

S R O C



The Red Rose Orienteering Club BOF Club of the Year 2008 Newsletter July/August 2015



Guest Editor : Martyn Roome

Editorial

Events dear boy.....

Harold MacMillan was once asked by a journalist what is was that was most likely to blow a government (Club) off course. He is alleged to have replied, "Events dear boy, events". Well, events are what we have all been busy with, both organising and planning and competing in. And events are what the majority of this Newsletter is about, which I think is the way it should be. Fortunately, we have not been blown off course as a club, so enjoy the read. And if you do find this Newsletter worthwhile, please do write something for Dick for the next one! My sincere thanks to all the contributors to this edition, including to Richard Tiley for his thought provoking article on WOC and Karen Clark for use of her photos.



JUNIOR WORLD ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2015 - RAULAND, NORWAY

BY Helen Ockenden

This year I was selected to represent Great Britain at the Junior World Orienteering Championships for the first time. JWOC was held in Rauland in the Norwegian mountains from the 5th to the 10th of July in very technically demanding terrain.



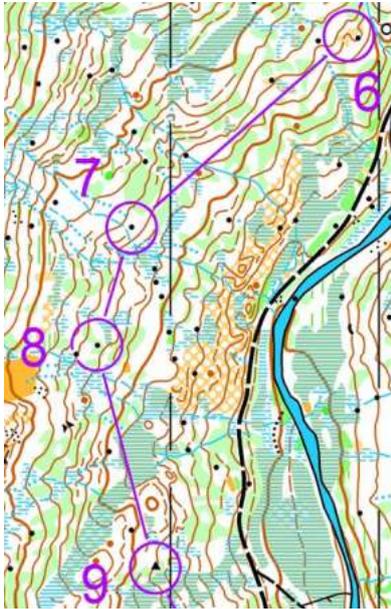
The terrain in Rauland



The GB team

The whole team flew out to Norway a few days before the competition began to do some orienteering training on the model areas. These areas were quite similar to the competitions areas, and this helped us to get used to the way things are mapped in Norway. We also found that open

marshes were good features to use as they were very obvious, which is quite different to north-west England.



An extract from the middle qualifier map

The first race of the week was the sprint, which I was not running in. This was because most members of the team were only selected to run for two of the three individual disciplines. However, I enjoyed watching the rest of the team compete, and finish with some excellent results.

My first race was the qualification race for the middle distance.

The course was almost entirely slope orienteering, with lots of legs diagonally across vague slopes. This required very accurate use of compass, and I made quite a few mistakes early on in the course, eventually finishing in 30th place in my heat and qualifying for the B final. (There are 3 heats and finishers 1-20 in each heat go through to the A final, 21-40 go through to the B final and the rest to the C final).



On the run in at the middle final

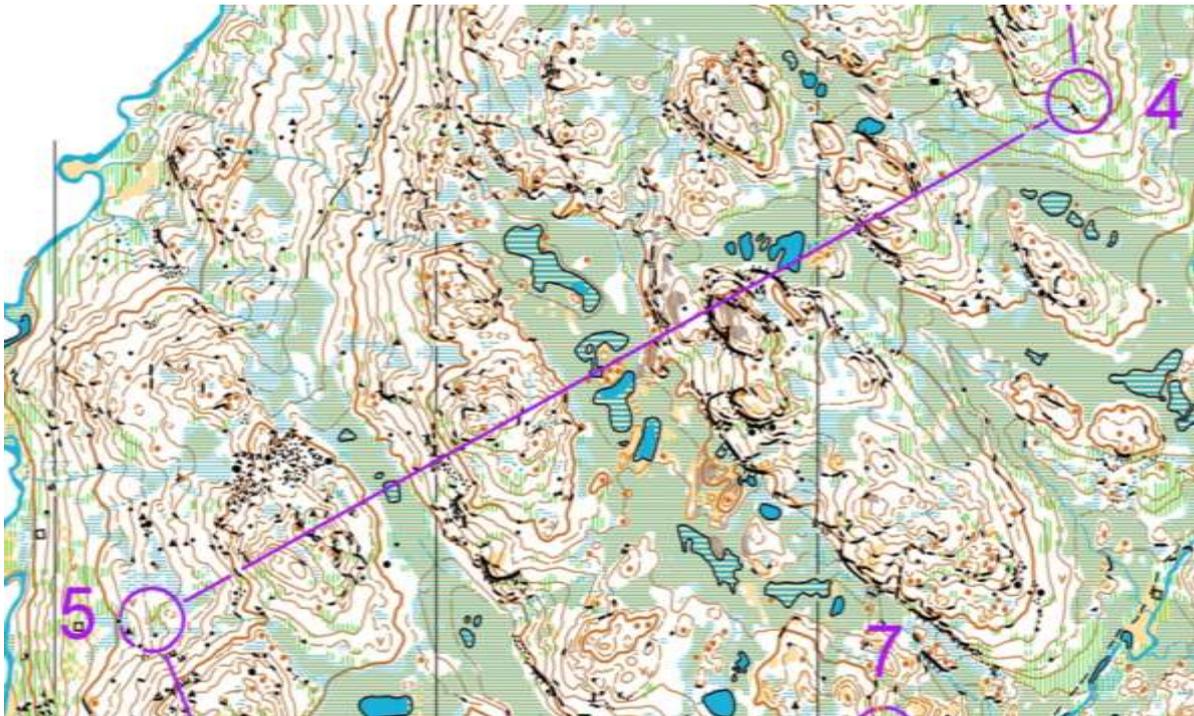
The middle distance finals were the next day. The start list is in reverse order of the results from the qualifier, so I had a start time in the middle of B final. I found the course a lot more enjoyable, although it was still quite technical, and I finished in 8th place. I knew that the terrain for the long distance was similar to some areas of the middle final area, so having a good run built up my confidence for the long distance race.



The view of the Lake from the huts

Between the middle finals and the long distance we had a day off from racing, and some of the team went to the long distance model area mainly to familiarise ourselves with the 1:15,000 map scale used in the long distance races. In the afternoon, we also went for a short swim in the lake near where we were staying.

Because there are no qualifiers for the long distance race at JWOC, the start window for the long distance runs from 9am to 2:30pm. I had an early start at 9:31, which meant that after I had finished I got to enjoy watching the rest of the team finish as well. Some of the runners were wearing GPS tracking, and there were cameras out in the terrain, so there was a lot to watch on the big screen in the arena. There was lots of route choice on the course, but it was also very physical as there was quite a lot of climb and the open marshes were quite energy sapping. I had a fairly clean run, although I made a bad route choice when I caught up some runners who had started ahead of me, and I made a few errors in the control circle.



How would you do this leg?

My position at the end of the day was 54th, and I was the first British girl. The top result of the day was Aidan Smith finishing in 4th position on the men's course, which was the best ever GB result on the JWOC long.

The final event of the week was the relay, which was held in the same arena as the long distance. The boys relay started first at 9am and the girls relay started later at 10:20am. We were held in quarantine before the start, so we couldn't speak to any members of the team who had already run and we couldn't see the big screen where they were showing the GPS tracking. Fortunately, we could still see when our runners were coming in. I was on second leg for the second team, and we came back quite far behind after the first leg. I had a clean run apart from one control, where I made a massive error, but I still brought the team up a few places. Fiona had a good run on 3rd leg and we finished in 32nd.



Ready for the party

Day 2 started in Rauland at the back of a supermarket on a cold and rainy day and by the end I was feeling distinctly hyperthermic. Although there was the comfort of a few line features and a bit of track running there were some quite technical legs and the usual realisation that as nearly all of the competitors were Scandinavian the slightest error would be punished by being plunged a long way down the results table.



Brian, Richard, Jill and Martyn on top of a small mountain

Day 3 was also from Rauland but there were very few paths and one of the few that I had to cross I failed to notice because it was so feint on the ground. These two days were the days of the JWOC Middle Distance Qualifier and Final also from Rauland. They used different parts of the forest but shared the same finish arena.

On the rest day for both competitions we visited the Vermork hydro-electric power station which is not far away. Fortunately we got there before the other 2000 competitors arrived. When built at the start of the C20th it was the largest power station in the world. It has been de-commissioned and is a museum. The water powers another installation. The HE power was used to establish a chemical industry in the valley. It was in the hydrogen plant in front of the power station that heavy water was being produced prior to and during WW2. It was feared that the Nazis might be developing the atomic bomb and would be using heavy water from this plant and it became the target of raids by Norwegian commandos and the USAAF. The story of these and the sinking of a ferry with a consignment of heavy water on it is told in the museum and was the subject of various films and documentaries such as the Heroes of Telemark.

Days 4 and 5 were on the area around the ski resort we were staying in and the JWOC Long and Relay races were held on these days. These had the most technical terrain and I had my eye in by now. However, it did not stop me from running to no.2 before no.1 on Day 4 and losing 5 minutes.

We decided to split the work load between us largely by subject area, with Tony taking on Task Procedure and me taking on Helper Organisation. We made sure we got top notch Team and Assistant Team Leaders and had 2 two way briefings with them before the event. I thought originally that we might need about 75 helpers. How wrong I was! In the end we needed about 130 to ensure that almost everyone was able to get a run.

One subject that caused a fair amount of discussion was the run in. We thought long and hard about putting safety barriers alongside the artificial pond that bordered one side. However, we considered that by doing this competitors were more likely to injure themselves by getting their legs entangled in the bars of the barriers. And the pond was very shallow! The enthusiasm of some runners (or should I say misjudgement) exceed our expectations and I think it was 4 or 5 who landed up in the pond, being unable to negotiate the 90 degree bend. The crowd loved it!

So how did it go on the day? Well, the weather could have been better (but believe me it could have been much worse!) It started off dry, mizzled around mid event and then cleared up. We collected equipment in glorious sunshine! We could have done with bigger, higher signs to the start (rectified once we realised). As ever at Easter, the M6 was horrendous, so having punching starts for all but the elites was exactly the right thing to do. We kept the starts open for half an hour longer to make sure everyone got off.



Run-in action, just before the pond!

David and Miriams' courses came in for much praise, and produced some wonderful racing. With WOC in Scotland this year there was a large and quality field from overseas. I was lucky enough to be at the finish when Matthias Kyburz (Switzerland) came in to confound the prediction of the excellent commentators by dead heating with Scott Fraser in M21E. Cat Taylor grabbed an excellent 2nd place in W21E behind Denmark's Emma Klingenberg.

issues and drive around to the Quarantine area and Pre-Start. Dick and I had agreed that he would lead the Start team and I would lead Pre-Start. Kit Drop and Pre-Start gazebos (brought by Dick) have been erected and I am introduced to Becca & Issie who will be running Quarantine every day. Dick gives me a briefing for the day. 1) This is Pre-Start location. 2) Give the athletes their GPS trackers & Timers & check their SI Air Cards. 3) There will be some problems and you will have to sort them out. Brilliant – that covers everything! My immediate problem is that there doesn't appear to be any toilets apart from the couple in Forres Academy and we are expecting 120 men plus 105 women athletes plus pre-runners for each course plus an additional 40 or 50 coaches and the helpers. Talk to Becca & Issie who assure me the toilets are on the way . . .

The SI Team arrive led by Ted Finch and the GPS & Timer processes are explained. Two of our helpers haven't arrived so Pre-Start is two people down. Instead of just supervising looks like I will be helping stuff GPS trackers down ladies vests. 3 Toilets eventually arrive shortly after the first teams start arriving into quarantine. I saunter across to have a pee and discover there is no loo paper. Check the other two and also no loo paper. Back to quarantine where Becca has organised someone to fetch some. Back to Pre-Start to keep discussing process with other members of the team. See a car pull up in front of quarantine and someone get out with a four pack of loo roll – and proceed to distribute amongst the loos. Can't quite believe what I've seen as I think we are expecting 275 nervous people to be using these but check and there is only one loo roll in each of two of them and two rolls in the other.

Consider what Daniel Hubman might say, being a late starter, if he is asked to use his hand. Walk through the 700m from Pre-Start to Start and on the way pass a mini-market and buy another 12 rolls. At the Start people are using the medical centre toilets but this shuts at 6pm and the starts run from 6pm to 7:45pm. I'm not sure what the helpers did but I know some of the men were peeing in the bushes at -4.

Back at Pre-Start we sort out the Pre-runners and then at 6pm start processing 3 women every minute. Stuff a gps tracker into the vest, attach a timing watch to one arm, check the SI Card has good battery life, turn it on, check it works in air mode, then clear and check. There is nobody spare to deal with problems so Margaret, Suzanne from Poland and myself work feverishly for 40 minutes. 20minutes respite and then another frantic 40 minutes of the same routine with the men. High fives once everyone has been processed. Dismantle the two gazebos, load tables back into Forres Academy, collect all signage, tape and assorted bits and load into the back of my car. Drive around to Start and help with clear-up there. By 8:45pm we have finished and just make the chippy before 9pm to get a cone of chips my hot food for the day. Then drive to Elgin for the Premier Inn. Crash by 10pm.

Chapter 3 – Sprint Relay

Very sleepless night from all the adrenalin but after breakfast drive to Nairn for 10am to start setting up the Sprint Relay start. Each team needs a changeover board which display Team No & Country Code back and front, and has three maps covered by opaque paper plus a Reserve Maps sign and another three maps covered by opaque paper. Just the 50 staples to staple gun 11 bits of paper plus 6 sticky labels to attach (Leg1/2/3) which is fine when you say it quickly but with 34 teams that is 1700 staples across the 34 boards.

Around 1:30pm and up to Team Board 19 when one of the IOF advisors walks across and tells us that the team numbers and countries don't match. Ukraine have had problem with visas and haven't arrived and are no longer Team 5. Much debate between IOF, Day Controller Chris and Jon from the SI Team. We are told to stop work. After a 30 minute delay it's decided that the Team 5 gaffle will become GBR (previously Team 6) and all country codes will shuffle down one map board. It's a good solution from our perspective with minimal staple gun change. We haven't long restarted when around 2pm a heavy rain squall arrives and we run to shelter in the SI Download tent. It shows no

sign of abating after 10 minutes so we move map boards and very wet gear into the Press tent to continue work.

By 4pm we have finished the map boards and I have very sore knees and callouses on my thumb from using the staple gun for 4 hours. I managed one cup of tea and half a sandwich for lunch. Athletes and Pre-Start helpers now arriving and move across to brief the team on athlete processing and transfers to change-over. The athlete goes through a similar process of GPS, timing chip, checks on the SI air card but instead of three a minute like yesterday we have to process a set of 34 in short order.

At 5:15 we call first leg runners into Pre-Start for processing. The Norwegian coach sidles over and explains it's not possible as the athletes are still warming up. Fair point but unless they start with all of the stuff the race isn't going to happen so after a brief discussion we agree to process the athletes and then release them back into quarantine. The Transfer team are told to make a new break in the quarantine barriers to exit the sets of leg runners from a different point – good job this has been carefully planned and not made up as we go along.

Once first leg have been kitted up and called to start at 5:45pm then we process second leg runners. Manage to finish two minutes before the Mass Start and stroll across to see them set off. Then back to process third and last leg runners – organised chaos in the tent. Finish and big hugs all around – wander over to watch the end of the race. Standing there when Soren Bobach walks up with Emma Klingenburg & Tue Lassen – “Are we ok to go back into the area to the last control and run down the finish?” Say I don't think it will be a problem and they vault a couple of barriers and meet Maja Alm to run in together.

Back to break everything down and tidy up and finish around 8pm. Drive to our accommodation for the week in Findhorn to meet up with Rachel and the other people we are staying with. Another restless night.

Chapter 4 – Sprint Final

Meet at 10am again to begin prep. Set up 4 gazebos at edge of Grant Park and two at edge of Forres Academy and distribute a large amount of tape in the 800m between the two. Manage to stop for an hour and go to a café for a meal – first hot food in 60 hours. Back to Pre-Start to meet SI Team and sort all of the GPS and timing kit. The 3 Portalooos are still at Forres Academy and now have a couple of loo rolls each but don't smell as though they have been emptied since Friday; still small mercies. And Becca from quarantine has come prepared with an additional 20 rolls – happy days.

The Pre-Running team arrive and we process the girl runners. Shortly afterwards when we are checking we have spare SI air cards discover they are missing. Go to check with Pre-Runner manager who has walked off with the case as it contains the mens Pre-Runner cards as well as the spares. Retrieve the case and we are good to go for the women's race.

It goes off without problem as does the men's. We clear up the Pre-Start and drive around to Grant Park and help clear there. Finished by 7:30pm and back to the house for more hot food – luxury.

Chapter 5 – Middle prepare

Don't have to start until midday in Conicavel so manage to take Rachel for a walk down to Findhorn. By now the usual process of setting out the gazebos and tying them off to trees and stakes. Slightly worrying to see no portalooos but we manage to sort everything in 5 hours. Able to chat to the residents and reassure them that they will be able to drive in and out.

Chapter 6 – Middle race

Arrive in Conicavel for 9am. The village hall is now open and we discover it has 3 loos which is a relief as there is still no sign of the Portalooos. Of course with only half a loo roll in each and around 200

athletes, coaches and volunteers it could get nasty. I have six spare rolls from the Sprint Qualifier and I approach one of the residents I met yesterday and blag another 4 pack.

Colin Matheson turns up and I say hi and enquire what role he is fulfilling. Assistant WOC Director is the response. Ask him if he would know the situation about the loos and he says he negotiated the contract with PortaCabin and he has been disappointed with the service so far. Ask him if he has thought about getting loos into Glen Affric and he assures me it has been taken care of.

Pre-Runners arrive and we issue GPS Trackers and SI Cards and they set off. Athletes begin to arrive in minibuses from Quarantine and I meet and greet and direct them to the Village Hall.

The coaches start asking a variety of questions and I try and make up some sensible answers. Just before first start at midday when we are checking all of the kit discover the spare SI Cards are missing – despatch a car to Darnaway arena to retrieve the SI Case from the Pre-Runner Managers . . . again. By 1pm the athletes are proving to be a nervous bunch and going through toilet paper at an astonishing rate. Sprint Final planner Tim Sands is helping and I ask him to drive to Darnaway to get some more loo rolls – instant promotion. Around 2.30pm a single portaloos arrives but its more trouble than it is worth to unload so I send it away.

Just before the end of the women's starts a nasty shower comes through absolutely soaking the last few including Minna Kauppi, Ida Bobach & Annika Billstam. Annika is clearly not fazed going on to run a great race and take the gold medal.

Check on the loo paper situation, have a chat to Derek Allison and decide that there is still some doubt as to whether we need more so his son Stewie is despatched by bike to collect some. There are no further dramas and the start runs smoothly through to 4pm.

Whilst the gazebos begin to be dismantled the key team of Dick & Ange, Rachel & myself, Derek & Stewie and Rob Browne make a start on the map boards for tomorrow's Relay in the village hall. Whilst it is similar to the Sprint Relay, each board needs men's maps (covered up) on one side and women's attached to the other. We work methodically through for three and a half hours and manage to finish in time to get back to our accommodation for 8pm for a bite to eat. Again I have sore knees and sore thumbs from kneeling with a staple gun for that amount of time.

Chapter 7 – Forest Relay

Meet back at Conicavel village hall for 8:30am to load the 36 Relay Boards into the back of 3 cars and drive them to the Arena in Darnaway. Spend an hour covering the men's side of the boards with black plastic (so the women's change over cannot see the men's maps) and help to attach to the barriers. Then drive around to the Walled Garden which will be quarantine.

Initially this was the only quarantine space but a few weeks before it was extended 800m into the arena. Decide to leave Pre-Start and GPS issue back near the walled garden as planned. Delighted to find that we have had 4 Portaloos delivered and they have paper.

Becca & Issie arrive and have a shock to find that there is no Marquee to protect the 200 athletes and coaches from the elements. Becca follows this up and discovers that the Quarantine marquee has never been ordered. Eventually a small tent is delivered.

The Pre-Runners Manager turns up wants to take away the case to issue the SI Cards in the arena. Ted Finch who is in charge of GPS & SI issue refuses to let him take it away and demands the Pre-Runners attend the Walled Garden and go through Pre-Start properly.

Athletes start to arrive and I try to persuade first leg women to remain within the walled garden segment so that we can manage the first mass start. Some clearly think we are being over officious but it is made clear that it is their responsibility to return in plenty of time to be kitted up. Needless to say one of those on first leg who gave us the shoulder returns without her si air card, without enough time to run back to Arena and back again, and is issued with a spare.

Process athletes throughout the afternoon and it seems to go ok. Being 800m from the Arena we can hear nothing of the action and it is a bit depressing to be missing out. Eventually third leg men are sorted around 5pm and we quickly clear the tables away and walk through to the arena. I am just in

time to see Graham Gristwood arrive back in second place and then watch Ralph Street have a fantastic run but just be pipped for the medals.

Walk back through to Walled Garden to find Becca on the phone. The small tent has already been collected together with the tables, chairs and water that shouldn't have been as they are needed in quarantine for the long race. Leave her sorting things and back to Conicavel village hall to load up gazebos and other kit for Long Start. Discussion with Dick as to what time to meet at Cannich the next day and he wants to get there for 8am meaning a 6:30am start driving for me. I refuse as Rachel has been absent with food poisoning and I don't want to get her up at 6am. We agree to meet at 9am. Clear village hall by 6.30pm and back to accommodation by 7pm. Further texts through the evening where I learn of Simon Cane joining us but not being able to reach Cannich until 10am – happy days - later start.

Chapter 8 – Long prepare

Leave accommodation at 8:30am to start drive to Glen Affric. Rachel & I arrive at Cannich to meet Dick & Ange & Simon Cane. Drive in the final 7 miles – past Dog Falls the tarmac ends and we are on Forest tracks. The drive goes on for 40 minutes until Dick just stops next to some flattened bracken, the only indication on the track of where Pre-Start will be. Quickly into midge nets and full body cover including gloves.

We unload the gazebos, tables, stakes and tape and begin to haul them up the slope (some 80m in height gain). As you climb the terrain gets rougher and rougher and we all fall several times – I manage to find a hole which swallows the whole of my leg. After two hours work we have managed to erect the top four gazebos and the tapes between them through the tussock grass. Short stop for lunch and then finish setting up the other three. The athletes are being bussed in so explore where the minibuses are meant to turn around. It is about 500m beyond Pre-Start around a couple of bends in the track and find a car parked there. Return with a sign asking for area to be left clear.

Meet a chap who has been delivering water and he advises us we could exit around the south end of Glen Affric and gives us the combination of the padlock on the forest gate if we go that way. You might have thought someone would have mentioned this to the start team before.

The recurring theme is that there are no portaloos delivered so far when we leave at 4pm. I make up a sign and leave it where I want the toilets positioned should they turn up. We drive around the south end and it takes longer to get back to Cannich around 5pm.

On the return through Inverness & Nairn hit rush hour queues and eventually arrived back in Forres at 7pm. Although the house has invited the rest of the club to a BBQ after the 6-days race in Darnaway we have a quiet meal in Forres and then crash early – Dick wants to meet in Cannich before 7am next day.

Chapter 9 – Long race

Awake early at 4am and we leave at 5:15am. Meet up with Dick & Ange at 6:45am and transfer to their car to drive in. Shortly before Dog Falls we see 4 portaloos sat at the side of the road –they may be the ones for the start but we won't know until we arrive – if so they are only 6 miles away from where they need to be. Arrive and sure enough no toilets – huge relief that I have brought large quantity of loo roll. Unable to warn anyone of the situation as no mobile reception and apparently no provision of satellite phones – someone has a lot of faith that the remote start will work without any problems.

Set up Pre-Start. Pre-Runners arrive and are despatched. Helpers arrive. First athletes arrive and I am first point of contact to meet and greet and explain there are no toilets but there is some paper. Midges are very bad to start and athletes seem unprepared for level of irritation. First couple of hours things seem to work ok and minibuses arrive, drop athletes and coaches, and then make return journey along single track. Some tales from drivers of some minibuses not stopping at correct passing places. Then we have a driver who manages to drive into the ditch at the side of the track near Pre-Start.

Controller Tony Thornley, myself and one other manage to push it back out in reverse but nearly run over a competitor in the process – lucky escape. Clearly keeping the minibus shuttle working is key to the event.

Around 11:30am a small van unexpectedly appears. He is part of the TV crew and reports he was following a minibus which has driven into the ditch about a km before Pre-Start. At first one wheel was in the ditch but then the athletes got out to push him and only succeed in getting him stuck fast with both wheels in the ditch. Cars may be able to get through the remaining gap but no other minibuses. Quick discussion with Tony & Ted Finch and Tony tells me to keep the start running, I am in charge whilst he disappears off to investigate in Ted's car. Oh good, no additional pressure then. After a while he returns on a push bike. The minibus is well and truly stuck. The driver has been positioned a km and a half back from Pre-Start at a track junction where he will now instruct the minibuses to turn around and the athletes and coaches walk in from there carrying their bags. It seems churlish to enquire where the 4WD Land Rover or Tractor with towing chains is positioned with a satellite phone waiting for just such an eventuality. This is the World Champs and the minibus transfer is the obvious weak link to be identified on the Risk Assessment. I wouldn't mind seeing the RA. I wonder who prepared it. Normally it's the organiser.

Tony is concerned that the athletes may now arrive late for their starts. I am told to meet them when they arrive and make a note of their bib numbers and arrival times. And then I can tell them to shit in the bushes. It is not getting any better. The first group of athletes walks in with a group of ladies first and the men straggling behind. All of the girls seem to think they still have enough time and move on down the track. Relief. Then a Polish chap and his coach approach and say they are now late. I question how late and they say he only has 20mins to his start. Tony appears at my elbow and we agree with the Poles that after 12:25 starts we will have a gap of 20minutes and everyone's start goes back 20 minutes – it's an easyish number to do the maths, although the long week and 4am start is beginning to catch up with my brain. So for each new group of athletes I have to advise of the 20 minutes Start delay and the lack of toilets.

Short term problem that the group of ladies off this minibus haven't been advised of later start times so we hastily write a couple of notices and Rachel walks back down the track trying to advise all coaches and athletes where the delay will occur.

More athletes arrive and I note bibs and arrival times. Just as we are coming to the point where there will be the gap Eva Jurenikova and a Czech coach turn up. She hadn't got the message about delayed starts and has just completed her warm-up and preparation – is it ok for her to start at the correct time? Instant decision to let her start hoping what the athlete wants is OK with Controller Tony (it was). Nervous wait during the 20 minute delay and then we begin processing athletes again.

Realise we are missing a final bus load of Elite Men and that Hector Haines has the earliest start time of this group. Talk to British coach Liz Campbell that it is likely to be her call as to whether Hector will arrive at least 40 minutes before his revised start time and he has enough time to prepare. His group eventually arrives a huge 60 seconds before the deadline and Hector and Liz are happy to go with his revised start time.

Once all of their Athletes have departed Coaches want to leave and are faced with the km and a half walk back to the track junction and the hope that minibuses will continue to run to take them to the race arena. I assure the Russian coach I will make sure he is not left standing there all night. We assume that some minibuses may be sent around the South of Glen Affric to collect the Athletes bags and transfer them to the arena. The Estonian lady coach decides she cannot wait for an unknown delivery and walks off up the track with half a dozen holdalls draped around her neck – I made sure that was caught on camera.

At 14:35 Mattias Kyburz is sent on his way and we take the next hour breaking everything down. Eventually Becca & Issie arrive with 4 minibuses around the southern route. Two are to take athletes' bags and any other coaches to the Arena, two are to take the remaining volunteers and kit back to Cannich village hall. On the drive back I am chatting to the driver and find out he is not an orienteer



Final day arena in Borås FC Stadium (note ramps built for run in far left)

On the last day, everyone who was within 90 minutes of the leader overall set off in the chasing start while the remainder set off afterwards at 15 second intervals.

Best SROC results were Miriam's 17th in W65 and Martyn's 25th in M60K (short). Sue R was injured and not able to compete.

While Martyn and Sue headed back to the UK, we went on to the World Masters Championships in Gothenburg. On CompassSport editor Nick Barrable's recommendation we stayed in an Ibis hotel out in the suburbs; it turned out to be a pretty wet week so it was good to have somewhere warm and dry as a base. The organisers encouraged us to buy a 7-day City card which turned out to be really valuable as we travelled everywhere by bus and tram and the Card also gave us free entry to some of the major attractions.

The Sprint qualification and final were held largely in some new housing near the waterfront consisting of modern blocks of flats around courtyards. Most of the legs were very straightforward but a small rocky hill in the final caught out many competitors. Miriam ended up rock climbing which was probably not the best route choice. Nick Barrable in M40 won the only British Gold of the championships.

Despite being only a few kilometres from the centre, the Long Distance Qualification races were in remarkably wild terrain with marshes, tricky contours and few paths. Torrential rain made the first race particularly tricky for the early starters. Miriam was 19th in the first race and she was aiming to achieve a similar result in the second so as to be in the top 27 who would qualify for the A-Final. Unfortunately, a couple of incorrect control codes on the loose descriptions for her second qualification meant that race had to be declared void. But she was guaranteed an A-Final run on the basis of her first race.

On the final day, the sun at last shone creating a great atmosphere in the arena. Miriam had one of her best runs to finish 22nd and highest-placed Brit, only 7 seconds outside the top 20. I had a steady run in M60C.

The airport was only a few kilometres away so we were in plenty of time for the special charter flight which took 75 orienteers from Gothenburg direct to Aberdeen. After a drive to Inverness, we were then ready, although not entirely rested, for the first of the Scottish 6-Day races the following day.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT - TONY MARLOW



Town of birth: [10th September 1965](#)

Previous O clubs: [WashOC \(now defunct\)](#) & [Suffoc](#)

When, where and how did you start orienteering? [1979 Holkham Dunes, Norfolk. It was a black and white map without control descriptions! I went with my Dad who had a friend who had done some orienteering. 36 years later and I haven't improved!](#)

What is it that makes you carry on? Why do you enjoy it? [I Continue to orienteer as not only do I enjoy the varying challenge of the orienteering itself and the feeling that you get from visiting places and areas 'normal' people tend not to visit. I also have many good friends within the sport and I would miss their company.](#)

Do you have any family members who orienteer? [My daughter Niamh orienteers fairly regularly](#)

What are your greatest orienteering strengths and weaknesses? My biggest weakness without a doubt is changing my mind midway through a leg, probably brought about by a lack of confidence. My biggest strength at the moment would be my fitness level.

What is your most memorable event (and why!)? Winning at the Original Mountain Marathon 2009 only 12 months after finishing last at the Saunders.

What are your greatest orienteering achievements? Not many real achievements in competition but organising 3 level A events (British Sprint Champs, Northern Championships and the JK sprint have given me particular satisfaction

What are your orienteering ambitions? To Increase the volume of orienteering I do (I have backed off to concentrate on long distance events recently), To Orienteer abroad and generally to Carry on competing for another 36 years!

What would you change about the sport, if you could? Red tape and the problems that are the upper tier of our sport.

What do you do for a day job? I'm a Diesel Engineer

Do you have any other leisure/hobby activities? Long/Ultra distance fell funning. If I couldn't run or orienteer I would probably sail as I was quite a successful sailor in my youth and it gives you the same feeling of ' freedom' that you get from running in the hills.



Today Blakeholme, tomorrow Everest.....

Editor - Actually, it's the Pyrenees. On 21st August he is running in the Grand Raid Des Pyrenees, a race across the French Pyrenees involving 100 miles and 34000 ft of ascent to raise money for

