sandhurst and Yateley Common. I enjoy doing the cartography more than the ground survey. Recently spend quite a bit of time helping Denise with the schools Orienteering events.

Other activities/interests:

- I have taken up cycling, mainly mountain biking, and enjoy cycling in the woods north of Reading. We have been abroad to several MTBO events. A few years ago I did a part-time MA in Medieval History which as I hadn't written an essay since I was about 15 was a challenge but really enjoyable.

Employment?

- I started off in the Steel plant at Consett in Co. Durham. After that shut I went into Software development and worked in that for over 25 years until redundancy since when I have been retired.

What training do you do?

- No training other than the cycling. I haven't done a great deal of Orienteering in recent years. I enjoy the mid-week army events but we haven't been going to many weekend events though I have been told we are going to the British Champs and Croeso which should be interesting as I can't imagine my body being able to cope with 5 days of O. Denise is getting keen again now she has had her knee replacements. We will also go to the World Masters MTBO in Lithuania so I need to do some cycle training for that.

What is the best thing about orienteering?

- Being in the woods. I really enjoy planning and to a slightly lesser extent, controlling, being able to spend time wandering through the woods.

What is the worst thing about orienteering?

- I am not a great fan of urban Orienteering. It can be good fun but far too often it is spoilt by mapping issues and planners trying to trick the competitors and then complaining because people went Out of Bounds. My pet hate is where there is an uncrossable boundary on the map but nothing significant to mark it on the ground - the British Sprints final at Aldershot last year was a prime example. There was very small uncrossable black line mapped between a building and a hedge but on the ground there was a gap about 1m. They put a piece of tape to mark the uncrossable boundary but it wasn't there for a lot of the race and I, and a lot of people went through the gap – the controller should never have allowed it to happen.

Orienteering ambition?

- No real ambitions anymore. I had thought that moving up an age class (to M65) might have inspired me but I managed to injure myself at the first event of the New Year so that enthusiasm didn't last long.

What have you done that no one else is likely to/ will have done?

- I took part in the very first Great North Run in 1981 and that was the first, and will be the last, time I have ever done a half marathon.



Here is **Eric** approaching the finish at the 2015 British Championships in the Forest of Dean
(Photo: Claro Orienteer)

British Orienteering Championship - Brown Clee Hill

Mark Saunders, a relative newcomer to the sport, reflects on his experience of his first BOC/BRC weekend

Individual Day - Saturday

I had a fairly early start on the M35L course, well before the serious competition started, and was one of the first off from the south start where the long races began. The assembly, starts and finishes were high up on the col between the two hills that make up Brown Clee and even the walk up from the carpark was a decent warm up. I was unusually the only one in the start pens and somehow I didn't move forward in the boxes at the right time and ended up missing my start time by about 30 seconds. The first 4 controls were in a wooded area and for once I made a fairly good job of the first control. However, on the way to the second a squall of hail started and it was almost like dusk under the thick tree canopy and I wasted a load of time running in circles not understanding the map.

On the way to #5 we left the thick trees and started a series of controls around the top of the north hill that were in a combination of open moorland, pockets of trees and small marshes, all mixed in with the contours created by historic mining. This area was far more complex than anything I had run before and, when combined with the 1:15,000 scale map, it caused me some problems. I made steady progress in this section before the course dropped down again into the woods, where I lost a little time on close into a couple of controls.

Heading back up into the open area I struggled to find a few controls in pits on the open moorland and wandered about for 5 minutes at #17. Then it was into the arena for a couple of spectator controls and a mention on the tannoy. The course had a final sting in the tail with 3 controls on a small hill that was pockmarked with pits, made really difficult by increasing tiredness, and then the final run in.

Relay - Sunday

I was the final runner in **BKOs**mic team with Alex Moore and John Methven taking on the first two legs. Running in the Men's Premier Class it was always going to be difficult for us to keep up with the quickest teams. I ended up starting from a mini-mass start before John had finished and I didn't have much company on my run.

The first half of the course was through the parkland of the lower part of the estate, but I still managed to make a couple of frustrating mistakes. The middle section was open moorland, which I ran fairly well. However, the last section took us into a large valley with a number of smaller stream re-entrants along the sides. Not something you often see in the Berkshire woods and I spent quite a bit of time trying to work out which of the smaller streams I was standing by. Finally, a couple of steep uphill legs into the finish and the run into the arena. Thanks to everyone from the club who stayed on to see me finish – it was great to be cheered home – and to Martin for organising the teams.

Final thoughts

On the individual day I finished mid-pack in a small class and we were the last team home in the relay, so not a great set of results. However, it was my first time running in an area this complex and in a major race. So plenty of mistakes, but also so much learnt for next time around.



QuickRoute

In the 'Know Your Sport' section, guidance was given on using GPS. Here Martin Wilson explains how to use another internet tool describing how it works and what he sees as its main attractions ...

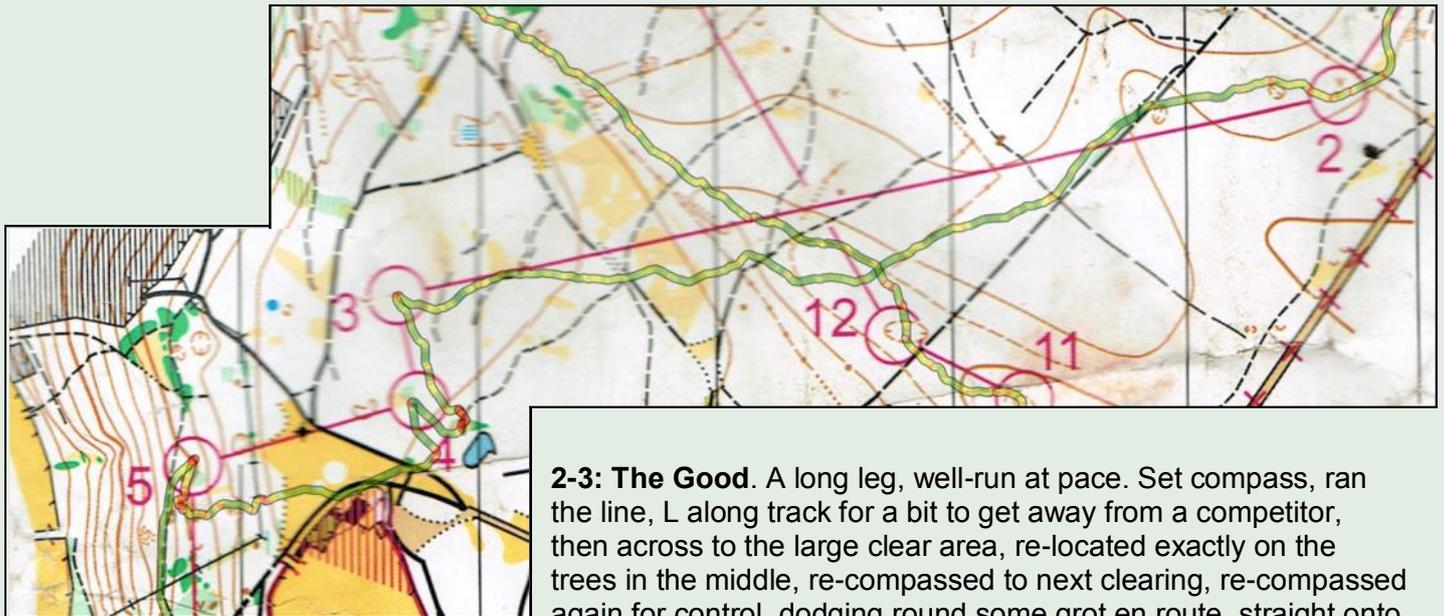
QuickRoute is a freeware software product which enables runners to plot their GPS course on event maps. I have begun using it to review my own routes, other members might like to try it.

To use it, first scan your event map into your computer as a jpeg file. Then run QR and create a new project using the scanned file as background. Connect your GPS watch via a USB port, and QR loads your route data onto the map as a track. Now adjust your track to match the controls. QR makes this very easy. As you move the cursor along the track, it displays your elapsed time at that point. Thus if you reached control 6 after 14m 56s, keep moving the cursor until it shows that time, click to set a marker on the route, and drag the marker onto control 6. Repeat this at other controls as necessary, and your route quickly assumes its real shape....and your mistakes become alarmingly clear!

Your track also shows relative speed as green, amber or red, and other speed/climb data that I've not yet found a use for. But its immediacy and ease of use are the prime benefits. The product has some real advantages:

- You can set it up as soon as you get home (no waiting for RouteGadget to appear)
- You can review it in private, keeping your own mistakes secret (!)
- You can save the route as a jpeg and send it to others for comment or comparison
- You can use it with any map any time, e.g. on a training run in terrain.

To illustrate **QuickRoute**, I'm showing part of my course at Ashridge recently. Here's the commentary:



2-3: The Good. A long leg, well-run at pace. Set compass, ran the line, L along track for a bit to get away from a competitor, then across to the large clear area, re-located exactly on the trees in the middle, re-compassed to next clearing, re-compassed again for control, dodging round some grot en route, straight onto control, fastest class split by a full minute. Note the track shows

mostly green pace. Now read on...

3-4: The Bad. Used rough compass (needle aligned to map north only, no bezel set) assumed I could track straight for short leg. Nothing turned up, though, till a track much larger and longer than mapped. Confused, eventually relocated on large pond (note large red blob at this point!). Ran back in anger to control, punched and then....

4-5: The Ugly. Exited 4 in completely the wrong direction, back where I'd been, internal compass gone haywire somehow. Gradually came round on correct course, but failed to find good AP (attack point) onto 5, went too far L, more time lost. Overall, lost 2 minutes 3-5 all due to one slight mis-direction on compass bearing. Be warned...this could happen to you, keep checking your bearing!

I recommend **QuickRoute**. Unfortunately, the only thing it doesn't do is tell you why you've made your mistakes. Only you can work those out...



View from the start

**Langley Park Saturday Event
23rd April 2016**



**Mark Saunders (left)
with Sue Parker**



Mark Foxwell



Rich Golding