

# The West Midlander

Winter 2021



The Newsletter of the  
West Midlands Orienteering Association



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*Mike Callow (WRE) with some of his 2021 trophies.*

*Photo: Sandra Callow*

## Editorial

Welcome to the Winter edition of the 'West Midlander'.

Orienteering has been getting back to something resembling normal in the last few months with a lot of the pandemic restrictions being relaxed and a number of events taking place. The West Midlands Championships were held on the Malvern Hills so a big 'thank you' to HOC who have struggled to get permissions for a lot of their areas. The West Midlands League, albeit a slightly truncated version, has been completed and OD have regained the trophy from last years winners WCH. Planning for next year's fixtures has been taking place but there have been some problems. Clubs are reporting that they have been struggling to gain permission to hold events and also finding enough volunteers for them to take place. Hopefully these problems can be remedied in the new year.

At the time of writing the Omicron variant of Covid-19 is spreading through the country at an alarming rate. It's difficult to know what its long term effects are going to be both for the country's health and for our sport. It is to be hoped that the vaccination and booster programmes will save people's lives and reduce hospitalisations.

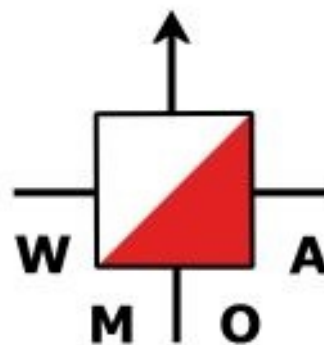
Looking forward into the New Year there is the Laurie Bradley Trophy Score Event on New Year's Day at Park Hall being held by POTO, a few League events and, later in the year, the European City Races in Birmingham and Coventry.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Rod

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**Minutes of WMOA Committee Meeting      20 September 2021      via Zoom**

1. **Present:** R. Collins, C. Dredge, B. Elkington, B. Ford, I. Gamlen, R. Lewis, B. Morgan, H. Morgan, R. Postlethwaite, R. Rogers, K. Strain, A. Williams.
2. **Apologies:** M. Elkington, J. Howell, H. Lawson, M. White.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
4. **Acceptance of Previous Minutes:** Accepted.
5. **Matters Arising:** None.
6. **Correspondence:**

❑ Note from BOF requiring an update of the WMOA officials to be returned after the AGM.

**7. Chairman's Report:**

Firstly thank you to Ray for chairing the last meeting, an administrative error by my wife meant that we would be away on that day. Secondly, thank you all for accommodating the change of date this time. I was due to have my wisdom teeth out but as I sat in the waiting room they had to cancel due to a staffing problem.

Whilst we are all coming to terms with how we handle Covid-19, which is still very much with us, it's pleasing to see more and more large scale events taking place successfully in a safe environment.

I think the way we have changed to accommodate safe practices with Covid-19 will stay with us as we move forward. Processes like pre-entry for local events etc, will help clubs manage map printing/usage and reduce any wastage along the way.

I seem to have got out of the habit of checking websites and calendars for fixtures and have missed a couple of events whilst I get back into the habit. I did manage a small Tuesday afternoon/evening event, recently held by WRE, but also seem to be out of practice on orienteering as I ran to No 3 before No2 and then completely missed the last but one control as I could see the finish and didn't check my map. I need to get back into the routine!

I hope Kirsten, Harriet and the Juniors didn't mind me turning up at the WMOA Junior Squad day at Pitcher Oak Wood. Thank you to Kirsten and Harriet for giving me an insight into to what they do. I was impressed with the high quality training sessions they had prepared for the Juniors and they certainly put a lot of time and effort into running these events. Thank you to all those involved.

11 October is the date of our AGM. Please can everyone help me to ask members for suitable nominations for the vacant officers' positions that are coming up.

**8. Treasurer's Report:**

There have been a few events with a total income from levies of £507. Money has been saved this year on travel to, and the booking of, the Great Barr Hotel for Committee meetings. Overall a small loss was made but the WMJS are £500 better off than before.

Brian Laycock is to audit the accounts prior to the AGM.

**9. Fixtures:**

No fixtures meetings have been held.

In the West Midlands League three more events are to be held by POTO, HOC and OD. This makes a total of 6 events in the League with Shoal Hill, Rorrington and Stapeley and the Church Hill, Redditch, Urban having already taken place.

Awaiting a reply from POTO as to whether the Bathpool Park event is to be included in the League. H. Morgan thought this would be the case.

B. Elkington is to contact Lesley Ross to process the results from the League. It was suggested that we use the best 3 out of 6 or 4 out of 7 to count.

R. Rogers is to put the League events still to come on the website.

A. Williams is to modify the listings on the BOF website to show the League events.

R. Collins suggested that the WCH Chetwynd Wood (Brereton Spurs) event could also be included.

A. Williams reminded everyone that he was standing down at the AGM after 13 years as Fixtures Secretary. R. Lewis thanked him for all his work.

A National Fixtures meeting is to be held the week after the AGM, probably by Zoom. There is a need for someone to stand in if no Fixtures Secretary is appointed at the AGM. I. Gamlen may stand in.

#### 10. West Midlander:

R. Postlethwaite reported that there was an issue ready to go out and he hoped there would be another one before Christmas. Articles are always required.

#### 11. WMOA Website:

We are trying to return to some sort of normality after Covid-19. League events are to be added. The Regional Fixtures List has now added local events to the website.

#### 12. Development:

H. Morgan hoped to run a Planner's or Organiser's Course next February/ March, whichever was needed the most, with a Controller's Course in the Autumn. Club reps to find out which would be most useful to be held first.

The Event Safety Course can be added to Organiser's Course or it can be done online. though it is better to hold it face to face.

#### 13. Events and Competitions Committee:

B. Elkington stressed that this year had been all about making events happen and changing rules to allow this. Hopefully next year events can be run according to the rules.

Mike Cope has done lots of work over the last year rescheduling events wherever possible.

R. Lewis participated in the JK Review meeting held by BOF on Zoom. This was a 'fact finding' discussion and nothing was finalised or changed.

A BOF questionnaire is to be sent to all members regarding the format of the JK.

☑ How many days ?

☑ The human resources for putting on the event are ageing. Should someone be employed professionally to run it?

☑ It is to be rotated within 5 areas.

☑ Core function and expectation of people attending JK.

☑ Review of age classes for the JK.

No questionnaires have been seen out yet. B. Elkington is to follow this up.

I. Gamlen asked if there was any discussion on the financing of the JK. R. Lewis reported that there was none but BOF would like it to be run like the Scottish 6 days, i.e. funded from the event.

#### 14. West Midlands Junior Squad:

The training at Pitcher Oak Wood on 27 June went well with Harriet coaching whilst Kirsten was 'pinged' that morning and so could not coach. Thanks to HOC for the area permissions.

No WMOA Juniors participated on the JROS tours this Summer nor will any be at the JHIs.

The Junior Inter-Regional Championships (JIRCs) is taking place on this coming weekend (25/26 September) in the North East and we are taking a small team of 3 juniors.

Training dates in the Autumn term are hard to fit in because of such a busy calendar of events. We have a few dates to investigate and will be contacting clubs directly to ask for help with area permissions.

Zoom training continued through the Summer term until the school holidays started in July. They are due to restart in October, with a schedule of two per month - one physical and one technical.

K. Strain reported that there were only about 12 children currently in the Squad with half of these only being M/W 12. Lots of Squads have experienced a drop in membership over the last year. I. Gamlen stressed the need for all clubs to renew their efforts with juniors. B. Elkington reported that the BSOA have sold more equipment this year than ever before. There is a need to get children out from school events to other local events.

#### 15. AGM:

The Great Barr Hotel has been booked for 11/10/21 from 7pm at a cost of £65.

It was agreed to hold the meeting via Zoom as well. C. Dredge is to contact the hotel to arrange this.

C. Dredge is to send out an AGM reminder to all members adding the Zoom option details and also stressing the need for a new Chairman and Fixtures Secretary.

I. Gamlen suggested that R. Lewis could continue as Chairman if no one else was forthcoming, due to the circumstances of last year. R. Lewis agreed to this.

#### 16. Club Round up:

❑ **COBOC:** Beginners, Family, Schools events are being held on the 4th Saturday of each month. Encouraging people to let us know if they are coming as there is limited EOD subject to map availability. The Lichfield Community Games were held last Saturday with 230 children taking part in the COBOC Maze.

❑ **HOC:** The Redditch event had lower numbers than were hoped for. We are looking to use the area again soon as it is a new map. There is a programme of Winter events. The CompassSport Cup/ Trophy Heat for next year is in the Wyre Forest though the Forestry Commission are creating some issues. 14 November is the date for the West Midland Champs and League event at Worcestershire Beacon in the Malverns.

❑ **OD:** Getting back to normal with one event per month. Bob Brandon is sorting out Saturday and Sunday events for next year. A benefit of Covid-19 restrictions has been pre-

entry and printing correct map numbers. A problem has been getting newcomers to attend because there is no EOD.

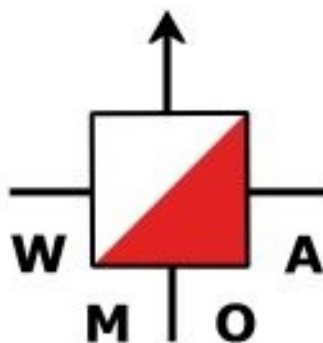
- ❑ **POTOC:** The series of monthly events is continuing and events are being planned for next year. There has been a big input into schools updating maps, working with staff etc. We are hoping for positive results. The Park Hall New Year's Day Score Event needs a Controller.
- ❑ **WCH:** A Tuesday night Urban League consisting of 45 minute score events using MapRun has 6 events planned prior to Christmas and are open to all. Please contact R. Collins to reserve maps.
- ❑ **WRE:** There is an event at Nesscliffe this Saturday. On 16 October there is another event at Gogbatch on the Long Mynd. Both events have a limit of 60 people.

**17. AOB:** The Orienteering Foundation Working Group held a virtual meeting and the report is due out in November. They looked at club websites assessing how useful they were for newcomers, etc. Feedback is to be given to individual clubs. A worthwhile exercise.

On 20 November there is a Coaching Day in the Lake District which is open to individuals and groups.

**18. Next Meeting:**

13 December 2021 (via Zoom).



**WMOA AGM Minutes****Great Barr Hotel****11 October 2021**

1. **Present:** R. Lewis (Chairman & WRE), R. Collins (Vice-Chairman & WCH), C. Dredge (Secretary & WCH), I. Gamlen (Treasurer & COBOC), A. Williams (Fixtures & WCH), M. Denham (POTOC), B. Elkington (OD), M. Callow (WRE), B. Elkington (OD), J. Howell (WCH), P. Langmaid (HOC), B. McGowan (HOC), R. Rogers (WRE), J. Thomas (COBOC), A. White (HOC), M. White (HOC).

**By Zoom:** B. Morgan (POTOC), H. Morgan (POTOC), K. Strain (WMJS & OD), R. Vickers (HOC).

2. **Apologies:** M. Elkington (WMJS & OD), P. Graetz (POTOC), A. Pickles (WRE), R. Postlethwaite (West Midlander & WRE).

3. **Declarations of Interest:** None.

4. **Acceptance of Minutes of previous AGM:** The minutes of the 2020 AGM were proposed as a true record by I. Gamlen and seconded by R. Collins.

5. **Matters Arising:** None.

6. **Correspondence:** C. Dredge has received the Association Affiliation Documents for 2022 from BOF. These will be returned to BOF with updated information after the AGM.

7. **Chairman's Report:** Richard Lewis

Last year I reported that I thought it would be sometime before we could get fixture lists and league competitions back to pre COVID levels.

It's pleasing to read BOF's data on how many events have taken place and how many participants have attended national events. It's also great to see WMOA have a forward fixture list with planned events throughout the region.

The popular events that build the WMOA League have been reduced but we will have a league this year with a list of events on the WMOA web page.

Events further afield such as the Scottish 6 Days and British Middle and Long Distance Championships have brought success to some WMOA club members. Congratulations to you all and especially the champions.

This AGM brings the Chairman's 3 years in office to an end. In general they have been an enjoyable 3 years if not somewhat challenging in various ways. The job of Chairman has been made simple by the support and commitment of the committee, who I thank.

I have to give special thanks to our WMOA Secretary, Carol, for the background work she does in supporting the WMOA and its Chairman, always supporting on time with minutes and reminders, etc. Thank you.

A special thanks has to go to our retiring Fixtures Secretary, Allan Williams, who after over 13 years has decided to hang his fixtures calendar up or down. Thank you Allan.

Thank you also to all the WMOA clubs, Chairs, and club reps for supporting me during my term.

So, hopefully, I will start to see more of you at events around the region as we start to plan ahead.

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

2020-21 has been an unusual year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The usual number of West Midlands League and local events have not taken place and SinS was only held on one day rather than over the usual three days. This has inevitably resulted in less event levies and since



this is our only source of income, a significantly lower income for 2020-21 compared to previous years.

As you can see our total income for 2020-21 was £507.00 with £231 coming from SinS and the remaining £276 from local and West Midlands League events.

The total WMOA expenditure was £ 1588.

We continued to fully support the WMJS transferring £1000 into their account. This proved to be a generous donation as their expenditure was lower than in previous years leaving them with a surplus of £504 by 31/08/2021. We also paid the English Orienteering Council levy of £378. The WMOA website has been updated and made more secure by changing it from http to https. This has cost £153.

We have continued to hold WMOA committee meetings via Zoom which has saved us a significant amount of money as we have not needed to pay committee members their travelling expenses. The total committee meetings costs incurred was £57.56 for the Zoom meetings which Allan Williams has kindly set up and run for us.

To summarise, the WMOA had a deficit of £1081.56 and the WMJS had a surplus of £504 resulting in the following closing funds: WMOA £7646.30 and WMJS £3907.02 as of 31/08/2021.

As in previous years Brian Laycock has kindly inspected the accounts and declared them to be a true and accurate record.

### **Budget for 2021-22**

Like last year, due to the unpredictability of whether events could take place as planned and the uncertainty regarding our expenditure, I do not feel I am able to set a budget for 2021-22. I am, however, confident that we have sufficient funds to cover any likely expenditure over the next 12 months even with little or no income. In view of this I suggest that we continue with the current WMOA event levy, i.e. no charge for the first 40 adults at a WMOA event and £1 per adult for any additional participants.

Peter Langmaid asked whether next year we should rebalance the money paid to the West Midlands Junior Squad as they had fewer members now? Ian Gamlen suggested that monies allocated may be in future based on numbers in the Squad. This is to be discussed with Squad leaders. This item is to be added to next committee meeting agenda under 'Review of West Midlands Junior Squad donations'. Barry Elkington pointed out that expenditure depended on where the JIRCS is held each year. Next years JIRCS is in Northern Ireland.

Barry Elkington also noted that 2 European City Races were planned for June 2022 with hopefully 500+ entrants at each so we should expect a good income from these.

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

At the 2020 AGM there was hope that several events would take place before Christmas and a small WMOA League could take place. The November lockdown scuppered those plans and the year ended with very few events. Following the lifting of restrictions in the Spring there have been many events and it now looks likely that a WMOA League consisting of 6 races will take place. It was a shame that OD could not host the CompassSport Cup Final in Sutton Park. At the last minute SYO have stepped in to save the event. It looks like 2022 can approach something close to normality with a full range of WMOA events.

After 13 years I am leaving this post. In recent years there have been some very positive changes in my lifestyle and, for the time being, I've left orienteering behind. My partner Charlotte and I formed a civil partnership last month and are enjoying our new home in South Derbyshire. Walking and the occasional Parkrun keeps us active.

Richard Lewis thanked Allan on behalf of the WMOA for all the roles that he had fulfilled in his time orienteering in the West Midlands both as a competitor and an official.

#### 10. Other Reports:

##### **WMJS Report 2020-21:**

Post lockdown the West Midlands Junior Squad training began again in September 2020 with a session for three squad members at Elmdon Park. There were originally four but sadly one had to quarantine due to a Covid-19 case in his school year group. Another training session was held at Hartshill Hayes and both sessions were made Covid-19 secure by following British Orienteering coaching guidelines.

The 2020 Junior Inter-Regional Championships did not take place.

In 2021 a training session was held at Itchington Holt, which went very well, followed by one at Pitcher Oak Wood in June. Many thanks to OD & HOC for allowing us to train on these areas.

We have held monthly physical training sessions along with monthly technical training sessions by Zoom throughout the year. At Christmas we held a Zoom Christmas Quiz finale for all current members and their families.

In view of the lack of opportunities for children to orienteer this year, we offered the opportunity for any 12 year old and above who had completed an Orange course to start training with the squad. This resulted in the inclusion of ten new younger Juniors into the squad which has been successful. We welcomed Harriet & Grace from WRE, Kieran & Robin from HOC, Jonah & Olivia from WCH and Henry, Rupert, Max & Adam from OD. In 2021 Craig from HOC also joined us. We have, therefore, bought some more 'O' tops which are available at £25 each to squad members.

Over the year we have worked with JROS (Junior Regional Orienteering Squads) to develop a replacement for the British Orienteering Talent Programme. It is intended to introduce Talent North & Talent South Squads to replace the current programme. West Midlands are in the Talent South Squad at present.

The JROS Summer tours took place in 2021. Sadly, we were very disappointed not to be able to nominate anyone for these but, hopefully, with such a young squad this will change next year.

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

##### **West Midlander:** Rod Postlethwaite

Rod is happy to continue as Editor and, as always, is happy to receive material for the next edition.

#### 11. Election of Officers:

There were no nominations for the role of Chairman so it was suggested to Richard Lewis that he could be co-opted into this role, which he agreed to. (He could not be elected to the role as

he had already fulfilled his 3 years as Chairman as per the WMOA Constitution). A vote was held to co-opt him which was passed unanimously.

Position	Nomination	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman	Richard Lewis	B.Morgan	R. Vickers
Vice Chairman	Ray Collins	A. Williams	R. Rogers
Secretary	Carol Dredge	K. Strain	H.Morgan
Treasurer	Ian Gamlen	C. Dredge	K. Strain
Fixtures	* There were no nominations for this post.		
Newsletter Editor	Rod Postlethwaite	A. White	I. Gamlen

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

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

\* Allan Williams to put together a brief job description of Fixtures Secretary role to go out with AGM minutes in the next West Midlander and also to be put on WMOA Website.

*(Rick Roberts (HOC) volunteered for the post following the AGM - Ed.).*

## 12. Any Other Business:

Richard Lewis has received a request from Andy Yeates regarding JK 2024. EMOA are struggling to find areas of their own and clubs to organise days so they have suggested that EMOA organise the Sprint and Relay days and WMOA organise the Middle and Long Distance days at Beaudesert. Only LEI and DVO have the resources to put on a day. JK 2024 would then be a combined EMOA/ WMOA event.

JK 2028 is scheduled to be held by the WMOA but Andy Yeates would ask Mike Cope to defer this to a later date if the joint event went ahead.

Jonathan Howell commented (as Beaudesert is a WCH area) that it would be up to the new WCH committee to consider the proposal. Concern was expressed that it would embargo the area again for two years. WCH are not a big club and may struggle to put this on. It was suggested that if this went ahead all clubs in the region would have to help.

Richard Lewis to reply to Andy Yeates stating that the new WCH committee would need to discuss this and also to point out that SYO are nearer to the current planned area for the Relays.

Barry Elkington pointed out that the current 2 year embargo might put clubs off holding Major events. Could this be reduced to one year?

Robert Vickers endorsed the thanks given to Allan Williams for all the time and effort he has put into the WMOA over the years and wished him well in the future.

A National Fixtures Meeting is to be held virtually on Saturday 16 October. In the absence of a Fixtures Secretary Ian Gamlen agreed to represent the WMOA at the meeting.

## 13. Next WMOA AGM: 10 October 2022. Venue to be confirmed.

**Next WMOA Committee Meeting:** Monday 13 December 2020 via Zoom.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30.

## 2021 An Event Full Year

Mike Callow M80 (WRE)

One good thing about our sport is the way, as you get older, you get a 'Birthday' every five years.

Other good things are the puzzles the Planners set us in a wide variety of terrain. There's the 'rush' we get when the control is where we thought it was. Then there's the 'flip' side - "It's not here!", "It must be somewhere else." "I must be somewhere else", "Where am I?"

2021 was my 'Birthday' year and so I was determined to try hard in my new M80 class.

Along with other WRE runners I was rewarded with a Midland Championship win at Stapeley and Rorrington, a reduced Springtime in Shropshire event, which we co - organise with HOC. Home ground advantage? Not really. We don't go there very often and haven't used it for any training.

Two days in The Lakes beckoned next. Good weather was welcome. My course on Summer House Knott had some useful paths with 14 controls placed as far away from them as was feasible in only 2.5km. My plan was to be very, very careful. Slightly adrift on 3 of them, my result slip showing: You are 1<sup>st</sup>.....out of 1, had me thinking it wouldn't last, but others drifted too and I was thrilled to win this British Middle Distance Orienteering Championships.

'Pride comes.....' etc. High Dam had few paths and was very complex. Going from 1 via a crossing point I found the next flag but it had the wrong number. After some thrashing around I realised I'd gone to 6 instead of 2. A later control was technical difficulty 8!? But as I stood around I got a really helpful *TIP 1* from a lady runner: "Don't just stand there! Run. Somewhere." I ran and eventually found that everyone else had had difficulties, taking longer than me. "Sorry, Mike this is the Northern Championships so you can't have our trophy," said the Organisers. Quite right too.

Chinley Churn was 3.8km with 16 controls, open and runnable. I ran hard (see Fitness later) and was 4<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> M80. "Sorry Mike, this is the East Midland Championships.....etc."

Scotland. On? Off? Maybe? Okay WRE, you have Days 1,2 and 5. With so far to travel I'd entered M75 Long, wanting more for my money. What a comedown. Lost twice on Ardchattan and way down in the results. Day 2 was Inverlochy, mostly around the outskirts of the fine Golf Course. No mistakes, but way down again. "How do they run so fast and navigate?" I wondered.

Nobody ran fast on Day 5, Creag Dhubh, legendary, technical wilderness!....and raining. Part of my 'walk' was - "Okay, Mike, you've found number 6 the 0.5m boulder in the wood. Number 7 is another boulder 600m away; no attack or re-location points." After 30 minutes I gave up and finished 8 and 9, feeling pretty downcast. Later results showed that 20+ people had retired on my course alone. I mailed the organiser to thank him for putting on the event under difficult circumstances and felt a little better when he replied, "Well you finished all three days. I only finished one and I live here." Highlight of the week was a 'Rest (!) Day' ascent of Ben Nevis with Duncan and Christopher Bayliss of WRE. Good company in spite of no views with rain and mist.

On then to Wales with two Championship days. Managed to be first M80 for both Middle and Long, ready by now for "Sorry, Mike," this variation being "You're not Welsh." Quite right too. One puzzle was control 2 on Day 1. After finishing I asked others what the symbol meant and was told, "It's a sheepfold." Good to know I thought when the longest leg on Day 2 had the same symbol exactly half way along the bearing. No sheepfold. Where am I? Used *TIP 1* and relocated quickly from an obvious feature. Later I checked the symbol, a circle with a black dot in. 'Cairn or Boundary Stone.'! So, *TIP 2*: check the latest version of the IOF symbols! The possible huge differences between these two 'stones' is taken care of by the size box in the control descriptions,



so *TIP 3*: the extra boxes have useful information about size and location, i.e. the flag may be hiding on the other side of the knoll!

Braunton Burrows British Long Distance Championships. Sand dunes are tricky, e.g. Newborough Warren. At Download. "You've got the fastest time"....but "There's another one missed out number 6" was called across the tent. So I had. Later, showing the map to two very experienced orienteers, I asked which route they would pick after 5. Both chose the route to 7 as I had done. Ah well.

With this in mind I got a year 2000 map of the Burrows from Pete Jones' (WRE) extensive archive to worry over, plus an e-mail from the organisers with an A4 page of details about the mapping and what to expect. Tricky or what?!

The weather was fine on the Friday when I arrived, so I cycled to Saunton along the Tarka Trail, then back along the beach, firm going for 4 km then so soft I had to walk.

Saturday, an Organiser's nightmare. Heavy rain had made the lovely big field where they'd set up Download, etc. on Friday unusable for car parking. Tim, of Podium Catering, was stuck until a 4x4 towed him into position. Alternative parking on a hard surface was good for my camper van., not sure how the cars fared though. A really good idea was a mini map of a practice area with 6 controls. I spent 30 minutes checking my pace counting against the 1:7500 distances I'd taped onto my compass = *TIP 4*, then the accuracy of my compass against a distant flagpole = *TIP 5*. The rain was really heavy with cagoules compulsory so it was hood up for me, hopefully keeping my brain warm. 3.7km and 11 controls. I overshot 2 because I was expecting to find a concrete bunker on the way. The A4 info sheet had a photo of one warning that you might not see it. I'd run over its grassy top set into a knoll! Luckily pace counting pulled me up. I felt I'd had a good run, with no costly mistakes, but without internet access I had to wait until Sunday. On the car park I saw Ifor Powell, a member of WRE long ago then a serious Elite runner on Mountain Marathons, now getting top spots on Mountain Bike Orienteering events. I asked him if he'd remembered to put his wristwatch on the other wrist from his thumb compass. In Wales I'd got him to check this and his watch had given the needle a big swing! So that's *TIP 6*. Some watches can affect compasses. "Congrats, Champ," he said, "You won by almost 15 minutes". Wow, what a thrill! Day 2, 2.3km, 11 controls. I was rubbish. And a fierce gust of wind blew my umbrella inside out on the campsite!

**Fitness:** I'm not sure I should be writing this as I've recently joined the SSII club - the 'Stupid Self Inflicted Injuries Club'. In my case lifting a heavy bag of compost thinking "I'll just use my right arm as I injured my left shoulder a few years ago". Ouch! Pulled back muscles. Duh! From Champ to Chump in the blink of an eye, or as one friend put it, 'Hero to Zero.'

I belong to two cycling groups, plus chasing Sandra on her electric bike, so manage around 2,000 miles a year.

Each year I try to 'swim the Channel'. That's 50 lengths at a time, once a week at my local pool.

Visiting my son, Andrew, in New Jersey I had a go on his Peleton bike but didn't like the coach constantly urging me to put in more effort. He showed me the 'Scenic Rides' option which I thought was a great idea. Then for a special birthday, a Peleton arrived and I was soon riding round the world between November and April usually.

To keep the rest of our bodies in shape, both Sandra and I exercise with YouTube videos - 'The Girl with the Pilates Mat.' Gentle, all round workouts for 30 minutes a couple of times a week.... and free, so we donate to a charity of the presenter's choice. All this so far means doing quite a bit with my weight taken elsewhere - saddle, water, mat.

**Running:** I try to keep off hard surfaces as my hip twinges. I think uneven ground helps to strengthen those ankle muscles that can prevent a sudden twist. I'm lucky enough to live near the iconic complex Ercall, actually timing my runs - for the first time ever! This was helpful because I found that if I jogged uphill, I was taking very short steps and when it flattened out, 'muscle memory' kept my stride still short, hence slow. A mix of walking and running uphill gave a longer time to the summit, but long strides afterwards resulted in a faster overall time. Perhaps I shouldn't be giving away all this information?

Being a member of Wrekin Orienteers is great. Various members have encouraged me to tackle Long Distance Walkers Association events, fearsome Fell Races, and gruelling Mountain Marathons as well somehow tackling Polaris Two Day Mountain Bike Orienteering. Organising and planning events and acting as Controller for others is quite active too.

'Off my own bat' as it were, I've tackled Triathlons too. None of the current style of running around the houses and cycling in groups, but the 'real thing', swims in lakes and the sea (complete with jellyfish, Aberdovey), rides up steep Lake District Passes, and down! ("I don't want you racing fast down that there Honister Pass. Last year just three riders crashed. An it were dry. Today it may rain." - Organiser) It rained and Honister was after the run- up and down Scafell Pike! What's with all this 'blue carpet' and 'round the houses' stuff? I did it for the scenery!

Maybe this is why we orienteer

## British Long Distance Championships 2021

The British Long Distance Championships were held on 2 October on the intricate sand dunes of Braunton Burrows in North Devon. The area is used for military training and played a vital part in the training for the Normandy Beach landings of World War II.

### WMOA British Long Distance Championship Winners

<b>M50</b>	Alistair Landels	OD	<b>W35</b>	Kirsten Strain	AROS/ OD
<b>M80</b>	Mike Callow	WRE			

## British Night Championships 2021

The British Night Championships were held on 27 November at Cleve Hill in Gloucestershire on probably one of the coldest nights of the year.

### WMOA British Night Championship Winners

<b>M20</b>	Alexander Mitchell	HOC	<b>W40</b>	Anne Straube	OD
<b>M21</b>	Philip Vokes	OD	<b>W75</b>	Sheila Carey	OD
			<b>W85</b>	Alison Sloman	HOC

## West Midlands Championships 2021

The West Midlands Championships were held by HOC on 14 November at Worcestershire Beacon in the Malvern Hills. Congratulations to all the winners.

### Winners

M10	Not Awarded		W10	Not Awarded	
M12	Jonah Hearn	WCH	W12	Grace Allinson	WRE
M14	Max Straube-Roth	OD	W14	Not Awarded	
M16	Not Awarded		W16	Not Awarded	
M18	Arthur Mitchell	HOC	W18	Not Awarded	
M20	Not Awarded		W20	Not Awarded	
M21	James Thomas	COBOC	W21	Eloise Lee	HOC
M35	Thomas Lewis	WRE	W35	Anne Straube	OD
M40	Alistair Landels	OD	W40	Not Awarded	
M45	Stuart Duckworth	WCH	W45	Julia Allinson	WRE
M50	Chris McCartney	OD	W50	Juliette Soulard	OD
M55	David Leadley	OD	W55	Carol Dredge	WCH
M60	Adrian Pickles	WRE	W60	Rachel Alexander	OD
M65	Barry Elkington	OD	W65	Judith Evans	HOC
M70	Charlie Nelson	HOC	W70	Karin Kirk	OD
M75	Peter Carey	OD	W75	Sheila Carey	OD
M80	Gary Langston	WCH	W80	Not Awarded	
M85	Not Awarded		W85	Alison Sloman	HOC
M90	Not Awarded		W90	Not Awarded	

## CompassSport Cup/Trophy 2020 Final

Cup		Trophy	
SYO	2397	SROC	1261
FVO	2368	EPOC	1251
WCOC	2245	INT	1240
<b>OD</b>	<b>2183</b>	MOR	1235
AIRE	2179	<b>HOC</b>	<b>1181</b>
SLOW	2100	<b>WCH</b>	<b>1172</b>
DVO	2049	NOC	1158
LEI	1549	<b>POTOC</b>	<b>1127</b>
BOK	1460	<b>WRE</b>	<b>1092</b>
ESOC	825	GO	1085
GO	1199	SOS	1071
		SOC	1067
		WIM	1033
		<b>COBOC</b>	<b>319</b>

The CompassSport Cup/Trophy 2020 has a very fragmented story. The Qualifying Heat due to be held at Postensplain was cancelled and couldn't be rescheduled therefore all the competing clubs were deemed to have qualified for the Final. The Covid-19 pandemic came along and the Final, due to be held at Sutton Park was duly postponed. Lockdowns ensued and potential Qualifying Heats for the 2021 version were cancelled. Orienteering slowly but surely started happening again and it was decided to hold the 2020 Final towards the end of 2021. The proposed Final at Sutton Park couldn't take place as permissions from the Council weren't forthcoming. WCH tried to get permission for it to be held on Cannock Chase but, unfortunately, that fell through too. At the last minute SYO stepped in and the Final was held at Tankersley Wood on 17 October.

OD finished a creditable 4th in the Cup but HOC were unable to retain the Trophy, finishing in 5th place.



*The Finish at Tankersley Wood*

*Photo by Graham Pigott (POTOC)*



## 2021 West Midlands League Events

Apr 25	Shoal Hill	WCH	Nov 14	Worcestershire Beacon	HOC
May 30	Stapeley & Rorrington	HOC	Nov 21	Chetwynd Wood	WCH
Sep 12	Church Hill	HOC	Dec 5	Brandon Wood	OD
Oct 24	Bathpool Park	POTOC			

## Individual Class Winners

M10	Jamie Atkins	HOC	180	W10	Annie Lewis	WRE	240
M12	Daniel Pigott	POTOC	380	W12	Grace Allinson	WRE	395
M14	Rupert Powell	OD	183	W14	Olivia Stamp	WCH	80
M16	Arthur Mitchell	HOC	353	W16			
M18	Sebastian Mitchell	HOC	180	W18			
M20	Alexander Mitchell	HOC	100	W20			
	Henry Webb	WCH	100				
M21	James Thomas	COBOC	400	W21	Eloise Lee	HOC	266
M35	Thomas Lewis	WRE	335	W35	Katie Lewis	WRE	300
M40	Graham Pigott	POTOC	327	W40	Claire Stamp	WCH	180
M45	Martin Pigott	POTOC	381	W45	Anne Straube	OD	366
M50	Chris McCartney	OD	388	W50	Sarah Bayliss	WRE	353
M55	Alex Morgan	HOC	392	W55	Liz Phillips	OD	400
M60	Adrian Pickles	WRE	400	W60	Christine Collins	WCH	266
M65	Ray Collins	WCH	370	W65	Carol Dredge	WCH	397
M70	Geoff Trewin	HOC	364	W70	Karin Kirk	OD	354
M75	Peter Carey	OD	400	W75	Sheila Carey	OD	400
M80	Trevor Simpson	OD	400	W80	Hilary Simpson	OD	400
M85	Colin Roscoe	WRE	80	W85	Alison Sloman	HOC	400

## The West Midlands League 2021 Final Positions

1. OD 5252				2. WRE 4722				3. HOC 4712			
A	Max Straube-Roth	M12	376	A	Grace Allinson	W12	395	A	Arthur Mitchell	M16	353
A	Rupert Powell	M14	270	A	Harriet Allinson	W12	368	A	Robin Lambe	M16	236
B	Mykyta Chubynsky	M45	356	B	Thomas Lewis	M35	335	B	Robert Rose	M40	208
B	Alistair Powell	M40	188	B	Kristof Nowicki	M40	100	B	David Aldridge	M40	166
C	Chris McCartney	M50	388	C	Jeb Lewis	M50	336	C	Alex Morgan	M55	392
C	David Leadley	M55	362	C	Tony Callow	M55	257	C	David Smith	M55	303
D	Liz Phillips	W55	400	D	Sarah Bayliss	W50	353	D	Karen Thompson	W50	343
D	Anne Staube	W45	366	D	Julia Allinson	W45	340	D	Phil Dolphin	M45	274
E	Peter Carey	M75	400	E	Adrian Pickles	M60	400	E	Alison Sloman	W85	400
E	Trevor Simpson	M80	400	E	John Broadhead	M65	340	E	Geoff Trewin	M70	364
F	Sheila Carey	W75	400	F	Richard Lewis	M70	322	F	Barry Houghton	M70	345
F	Hilary Simpson	W80	400	F	Rod Postlethwaite	M65	308	F	Russ Fauset	M70	343
F	Karin Kirk	W70	354	F	Katie Lewis	W35	300	F	Barry McGowan	M70	336
F	Stan Alexander	M65	340	F	Phil Bibby	M65	285	F	Robert Vickers	M75	326
F	John Middler	M65	339	F	Diane Jacks	W50	283	F	Geoff Sara	M80	323
4. POTO C 3940				5. WCH 3866				6. COBO C 1319			
A	Daniel Pigott	M12	380	A	Jonah Hearn	M12	282	B	James Thomas	M21	400
A	Eden Pigott	W12	380	A	Rory Hind	M14	160	C	Ian Gamlen	M55	353
B	Martin Pigott	M45	381	B	Stuart Duckworth	M45	334	E	Lap On Leung	M55	221
B	Graham Pigott	M40	327	B	Simon Webb	M45	226	E	Mick Sadler	M70	225
C	Jim Cooke	M55	235	C	Andy Hind	M50	190	F	David Arnot	M70	120
C	Jonathan Whilock	M55	111	C	Matthew Mardling	M50	167				
D	Ianka Evans	W50	286	D	Claire Stamp	W40	180				
D	Elizabeth Bales	W55	78	D	Tamla Short	W21	172				
E	Dora Deaville	W65	305	E	Carol Dredge	W65	397				
E	Marian Denham	W75	285	E	Ray Collins	M65	370				
F	Robert Holdway	M35	300	F	Gary Langston	M80	352				
F	David Dunn	M40	292	F	Andrew Yeates	M60	272				
F	Jean Rostron	W75	232	F	Christine Collins	W60	266				
F	Andrew Rowe	M45	183	F	Mary Adams	W60	261				
F	Sam Naylor	M21	165	F	Jonathan Howell	M65	237				

## WMOA Fixtures

### December 2021 to July 2022

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

#### 2021

##### December

27	OD Local	<b>OD Christmas Event Rough Close Scout Camp</b>	Coventry	<a href="#">SP264780</a>
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#### 2022

##### January

1	POTOC Regional	<b>Laurie Bradley New Year's Day Score Park Hall Country Park</b>	Longton Stoke-on-Trent	<a href="#">SJ930446</a>
13	HOC Local	<b>HOC Winter Evening Event Walton Hill</b>	Halesowen	
16	HOC Regional	<b>HOC West Midlands League 1 Dudmaston</b>	Bridgnorth	<a href="#">SO747891</a>
22	COBOC Local	<b>Beginners, Schools and Families Event Pype Hayes Park</b>	Sutton Coldfield	
29	OD Local	<b>OD Night Event Burton Dassett Country Park</b>	Southam	<a href="#">SP396519</a>
29	HOC Local	<b>HOC Local Event Worcestershire Beacon</b>	Malvern	<a href="#">SO765451</a>
29	WRE Local	<b>WRE Introductory Event Telford Town Park</b>	Telford	<a href="#">SJ697082</a>

##### February

6	WCH Regional	<b>WCH West Midlands League 2 Beaudesert</b>	Hednesford	
13	HOC National	<b>HOC CompassSport Cup/ Trophy Postensplain</b>	Bewdley	
19	OD Local	<b>OD Saturday Event Everdon Stubbs</b>	Daventry	<a href="#">SP606562</a>
19	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Local Event Downs Banks (tbc)</b>	Stone	<a href="#">SJ900365</a>
26	COBOC Local	<b>Beginners, Schools and Families Event Perry Hall Playing Fields</b>	Birmingham	

**March**

12	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Local Event Cheddleton Heath (tbc)</b>	Leek	
13	OD Regional	<b>OD West Midlands League 3 Hartshill Hayes Country Park</b>	Nuneaton	<a href="#">SP317942</a>
19	OD Local	<b>OD Saturday Event War Memorial Park</b>	Coventry	<a href="#">SP322772</a>
24	POTOC Local	<b>Staffordshire Schools Champs (Closed)</b>	Hanley Stoke-on-Trent	<a href="#">SJ886487</a>
26	COBOC Local	<b>Beginners, Schools and Families Event New Hall Valley</b>	Sutton Coldfield	

**April**

9	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Local Event Biddulph Grange Country Park (tbc)</b>	Biddulph	<a href="#">SJ893594</a>
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**May**

7	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Park League 1 Brough Park</b>	Leek	<a href="#">SJ986570</a>
21	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Park League 2 Tunstall Park</b>	Hanley Stoke-on-Trent	<a href="#">SJ865514</a>

**June**

4	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Park League 3 Fenton Park</b>	Fenton Stoke-on-Trent	
18	OD National	<b>Euro City Race Tour incl. WM Urban League Coventry</b>	Coventry	
19	HOC National	<b>Euro City Race Tour Birmingham</b>	Birmingham	
25	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Park League 4 Festival Park</b>	Hanley Stoke-on-Trent	<a href="#">SJ870482</a>

**July**

9	POTOC Local	<b>POTOC Park League 5 Hanley Park</b>	Hanley Stoke-on-Trent	
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