



# Contents

We need a Chair – could it be you?.....	2
Publicity for WMOA events .....	2
Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting.....	3
Minutes of the December 2024 Committee Meeting.....	3
60 years of the WMOA .....	3
WMOA Relays.....	3
WMOA Clubs and junior development .....	3
2024.....	4
Junior Home Internationals reports.....	5
West Midlands Urban League .....	7
Woodside Urban.....	7
2023 Urban league events .....	8
West Midlands League update .....	9
2024 events.....	9
Burlish Top, event 6 .....	10
Sutton Park, event 7 .....	10
Regional events coming up in the West Midlands .....	11

## We need a Chair – could it be you?

It is with regret that Adrian Bailey has had to stand down as Chair of WMOA due to pressure of work. He is unable to put in the time that he feels is needed to carry out the role successfully.

2024 promises to be an exciting year for the West Midlands with both the British Sprints and Sprint Relays and two days of the JK on our areas.

We are in need of a new person to fill the Chair's role and help make this year a successful one for the region. Could it be you? If you are at all interested, please contact [Carol Dredge, WMOA Secretary](#), to discuss what it entails.

## Publicity for WMOA events

Clubs are receiving lots of requests to publicise other club's events. The committee agrees that this is reasonable for league and other significant WMOA events but asks that such requests are emailed to the [WMOA club representatives](#).

We would also encourage members to use the various online facilities to find events. For example, the [oevents.info](#) web site allows users to create their own customised list of upcoming orienteering events:

- On the home page, select "Custom lists" on the main menu. Then enter your "home" club and association and choose which clubs and associations you would like to see events for at each level. Sensible defaults are provided but you can provide your own specific lists. For example, you could choose to see National (level B) events for SWOA and Regional (level C) events for BOK and NGOC.
- Once you have created your search parameters you will see a list of matching events up to 2 years ahead. To save re-creating your search, you can bookmark the list. When you load the page from your bookmark it will perform a new search so it's always up to date with the latest changes to the list of events registered with British Orienteering. (For the real techies, you can even edit the bookmarked URL to adjust your search parameters!).

The ["All Principal Fixtures" page](#) also lists of Regional, National and Major fixtures in the West Midlands region and can has the option to include Local events.

## Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting

Here is a link to the [Minutes of the AGM held 2 October 2023](#) (subject to addition of Chair's report and ratification at the 2024 AGM on 7th October). These minutes, and those from earlier meetings, can be found on the [Minutes page of the WMOA website](#).

## Minutes of the December 2024 Committee Meeting

And here is a link to the [Minutes of the Zoom meeting held 11th December 2023](#) (subject to ratification at the 11th of March 2024 meeting). Some "matters arising" to tempt you to follow the link and read more:

### 60 years of the WMOA

The Association was 60 on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023. There is a precedent for missing this landmark; in the [Spring 2015 West Midlander](#) Rod Postlethwaite wrote "*It appears that we have actually missed the 50th Anniversary as the inaugural meeting was held at the Martineau Teachers' Centre, Bristol Road, Birmingham on 21 November 1963. We are, therefore, 51 years and 6 months old!*"

Participants at the 2024 WMOA Championships will receive a small commemoration of this milestone.

### WMOA Relays

Do the classes need a refresh? Should we be looking at a different approach?

How about the SOA approach ([link to their rules and guidelines](#)) These are designed with this in mind: "*The philosophy is that any combination of genders and ages is allowed and catered for. The system is designed to make it easy for everyone to run an appropriate distance in a competitive team, while encouraging head-to-head racing.*"

### WMOA Clubs and junior development

Can clubs look at the development pathway that they are offering to their juniors and feed back to the committee if there are barriers to providing coaching that could be overcome with the support of the region? For example, WMJS can support coach development in providing opportunities for coach qualification practice or assessment sessions. In the meantime, if there are any juniors able to confidently complete orange courses, please tell them about WMJS and help us to contact them.

Potential coaches can lead sessions at WMOA training either individually or with support to develop skills. Joint squad / club sessions could be run if there are not many younger juniors in a club.

## Coming up in 2024

The 2024 orienteering calendar is full of treats for the West Midlands.

Start the year with a run around Pooley Fields for the Laurie Bradley New Year's Day Score, organised by Octavian Droobers. Will Wrekin be able to defend their title against OD on home ground? Or will another club turn out in force? With 25 runs to count for each club, a good team effort is needed to lift this trophy.



Next up on the 14th January the [West Midland League](#) kicks off at Bodenham Arboretum & Shatterford Woods. Hosted by Harlequins, it will be a combination of challenging Wyre Forest terrain with the more manicured Arboretum Full [details are here](#); pre-entry is via [Fabian 4](#) with entry on the day while maps are available.

The WM [CompassSport Cup and Trophy heat](#) is being planned by Walton Chasers on 18<sup>th</sup> February, on Cannock Chase.

### Teams due to attend are:

**CUP:** DVO, OD, NGOC, MDOC, HOC

**TROPHY:** ERYRI, WCH, LEI, SBOC, POTO, WRE, SWOC NOC

In the **Cup**, the winning team qualifies for the Final. In the **Trophy**: The first and second placed Trophy teams qualify for the Final under the 8 clubs rule. Then if SBOC comes first or second then a third team qualifies for the final.



Later in the year we have two major weekends on our door step:



[The Jan Kjellström International Festival of Orienteering 2024](#) is coming to the Midlands from 29th March to 1st April. Days two and three (the Middle and Long races) are on Cannock Chase at Beaudesert. WCH, WRE and POTO are involved with the organisation of these days and volunteers will be needed from across the Region and beyond to ensure their success.

In the Summer Harlequins are organising the 2024 British Mixed Sprint Relay Champs at the University of Birmingham on the **evening** of Saturday 22 June. On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June OD look forward to welcoming you to the British Sprint Championships which will be held in Coventry at the University of Warwick.



## Junior Home Internationals reports

The Ward Junior Home Internationals took place on two different parts of Sutton Park over the weekend of October 7th and 8th 2023.

Ian Gamlen HOC – 2023 Event Co-ordinator - reports:

*The Junior Home Internationals take place every year in early October. The top 12 male and 12 females in each of the age groups M/W14, M/W16 and M/W18's from all the home nations of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland compete in a 2 day orienteering event with an Individual Day and a Relay Day.*

*There are four trophies awarded at the JHIs:*

- The Individual Trophy – awarded to the country with the most points in the Individual race.*
- The Relay Trophy – awarded to the country with the most points in the Relay.*
- The Ward International Trophy – awarded to the country with the highest overall points total.*
- The Judith Wingham Platter – awarded to the winner between Ireland and Wales.*

*This year the JHI was hosted by the West Midlands Orienteering Association on 7-8<sup>th</sup> October 2023 with Harlequins Orienteering Club organising the Individual Day and Octavian Droobers organising the Relays. Sutton Park was the venue with residential accommodation at Beaudesert Outdoor Activity Centre.*

*In total 88 competitors took part supported by team managers from each of the home nations.*

*Adrian Bailey and Barry Elkington planned some challenging courses for the individual and relay races respectively, overseen by Richard Lewis from WRE who controlled both days. Peter Langmaid and I organised the individual day and Alistair Powell from OD organised the Relays.*

*Thanks to the unseasonably warm weather we were able to have a very lively ceilidh and individual prize giving outside with live music from the Banjacs, a West Midlands band on the Saturday evening.*

*England won the individual day, and going into the relay day, held a slender five point lead over Scotland for the Ward International Trophy.*

*The total points for the relay day were: ENG 58; SCO 46; IRE 24; WAL 10, making England also the winners of the relay trophy.*

*The **overall scores** were: ENG 135; SCO 118; IRE 65; WAL 33, so England were awarded the Ward International Trophy and Ireland were awarded the Judith Wingham Platter.*

*Thanks again to everyone who helped make sure that the event was both challenging and enjoyable.*

Many thanks to Ian and his team for all their hard work.



Congratulations to West Midlands Junior Squad member Eden, who was part of the winning English team Squad members Adam, Grace, Harriet and Kieran also volunteered in various roles over the weekend, supporting the event teams led by Harlequins and Octavian Droobers.



**Eden writes:**

*I was dropped off at Beaudesert Scout camp on Friday evening and met up with my friends who were also part of the England team. All the countries were staying there, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.*

*On Saturday morning we drove to Sutton Park for the Individual event. I came 7th on W14 as I made a couple of mistakes on some controls. Later on we headed back and played a football match, while waiting for our tea which was lasagne. After we got ready for the Ceilidh which was outside and they had a live band playing. Half way through we had the individual prize giving and then carried on with the dance.*

*On the Sunday morning we went back to Sutton Park in the south area for the relay. I was in a team with Anna Todd and Daisy Rennie. Our relay team came in 2nd place and we had all English teams on the girls podium. England were the overall winners of the JHI's after winning both days. I had a really good time and it was lots of fun.*

Read more, including a write up from Eden herself, on the [WMJS website](#)

## West Midlands Urban League

Congratulations to this year's winners:

### Category

Young Junior Men 12-	Edward Lewis (WRE)
Young Junior Women 12-	Lana Whitman (HOC)
Junior Men 16-	Craig Thompson, Kieran Rose, Oscar Whitman (all HOC)
Junior Women 16-	
Open Men	Simon Lanckham (HOC)
Open Women	Eloise Lee (HOC)
Veteran Men 40+	Chris McCartney (HOC),
Veteran Women 40+	Tanya Taylor (LOG)
Supervet Men 55+	Roger Thetford (TVOC)
Supervet Women 55+	Karen Thompson (HOC)
Ultravet Men 65+	Ian Prowse (NGOC)
Ultravet Women 65+	Hilary May (OD)
Hypervet Men 75+	Peter Carey (OD)
Hypervet Women 75+	Sheila Carey (OD)

The series is coordinated by Rick Roberts; scores and standings can be viewed on the [WMUL site](#), which also has links to the other Urban Leagues.

## Woodside Urban



The fourth and final event in 2023 West Midlands Urban league was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> October. Wrekin Orienteers provided a challenging new area. Results are on the Wrekin website:

- [PDF to view or download](#)
- [Splits](#)
- [RouteGadget](#)

## 2024 Urban league events

Planning is underway for the 2024 season, with two confirmed and one possible event:

Event	Date	Club	Venue	Details
1	Summer	WCH	tbc	<a href="#">club website</a>
2	01/09/2024	HOC	Worcester	<a href="#">club website</a>
3	13/10/2023	OD	Stratford	<a href="#">club website</a>



## West Midlands League update

Wrekin won the 2023 [West Midlands League](#) for the first time since 1981, and for only the second time in their 45 year history. They did so in style, beating the region's two larger clubs by over 200 points:

Club	Points
WRE	5750
HOC	5511
OD	5411
WCH	4535
POTOC	4032

Follow the links to the WMOA website for details of the [club counters](#) and [individual scores](#).

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## 2024 events

Planning is underway for the 2024 season with around nine events currently being planned:

Event	Date	Club	Venue	Details
1	14 January	HOC	Bodenham Arboretum & Shatterford Woods	<a href="#">club site</a>
2	24 March	OD	Coombe Abbey Country Park	<a href="#">club site</a>
3	March to May	WRE	tbc; <a href="#">Yvette Baker heat</a>	<a href="#">club site</a>
4	12th May	POTOC	Morridge, nr Leek <a href="#">WM Champs</a>	<a href="#">club site</a>
5	19th May	OD	Newbold Comyn, Nr. Leamington	<a href="#">club site</a>
6	Autumn	WCH	tbc	<a href="#">club site</a>
7	10 November	HOC	Eymore Woods	<a href="#">club site</a>
8	24 <sup>th</sup> November	WCH	Badgerslade	<a href="#">club site</a>
9	10 December	OD	Brandon Wood	<a href="#">club site</a>

## Burlish Top, event 6

The Penultimate league event of 2023 was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> November at Burlish Top, courtesy of Harlequins Orienteering

- [Results](#)
- [RouteGadget](#)



## Sutton Park, event 7



The final event was held in changeable weather on 10<sup>th</sup> December in Sutton Park, organised by Octavian Droobers

- Click [here](#) for a PDF of the results.
- Routegadget (inc SplitsBrowser): [here](#)
- index for course results and splits [here](#)
- BOF results and ranking points are [here](#)
- Winsplits are [here](#)

To quote the Planner, Andy Emmerson:

*"I hope you all enjoyed your courses despite the downpour; the feedback I heard was all positive so thank you. No doubt you will be gratified to know that with their early morning work done, both planner and controller were able to shelter in a dry, warm building with mugs of coffee while the rain drummed incessantly on the roof. But we were thinking of you!"*

*It is a joy to plan on Sutton Park with the abundance of potential control sites and the variety of terrain although finding long legs that present a continual navigational challenge is difficult. I would have liked to take the short green course into the contoured wooded area in the NE part of the A3 map - to add more variety - but that would have required a remote start and finish.*

*The fast nature of the area was reflected in the relatively short winning times but the courses did comply with the guidelines for West Midlands League events and I didn't hear any rain-sodden finishers complain!"*

Full reports from all three lead officials are on [the Octavian Droobers website](#).

## **Regional events coming up in the West Midlands**

- 01/01/2024 Laurie Bradley Trophy Score Event (OD)
- 14/01/2024 WML Event - Bodenham Arboretum & Shatterford Woods (HOC)
- 18/02/2024 CompassSport Cup Heat (WCH)
- 24/03/2024 Coombe Abbey Country Park WML Event (OD)
- 30/03/2024 Jan Kjellström Orienteering Festival - Middle
- 31/03/2024 Jan Kjellström Orienteering Festival - Long
- 21/04/2024 WMOA Relays 2024 - Baggeridge (HOC)