

# ***The West Midlander***

**Autumn 2020**



**The Newsletter of the  
West Midlands Orienteering Association**

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*The start at the WRE Long 'O' on the Long Mynd 13 September 2020*

*Photo: Martin Gibbons (WRE)*

## Editorial

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the 'West Midlander'. It was decided not to produce a Summer edition due to the lack of material because of the Lockdown.

2020 has been a very strange year with the global pandemic of Covid-19 taking a grip and changing all our lives since March. From 23 March we became much more restricted in what we could do and orienteering events suddenly vanished from the calendar. The British Championships and the JK were the early major casualties and, in the region, the WM Relays, WM Urban League and CompassSport Cup Final have been cancelled and it looks as though there might not be any more League events this year.

During this period all the region's clubs have set up MapRun courses and I have attempted to summarise these on page 21. POCs have also seen increased use as orienteers try to keep in practice.

In July restrictions were lifted and formal orienteering events were, once again, allowed. The region, however, has not held many events and those that were held were very restricted. WRE held the John Bennison Long 'O' on the Long Mynd, HOC held a score event at Castlemorton Common and OD held a 'club only' event at Itchington Holt. Beyond these few events there has been nothing. Landowners, particularly Local Authorities, seem very reluctant to grant permissions though this does not seem to be such a problem in some other regions.

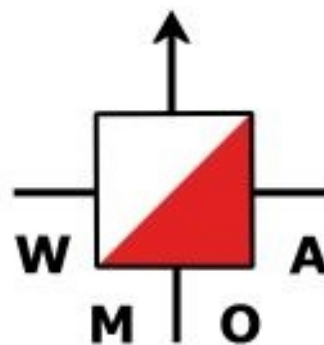
A second Covid-19 Lockdown came into place on 5 November for a four week period causing further cancellations of planned events. At the time of writing there seems to be little hope of events other than MapRun in the region though a mass vaccination appears imminent which may help.

Enjoy your Christmas and stay safe.

Rod

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**Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting 8 June 2020****via Zoom**

1. **Present:** R. Collins, C. Dredge, B. Elkington, M. Elkington, B. Ford, I. Gamlen, J. Howell, R. Lewis, H. Morgan, R. Postlethwaite, R. Rogers, K. Strain, M. White, A. Williams.
2. **Apologies:** R. Brandon, B. Morgan, S. Parker, A. Pickles.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
4. **Acceptance of Previous Minutes:** Amendment to minutes: Item 15 (AOB) - It was not agreed to reimburse HOC for costs re Postenplain. Club reps were asked to go back to clubs to get feedback on what to do.
5. **Matters Arising:** None.
6. **Correspondence:** None.
7. **Chairman's Report:**

R. Lewis was hopeful that orienteering would soon recommence with some organisational changes. He noted that in 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease led to development of Urban Orienteering. Clubs are actively looking at alternatives e.g. MapRun, Permanent Courses. Hopefully these will attract new people to the sport.

8. **Treasurer's Report:**

I. Gamlen reported very little change since March.

WMOA: £9527    WMJS: £2884

It was agreed to donate £500 more to the WMJS to bring the total for the year to £1000 as normal. M. Elkington thanked the committee for this and explained that the expected quizzes and cake sales were not able to go ahead but JIRCs may still go ahead at some point with possible increased costs for travel and accommodation.

9. **Fixtures:**

There were some tentative plans to reschedule major events from 2020 to 2021 but this was not simple due to availability of the areas. All events on club websites to be cancelled until the end of June. A. Williams to help clubs on restart to avoid clashes, etc.

The **WM Leagues** were discussed. It was agreed to decide on these at the next meeting when we know more - extra events could be added to the Leagues.

**POTOC:** to continue with CS Cup/ Trophy in 2021 as it has to be held in March. HOC may use Postensplain for CS Cup/ Trophy in 2022 as a February date was possible that year.

J. Howell asked if clubs were rescheduling missed events.

**OD:** The Summer Series has been abandoned. CS Cup/ Trophy Final is in question. Whether the December event at Brandon Woods is to be held will be decided in the Autumn. Planning to hold Saturday morning events in the Autumn if possible.

**HOC:** The Birmingham Urban has been cancelled this year and will not be rescheduled in 2021. The 2022 planned date remains the same.

**POTOC:** are not rescheduling events. Planning to hold the WM Champs in November.

**WRE:** The Telford Urban event may possibly be rearranged for New Year's Day.

**HOC:** are unsure of plans for rescheduling events.

**WCH:** The July Urban League event is planned to be rescheduled possibly next year.

**10. West Midlander:**

One West Midlander has been produced. It was agreed to combine the Summer and Autumn editions due to lack of content. R. Postlethwaite has been researching WM champions (at present he is back to 1991) and WM Night League. Let him know of any results from earlier.

**11. WMOA Website:**

M. White: The Laurie Bradley/ TSB Trophy has been added. A list of all the events that have been cancelled has been put up. Any virtual orienteering events can be put on the site - the POTOE MapRuns are already on.

R. Rogers: a clean out of site has been done.

Web pages on how to use MapRun are to be added in the future.

R. Lewis: the website is very good and up to date all the time. He expressed thanks to M. White and R. Rogers.

**12. Development:**

H. Morgan: There are no planned courses at the moment.

**OD:** are planning weekly MapRuns in parks over the Summer and promoting POCs in the same parks. Maps are available to use in addition to using the phone app.

**POTOE:** are planning MapRuns - maps are available as well.

**WRE:** Duncan Bayliss had planned a virtual orienteering course around Shrewsbury though some Google Street View images were out of date.

J. Howell suggested trying a West Midland MapRun League with 3-4 runs to count for a year. The limitation is some people not having smartphones. A Winter Night Urban League was also suggested.

R. Rogers suggested it was easier to use post box reference points.

**13. Events and Competitions Committee:**

The next meeting was planned for 2/3 weeks time though it was unsure if it will take place.

**14. West Midlands Junior Squad:**

A lack of children in W/M 14 age group is worrying. There was no-one to put forward for Laganllia which has now been cancelled.

The cancellation of the Midland Championships gives children nothing to aim for. (A. Williams raised the question of the Midland Championships at the fixtures meeting but nothing was moving forward on this).

Deeside Tour cancelled.

The Squad Tour with the EMOA to Sweden has been cancelled and the flight money has been lost.

The Junior Squad e-mail address has changed (M. Elkington to e-mail Mike Farrington).

**15. Club Round up:**

❑ **COBOC:** are developing MapRuns. The Sutton Parks Gates Race is to be run this way and is available throughout June.

❑ **HOC:** had used Photo 'O'. The 'June Jaunter' is to use MapRun.

- ❑ **OD:** all events are cancelled until October. Focussing on MapRuns in Country Parks with the intention of, hopefully, recruiting new members.
- ❑ **POTOC:** The West Midlands Schools Championships in March were cancelled. The Park Series and Barbecue have also been cancelled. The West Midlands Championships in November at Bathpool are still awaiting permissions.
- ❑ **WCH:** There is enthusiasm for MapRun within club. Some practice courses have been put out to check that they work with the app. Events will appear on the website soon. Struggling with access permissions from both the County Council and the Forestry Commission. It is hoped to develop them over Summer.
- ❑ **WRE:** The Summer Series consists of post box and street events.

#### 16. AOB:

R. Lewis asked all clubs for feedback on giving £300 to HOC for expenses for the cancelled CompassSport Cup event at Postensplain. After much discussion it was agreed that WMOA would pay £300 to HOC. R. Lewis and I. Gamlen both stressed that this was not a precedent.

B. Elkington had circulated an e-mail about POCs printed from the BOF website which were not good quality/ the wrong colours and the wrong scale. The issue had been raised previously with BOF but there had been little response. A question about rectifying this had been e-mailed to the Webinar on the 'Back to Orienteering Plan' scheduled for Tuesday 9 June. If there was no answer it will be put to the BOF AGM. All clubs agreed that the maps were not good enough and they needed to be right as this is the only source of orienteering at the moment.

No POC maps are to be put on club websites. They all to go on BOF site as central location and easy to see downloads and other statistics.

#### 17. Next Meeting:

14 September 2020 (probably via Zoom).

The Meeting closed at 9pm. Thanks to Allan Williams for facilitating this meeting.

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## Minutes of Supplementary WMOA Committee Meeting

20 July 2020  
via Zoom

1. **Present:** C. Dredge, B. Elkington, B. Ford, I. Gamlen, R. Lewis, H. Morgan, S. Parker, R. Postlethwaite, R. Rogers, K. Strain, M. White, A. Williams.
2. **Apologies:** R. Collins, B. Morgan.

R. Lewis stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss future plans to restart WMOA events following guidance from BOF. From August small scale events using electronic punching are able to be held subject to BOF guidelines.

A. Williams had e-mailed all the WMOA clubs fixtures secretaries. All were being cautious and didn't feel resumption of League events would be fair at the moment, maybe it would be possible by October. All clubs planning to do what they feel they can do safely following guidelines.

A. Williams to deal with any fixture conflicts in WMOA. Next National Fixtures meeting set for October but there is the possibility that it may be before that.

### 3. **Club Round Up:** Each club was invited to share their plans:

- ▣ **OD:** B. Elkington: Events are to be initially pre-entry for club members only. Spare slots, after a time, will be offered to other WMOA competitors and then to other associations to control numbers. Plan to use Fabian 4 for entries but not start times. Individuals to allocate start times and publish them on the web to be e-mailed out by Fabian 4.

The biggest concern is gaining permission to stage events with councils reluctant to set a precedent with orienteering.

The event on the calendar for 27 September has no venue as yet. Ideally the club will stage a Colour-Coded event using SI with 90-120 people to make the organisation worthwhile.

CSCup Final planned for Sutton Park in October. Will they get permission? Sutton Park are not granting permission for any events in September **BUT** by October football stadiums could be holding 25000 people!

The WM League event at Brandon Woods in December is a case of seeing what happens.

- ▣ **WRE:** S. Parker: Long 'O' on the Long Mynd on 13 September is still going ahead because there will be a small numbers of competitors (40-50) and it is an open area. Pre-entry only through SI. Maybe a shorter course will be introduced as well. The next event on 29 November is a WM League at Nesscliffe Country Park and the club is still planning to hold this.
- ▣ **POTOC:** H. Morgan: There is a Local event on the calendar for the beginning of September but we are unsure of gaining permission to hold it. There is a plan to use PayPal for pre-entry and it will be open to all WMOA clubs. Still planning to run regular MapRun events. The WM Champs on 22 November are going ahead with planning and permissions.
- ▣ **COBOC:** I. Gamlen: COBOC's aim is to promote orienteering to newcomers. BOF guidance states that no events for Beginners/ Novices are to be held. Using MapRun events once a month is to continue in different parks in Birmingham as there are no permission problems with these. No other events are to be held before next year.
- ▣ **WCH:** No committee member was present to give feedback on the next steps. 11 October at Haywood Warren and 13 December on Shoal Hill. Both events have been left in place with the hope of running them.

### 4. **Junior Report:**

K. Strain highlighted the problems of trying to keep Squad active at this time. There are restrictions in place regarding coaching numbers and the number of coaches needed.

The squad are using Zoom to do on-line training weekly which comprises a mixture of physical and technical training sessions. It is hoped to start monthly outdoor training sessions from August. No permissions or areas are fixed as yet.

WRE Long 'O' event: can anything be offered to the Squad? S. Parker is to raise this with the Organiser.

There is a plea to not neglect Juniors at this time as they are losing a year in their 'O' development. New Juniors are needed to come through into Squad.

B. Elkington: The WMOA needs to put on events where Juniors can take part - not street events but small woods.

### 5. **Toilets:**

R. Postlethwaite: How are we going to deal with these?

The Guidelines say there are no requirements to have them at the moment but gives guidance re queuing, disinfecting, etc. if the event has mobile toilets. A. Williams suggested that toilet companies may now provide enhanced sanitation. It was stressed that there was a need to have toilets at events as companies need to be supported at this time. The extra expense of these could be added to entry fees.

#### 6. **MapRuns:**

R. Lewis suggested that we could try to organise a simple WMOA League using MapRun over the next few months. It would need strict finishing dates for MapRuns so points could be allocated.

- The tracking of people who have gone round previously can be seen so there is an unfair advantage to people running later.
- It depends too much on technology of the smartphones being used as some work much better than others leading to unfair competition.

The decision was not to run a MapRun League.

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### **Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting      14 September 2020      via Zoom**

1. **Present:** C. Dredge, B. Elkington, M. Elkington, B. Ford, I. Gamlen, R. Lewis, M. Denham, R. Postlethwaite, R. Rogers, M. White, A. Williams.
2. **Apologies:** R. Brandon, R. Collins, J. Howell, B. Morgan, H. Morgan, K. Strain.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
4. **Acceptance of Previous Minutes:** 8 June and 20 July were accepted
5. **Matters Arising:** None.
6. **Correspondence:** BOF Association Returns Form - C. Dredge to complete and return. E-mail from Peter Hart re: 'groups of 6' is not affecting orienteering as an organised sport with Covid-19 regulations. An update of the 'Review of Return to Orienteering' allows increased numbers at starts.
7. **Chairman's Report:**

It is pleasing to see that events are now starting to take place. Clubs' MapRun events continue to provide new challenges. MapRun is now also being used by running clubs and for fell races so perhaps this is a way to encourage them into orienteering? Clubs seem to be able to manage Covid-19 rules but getting landowners to give permission to hold events is the problem. JK 2021 in the South West has been cancelled.

The WMOA web page is looking good with up to date content and news. Thanks to M. White and R. Rogers.

#### 8. **Treasurer's Report:**

Financially it has been very quiet. There has been a slight loss this year as the levy income is lower than anticipated. Money has been saved on not holding meetings at the Great Barr Hotel



and the fact that the English Orienteering Council has not required payment. Brian Laycock is to inspect the accounts prior to AGM.

#### 9. Fixtures:

Events are starting to happen again. The CS Cup Final has been lost but the embargo is to be kept in place at moment as it may be the Final next year. Heats may not take place in February/ March next year so it may be the same clubs in the Final.

**Urban League:** No events have taken place.

#### **West Midlands League:**

7 **WCH** Haywood Warren on 11 October is hopefully taking place with up to 300 entries.

8 **HOC** 15 November if somewhere can be found with permission for enough people and a large enough car park.

9 **POTOC** Bathpool on 22 November incorporating WM Champs still awaiting permissions.

10 **WRE** Nesscliffe on 29 November - still hoping to go ahead.

11 **OD** Brandon Woods on 6 December - waiting on numbers allowed.

**WCH** Shoal Hill on 13 December is a possibility for a League event if others fall through.

A BOF Events Scheduling Group meeting is coming up via Zoom. After this the structure of next year's League/ Urban events is to be discussed between WMOA Club Fixtures Secretaries and A. Williams.

#### 10. West Midlander:

R. Postlethwaite is trying to put something together with a plea for articles. It was suggested that there could be reports of the Long Mynd event.

#### 11. WMOA Website:

The continued embargo of Sutton Park is to be put on the website.

#### 12. Development:

Nothing to report.

#### 13. Events and Competitions Committee:

Nothing to report until major events start happening again.

#### 14. West Midlands Junior Squad:

West Midlands Junior Squad training is beginning again with a session for three Squad members at Elmdon Park. Originally there were four but, sadly, one has had to quarantine due to a Covid-19 case in his year group at school.

Two other training sessions are planned, one at Hartshill and one at Itchington Holt. All three will be Covid-19 secure by following British Orienteering coaching guidelines. In view of the lack of opportunities for children to orienteer this year we would like to offer the opportunity to any 12 year old and above that has done an Orange course to start training with the squad. In order to keep numbers at the right level we may need assistance from parents so please could you let us have contact details for any 12 year old that you think may be interested.

There is no flexibility to just turn up at any training at present so they would need to have booked a place by our closing date so that we can ensure we have the correct ratios of adults to children and to get maps printed and bagged for each participant in time.

In addition we will be running Zoom technical and circuit sessions for the Squad.

Discussion followed with names of children who may be suitable given to Mel Elkington.

#### 15. AGM:

##### **Monday 12 October at 7.30pm by Zoom.**

The Zoom account allows up to 100 people to attend. C. Dredge to e-mail the clubs for forward distribution to their members. Any nominations for officers and members attending to e-mail C. Dredge prior to the meeting. AOB to be submitted 7 days before the AGM.

#### 16. Club Round up:

- ❑ **COBOC:** Birmingham City Council are not allowing use of their Parks so the club are putting on MapRun courses only. Lickey Hills has a new POC.
- ❑ **HOC:** Looking at where they can put on bigger event. Castlemorton Common on 20 September is initially open to HOC/ COBOC members and will be opened up to others to fill start times. MapRuns are continuing.
- ❑ **OD:** Itchington Holt on 26 September is a private forest, therefore not subject to local authority restrictions, and is for OD members only. There is a big push on MapRuns and POCs. Looking for permissions for October/ November events.
- ❑ **POTOC:** The MapRuns being held once a week are all well used (30/40 per event) with no permissions needed. A few new members have been gained. The Local Event at Central Forest Park Hanley has been cancelled as there was no guarantee of permission being granted.
- ❑ **WCH:** (via e-mail) Permissions are in place for Haywood Warren.
- ❑ **WRE:** No update.

#### 17. AOB:

The Great Barr Hotel had been in contact regarding future meetings. C. Dredge had e-mailed in April/ May saying that we would be in touch if and when we can hold meetings there again.

A. Williams asked if we needed these meetings to be held there given the cost of travel etc. Is Zoom the way forward? I. Gamlen said that Zoom would be more difficult if contentious issues were to be discussed.

R. Lewis thanked A. Williams for again hosting the meeting. It was agreed to contribute to A. Williams' Zoom account.

#### 18. Next Meeting:

AGM: Monday 12 October (via Zoom).

Regular meeting: 14 December 2020 (via Zoom).

### **British Orienteering Awards 2020**

In the annual BOF awards Alison Sloman (HOC) was awarded the Bonington Trophy for the best contribution to Mapping - congratulations.

In the Volunteer of the Year category, John Heaton (POTOC) was in the runners-up position. For many years he has been the mainstay of POTOC taking on many roles within the club including mapping, welfare and POC management not to mention organising and planning many of the club's events - congratulations.

**WMOA AGM Minutes****Great Barr Hotel****14 October 2019**

1. **Present:** R. Lewis (Chairman & WRE), R. Collins (Vice-Chairman & WCH), C. Dredge (Secretary & WCH), I. Gamlen (Treasurer & COBOC), R. Postlethwaite (West Midlander & WRE); A. Williams (Fixtures & WCH); M. Elkington (WMJS & OD); H. Lawson (WMJS & OD); K. Strain (WMJS & OD), M. Denham (POTOC), B. Elkington (OD), D. Finlay-Robinson (WCH), B. Ford (HOC), J. Howell (WCH), R. Rogers (WRE), R. Scott (HOC), R. Vickers (HOC), M. White (HOC).
2. **Apologies:** B. Morgan (POTOC), H. Morgan (POTOC).
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
4. **Acceptance of Minutes of previous AGM:** The minutes of the 2019 AGM were proposed as a true record by R. Postlethwaite and seconded by R. Collins.
5. **Matters Arising:** None.
6. **Correspondence:** None.
7. **Chairman's Report:** Richard Lewis

Before compiling this report I read over the 2019 AGM minutes, reports and comments, and one thing I noted was Ian's date and venue for 2020 tonight. The venue was noted as 'To Be Confirmed'.

Did Ian know something we didn't as for many years we have been to Great Barr?

2020 started off with the Laurie Bradley Trophy where those competing gathered at Baggeridge Country Park. What a fine event it was with WRE coming out as winners followed by HOC with OD in 3rd position, thus breaking the stronghold OD have had on the trophy for a number of years.

During January we launched our new look WMOA website bringing news information and anything you need to know about orienteering in the West Midlands at the touch of a button. This was developed by Marian White (HOC) and Richard Rogers (WRE) and hosted by Mike Farrington (HOC). Marian is the person who is keeping all the info updated on a daily basis.

Due to Covid-19 our WMOA league has only been able to hold 3 events so far and currently WCH are leading by a slender 86 points from OD. The pandemic has decimated our plans and fixture lists and made planning for the future difficult. Although all our clubs have excellent Risk Assessments and preparations, including following the BOF guidelines which have enabled some events to take place, our landowners and managers of orienteering areas are very cautious and unwilling yet to give permission.

We have already lost next year's JK 2021 with land access problems and I think it's going to be a while before we can get back to 2019 levels.

We also need to look at the costs when we get back into Forestry areas under the new agreement signed in August. This is something the committee will be discussing in the future.

However, let's conclude on a positive note with orienteers being orienteers we have found alternative routes to get our fix and enjoy our sport. Most clubs in our region and beyond have been successful in developing MapRun courses and, whilst these are not the same competitively or socially, it is a way to keep our hands in but not the same as discussing routes in car parks after the event.

MapRun, however, may be a way forward in providing individual and club competitions within the WMOA and further afield. It is something we will discuss at our next committee meeting, and if you have anything you would like to add please let your club rep know or e-mail me.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank our committee for the support, help and understanding they have given me over the last 12 months.

This next year will be my final year, if elected, so maybe now is the time to start to think whether you would like to take over the role after my term is up.

#### 8. **Treasurer's Report:** Ian Gamlen

It has been an unusual year financially for the WMOA due to COVID-19 which has meant that from March 2020 until now very few orienteering events have taken place that have exceeded 40 adult participants, resulting in very little income for the WMOA from March 2020.

In terms of income the WMOA collected £1278.50 from WM event levies, less than the £2500 budgeted for due to events being cancelled from 16/03/2020.

In terms of expenditure this has generally been lower than anticipated due to the following:

1. Lower than anticipated committee expenses - £447.20 rather than the £600 budgeted for.
2. No English Orienteering Council fees for which £500 was budgeted for.

There was, however, an unexpected expenditure of £300 due to the cancellation of the qualifying round of the Compass Sport Cup/ Trophy in March 2020.

Overall the WMOA Treasurer Account had a deficit of £890.80 and the WMJS had a surplus of £494.43.

Going forward as of 01/09/2020:

WMOA Treasurer Account           £8727.86

WMJS Account                           £3402.27

The accounts have been inspected by Brian Laycock of Malvern and he confirms that they are an accurate and true record.

Questions about accounts:

Richard Lewis asked whether the English Orienteering Council fee would have to be paid at some point. Barry Elkington stated that there would be no charge this year but there would be a normal charge for 2020/21.

#### **Budget for 2020/21:**

Normally I would propose a budget for 2020-21, however, as both income and expenditure is totally unpredictable I suggest that, in terms of income, we continue to charge a WM event levy as follows:

- ▣ Juniors and up to 40 adults - no fee.
- ▣ £1 for the 41st adult and £1 each adult thereafter.

In terms of expenditure this will be paid by the Treasurer as and when necessary. For amounts less than £100 this can be authorised by the agreement of both the Treasurer and Chairman. For amounts greater than £100 this will be agreed by the WMOA Committee as a whole.

I have highlighted to the WMOA Committee that one of the disadvantages of the WMOA relying on an event levy is that it does make us financially less secure in exceptional times such

as when events do not take place as anticipated. A more financially secure source of income would be to charge a West Midlands membership fee which can be collected on our behalf by British Orienteering as part of the British Orienteering membership fee. Alternatively a combination of the 2 income sources could be considered. I suggest that the new WMOA Committee put this issue on the agenda for the next WMOA committee meeting so that this can be openly discussed and some options can be brought forward at the next AGM.

Richard Lewis proposed the accounts were accepted and Allan Williams seconded.

#### 9. **Fixtures Report:** Allan Williams

2020 got off to a normal start with the traditional New Year's Day Score Event at Baggeridge Country Park. By the start of February three League events had been completed and Walton Chasers were in the lead. Things then started to take a turn for the worst and there were dark clouds on the horizon. Storm Dennis caused the cancellation of our CompassSport Cup qualifier and for a time it looked like we were all going to be washed away. That turned out to be the least of our worries!

On 14 March I attended the Event Scheduling meeting in an unusually quiet Birmingham - there were no visiting football fans in town that day and professional sport was already being cancelled. BOF were on the verge of calling off the JK but the following weekend's British Championships still looked on. Most CompassSport cup rounds took place the next day.

On the following Thursday HOC's Night Street League in Worcester became the first of a long list of events to be cancelled. Our normal year of orienteering had come to an end.

For several weeks, as Lockdown progressed, all was quiet but then, in May, orienteering showed its resilience and ability to adapt, just as it had done when Foot and Mouth struck. From May onwards the new craze was MapRun.

Since August it has been good to see clubs start to hold conventional events, doing what they can within the restrictions. Even though these events are being conducted under very complex regulations, if ever there was a group of people who are happy to read, digest and act on pages of complex instructions it's us. It's clear that in 2020 we will have a truncated League and, sadly, there won't be a West Midlands Championship.

On Saturday I will be attending the Event Scheduling Group meeting by Zoom and I am holding another virtual meeting for the WMOA Fixtures Secretaries on the 27th. We usually use that meeting to map out the coming year but I think we will find that difficult. It seems that clubs should just do what they can until we find we can begin to operate a bit more normally.

A discussion followed the report about the possibility of holding the West Midlands Championship at another event. It was agreed that the Championships should be held at the first WM event that was able to have a suitable number of competitors, providing this was agreed by the organising club. Potentially this could be OD's event at Brandon Woods with WCH's event at Shoal Hill in reserve.

#### 10. **Other Reports:**

**WMJS Report:** (see page 15)

Richard Lewis thanked Mel, Kirsten and Harriet for all their work with the Squad.

**West Midlander:** Rod Postlethwaite

An issue of the West Midlander would hopefully be out within the next few weeks. There is a shortage of articles and no fixtures or league information to include.

**11. Election of Officers:**

Position	Nomination	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman	Richard Lewis	C. Dredge	R. Collins
Vice Chairman	Ray Collins	B. Elkington	A. Williams
Secretary	Carol Dredge	M. Elkington	R. Postlethwaite
Treasurer	Ian Gamlen	R. Scott	C. Dredge
Fixtures	Allan Williams	M. Denham	I. Gamlen
Newsletter Editor	Rod Postlethwaite	R. Lewis	I. Gamlen

Marian White and Richard Rogers were happy to continue as Webmasters.

Mel Elkington, Harriet Lawson and Kirsten Strain were happy to continue running the WMJS.

**12. Review of Data Policy:**

M. White proposed that the Policy be only reviewed every two years unless, due to a change in legislation, it needed updating. Seconded by R. Rogers.

**13. Any Other Business:**

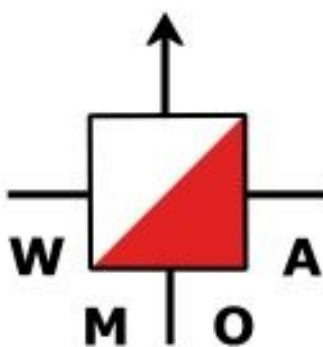
I. Gamlen asked whether future committee meetings and, possibly, next year's AGM would continue to be held over Zoom. R. Lewis suggested that maybe the committee should get together once a year. To be discussed at the next Committee Meeting.

R. Collins pointed out that Southern England were holding a MapRun Urban League and suggested that the WMOA should do the same. It was agreed that I. Gamlen would set up a Zoom meeting with MapRun specialists from each club to discuss the feasibility of this idea. Ian thought this would be a good way of getting money for WMOA. Ian to report back to next Committee Meeting.

**14. Next WMOA AGM:** 11 October 2020. Venue to be confirmed.

**Next WMOA Committee Meeting:** 14 December 2019 via Zoom.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.35.



## West Midlands Junior Squad Report:

### September 2019 to September 2020



We started on 22 September 2019 after the West Midlands Relays at Whitfield Valley with a post event training session. Then, on the weekend of the 28/29 September 2019, the Junior Inter-Regional Championships took place at Cowms Rocks with the Relays being held on Tankersley on the Sunday.

The team was:

M18 (Brown)	Oliver Flippance, Felix Lunn, Ollie Lunn, Henry Webb
M16 (Blue)	Matt Bambrook, Nathan Chapple, David Knott, Jacob Oxtoby
M14 (Light Green)	Oscar Barnby, Lewis Oxtoby
W18 (Blue)	Holly Craig
W16 (Green)	Florence & Tabitha Lunn, Pippa Smart, Holly Stodgell,
W14 (Light Green)	Josie Smart

Kirsten Strain, Harriet Lawson, Rob Smart and Mike Barnby accompanied the team. The boys were 11th in the Individual and 8th in the Relays finishing 9th overall boys team. The girls were 7th in the Individual and 6th in the Relays finishing 6th girls team, putting the whole Squad into 7th position overall.

On 19 October 2019, the Squad trained on Burton Dassett. Then, on the 2 November 2019, a training session was held on Shoal Hill. Late November saw some of our M/W 16s heading up to Hawkhead to take part in a weekend of training with all the other Regional squads.

To finish 2019, on the 15 December 2019, the Squad enjoyed a festive themed training session on Hartshill. In early January 2020 a couple of the Squad attended a training session on Big Moor run by the YHOA squad. On the 29 February 2020 there was a session held on The Wrekin concentrating on contour interpretation.

Several successful cake stalls were held. There were regular e-mails to Squad members throughout April, May and June.

Kirsten ran a West Midland Junior Squad 'Lockdown Challenge' throughout the Lockdown period, which some of the squad participated in. Weekly Zoom training sessions, both technical and physical, were held in July.

Sadly, we had no one to put forward for Lagganlia this year. Florence Lunn, however, was successfully put forward for the Deeside tour which was run virtually.

The Squad intended to go to Sweden this year with the East Midland Squad which, unfortunately, was cancelled. Flights had been already been booked and paid for.

## Kath Wright (OD) W75



It is sad to report that in early August Kath died peacefully in the wonderful care of the Warwick Care Home where she had been resident for almost 3 years.

Together for 54 years, her husband John recalls that in 1978 they saw an advert for orienteering in Warwick Library. The family, including daughters Jane and Anna, joined Octavian Droobers. Their first event was at Badby Woods near Daventry, on the Wayfarers course. This began many years of challenging enjoyment and cheerful camaraderie. Kath became a third OD W35 along with Maureen Chapman and Janet Farmer. When asked to make up a W35 Relay team, Kath jettisoned her short, cream wellingtons in favour of trainers in order to look the part!

Kath soon achieved Gold standard (due to accurate navigation), ran in the Swedish 'O Ringen', and became W40B British Champion (claiming there weren't many participants!). Kath organised, planned and surveyed the first black and white map of St Nicholas Park in Warwick, drawing the map with a Rotring pen.

Kath is particularly remembered for cooking breakfast for many years, latterly with Hilary Simpson, and cheerfully welcoming finishers of the Octavian Night Race with a deserved breakfast. This would include John, who had to cover 20 miles in the dark to earn her Full English.

In 2012 Kath broke her neck falling downstairs in a holiday cottage which led to a loss of orientation and spatial awareness. Doggedly Kath tried to continue orienteering but eventually had to accept her limitations. Hilary accompanied Kath on regular monthly walks before the need for residential care became apparent.

John and family wish to express their sincere thanks for all the many expressions of sympathy and support which they have received from near and far.





## My Covid-19 Year Diary

Carol Dredge (WCH)

**23 February**

**DVO Event at Lindop**

*Incredible floods in the fields on the way there and we noticed a car, with water up to its bonnet, stuck in a ford at Tissington. Arrived at the car park to a torrential downpour and a long walk to the start. My first leg began with a long uphill track run and then more uphill scrambling to the control. (Not my favourite start to any event!). The weather was clearing up but still there was more uphill to number 2 but then most of real climb was thankfully over. Controls 6-13 were either contouring on a steep slope bisected by many streams, or steep downhill. After slipping over numerous times I decided it was safer on my backside as my 'O' shoes seemed to have no grip in the thick mud. By the time I finished the sun was shining and the long walk back to the car park with Mike and Oscar Barmby was spent discussing our courses and future events. Little did we know .....*

**5 March**

*A 5 day family holiday to Lanzarote. Incredible weather, a beautiful spot and great family time. Covid-19 scenes in Italy seemed in a different world. Planning to return in October.*

**23 March - LOCKDOWN!!**

*The first few weeks consisted of long daily walks (2-3 hours) across Cannock Chase. When it seemed as though you were only allowed to go out once a day for exercise it seemed a waste to use that on a 40 minute run.*

**May**

*Began running again, every other day, when restrictions allowed you to exercise more than once a day. The road across The Chase was closed due to fire risk and I often went for a long walk, bike ride or run and saw no one once out of the village.*

*MapRuns were now being promoted by many clubs but, for me, the pleasure of orienteering has always been finding the flag. Waiting for my phone to ping (or not) had no real attraction so continued just running from home.*

**July**

*At the West Midlands committee meeting it appeared that WRE were still hoping to put on their Long 'O' event on the Long Mynd in September following new Covid regulations.*

*Normally Long 'O' and big hills hold no great attraction to me but desperate times.....*

**August**

*Continued running from home every other day on a mixture of public footpaths and on Cannock Chase.*

**3 September**

*5 minutes into my run I tripped over large tree root and landed heavily on my knee. All seemed OK so I carried on running for an hour. Two days later, after no pain at all when walking or going up and down stairs, I went for a run. Excruciating pain, inside my knee cap for the first few hundred metres but then it calmed down. This continued each time I ran until the Wrekin Long 'O' event.*

**13 September      Wrekin Long 'O' at the Long Mynd**

*A beautiful sunny day on the Long Mynd. I had entered the Very Short course as hills are not my thing but it would be great to be out again. Everything about the event set up felt 'very safe.' Hand sanitiser at a well organised and socially distanced start run by only two people.*

*Once the map was picked up it felt just like a normal event although the map scale of 1:15000 took a bit of time to adjust to. I quickly learnt that longer routes on paths were preferable to wading through knee high heather. All went relatively OK until leaving the penultimate control. Heading out correctly upwards over an open area I spotted my husband on a path lower down. A 6 minute leg then took me 18 minutes as I convinced myself, wrongly, that I needed to be on the same path. I dropped down to a stream from the last control and then it was a steep climb up the other side to the finish. Sanitiser at Download brought me back to reality but for over an hour I had forgotten all the world's problems and just enjoyed having a map, compass and SI card in my hands. There was no standing around chatting and discussing routes but it was a great return to orienteering. Thanks Wrekin!*

**14th September**

*As my knee was no better, or worse, after the Long 'O' and being concerned about doing long term damage I made a trip to the Physio. Severe bruising inside my knee was affecting the muscles in my upper leg. Acupuncture was amongst the treatments I was given and lots of exercises and heat and ice to do at home. There was no running for a week but on my return I was given the all clear to run the Lincoln City Race on the following Sunday. It will be nice to do a small Urban race again and while away a few hours somewhere different wandering around Lincoln.*

**27 September          Lincoln City Race**

*Looking at Routegadget it looked a great area and courses with lots of tricky route choices. Unfortunately Bob came down with a really heavy cold, cough and sore throat on the Saturday so all bets were off for Lincoln.*

**October**

*Looking at the BOF Diary there are very few local events on. There are a few in the Lakes as it appears to be easier to gain access from farmers/ landowners up there, so planning a trip to the house up there later in the month. It could be a long Winter with no orienteering to look forward to.*



*Carol in action at the Long Mynd Long 'O'*

*Photo: Martin Gibbons (WRE)*

## Lake District Junior Selection Races 28-30 August 2020

### Lil Bales (POTOC)



*Ellie Bales in action*

It was with about 2 weeks notice that Ellie announced she wanted to take part in the Junior Selection Races which had been hastily re-arranged from April. Being the Bank Holiday weekend, the only campsite we could find was on a farm usually used as a wedding venue. Consequently the facilities amounted to portaloos and a tap!

Constant rainfall in the days before we left made us concerned about the conditions there, but a quick phone call reassured us that the campsite was fine. On arrival, we realised that further rain had made conditions rather muddy on the tracks leading onto and off the field. "Don't worry if you get stuck, we have a tractor to pull you off" they said enthusiastically. However, we knew that having pitched our tent, we had to get promptly to Windermere in good time for the Friday evening Sprint Race. As predicted, we got stuck in the mud attempting to leave the field, but with a little muscle power the car slid just far enough to get through the gate and onto the firmer farm track. By this time Ellie

was getting even more nervous about her race. Unfortunately the race did not go well for Ellie. She got a bad stitch and at one point had to stand still for fear she was going to throw up. She did manage to complete the course, finishing 7th out of 8 in W20. Not a good start to the weekend.

The Long and Middle Distance events both took place on the Northern end of the Graythwaite Estate and were combined for W18s and W20s. Saturday's Long was over 6km with 325m of climb. Ellie made a mistake on the first leg which did not help her confidence but she was steady over the remainder of the course to put her in 12th place out of the 17 finishers (There were several non-finishers!).

After the event we drove into Milnthorpe and consoled ourselves with a Chinese takeaway banquet which we took back to eat in our tent. By this time the campsite was full to capacity with stay at home Covid-19 campers. That evening we were glad that we had packed extra clothing and blankets as the temperature plummeted to single figures - the coldest night of the summer so far! We were soon cosy and warm in our sleeping bags and enjoyed a good night's sleep.

We had a very early start the next morning as we had to pack away the tent and all our belongings. Luckily the sun and wind had dried out the field and so our departure from the campsite was unhindered by mud which was just as well as we had to find a petrol station on the way to the event to be sure of getting there!

Thankfully the Middle Race brought a smile back to Ellie's face. The course was only 2.6km with 150m of climb but was very tricky and most of the competitors had at least one bad leg. Ellie was in 4th place at control 4 but a 2 minute error on leg 5 saw her drop down to 9th position. In spite of a further blip on the 9th leg, Ellie finished in a very creditable 8th place out of the 19 finishers. She beat some very good competitors from both age categories including a rare victory over Junior World Championship Gold Medallist Grace Molloy! The Middle Race was won by one of Ellie's new flatmates in Edinburgh who she now has the opportunity to train with more regularly. We are keeping our fingers crossed that this will bring out further improvement in Ellie in the months to come!

## MapRun 2020

Whilst conventional orienteering events have been in short supply in the West Midlands since the Covid-19 pandemic struck all the region's clubs have set up MapRun courses with POTOC being the early adopter and leading light. The following is a round up of those activities with more details to be found on the individual club websites.

### COBOC

The traditional Sutton Park Gates race could not take place as normal but the club set up a MapRun course and kept the event open between the 11 and 31 August with many competitors having multiple runs. Two other courses are available at Handsworth Park (a 60 minute score event) and another at Lickey Hills using some of the new POC controls.

### HOC

HOC have set up a variety of MapRun courses using ordinary 'O' maps and maps derived from Ollie O'Brien's Open Orienteering Map. A series of Urban maps were available at Birmingham (Billesley), Redditch (Church Hill and Walkwood) and Worcester St. Peters.

The regular Summer Series was cancelled but MapRun courses were available at Burlish Top and Sandwell Valley and there was a 'Quiz O' at Baggeridge and Himley. A number of courses were also available at Arrow Valley in Redditch using the revamped POC.

For the Autumn Kinver Edge hosted an event and there is a MapRun at the Wyre Forest which is open from 1 November until 31 January 2021.

### OD

OD have adapted their traditional Summer Series to use MapRun and the events comprise their normal Long, Medium and Short courses.

Week	Course	Week	Course
1	Memorial Park	8	Draycote
2	Hartshill	9	Elmdon
3	Pooley	10	Burton Dassett
4	Coombe Park	11	Coundon
5	Malvern Park	12	Kenilworth
6	Daventry	13	Borough Hill
7	Burbage		

The Autumn/ Winter Series is now underway with the first event being at Hawkesbury. Further events will appear in due course utilising areas not previously used for orienteering or not used for a very long time.

### WCH

Chasers held a short Summer Series with events at Shoal Hill, Lichfield, Stafford Castle, Brindley and Weeping Cross, Stafford using a combination of 'O' maps and Open Orienteering Maps.

A Winter Series has begun with events at Hednesford, Rising Brook, Wildwood and Lichfield.

**POTOC**

POTOC started their MapRun Challenge Series back in May also using a combination of 'O' maps and Open Orienteering Maps. The series has been very successful and they have managed to recruit some new members in the process.

**The Lockdown Challenge Series 1 Venues:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Course Type</b>
1	Central Forest Park	60 Min Score
2	Westport Lake	Linear
3	Hanley Park	Linear
4	Whitfield Valley Score	60 Min Score
5	Leek Town Centre	60 Min Score
6	Meir Park Urban	Linear
7	Birchenwood Country Park	Linear
8	Berryhill Fields	Linear
9	Festival Park	Linear
10	Cheddleton	60 Min Score
11	Whitfield Valley North	Linear
12	Burslem	60 Min Score
13	Alsager Salt Line	60 Min Score
14	Tunstall Park	Linear
15	Odds and Evens Berryhill Fields	60 Min Score
16	Stone Town Centre	Linear
17	Sandbach Town Centre	60 Min Score
18	Congleton	60 Min Score

With a new Lockdown starting on 5 November the club has started a second series:

**Lockdown 2 Challenge**

**5 Challenges**  
**Norton Heights**  
**Whitehill**  
**Cheadle**  
**Congleton**  
**Sandbach**

**Maps & Details Online**  
**[www.potoc.co.uk](http://www.potoc.co.uk)**

**£1 Per Map**  
**Free for Members**

POTTERIES ORIENTEERING CLUB

**WRE**

Over the early part of 2020 WRE had been holding a series of 'Street O' events using Open Orienteering Maps so it was a natural progression to make some of these into MapRuns for the traditional Summer Series which has been very successful over the years.

03/07/20	Wellington	31/07/20	Newport
10/07/20	Shrewsbury	07/08/20	Shifnal
17/07/20	Bridgnorth	14/08/20	Oakengates
24/07/20	Church Stretton	21/08/20	Cardingmill Valley

An additional event was organised at Haughmond Hill using some POC controls and some 'virtual' controls. A Winter series is due to begin in December with Priorslee and Gains Park, Shrewsbury the confirmed venues at the time of writing.

**WMOA Fixtures****December 2020 to January 2021**

Please note all Fixtures are correct at the time of publishing. Please check club websites for further details.

**ALL FIXTURES ARE SUBJECT TO THE BAN ON ORIENTEERING ACTIVITIES BY BOF DUE TO CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 BEING LIFTED.**

**2020****December**

12	HOC Local	<b>HOC Club Championships Hartlebury Common</b>	Hartlebury
13	WCH Local	<b>WCH Local Event Shoal Hill</b>	Cannock
20	WRE Local	<b>WRE Club Championships (tbc)</b>	
28	OD Local	<b>OD Christmas Score Event (tbc)</b>	

**2021****January**

17	HOC Regional	<b>HOC West Midlands League 1 Wyre Forest (tbc)</b>	Bewdley
30	OD Local	<b>OD Saturday Morning Event tbc</b>	

## WMOA Privacy Policy 2020

West Midlands Orienteering Association is a voluntary group whose objective is to encourage, promote and co-ordinate the sport of orienteering in the area of the West Midlands as defined by British Orienteering.

The General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Data Protection Act 1998 impose rules and safeguards on those who hold and process personal data, i.e. data relating to living identifiable individuals. Details of usage must be notified to the UK Information Commissioner, with some exceptions which include not-for-profit organisations whose usage is restricted to specified purposes. WMOA is exempt from notification but the principles setting out rules and safeguards do apply. In the interests of being open and fair, the Association wishes to inform members of the data held and how it is used.

WMOA does not actively maintain membership details. WMOA and its officials may hold some or all of the following data about some or all members and others who compete in orienteering events: name, postal and e-mail addresses, phone numbers, year of birth, competition age class, competition results, offices held, skills and qualifications, courses attended and details of officiating at competitions. Contact data is held for landowners and other organisations with whom we co-operate, their employees, agents and tenants.

To facilitate the payment of expenses and other items claimed by clubs, members of the WMOA and others, the WMOA Treasurer will require the bank account details of those who wish to be paid by bank transfer. This information will be kept securely by the WMOA Treasurer only for as long as necessary and will be deleted when no longer required.

The data may be held in electronic or paper form. The data may be obtained directly from an individual person or a family member or indirectly from the British Orienteering Federation, clubs or other organisations.

The data is used in organising the sport of orienteering and for social purposes, including, but not limited to, distributing information to co-ordinate the sport regionally, mailing of magazines and other literature, publication of competition results, coaching, team selection, training and appointment of officials.

Data may be distributed in paper or electronic form between members, competitors and orienteering organisations.

Publication of personal data in paper and electronic form may occur in membership and contact lists, magazines, competition information and results and other literature. Publication on publicly accessible web sites may include name, age class and club in competition results; names with offices and photographs may be published, but addresses, contact numbers and personal background details will be published only with the explicit consent of the person.

The data is not available for commercial purposes.

Right of access: Any individual has the right to see personal data which WMOA holds about him/her on written request.

This policy will be reviewed if the legislation or guidance changes, and biennially at the WMOA AGM. It will be published annually in West Midlander.

**Next scheduled review: October 2022**