

NEWSTRACK
FEBRUARY 1996

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CONTENTS

Editor's Bit.....	2
Event Reports - Home.....	2
An Enchanted Place.....	2
The Wrekin.....	3
New and Renewed Members.....	5
Event Reports - International.....	6
Orienteering in the Orient.....	6
DVO Social Calendar.....	8
Odds and Sods.....	9
Fixtures.....	10

THE EDITOR'S BIT

This edition is hopefully back to its customary size after last time's expansion to A4. In fact, last issue proved to be a nightmare to produce. It was actually ready for printing on the weekend before Christmas but I decided to wait until I had the DVO directory of members to go with it. This took me up to Christmas so I took Newstrack away with us to North Yorkshire, intending to have it copied in Scarborough, only to be thwarted by the worst Christmas weather for years which kept us snow-bound all week. So it was eventually printed by Steve Buckley's school in the new year, and due to a misunderstanding, outgrew itself before finally landing on your doormat.

This issue is also likely to be shorter than when I first took on Newstrack just over a year ago. 16 page issues have shrunk to 10 pages largely because apart from a few dependable contributors I am writing the thing myself and there is a limit on the amount of time that I have got and am prepared to spend on the magazine in the absence of interest on the part of the rest of DVO. I am supposed to be an editor, not a writer. So more effort please from the rest of you or Newstrack will dwindle to a two-page handout of future events of the orienteering and social variety. Perhaps this is all people want?

EVENT REPORTS

An Enchanted Place (Ashdown Forest) - 31st December 1995

Riddle found in cracker: When is an 1996 National event not a 1996 National event? Answer: when it takes place in 1995. (I lied about the cracker). As I understood it, the organisers were restricted to the last two months of the year in which to organise the event at quite short notice, and holding it as a National on the last day of 1995 seemed an ideal compromise.

As we headed down the M1 into the teeth of a blizzard on the Saturday before the event, I began to wonder what had prompted us to enter an event on the wrong side of the M25. And then I remembered. Val, in one of her few moments of weakness, had volunteered to plan the Score event on Matlock East fixed for the same day, and this seemed as good an excuse as any to avoid the less than enticing prospect of putting out controls.

My experience of events south of Watford is limited, but I had heard stories of even the most informal of events being inundated with people eager to take part. I was somewhat surprised to find that this, a National event at a holiday time, was no more subscribed than a badge event in our own neck of the woods. Some courses were definitely on the threadbare side - 7 on W17A, 7 and 12 on W21E and W21A.

For some people, this was an opportunity to run a day early in a new badge class. John Hopper was one such, running M45L for

the first time. I had to smile as I surveyed the start lists. For most of last year, the one year in five when John and I run the same class, organisers everywhere contrived to start John two to three minutes ahead of me so an early mistake often resulted in my breath down John's neck, a sadly unusual phenomenon in the orienteering circles in which I ever decreasingly tend to run. This time, John had escaped me only to find himself three minutes in front of Steve Buckley.

There had been rain earlier in the day falling on top of ground frozen for the previous week. This made for treacherous conditions as I found out only a few metres into my course. As I ran along an icy path, my feet separated from under me and, as I thudded on to the permafrost, all four limbs shot in the four directions of the compass in an involuntary recreation of Walt Disney's famous Bambi on Ice scene.

Was this a National event area? Undoubtedly not, although a decent badge event area it certainly was. A network of paths meant you were never too far from safety. I have never known an area with so many changes of vegetation in so short a time, which gave the course a very bitty feel, and I never quite got into my stride - another way of explaining another less than spectacular run.

I suspect that I am not the only one whose downfall was a thicket at the end of one of those you-can-either-go-round-or-straight-but-you'd-be-out-of-your-mind-if-you-chose-the-second route choices. No doubt it was obvious enough when planned on a sunny day but in the gloom and mist of the fog end of the year, it was difficult to see what the mapper had intended to denote as a thicket and what not.

It was only when I had finished that I realised that my course had actually crossed what A A Milne had called his "enchanted place". A A Milne must have been led a dull life because it did not inspire me.

I shall probably not hurry back to Ashdown Forest unless they happen to coincide an event there with one we've already agreed to plan at Matlock East.

The Wrekin - 11th February.

A rare embarrassment of riches this Sunday. Two badge events to choose from - Yateholme and the Wrekin - not to mention (and I'd rather not) a colour-coded at Blidworth, which is more of just an embarrassment really. Did you know that Blidworth is my least favourite area anywhere, by the way? We opted for the Wrekin, and were rather surprised to find the remaining DVO presence at the event somewhat understated: the Wrights, the Buckleys, Sue Russell and reportedly Dave Brodie. The last-mentioned apparently used to live in a house actually marked on the map, and ran his school cross country course literally round the Wrekin.

Presumably most of the rest of you were flogging yourself through the bogs of Yateholme. To me there was no contest. There was a badge event at Yateholme less than a year ago, described in less than charitable terms in these pages, whereas it has been four years since a badge event on the Wrekin, a National event at that. Four years is quite long enough for any unpleasant memories to have faded.

Control descriptions were sent out with the event details, a practice which is now thankfully becoming the norm for winter events. We all had a good guessing game at what a symbol shaped like a witch's hat and featuring on everyone's course might be. The conclusion that it was a cave proved wrong as it turned out to be a niche, there apparently being no IOF symbol for a small re-entrant, though a shallow one is possible.

Those who went to the National will remember starting in the east of the map. On this occasion, we parked in the firing range - not in use - to the north-west of the map. Whilst this introduced a completely different part of the area to those with shorter length courses, that part was unfortunately the Wrekin itself. Every competitor will have made personal acquaintance with each of its (many) contours.

The event was a memorable one for most competitors crossing the road into the east of the map for entirely the wrong reason. Since the area was last mapped in 1992, part of it has been fenced off with a solid wooden barricade not marked as a map correction. I was suddenly confronted by it and, it being in a direct line between me and my next control, I climbed over whilst I tried to work out exactly what part of the map I might have strayed into. I suddenly came face to face with a man, a dog and a gun, the last being carried by the first I hasten to add. It was a horrifying sight and it will be a long time before I forget those red eyes, those fearsome teeth, those slobbering jaws and that stinking breath. The dog was pretty fearsome too. "Git orf my f-ing land, it's f-ing private" was the polite invitation with which I dutifully complied, not wishing to appear in the results as "disqualified - dead". He was still there when Val went through so he must have been thoroughly cheesed off by the end of the day. Good.

Memo for future reference: the Wrekin is not the best area at which to forget your bramble bashers. Perhaps those who stayed away have better memories than I do, because I had completely forgotten the man-eating variety of brambles that saturated the east of the map, not to mention the north of the Wrekin. The scars borne by my legs will ensure that I do not forget so easily next time.

After the previous week's vertiginous circuit of Dimmingsdale, I was gratified to find that my course was described as having less than half the climb, a mere 325 metres. My eyes and my legs by the end of my 6.8k told me a different story, as did my finger as it counted the 100 contours I crossed and 500

metres climbed. The last three controls were particularly savage requiring an escalation of one side of the Wrekin followed by a plunge down the other.

Yes, what an enjoyable event this was.

Ending on an environmentally friendly note, I will record that each pre-printed map was encased in one of those re-sealable bags which can be used again and again, as they will be at colour-coded. No doubt a little more expensive than the normal ones which are discarded or which litter the house for months on end while a useful purpose is found for them, but well worth it.

Incidentally, we are still trying to work out why, for example, (apart from sharing with M50L) Val had a 1:10000 map on W21 but W11s and 13s had a 1:15000.

New Local Members:

Andrea and Dennis Higgins, 125 Northwood Lane, Darley Dale, Matlock

John Bennett, 37 Ellesmere Road, West Bridgford NG2 7DE

Bryan Metcalf, "Shelsey", Chander Hill, Holymoorside, Chesterfield S42 7BW

Fiona and Rory Sellars, 20 Whitehouse Rise, Belper DE56 2TW

Rob Tucker, Stainsby Mill Cottage, Stainsby, Heath, Chesterfield S44 5RW
(strictly speaking, a re-entry - welcome back)

Dave Pooley, 114 Church Street, Matlock DE4 3BZ

Pedley Family, 14 The Park, Mayfield, Ashbourne DE6 1QB

Deborah Ryde, Lea House, Kiln Lane, Parwich, Ashbourne DE6 1QB

Muriel Moore, Highfields, 173 Ashbourne Road, Turnditch, Belper DE56 2LH

New BOF member (another blast from the past):

Adrian Boyes, 5 Woodlands Brow, Ashbourne DE6 1RY

ORIENTEERING IN THE ORIENT

What better way to spend Christmas and the New Year than doing a two day event in Guangzhou (formerly Canton) in southern China and the Asia Pacific Orienteering Championships (APOC) in Hong Kong - anything to avoid the Queen's speech!

It was the first time the Chinese had hosted an international orienteering competition and they were keen to do well as they wanted to host the APOC event in 1998. Very few of them had ever been out of mainland China to other events, so they welcomed any comments people had on how events should be run.

About 200 people from 15 countries took part; including 10 from the UK. We all stayed in the same four star hotel, which was clean and comfortable. All the meals were included and there was plenty of food although every meal bore a resemblance to the previous one. Eggs were served for breakfast for variety. It was odd, but this was the only time we used knives and forks (specially bought) - the rest of the two weeks we used chopsticks all the time.

The two orienteering events were held 30 kilometres outside Guangzhou in the rural areas. We were taken there by four buses in convoy and - quite amazing - with a police escort. We went through all the red lights and toll gates and the police threatened any driver or cyclist who got in our way. It got us to the event very swiftly but reminded us of how oppressive the regime in China is.

As soon as we arrived at the event, all the children came out to see this slightly wild looking bunch of foreigners. The older folk carried on spraying their crops and watering the fruit as though we didn't exist.

The orienteering was wonderful - through orange orchards, pineapple groves and even through paddy fields. I felt guilty and trod very lightly through the crops which the local people had spent hours growing, but there was obviously no concept of out of bounds as there would be in this country.

I had difficulties finding one control, thinking I was looking for a gully on the ground. When I checked the legend on the map it was a bamboo cluster and the control was cunningly hidden, six feet off the ground!

After the first day, the results were hung out on one line, all classes mixed together. Helen Teece, from the UK, suggested to them that it would be helpful if they were in classes. The next day they did this, but still in random order!

At the end of the second day, the prize giving was organised with military precision and the prizes given out by various Generals. Surprisingly I won both the short course and the long course in the women's 40 class, beating eight others. Randal also won the short course, so we acquired two Chinese tea services and a vase (this could take us over the weight limit - we don't usually allow for winning things!).

Christmas day - and we were travelling by bus to Hong Kong. While you were consuming turkey and pudding, I was standing in the Passport Control office in China waiting to cross the border while the officials were having their lunch. We swapped stories with the Australians and New Zealanders on how they would normally spend Christmas day.

The first event in Hong Kong was the Hong Kong Championships. I was the very last person to start and did not have a good time. It took a while to get used to the map, at one point a wild dog ran in front of me, growled and disappeared into the bush; I had problems struggling through the vegetation and then came across a competitor who was ill and asked me to report to the finish and get help. I retired. Ranald had a better run and completed the course but found it hot and got very dehydrated.

Two days of being a tourist and doing more normal things like going up Victoria Peak, visiting the Buddhist monastery on Lantau island and trying to escape the shops (Hong Kong makes Meadowhall look like the local corner store!). Then the model event, which helped us get used to unusual control sites, like Chinese graves. We were in one of the Country Parks and the scenery was superb - not dissimilar to the Lake District and certainly not how Hong Kong is portrayed in the media. Very few people took the model event seriously and it turned into Photo-O as lots of us took our cameras round.

The main event was the Asia Pacific Championships on the Saturday, with over 1,000 competitors from 19 countries. The UK contingency had increased to 16, with two Honorary Brits (tame Australians) who spent more time with us than with the Aussies, as one of them lived in the UK. The course was very enjoyable, up in the hills, across fairly rocky terrain which made it a bit tricky to run and, at times, with superb views across the hills and coastline. I managed to come third out of nine and got a certificate - only Asia Pacific countries qualify for medals.

Another day sight seeing, this time round Hong Kong Island and then on the last day the short course, which seemed more like a sprint-O as everyone seemed to come back with very fast times. My start time was near the end, which isn't good, especially as it was now quite hot for running uphill. But I trotted round, enjoyed the views, loved the details on the map and, amazingly clocked up a gold medal, beating a Japanese woman by 9 seconds!

Back in the UK I shall now return to my normal mediocre level of performance but the experience of running on the hills of China and Hong Kong was wonderful - and highly recommended!!

Why not come and see our slides, have a look at the maps and marvel at the prizes from China and Hong Kong at the DVO Open Meeting at 7.15 pm on Wednesday 13 March at Belper Sports Centre.

Viv Macdonald

(Note: it looks likely that APOC in 1998 will be held in Beijing in October)

DVO Social Events

Open Evening - 13th March - Belper Sports Centre

Instead of the usual format of run followed by open business meeting, we shall be starting at 7.00pm with an illustrated account by Randal and Viv Macdonald of their recent orienteering trip to China and Hong Kong, a sneak preview of which is contained in this very issue. These arrangements have been specially made to accommodate those who abhor running and business meetings of any description and/or who like an early night, so there really is no excuse to stay away. For those whose Wednesday evenings cannot be complete without a trawl through the streets of Belper, there will be the opportunity to indulge themselves later. I'm not sure if there is to be a business meeting, but, if so, I imagine that it will be a short affair. See you there.

Burns Supper

This was postponed from January due to snow. It will still take place, and it is hoped that we shall be able to combine this with Ros and Andy Clayton's much-anticipated illustrated lecture of their world tour before they disappear off round the world again to New Zealand. Anybody not giving their name in first time round can join the throng - there's plenty of haggis/nut roast to go round. It is hoped to try again at Wirksworth on a date in March. Look out for further details at Crich, or ring us around the same time.

JK Accommodation

For two years running, we have managed to obtain a church hall or scout hut at a reasonable cost for DVO's use, thus keeping down the cost of accommodation, particularly for families, for anyone not particular about the company they keep. This year's organisers do not seem as well organised for this type of accomm. as the previous ones so we are having to try our own contacts. We have nothing concrete, or wooden come to that, as yet but remain optimistic. More details as they emerge, but anyone interested in this idea should give names to me or Val. The more interest, the cheaper the overall cost.

The hall/hut has also served as a focus for a social get-together and communal meal on an evening and we intend to perpetuate this tradition too.

ODDS and SODS

CompassSport Cup.

At the time of typing, it seems probable that we will have been beaten by MDOC by around 6 points, which, given the opposition's pedigree, would be quite a creditable performance. I might have been able to give a more accurate indication but the results computer blew up!). Although we looked weakest in the middle of the junior age classes, it appears that it was MDOC's senior citizens who made the crucial difference. Oh well, at least Ann-Marie will be relieved of the job of negotiating more mutually acceptable fixtures for another year.

Strange But True Section. DVO Event hit by IRA bomb threat. It's true. Following the resumption of hostilities, Severn Trent has drawn up a list of possible targets, which includes improbably enough, the covered reservoir at the top of Crich Chase. Previously planned courses have had to be adjusted accordingly. I suggest that you do not go round in a balaclava.

Congratulations to Ann-Marie Priston and Paul Wright who have been accepted as Grade 3 controllers. Grade 3 and 2 controllers are in short supply. Any offers? (For the uninitiated G3 can control colour-coded events, G2 badge).

Coming to a DVO Camper van near you - DVO car stickers. Watch out for these at Crich?

Spotted. At the Wrekin event on 11th February, a NOC handout - for the Blidworth event - on 11th February. Derr.

Future Dates for your Diary.

Friday ~~Sunday~~, 5th July: Club Champs, Cromford, followed by a social at the Rugby Club, Cromford Meadows.
Organiser: Liz Tryner.

Summer League: starts on Friday, 10th May and continues for the next 12 weeks every Friday evening until 26th July at the traditional Allestree venue.
Organisers Derek and Jennifer Gale.

Saturday, 13th July: Midshires Relay. Watch this space.

June 15th. Football Rtg

FIXTURES

- 3rd March LOG Stapleford C-C SK/860565
Ian Durrant - 01522 532245
- 10th March DVO Crich Chase C-C SK/331543
Organiser: Kathryn Griffiths, 2 Chase Road, Ambergate,
Belper DE56 2HA - 01773 853152
White-Brown + String £2/£1/£5 family
- 16th March (SAT) DVO Drum Hill Short Race (part of Xanda
East Midland Short Series). Special entry form required.
Organiser: Judy Buckley, 253 Duffield Road, Allestree,
Derby DE3 1ET - 01332 552664
- 17th March NOC Sherwood Pines C-C SK/605620
John Sage - 0115 9396947
- 30th March LEI (SAT) Bradgate Park Badge Event SK/523117
Thelma Spalton, 5 Sheersby Close, Wigston, Leicester LE18
3NW - 0226 2888533 - £5 and £2.50 - Closing Date: 17/3/98
Chq: LEI OC.
- BEWARE: There is a 400 limit to entries, and this event is
supposed to be the East Midland Champs, although this
must be questionable in view of the limit on numbers.
- 31st March WCH Rawnsley Hills C-C SK/005132
Jan Ellis - 01785 816950
- 6th-8th April JK Orienteering Festival, Cleveland
Too late to enter, but colour-coded available.
- 20th April NOC Bestwood Short Race
- 21st April East Midland Junior Squad Benscliffe (Leics) C-C
Hilary Palmer - 0115 9820651
- 28th April DVO Allestree Park C-C SK/352409
White-Brown + String - £2/£1/£5 family
Organiser: Tim Mackervoy, 18 Cedar Street, Derby DE22 1GD
01332 557446
- 4th-6th May British Champs and Relays, Oban, Scotland
- 11th May LEI Beacon Hill Short Race
P Baldry - 0116 2673468
- 12th May DVO Stanton Moor C-C SK/242624
White-Brown + String - £2/£1/£5 family
Organiser: Andrew Kempton, 42 Kedleston Road, Derby DE22
1GU - 01332 345113
- 19th May LEI Burbage Moor C-C
- 23rd June DVO Shipley Park Relays
Enter-on-the-day Relays + Yellow + String - £2/£1/£5
Organiser: Kim Buxton, 5 Leafy Lane, Heanor DE7 7HB
01773 768631
- 15th Sept DVO Cromford Moor C-C
White-Brown + String - £2/£1/£5
Organiser: Colin MacDonald, 1 The Paddock, Church Street,
Monyash, Bakewell DE4 1JH - 01629 814001
- 12th Oct DVO Whitesprings C-C
- 10th Nov DVO Shining Cliff Badge
Organiser: Margaret Keeling 01773 - 852991
- 8th Dec DVO Eyam C-C

1997

- 17th May British Champs, Clumber
- 18th May British Relay Champs, Chatsworth