

Newstrack

Autumn 2007

Edited by Turgil Hawp

Have I got Newstrack for you!

Welcome to an Edition of Newstrack which is slightly different from previous issues. I am the guest editor for this issue following Dai Bedwell's departure to the United States for a few years. Fear not, however, I am the editor for one issue only until a new editor and more literate member of the club takes over.

Well what is store for you orienteering wise this autumn:

There are Colour-coded District events at Carsington (30 September) and Linacre (18 November) as well the jewel in our crown the National event at Longshaw (9 December). You will also be able to start off the New Year shaking off those headaches and hangovers with a street event around Bakewell.

Offers of help to

Stuart Swalwell for Carsington
Steve Kimberley for Linacre
and Margaret Keeling and Viv Macdonald for Longshaw

Note: All DVO senior members are required to help at Longshaw. Helpers are entitled to a half price run. Help from junior members is also much appreciated and a free run at District events and half price run at the National Event is their reward.

But there is more than that.

Each Wednesday night is club night with a chance of run. You can run with the serious and the not so serious. Run hard or set the world rights whilst you run. The choice is yours. Club nights are every week (1st and 3rd Wednesdays at the Johnsons (BELPER) and 2nd and 4th at the Mackerays (ALLESTREE)). Meet at 6-45pm for a run at 7pm with a cup of tea, bickies and chat afterwards. 5th Wednesdays something special will be arranged so see the website for arrangements for 31 Oct 2007.

Friday nights, starting 5 October, circuit training at Sawmills Village Hall, near Ambergate. When I say circuit training don't worry you exercise at your own pace with a selection of music ranging from 60s classics, punk rock to heavy metal and jazz to exercise to. More info from Val Johnson (Club Coach)

Monday night is DVO Headbangers night for those who like a long hard run followed by a pie and a pint. Contact Steve Kimberley for further details
But now I come to the most important announcement:

The DVO AGM will be held at

Wednesday 10 October 2007
8 for 8-15pm Sawmills Village Hall
On north side of A610 between Ripley and Ambergate
The usual Wednesday night run will be at 7pm from this venue.

Both chairs will become vacant so DVO will need new people to sit in them, Derek Gale finishes 3 years as Chairman of the club and Randal Macdonald as Vice-Chairman. They have served the club admirably over not just the last three years but for many years previously. I don't think they will however be able to escape to a life of leisure; their contribution is far too valuable. In addition the secretary's post also becomes vacant after three years of hard work by Paul Beresford. Anyone wishing to take on any these roles or any of the other posts within the club will not be thrown in at the deep end. There is a whole wealth of experience within the club on hand for any new incumbent to tap into.

The club however needs new blood to meet the challenges of the future. Without your help orienteering will become a pastime for a dwindling number of pensioners as we all get older. How would you like to see orienteering develop? As well as the traditional events would like to see more sprint races, weekend competitions of short races, more park O and as the spectre of the Foot and Mouth virus once more threatens to close down the countryside, would you like to see Street O developed. What are your thoughts and how can you help.

Should DVO cover all of Derbyshire or should we exploit the geographical not the political areas. Should DVO cover the High Peak or should a new High Peak Club become a satellite club of DVO or a separate club. These are all questions for the future.

Come along to the AGM and have your say on where the club is and what direction you would like it to go.



1969

40 years

2009

2009 sees the 40th anniversary of orienteering in the Derwent Valley. It is said life begins at 40 so to celebrate the milestone the club will hold a special event. Previously clubs

(including DVO) have reinacted an old event using old maps and old style punches. It was however decided that this is old hat. To celebrate DVO40 it was decided to celebrate by doing what we do best - orienteering and where should we orienteer but in no less than the World Heritage Site which is the Derwent Valley. A long O between Ambergate and Cromford is one of the proposals linking all our areas and new areas that overlook the Derwent Valley between these points. There will also be traditional orienteering within one of these areas. We need sponsors and volunteers to make this idea or any other idea come to fruition.

To all juniors can you design an eye-catching easily reproducible logo for DVO40. The star symbol of DVO represents an O kite (red and white) across the Derwent Valley (green and blue and hence why the colours are not interchanged on the other point). This needs to be part of the logo. The rest is up to your imagination.

Read All About it!

Did you know that reports of DVO events are published in the local press. You can see your name in print to show to all your friends. Aswell as reports in the excellent local sports coverage by the Matlock Mercury, reports have been published in the Belper News, Ripley and Heanor News and the Ashbourne News Telegraph

The Mysterious case of Déjà vu

The name's Knoll, Rocky Knoll, BOF special agent (retired). I hadn't worked for the Fed for over decade. I was taking a long earned retirement from orienteering enforcement. So it was with surprise that I got a message from BOF one morning as I ate my breakfast. After I cleared up the glass and unwrapped the message from the rock I realised that my retirement was at an end, I was needed for one more case.

I made my way to Darley Dale. The sign to the secret headquarters of BOF hung limply on one hook creaking in the wind as I made my way to the door. I found it was all boarded up. I knocked. "The cheque's in the post," came a voice from the inside. "It's me, Knoll," I shouted realising that the figure hiding behind the door was Alexi Rossoff. "I got a call to come back to BOF." With that explanation Alexi shuffled into the light. "I don't work for the Fed anymore. I've resigned. They are across the road now in those plush new offices"

I made my way over to the new glass fronted offices. As I entered the atrium O came around from behind the fountain. "Welcome back Knoll", he said "How do you like the new offices?" I muttered a reply as the elegant glass elevator silently and smoothly took us to his top floor office. I hadn't been so surprised since I found out that Andy the DVO social rep was not a guy but a gal. A large picture of Silas Wegg hung in O's office. We both looked at it knowingly. Some people thought Silas was gone, his grave marked by a single stone where he was supposedly felled, leading on the brown course. We both knew better...

"Tea", asked O, as we both sat down? The Silver tea service was brought out. I relaxed as we discussed old cases. The time I solved the case of the disappearing ink with my old mate

Toby Beeswick was my best case but I grew impatient, "Let's cut to quick," I told O "What's cracking off?"

"Well its like this," said O, "Orienteers are stating that they are running courses they think they have run before. Its happened at the Twin Peaks, The Double Gloucester and more recently at Shipley Park and Farley Moor." "My old mate Farley Moor, the actor manager," I exclaimed in puzzlement? "No, Farley Moor that used to be Matlock Forest West but we had to change the name to protect the planner after the K6 defections," O replied frustratedly. "The problem is that the planner of the first Shipley event thinks he ran it again last week, but then he couldn't find number 5 which sort of destroys his case." "Who was the planner," I asked? O told me. "Mmm," I said with a wry smile, "if it was him then it could well be true, getting lost on his own course is something he would do. I'll go and pay him a visit." "You'll need this" said O handing over a cannister of deodorant. "What for," I asked? "~~We've dropped the reference~~ to the Fed we've got to appear more orienteering friendly, we're just known as BO now!"

I made my way to Ambergate, centre of the Universe, where DVO has its HQ. I was going to see P the Equipment officer who had supplied me with many a gadget over the years. As I walked down the path to his house I was thrown to the floor by a rugby tackle. "Oops, sorry mate," my assailant exclaimed "I thought you were my brother." "Its all right," I said realising looking up at his near 6' frame that retaliation was out of the question, "I'm looking for P". "Oh Dad's in the DVO HQ he said pointing to a set of dilapidated garages. As I spun round an identical bruiser stood in my way. It wasn't only courses that were being repeated. They took me over to the HQ, which was a windowless building at the end of the row shrouded by trees. I knocked at the door. The door creaked open a notch. "Yes - Can I help you," snapped a voice from inside? "Its me Knoll," I replied, "I have come to discuss the case of the repeated courses." "You better come in," said P as he led me into the DVO depot. The depot was an Aladdin's cave of all things orienteering and in the corner under the warm glow of the orange lantern was a sofa and table. "Sit down," said P as he poured me a scotch on the rocks. A jazz record played quietly on the gramophone in the corner. "Its very cosy in here," I said "But I need to know all you know about the repeated courses." "Its true," said P "we are having to recycle orienteering courses from previous years. You see there aren't enough organisers, planners and controllers." "What can I do," I said? "Recruit," said P "or orienteering will cease to be!"

So volunteer now to organise, plan or control an event.
Your club needs you.

The name's Knoll, Rocky Knoll, BOF special agent (retired).

Fixtures
Early Autumn

Full details on www.dvo.org.uk and links therein

Events and venues can change at short notice please confirm before you set off.

September		
Sunday 30th	Carsington Pastures and Harborough Rocks	DVO District Event
October		
Wednesday 3rd	Belper (Johnsons)	Club Night
Friday 5th	Sawmills	Circuits and Keep Fit
Saturday 6th	Simonside (Rothbury) - October Odyssey	NATO Regional Event
	Willersley Woods	LEI District Event
Sunday 7th	Simonside - October Odyssey	NATO Regional Event
	Houghton and Rewell (Arundell)	SO Regional Event
	Warwick	City Race
Wednesday 10th	Sawmills	Club Night and AGM
Friday 12th	Sawmills	Circuits and Keep Fit
Saturday 13th	Evington Park, Leicester	LEI Local Event
Sunday 14th	Blidworth	NOC District Event
Wednesday 17th	Belper (Johnsons)	Club Night
Friday 19th	Sawmills	Circuits and Keep Fit
Sunday 21st	Lanfield Common, Hebden Bridge	EPOC Regional Event
	Shillingstone Hill, Blandford Forum The 19th Dorset Delight	WSX Regional Event
	Twyford Woods, Colsterworth	LOG District Event
Wednesday 24th	Allestree (Mackervoy's)	Club Night
Friday 26th	Sawmills	Circuits and Keep Fit
Sunday 28th	Salcey Forest, Northampton	SMOC Regional Event
Wednesday 31st	Special Club Night see website for details	Club Night
November		
Friday 2nd	Sawmills	Circuits and Keep Fit
Sunday 4th	Delamere Forest Cheshire The Delamere Trophy	DEE Regional Event
Wednesday 7th	Belper (Johnsons)	Club Night
Saturday 10th	Brocks Hill Park, Leicester	LEI Local Event
Sunday 11th	Fairoak and Hednesford, Cannock	WCH Regional Event

Sunday 11th	West Woods, Marlborough	NWO Regional Event
Sunday 11th	Byron's Walk	NOC District Event
Wednesday 14th	Allestree (Mackervoy's)	Club Night
Friday 16th	Sawmills	Circuits and Keep Fit
Sunday 18th	Linacre	DVO District Event
Wednesday 21st	Belper (Johnsons)	Club Night
Friday 23rd	Sawmills	Circuits and Keep Fit
Sunday 25th	Bentley Woodlands, Doncaster	SYO District Event
Sunday 25th	Watermead Park, Wanlip, Leicester	LEI District Event!!!!
December		
Sunday 9th	Longshaw	DVO National Event
January 2008		
Tuesday 1st	Bakewell	DVO Street O

All events especially Friday night events subject to confirmation

Final Thoughts from a Chair

By Derek Gale

Three years always seems a long time when you start a task but it seems to have gone by very quickly - probably a sign of me getting older. Anyway, I thought that it was appropriate to look back over the past three years and reflect on what has happened. I shall leave the judgement as to whether things have improved or not to the reader.

What matters to an orienteer? It seems to me to be four things: Is there an event next week and have I entered, how fit and capable am I, what did I do last week and how well organised was it. You will notice that I make no mention of taking responsibility for the sport and I will return to that later. However, I was going to reflect on changes and there is no doubt in my mind that there are more events available and that the process of entering, both to the Regional and District events has got much easier. Thank the almost universal electronic systems and web use for that and I make no apologies to those not using the web as it simplifies the volunteer help required substantially.

Fitness - perhaps the most difficult to see changes but some of the fitness training we have put on is not being as well supported as in the past so maybe

we are less capable than we used to be - or is that age? If you extend the fitness perspective to include technical aspects then with the improved coaching, albeit generally aimed at the newer members, I do believe we as a club are getting better overall.

What did I do last week - this has been an area that has changed dramatically over the past few years. Nearly all events today have electronic punching and you can analyse the splits to your heart's content. With the newer tools like Route Gadget you can even see your progress (or lack of it!) in comparison with your rivals.

Finally Organisation: and what I mean by that is the 'feel good' aspect of the event you went to last week. There are good events and there are bad events at all clubs and therein lies the problem as we have those within DVO as well so it is the support given to people that is the issue, not what a club does. Perhaps the most disappointing thing about my stay in office is that I did not tackle the establishment of acceptable standards for our events as hard as I should.

I said I would come back to the issue of taking responsibility for the sport. Volunteers with a thin layer of professional support run our sport. The question of why we do not get the volunteers without some 'arm-twisting' is the perennial problem of many sports, not just orienteering. Without those volunteers the sport would collapse and it is vital that those who wish it to continue make the decision to put some effort in to support it. With this in mind the DVO Committee have discussed ensuring that volunteers for roles are not left alone but will always have the support of someone more experienced. It is good to help at events; it is even better to become responsible for critical roles and better still to feed back into the sport by accepting responsible positions both within the club and beyond. We will provide the support for people to move through that route. I look forward to seeing new faces in the various committees.

Derek Gale

Arctic Midnight Orienteering

By Dave Bennett

And so it was that at 3am I was eating seal soup and reindeer steak, some of the Greenlandic delicacies which were available at the finish of the long-O event which had begun with a mass start at midnight. I only did the 10km course, which took me 2 hours 21 min compared to the winner's 2 hours, but with only 4 competitors that got me 2nd place and a prize: a pendant made of a seal's claw. The longest course on the long-O was 20km with 1000m climb, which was won in just under 4 hours, apparently by a 14 year old who navigates without a compass. I had kept up with the winner of my course for the first two controls, but after that was on my own in the fog that enveloped the high ground. Much of the terrain was steep and rocky, with a lot of bare rock between the tundra vegetation, which grows only a few centimetres above the ground, so is very runnable. There were plenty of ponds, which I found to be the best features to relocate on, although they were patches also of snow, which in the poor visibility looked just like ponds from a distance. The highest control, a cairn 391m above sea level, was manned as a safety check and drinks point, where I paused for a photo, (picture 018 on page 3 of <http://iog.9net.dk/AMO%202007/fotoside.asp>), and to choose which chocolate bar to take with the drink. Towards the end the course traversed a flat area, mapped as a huge marsh but dry in places, with protruding islands of rock which provided a few control sites and a more runnable route than the marsh. The final two legs were through the streets of Ilulissat town, with a control on a building corner, before finishing outside the sports centre, having run past people coming out of late-night bars, or taking advantage of the unbroken daylight to practice football all night. Inside the sports centre there was a permanent display about orienteering, with O-maps of the local area, plus one map of a contrasting foreign area - Epping Forest - the big difference being that trees are unknown in Greenland. Another is that the O-maps of Ilulissat are aligned to grid north, so the magnetic north lines cross the map at about 45 degrees.

The long-O event was the last of the 3-day event, and the only one that started at midnight. At the score event on day 1, after my first five minutes in the 'special Greenlandic terrain' I was thinking that, even though I wasn't sure where I was, I should surely be able to see at least one of the many

controls in the area. It got easier once I had found a couple of controls, and from some of the control sites there were some spectacular views across the fjord, of sunlit icebergs and floes of every shape and size. There are no walls or fences in Greenland, and there is no private land ownership (buildings may be privately-owned, but the land beneath them is public), but there were many small out-of-bounds areas, these being where the sled-dogs are chained for the summer. At the finish, home-made cakes were on sale every day, in addition to the complimentary meat dishes on day 3.

Day 2 was the 'Unofficial Greenland Championships', which started in sunshine across the marshes which were also at the end of the long-O. From the start we could see mist rolling towards us across the bay, and as I crossed the road onto the rocky headland for the latter part of the course I also crossed into the mist. It didn't reduce visibility as much as the fog did on day 3, but it added to the challenge as each hill loomed only in silhouette. With the horizon invisible I was surprised at one point to find that the course had dropped so much height that the next control was almost on the shore.

Arctic Midnight Orienteering is organised by Ilulissat Orienteering Greenland (IOG), which is Greenland's only O-club. Road-running is very popular in Greenland, but the only roads are within the towns; the runners in Ilulissat took up orienteering because they were bored running the 3km road to the airport. As the snow and ice melt from May onwards, IOG have training events every week, but Arctic Midnight Orienteering is the only large event. About 15 of the 50 competitors in 2007 were from abroad, all the others were from IOG, none from elsewhere in Greenland. Although Greenland has plenty of terrain with excellent orienteering potential, only Ilulissat has O-maps, and IOG can't expand its catchment area, as travelling between towns is only possible by plane or boat (or dog-sled in winter).

Details of next years event will be on www.iog.gl

From Viv Macdonald - Social Secretary but wearing some other hats aswell!!

Longshaw National Event - Sunday 9 December 2007

We've now got most of the team leaders for the national and a number of people have already volunteered to help - thanks. If you are planning to run,

you need to let Mike Godfree know with a paper entry and it will be assumed you will help - Margaret and I will be ringing you!

Retail business for sale!

Is anyone interested in taking on the DVO shop? We would be very willing to transfer the franchise and the goodwill that goes with it. You may like to develop the business into mail order using the DVO website. If you are interested, please let me know.

DVO Annual club dinner and awards

The annual dinner and awards will take place on Saturday 1 March at Wirksworth Town Hall - food provided by DVO Catering (Fairly) Limited. More details will follow but please put this in your diary.

Safety Matters

By Mike Godfree

Many of you will be vaguely aware that we check that all competitors have returned safely. In the days of control cards that was done by matching up the stubs collected at the start with the control cards handed in at the finish. With electronic punching we compare the contents of the start boxes with the e-cards that have been downloaded. Hence the reminders to download at the end of the competition. Otherwise we have no clue as to whether you have gone home or are still out there. Even finding out who the e-card belongs to can mean trawling through a lot of poorly written forms if the e-card is not on the BOF database.

The club has been fortunate over the years not to suffer any serious casualties but we have had the odd worry. The system of ensuring everyone has returned only works if we can rapidly identify a person genuinely overdue from any false alarms. We have twice now been puzzled over e-cards that have apparently started but never downloaded. In both these cases it has transpired that a youngster, not actually competing, had been encouraged to punch as they went round but because they weren't competing didn't think to download. Obviously we did not need to be concerned in these cases but the problem is that any false alarms divert attention away from what might be a real situation, cast doubt on the system and delay clearing away the whole

event. So please, if an e-card has been through the start you MUST download it. And the safety information on the registration slip could save a lot of effort.

We have also started searches or been held up at the close of an event by competitors who have been very slow and stayed out well beyond course closing time. It is probably fair to say that none of these have been club members. We have no issue with club members who have been helping and deserve a competitive run, but we have hung around long after everyone else has gone home waiting for the odd competitor. If you do not think you are going to complete the course by the stated closing time then it is only fair on the officials who still have to collect controls, tidy up, publish results etc. to retire to the finish. You are also taking a risk because by then there are usually insufficient helpers left to mount an immediate search.

On the subject of searches there is one fundamental rule and that is there needs to be a search co-ordinator who keeps a check of who has gone searching and where. Otherwise you rapidly end up with the situation that the missing person returns but you now have searchers out there except you are not sure where and who are themselves at risk and then the situation is perpetuated. We have a set of radios, but because they only work on line of sight they will often need someone to stand on a hill and act as a relay. Similarly mobile phones have black spots in many of our areas. So treat a search as a serious matter right from the beginning, don't start a random search that will only put more people at risk.

I am also horrified at the number of competitors who object to carrying a cagoule and a whistle. They could make the difference between a successful search for someone with hypothermia as opposed to a fatality.

Club Championships 2007

Congratulations to the new club champions

Junior	The Lithuanian Trophy	Adam Wisdish
Womens Champion	The Judy Buckley Trophy	Jennifer Gale
Club Champion	The Mike Yardley Trophy	Ranald Macdonald

DERWENT VALLEY ORIENTEERS JUNIOR SQUAD PROGRAMME - AUTUMN 2007

DVO Junior Squad will meet at the following events. Want to improve your Orienteering? Then why not come along and join in the fun. Courses will be available for all levels, qualified coaches and experienced Orienteers will be there to help and advise.

You will need to get there at least 30 minutes before the first start time. Remember to bring your O kit, compass etc, spare clothes, drink and food (football etc optional)

Orienteering is a 'Sport for All' and courses at events will be suitable for both adults and children, so why not make it a family session.

Events marked Ⓢ are large and may require pre-entry and a bit more planning, talk to Val or one of the coaches if you would like to come along.

Date	Where?	Start times	Club / Event	Map ref.	Junior entry fees
Sun 23/9/07	Burntstump Country Park.	10.30 – 12.00	NOC C5	SK588057	£1
Sun 30.9.07	Carsington Pasture EM round of 'Yvette Baker' – junior inter-club competition	10.30 – 12.30	DVO C4	SK250538	£1
Sat 13/10/07	Evington Park Leicester	11.00 – 12.00	LEI C5	SK 625030	£1.50
Thursday 25.10.07	Rosliston Forest Centre	10.30 – 2.00	Coaching Session	SK 242175	TBC
Sun 11/11/07 Ⓢ	Fairoak and Brindley Cannock Chase Staffordshire	10.30 – 12.30	WCH C3	SK 018171	£3.00
Sun 18/11/07	Linacre, Cutthorpe Chesterfield	10.30 – 12.30	DVO C4	SK339733	£1
Sat 24/11/07	Bestwood Nottingham	10.30 – 2.30	Coaching Session (All EM)	SK566 475	TBC
Sun 9/12/07 Ⓢ	Longshaw Estate	10.30 – 12.30	DVO C2	SK273805	£3.00
Sun 16/12/07	Walesby Scout Camp New Ollerton Notts	10.30 – 12.30	NOC C4	SK 669702	TBC

Full event details may be found on the individual club websites:

DVO - www.dvo.org.uk

LEI - www.leioc.co.uk

NOC - www.noc.uk.org

WCH - www.waltonchasers.co.uk

Or, on the East midland Orienteering Association website;

EMOA – www.emoa.co.uk

If you are completing orange level courses confidently and are M/W12+ then you will be able to come along to the East Midland Junior Squad sessions – talk to Val if you think this may be you.

Val Johnson

gmiandfam@aol.com or 01773 824754



Derwent Valley Orienteers

Annual General Meeting 2007

Sawmills Village Hall

8:15pm, Wednesday 10th October 2007

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 2006 Meeting
3. Matters Arising
4. Chair's Report
5. Secretary's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Election of Officers
 - a. Chair
 - b. Vice-Chair
 - c. Secretary
 - d. Treasurer
 - e. Club Captain
 - f. Fixtures Secretary
 - g. Committee Member

8. Appointed Officers

The current positions are

Social	Viv Macdonald	Lead Coach	Val Johnson
Equipment	Paul Wright	Mapping	Mike Godfree
Newstrack	Vacant	Permanent Courses	Mike Godfree
Access	Neil Forrest	Publicity	Paul Wright
Press	Paul Wright	Minutes Secretary	Jen Gale
Development	Ranald Macdonald	EMOA Rep	Ranald Macdonald
Junior Dev.	Val Johnson		

9. Presentation of the Budget

- a. Full, Local and Club Memberships fees.

10. Life Memberships

11. A.O.B.



Derwent Valley Orienteers

District Orienteering Event

Carsington Pastures

(15 miles north-west of Derby, near Wirksworth)

Sunday 30th September 2007

an East Midlands League event & East Midlands round of Yvette Baker Trophy

By car: The event will be signed from the B5035 (Ashbourne - Cromford road) near Brassington (SK234522) if approaching from the west, and near Wirksworth (SK272543) if approaching from the east. Car parking will be in a field off the minor road (SK250547) from Wirksworth to Brassington. Parking fee £1.

By public transport: Bus service 17 (Chesterfield - Matlock - Ashbourne) to Carsington village, then 1 mile steep walk.

Cost: **Seniors** £7 (reduced to £5 for National and East Midlands members of British Orienteering and IOF); **Juniors/Students** £1; **Family** £15 (reduced to £11 for National and East Midlands members of British Orienteering and IOF).

Please show your membership card.

On White, Yellow and Orange courses, family groups running together pay only one Senior entry fee.

The event will use SportIdent electronic punching. If you do not have a SportIdent card, you can hire one at Registration. Hire fee of 50p for Seniors, free for Juniors.

Registration: 1000 - 1200

Start: 1030 - 1230

Courses: String, White, Yellow, Orange, Red, Light Green, Green, Blue, Brown

Terrain: Open moorland with intricate contour detail.

No dogs allowed, as the event is on farmland. **Full leg cover compulsory**

Organiser: Stuart Swalwell 01335 347814 stuart.swalwell2412@mac.com

Planner: Dave Lawson

Controller: Ranaid Macdonald

Next DVO events

Events in 18th November 2007, District Event Linacre near Chesterfield

Sunday 9th December 2007, National event and EM. Champs. at Longshaw, near Sheffield

DVO club information and event results are at www.dvo.org.uk

Beyond Description

By Graham Johnson

(a Sports Personality of the Month Nomination)

(I think there is an element of self-nomination here too - Ed)

As I descend into increasing depths of decrepitude, it is a source of comfort and amazement that, even in the second half of my first century, M50s still find themselves running the third longest course at most district events. It is a measure then of the respect, nay veneration, with which I once held Steve Kimberley that, when he volunteered to collect two copies of the control description lists for the course we were both running at the Attermire National Event and brought back two copies of Course 4, the sole thought straying across the space between my ears was that the organisers must have re-jigged the course/class allocation.

We flash forward an hour to the start line where the same Steve Kimberley has the dubious privilege of starting 6 minutes ahead of me. My deepest commiseration to Pete Hubberstey at having to plan the CompassSport Cup Final at Blidworth is interrupted by furious gesticulations from Kimberley S, by now well advanced in the start box. Most of his words are lost in the wind but I do catch 'Wrong Control Description' before he grabs his map and disappears over the top of an adjacent hill.

Great! So now I know that somewhere on my course, there's a dodgy control but I don't know where, what or when. And for the next hour and a half, I approach each control site with the same caution and suspicion I would an unexploded bomb or Big Issue seller, never knowing which is going to leap out and bite me on the bum. Is it the description that's wrong, or the control code or even the position of the control itself?

The growing sense of unease is hardly relieved by the fact that all of the controls and all the codes seems to be in order. It is something of a relief when my course ends and I espy the same Steve Kimberley who tipped me off in the first place. Eager to find out which was the suspect control, I approach him, but he greets me with 'I bet you're glad I told you I'd given you the wrong control descriptions'.

The world seems to stop and grow silent as the awful truth dawns on me around an hour and a half later than anyone else reading this. Yes, for the past ninety minutes, I have been wasting my time even more than usual in trying to compete, not with my peers, but with the W21 Longs instead. I momentarily reflect that, if I did tear Steve Kimberley limb from limb, there's not a jury in the land that would not consider it an act committed whilst the balance of my mind was temporarily disturbed. In the event, I have chosen to exercise undeserved mercy, comforting myself with the thought that at least the Sports Personality of 2007 will not end up on my mantelpiece this year.

(Methinks he is a little too confident here - Ed)