

# S R O C



The Red Rose Orienteering Club  
BOF Club of the Year 2008



## Newsletter

October / November 2015

Editor: Dick Collins

**Best wishes to Bill Hyslop, who is recovering after a spell in hospital. We hope that he has a speedy recovery.**

### Editorial

**Success in the CompassSport Trophy !!** With all the results calculated we were level on points with Interlopers. We had taken the lead early on, then fallen back, then picked up at the end. This was due to most of our runners having either an early or a late run depending on whether they were helping on a late or early shift. We had relatively few runners out during the middle of the event. With the scores tied the next-best runner would count. That gave us a 9 point lead and made us the Trophy winners.

The event was a major success with many favourable comments being received. This was in no small way due to the organisational abilities of Brian Jackson whose efforts ensured that it all ran like clockwork. It proved to be the largest CompassSport final with 1059 runners representing 22 clubs who had made it through from the preliminary rounds. Below you will find Brian's report on the event.

We won't win the Trophy next year because, as you will see below, we are back in the CompassSport Cup competition again.

## Odds and Ends

It seems that we are now a big club again. We were re-designated as a small club when our membership fell below a certain level. This meant that we took part in the CompassSport Trophy rather than the CompassSport Cup. Now that we are back in the Cup we are being asked for our preference for the location of the event in the New Year, either Bickerton or Abrahams Valley. Bickerton is a bit nearer.



For those not at the AGM, the Club's financial position has improved over the last couple of years, mainly due to our involvement with some of the larger events. At the end of the financial year (July 31<sup>st</sup>) the cash balance stood at £18509, up about £10000 compared with a couple of years ago.

Comparing the accounts summary with that 20 years ago is quite interesting. This year our competition income came to £9967. In 1995 it was £8527. The difference seems rather small bearing in mind that the entry fee for our Anglezarke Badge (level B) event in 1995 was £3, level B entry fees now being around £15. The small difference in total income simply reflects falling numbers, with much higher entries in the mid-90s. This is shown also in the membership fee income which was £906 in 1995 but only £812 this year.



Surprisingly, membership is up by 8% over the north-west region with only SROC and SELOC down. WCOG is up nearly 28%. Rumour has it that they have reduced their membership fees to zero. Even more surprising is that the increase over the region is almost entirely adult orienteers.

At the AGM we agreed to reduce our membership fees to £5 (from £12) for seniors and families and to £0 (from £4.70) for juniors. Membership fees contributed only 6% of our income last year so this will not affect our bank balance too much.

## 2015 CompassSport Cup and Trophy Finals, Helsington Barrows, Kendal 18 October 2018

### Organiser's report

SROC has organised the CompassSport Cup Final once before, at Witherslack in November in 1987. I was the planner. There were four clubs in the final. DVO scored 139, SYO 130, HH 105 and ESOC 94. It was held at an ordinary colour coded event or what would possibly be Level C now and it was open to all with White, Yellow, Orange, Green, Red, Blue and, Brown (M19/35) and Brown (M21) courses. 483 took part and that included competitors who were not in the Cup Final. 61 were on the M19/35 Brown and 82 on the M21. I recall that I insisted that the maps should be overprinted, an unheard of thing at a colour coded event. Such extravagance was restricted to Badge Events in those days. I persuaded the club committee to buy the club's first Start and Finish banners. There was grumbling from some competitors not in the Cup competition that the entry fees were higher than normally expected for a colour coded event. I am sure that there was a trophy as a prize but little else, but I recall Arthur Boyt of Happy Herts coming up to me at the event and giving me some jars of his home produced honey to give as prizes.

Fast forward 27 years.....and SROC is hosting the final again. I am now the organiser and things have changed somewhat. It is now treated as a Level A event. e.g. like the JK or British Champs. There are two parallel competitions, one for 11 smaller clubs and one for 11 bigger clubs. Competition is closed to members of the 22 competing clubs.

There is a special BOF style set of Rules, which for the final lays out requirements for allocating start times, publicity on websites, timed starts, spectator control, radio controls, public address and commentary and "a dignified and prestigious ceremony to present the prizes" .....

Just a few changes then?..... Help!!!

Actually, it was not too difficult to organise because -

- The Competition Rules are very clear.
- There are people who look after the competition like Peter Guillaume, the Coordinator, and Nick Barrable of CompassSport, the sponsor. They and Sarah Francis, last year's organiser from Southern Navigators, gave invaluable advice. I stole Sarah's best ideas and

I hope that I stole some of her enthusiasm too.

- We had an excellent area. Technically challenging, in a beautiful part of the world, with an enormous field of limestone right next door to it with a very helpful farmer, Brian Bowness, who has hosted big orienteering events several times before.
- We had Gavin Smith as planner. He had successfully planned on Helsington before, and together with Andy Yeates, an experienced Grade A controller. Both were determined that we should have a top quality event in line with the CompassSport Cup and Trophy Rules.
- The club has expertise and manpower to put on the event, even though we are supposed to be a "small club", hence our competing for the Trophy in the Final. On the day we always had enough able and enthusiastic helpers led by excellent team leaders.
- In the weeks up to the event I had the help of three club members who put a lot of time into the preparations. Chris Roberts was not only responsible for the download side of IT on the day but did the taxing and tricky job of entries secretary setting up the software to handle the entries via club captains and then the diplomat's job of handling all the entries and amendments to entries up to the Start List being finalised. I also had Martyn Roome who recruited and co-ordinated the helpers, and Ray Pickett the club equipment officer who sorted out and supplied the kit in a very organised way.
- We had the usual professional input such as Martin Bagness's updated map, but also professional assistance in the commentary and IT support. The maintenance of a high level of informed excitement throughout the competition could only be achieved by having accurate up to the second information relayed to experienced commentators who know the orienteering scene and who are provided with the right environment to work in. So, many thanks to commentators Chris Poole and Andy Monro (straight from further honing their skills at the World Champs and the Scottish 6Days) commentating continuously from before 10am to 3pm, Barrie Smith of Amplified Sound, and Martin Stone of SportIdent UK who pulled together the IT side so that we had updates from out on the course, constantly updated electronic leader boards for both competitions, Wi-Fi results and the latest state of play in the run-in competitions.
- The graphic design skills of Paul and Judy Johnson of Borderliners who designed the towel memento and the business skills of Rick Houghton of CompassPoint who organised the contract for the acquisition and printing of the towels.
- Lots of enthusiastic competitors - far more than I thought would enter. Nearly 250 more entered than last year's final, hence the

underestimate of the number of mementos. My apologies.

Thanks

So, many thanks to all of the above including the 22 club captains and anyone else who had a hand in the event.

Congratulations to -

Forth Valley Orienteers - winners of the CompassSport Cup (despite being a small club), and,

**South Ribble Orienteering Club - winners of the CompassSport Trophy** (and showing that a small club can not only organise the final but win at the same time).



Martyn Stone who organised the IT.



Gavin Smith, trying to decide whether the Controller's wife should be non-comp.



The winning team !!!

Women's Run-in Winner - Lucy Adams (SYO)

Men's Run-in Winner - Stewart Allison (LOC) - after a very close run-off

My best memory? - The FVO victory rush to the table at the prizegiving. I spotted one of the young members of the team taking a very fast and direct line towards the large tin of sweets. He achieved his goal, grabbed the tin with both hands, and turned round triumphantly with the rest of his team to take the photo call whilst holding the precious tin for all to see.

Many many thanks yet again to everyone who took part, came to spectate and/or helped to make the day so successful.

## **Brian Jackson**

Organiser



Thanks to Brian for pointing out that if you missed going to the CST then you can see what it was like at

[www.flickr.com/photos/wendles56/albums/72157660025090991](http://www.flickr.com/photos/wendles56/albums/72157660025090991) where you will find 701 of Wendy Carlyles' pictures.

Of course, we have some pictures of our own :-



**Martyn Roome models the new Jacket.**



**Niamh Marlow looking pleased That we won.**



**Mark Edwards with the Trophy.**



## **Disaster at the Northern Night Champs by Dick Collins**

Jane and I ventured up to Slaley for the Northern Nights. It turned out to be right up there with the best (worst) of our many disastrous trips. My problems were the lesser ones. It turns out that reading the Final Details is now compulsory. As I knew how to get to the event, how to get to the Start, what my start time was, which course I was on, etc., I didn't bother reading anything else. This proved to be a mistake. I made it to the Start and at the appointed time picked up my description sheet and map. The description sheet listed 10 controls and there were 10 controls on my map. I made it round to control 10 and as I did so a woman who had just arrived at the control asked me what she was supposed to do next. This seemed a strange question as she had clearly made it around her course as far as this control. As she asked me, I was looking at my map and realised that everything seemed to stop at

this control. There was no line continuing to the Finish. In fact there was no Finish marked on the map. I looked at the description sheet and at the bottom, where there is normally a line pointing to the right with a Finish symbol, there was a line pointing to the right with a Start symbol. I replied to the woman that I didn't understand this but maybe the Start and Finish were the same place so we had to go back to the Start. This would have been quite logical as control 10 was just off a path which led directly to the Start. I set off to where we had started to find .... nothing. The Start had been dismantled and there was nothing there. I trudged off to Enquiries. It turned out that one was supposed to turn the map over and there was one (!) more control (and the Finish) on the back. "Didn't they mention this at the Start?" - "No, they didn't". I asked why there had only been 10 controls on the description sheet when the course was apparently 11 controls long. The Organiser (a well-known fellow physicist) didn't have an answer for this but promptly took his wallet out and refunded my entry fee. I have no idea what happened to the woman that I had met at control 10.

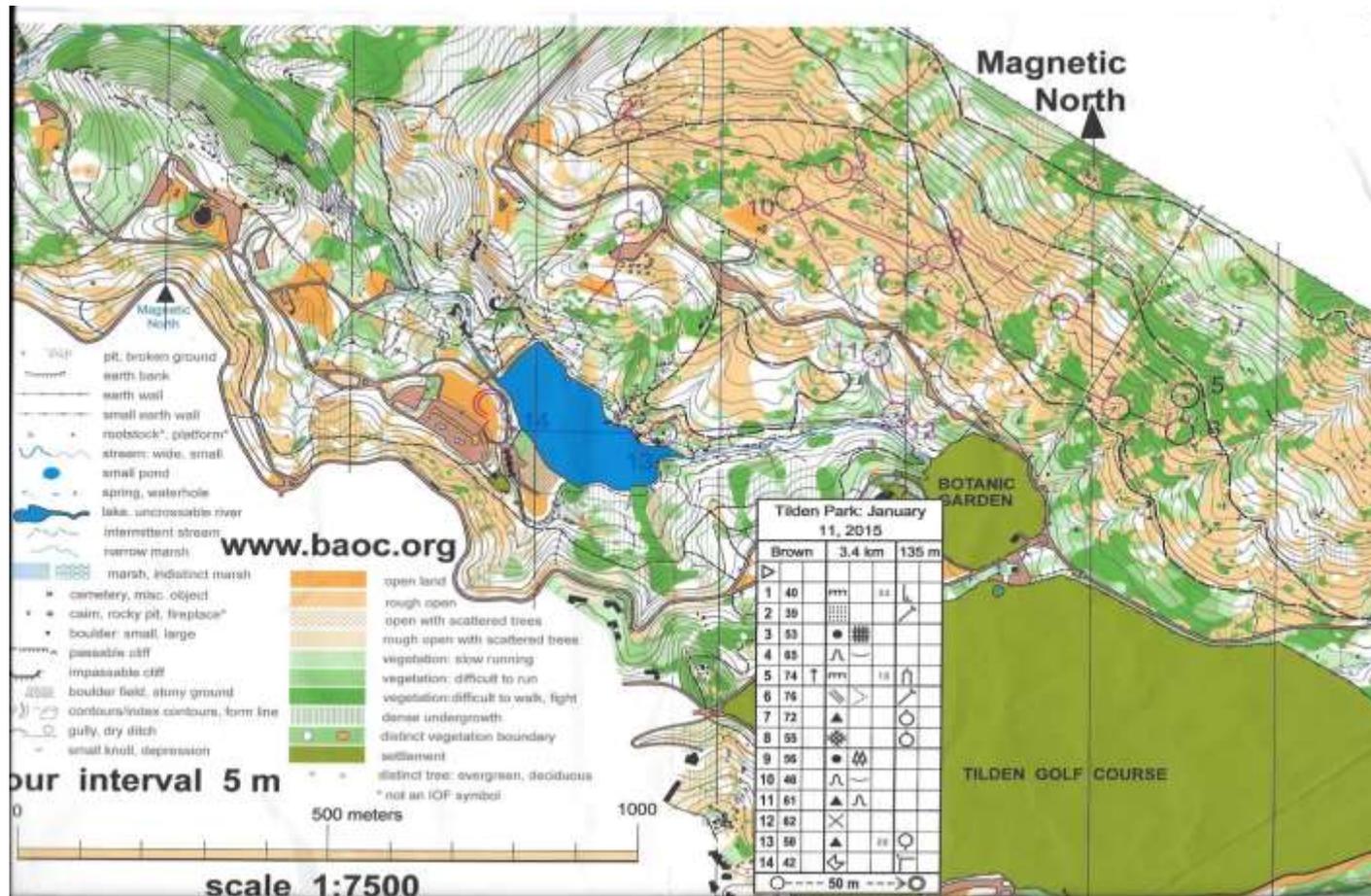
As I mentioned above, I came off rather better than Jane. She did rather well getting round her course but on the way to the Finish tripped up on a stony path. She got up but then fell again. She suffered damage to her cheek, lip, ribs and leg and sustained a double fracture of her right wrist. Her arm is now in plaster for 2 months and I am having to cut her food up for her at meal-times. However, it turned out that she had read the Final Details so she knew that she had to turn her map over, so at least she completed her course.



## ARE YOU “O”ING IN SAN FRANCISCO? (or, O TELL CALIFORNIA) by Martyn Roome

In January this year, our son Paul (whom many of you will know) got married in Oakland, just outside San Francisco. We spent 2 weeks over there beforehand and had the foresight to spot an orienteering event on in the Berkeley Hills (only some 10 miles from where he lives) the day after his wedding. To begin with, the rest of the family, Paul included, all said that they would come, but after quite a late night of celebrations, it was only your truly who was still up for the challenge!

It was more of a challenge as I had spent the previous 2 weeks being chauffeured round by the others and had not actually tried driving our hire car on the wrong side of the road. So it was that I set off somewhat gingerly, to follow the satnav some 10 miles to Tilden Park. The roads around San Francisco are not the broad freeways of middle America, rather, they twist and turn and cling to the steep hillsides above the Bay. So it was that I negotiated the winding Skyline Boulevard and Grizzly Peak Boulevard, avoiding the many cyclists who were testing themselves on the gradients and hairpin bends.



Martyn's course

I was pleased to arrive unscathed at the parking lot and find a good number of cars already there. Tilden Park is like many of the other recreational areas that cover the Oakland and Berkeley Hills, being on a west facing slope above the Bay and consisting of mainly coniferous forest with some broadleaves, including many eucalyptus trees which thrive in the mild climate.

Being California, there was no need for the Registration team to huddle in cars or in tents, there they were sitting out behind long tables. My first task was which course to choose. Naturally, I chose Brown, as I always do! (Those who know me will recognise the irony in that statement). Well, courses in the States are colour coded, but not as we know them Jim. I can't work out the rationale for the grading (it does not go from light to dark like ours), but Brown was about equivalent to Green in our system, and since I need to get back by 1.00pm as we were flying back to the UK that afternoon, I decided that discretion was the better part of valour.

Instead of a registration slip, I was handed a clipboard with a course entry list on and had to fill in my details. The entry fee was similar to a colour coded over here, perhaps a bit more expensive. The other competitors around me were much like in the UK. Rather fewer had specialist O kit on, there were a fair number of families and children, teenagers, quite a few in the veteran classes, and like over here, not as many in the M21 to 35 classes.

Around the car park were some interesting park notices that you don't often find in the UK, like what to do if you met a mountain lion. I read this carefully, but came to the conclusion that the most useful advice was not included – pray.



Lower slopes of Tilden

Hoping that my full leg cover would provide enough protection from the lions, I headed off to the start, which was about 5 minutes away, partly up a short but very steep slope. I handed in the slip of paper that I had been given, to the start official who was sitting on a stool. He worked out who could start when on which course and called you up by name (rather more complicated than just forming queues). I was amused when he tried calling out a very eastern European type name, 3 times with different pronunciations, until he eventually waived the piece of paper in the air which enabled the actual family to realise that he meant **them!**



After a while, I was called up, and dibbed at the start box as we were using the normal SI kit. My 1<sup>st</sup> leg was only about 100m away, crag foot, in a re-entrant. Setting my compass, this one appeared without problem. Leg 2 led me on a bearing up on to the open slopes, and it was here that I encountered the first steep climb, more punishing because I came out into the fierce sunshine in the 75F heat (and this was January!). The map was 1:7500 with 5m contours, which seemed to mask the steepness of the terrain – but maybe it was just the heat.

Leg 3 was one of the many contouring legs, across open but needing me to navigate on to the correct side of “fight” scrub. If you ended up on the wrong side there was no hope of getting through the scrub, it was extremely thorny! Indeed, just running in the yellow open, I broke up much of the brittle low growth, which flew up around my ears in a crackling, cartoon-like dust cloud. Further on there were more legs in the open, with tricky little controls in the mosaic of thorny scrub. A careful approach certainly paid off.

The last few controls dived back down into the forest, a mixture of good running with tall trees above and areas of green spiky bushes. Coming down into a steep re-entrant I found that the “man-made object” I was looking for was an early 1930s car, which must have been joyridden down there (some things never change). Almost all of its body work was still intact, with very little sign of rusting, due to the amazingly low rainfall of the area.

The final leg was a “which way round the lake” choice. I took what was the shorter route but with hindsight the longer one, on more tracks and less of the rocky shoreline might have been better – a good leg.

Finishing, I was greeted with a friendly smile at the open air download and a “well done”. I was invited to help myself at a table laden with food, all kinds of fruit, cakes and drinks – a lovely touch for newcomers! After trying to cool down, I got chatting to the U.S National Junior Coach who was there. We discovered we had mutual friends in the UK and that he was taking the U.S Junior Team to the Junior World Champs in Norway later in the year, an event I was also going to. Reassuringly, he said that the terrain in Telemark was “to die for” (and he was right).



Can't afford the new SROC top! But still flying the flag.

Overall, the experience I had was not a million miles away from the UK. The terrain was certainly more unforgiving than most we are used to, far dryer and spikier for one thing. The people were all very friendly, and being in cosmopolitan San Francisco no one seemed surprised to find an English orienteer coming to their event. And we certainly look forward to sampling more events in California in the coming years.



*The aging O-population, problems recruiting younger members and difficulties associated with the fact that our planners and organisers are becoming too old to plan/organise, has led Chris James, Chair of the BOF Events and Competitions Committee, to publicise the following open letter. - Ed.*

***A message from Chris James, Chair of Events & Competitions Committee.***

*Hello All,*

*I know we orienteers are a passionate and analytical lot so I have been doing some soul-searching and analysis on our behalf. Without wishing to be melodramatic, we are at substantial and increasing risk of becoming an endangered species, and at a time when other testing and vigorous sports are growing. Let me explain.*

*Our membership and our competing population have an increasing age profile at the same time as Triathlon, Trail Running and Cyclocross (to name just a few examples) are growing. We are likely soon to be short of and depending on volunteers who, through no fault of their own, have insufficient experience and training to deliver safe and consistently enjoyable events at Level A. Our 'best terrain' is under pressure, which creates increasing strain on some of our associations, and we are having difficulties agreeing, and sticking to, standard procedures.*

*On top of all of this, there is the real risk of a substantial reduction in our Sport England funding from early 2017, which will surely lead to less programmes and support being delivered by staff.*

*I will soon produce a paper of proposals which will offer some suggestions to help us to work together to clarify a way ahead and which will marry the best of what we have now with the best grassroots ideas for our future. The aim is to create a sustainable and growing sport. We can draw many valuable lessons from other sports which have already undergone (sometimes difficult) transformations and which have become more successful as a consequence. I ask only that you get your 'thinking hats' on in advance and consider what can be done, however small, in order to help us to create a vibrant and growing orienteering community to ensure the future of the sport we love. The alternative is unthinkable and I know that together we can achieve great things.*

*Yours in Orienteering,*

*Chris James*

*And last, but not least, the Club has a new President.*



Miriam Rosen

# Fixtures

See web-site for details - [www.sroc.org](http://www.sroc.org)

## North-West Night League

Sat 28 November Sizergh Castle  
Starts 6-7 pm £5 / £2

## Night Street League

Score 60/75 mins Starts 6.30-7.30 pm £3 / £1  
Hi-viz clothing required

Tue 1 Dec Preston Central

Wed 16 Dec Wigan

Wed 13 Jan Heysham

Wed 27 Jan Chorley

Wed 10 Feb Bamber Bridge

## Spring Series

Orange/technical Starts 12.30-1.30

Sat 20 Feb Elnup and Birley

## NEW YEAR CRACKER

Fri 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2016

Arnside Knott, Silverdale

## CLUB HANDICAP / SOCIAL / PRIZEGIVING

Sat 16 June 2016

Low Park Wood