

Black and Green – September 2012 edition



Welcome to the B and G September 2012 edition...

From the Chairman

What a fantastic summer of sport! The London 2012 Olympics probably exceeded our expectations and now it is all over, one legacy will hopefully have been to renew our enthusiasm for participating in our favourite sport. The new season is underway so I hope you will search out the fixture list, highlight some events and make plans for the forthcoming months, not forgetting to enter those that need entering! All of us at NOC will look forward to seeing you in a welcoming forest in the not too distant future.

Not all events need to be big, or require highly refined organisation – a couple of weeks ago the Horsewill family went to Sheffield's Big Running Weekend. There were a host of events organised by the local running and orienteering clubs and centred on Whirlow Farm. We were there for the Score Event around Ecclesall Woods and Limb Valley. It was all quite low key, as evidenced by the poll of competitors on the start line as to whether to have a mass start or start at 10s intervals, but tremendous fun nevertheless. It showed, with electronic punching, not all events these days really need to have a large investment in manpower and organisation. A run round a great area was followed by a nice surprise as all competitors were presented with a voucher for a hot lunch of top quality sausages in a roll offered by the hosting Farm Shop. The relaxed atmosphere before, during and after the event was tremendous and left me wanting to go back for more.

The Sheffield event was just one example of what can be achieved in promoting local sport. At NOC we are ambitious to provide a good programme of events for the region, but to realise these ambitions on your behalf, frankly, we need help. We are mainly limited by the available resources of manpower so please, whatever your level of experience of helping out at events, please come forward to offer your services as we plan the activities for the forthcoming year. The NOC committee will do our bit to facilitate a good programme and make the necessary resources available. For example we want to encourage more members to become involved in mapping, but to do so we must purchase more quite expensive software licenses. Please come forward and offer your services in whatever role or level you feel comfortable with. Catherine Hughes coordinates our event organisation and she will be delighted to hear from you: she can be contacted via the email address: volun_coord@noc-uk.org

Finally I would like to express our thanks to all members who have contributed to the programme of orienteering events in our local region in the past year. I would especially like to thank the coordinators of the local hubs, Robert Parkinson, Hilary Palmer and Catherine Hughes, who are doing a tremendous job in providing a regular focus of orienteering activity and bringing new enthusiastic people into our sport. Also special mention must go to Pauline Olivant for steering the renewal of our ClubMark status and Hilary Palmer (again) for updating all of our organisers' documentation. And of course, special thanks are due to the guest-editor, Nick Malbon, for his work in producing this excellent edition of the Black & Green.

Tony Horsewill

Bens' trip to Sweden

Back in May I had been selected to be part of the Stockholm tour which was ran by Nick Barrable for two weeks. The tour gave us an opportunity to train in high quality terrain and experience racing at different levels in different disciplines under the name of OK Ravinen.

I flew out with some friends on the Tuesday where we had to then get the brilliant public transport to the OK Ravinen club hut where we arrived quite late into the evening. Before we barely set foot in the door we went out for a night run in the terrain which led to the lads leaving most people behind before getting lost as we didn't have a map, after running to the top of the ski slope and looking at Stockholm at night we headed back and ran along the road. Throughout the rest of the week the routine was up at no later than 8 on the bus for about 9, train for the day with plenty of opportunities to swim in the lakes. Then back to the hut for dinner, maybe another swim and sometimes another session.

On the first full day we had a relay in the evening where the boys entered three teams. One of the teams managed a podium finish with the other two both finishing top 10. The relay was fast as there was no gaffes, but as there were no H18 only H16 and H20 we were put against some fast guys with the fastest time going under 30minutes for the 5.5km course, I went out on second leg at the same time as one of the other Ravinen teams and managed to get back just ahead to running the course in 38minutes with two big mistakes. The relay was good fun and gave us an insight to the competition in the local area that was to come in the next two weeks.

On the following Sunday we then attended a middle race where the speed had to be a lot slower through the first section which was quite technical and was pretty rocky. I was steady and didn't want to lose much time on number one but still made a 30s miss but didn't mind to much, then number 3 I made a total mess of coming off my compass too early and then not being too sure, I then could not relocate at all then after a good 15minutes I bailed to a road and ran down it and back into the forest. In total I had lost 20minutes, the rest of the course was me just attacking everything and made a mistake because of it but only losing a small 10minutes the rest of the course was good but was nearly last after this performance taking just under 53minutes for 3.5km.

On the Tuesday evening we had the OK Ravinen club championships, the course was pretty fast underfoot and not too technical which would have suited me but I picked up and injury earlier in the day but still managed to have an okay run. The Wednesday we had the tour champs and Sweden's #1 ranked orienteer Gustav Bergman turned up to take part and warmed up with a few of the lads. Carrying the injury still I didn't perform too well compared to others but no huge mistakes which was good, my time was 30minutes, 5mins down on the winning time and 10mins down on Gustav. After this we took part in some trail-o which was different before we moved on to an Island in Stockholm for a sprint race. The sprints are a bit different sometimes in Sweden, with bits of forest and bare rock so flat road shoes not always being the optimal choice, I chose the flats and as we arrived it was raining heavily which caused lots of problems on the rocks, either way I finished unharmed and it was a good experience.



Friday we then left the hut and headed up north for a few hours to the Swedish night championships. Unlike back home the Swedish championships are only open to 18/20/21E's so was a different experience. Being heavily injured I thought this would benefit me as I would have a lot of time for map reading the course was gaffled with a map exchange after about 4km. I managed to finish the course but was a long way down.

Saturday was the Swedish sprint qualifier, the course was a lot better than the sprints back home, no slow boring intricate sections, just fast racing, although I was injured I went out hard looking to qualify as close to the A final as possible, I was going fine and then lost over a minute on a control that was a bit confusing, so losing a minute in this short easy race put me well down, my leg was also in a lot of pain but kept going. I then finished and found out coming into the finish arena(football stadium) I had MP'd the penultimate control so was automatically in the C.

On the Sunday it was good to see 4 British lads in the A final, but for me it was early starts having MP'd, the atmosphere was much better with more spectators coming to watch the elite athletes. But as I was an early starter with other runner that had MP'd I wasn't too up for the race but the C final turned quite competitive with the MP's so I couldn't even think about winning the C, the race again was fast and furious, we had a loop where we came past the finish arena where we were pre warned, on the way back to the arena I was pre-warned in 2nd very close to first so pushed around the last section and put in a fast sprint finish but went into 2nd, by the time everyone else in the C final had finished I finished 6th, most of the people beating me MP'd the day before. I took 15mins 32seconds for the 3k course which was about 20s down on the leader so quite close but a good experience.

It was then time to travel home very tired and very sore and I have not fully recovered from my trip and injury free *touch wood* I am very grateful for the funding I received from NOC to take part in the tour.

Ben Beresford

Orienteering in Transylvania - the “forests of the vampires”



I received an invitation from NOC member Radu Rosca (a chemical engineering student at Nottingham University) to join his home club, Bucharest Orienteering, on their trip to the 3-day Transylvanian Open in Cluj. An exciting chance not only to orienteer in the forests of the vampires but also to tour the country to visit attractions such as Dracula's castle, the Transfăgărășan highway (Top Gear's the 'best road in the world') and the square in Brasov where the Pied Piper re-emerged with the children he had lured away from Hamelin.

We started out in Bucharest, walking along the chaotic jumble of streets. I was amazed by its eclectic mix of architecture; historic buildings hidden behind striking concrete communist apartment blocks. Bucharest used to be known as the “Paris of the East”. Ceausescu built a copy of the Champs-Elysees and the Arc de Triomphe; just like in Paris, only the road was one metre wider and three metres longer and the traffic around the Arc not so busy!

After a couple of days travelling north through beautiful countryside and fascinating medieval towns we arrived at Cluj for the first event. An urban sprint through a hillside suburb of densely packed communist era flats. I'd left my entry to this event until just before the closing date. As there were no other W40s entered at that time, I opted to run W21E. I didn't see the point of winning without any competition – or was it my Yorkshire genes looking for “value for money”, so that I'd see more of the country whilst I was there?! With temperatures that week between 35-39 degC, as I stood on the start line, I wondered if I'd made a wise decision. But at least I'd met another British W21 from SLOW – so I was looking forward to having a post run chat about route choice etc.

I enjoyed the sprint race and only made a couple of ten second errors. As I ran uphill through a playground, the local kids shouted “I show you where it is” (did they really say that to me in English?) and then proceeded to guide me the long way round a thicket to a control. I was a bit embarrassed but relieved

to find out afterwards that I wasn't the only person who fell for this trick! I finished 9th out of eleven women. For results and all other info on this competition go to <http://www.transilva.ro/> and for photos see my Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/catherine.hughes.161>

Day 2 was a middle distance in very technical forest. I was surprised to see several orienteers at the start wearing shorts. Not something we'd do in a British forest in summer. However, in Romanian orienteering areas there are no nettles, brambles nor nasty undergrowth – the forests are superbly runnable – even in summer. It has to be said, I didn't orienteer very well on this course. I lost a lot of time in a technical area with a multitude of deep gullies that we ran through on two loops. Although, by the last few controls I felt I was starting to get the hang of navigating through this deciduous forest with its low visibility and occasional patches of springy ankle-high oak saplings.

Concerned about the heat and my performance on day 2 I headed out cautiously for the long distance on day 3, armed with a camelback. First half of the course went superbly well and I caught up the woman who started 10 minutes before me. So I confidently picked up my speed on the long leg – a 1.3km leg, for which I'd chosen a route following a zigzagging selection of small paths. Halfway along I lost the path and headed off on rough bearing. I was running too fast for my navigation by now, and realised I was unable to relocate and was in danger of running off the map, so retraced my steps. After a few minutes I was joined by Maria from our Bucharest club group who confidently announced she knew where we were. Alas, this turned out not to be the case – it took a long time for me to finally regain contact with the map (we were 50m from the edge!!) and then locate the control (44 minutes for that leg – eek!). By now Maria was tired and was sharing my water so we had an easy run together through the last 2km of the course to arrive just in time for the prize giving.



I enjoyed a warm welcome and very generous hospitality from Radu, his family and his orienteering club – who organised all the travel, accommodation and entries. The Bucharest orienteering club has only about 20 members and doesn't have SI kit nor put on events. But they do have a regular programme of training sessions (like our Community O) and often travel to events in Romania and further afield, sponsored in part by the University and organised by their highly enthusiastic coach.

I can thoroughly recommend NOC members who enjoy overseas O-trips, to add the Transylvanian Open to their list of events to do. After all – there's no night event in the programme, so you're unlikely to encounter a vampire.

Catherine Hughes

Jukola and Venla relays

The Jukola and Venla relays are on many orienteers' must do list and with them being hosted on the outskirts of Helsinki, this was a year that many Brits made the journey over. A small troupe from NOC (Rich Robinson, Andy Llewellyn and Ant Squire) joined forces to run for OK Ravinen - Rich's Swedish club based near Stockholm (also the club of Nick Barrable and Gustav Bergman, Swedish No.1).

I travelled out early with the intention of getting a decent training run in on the Friday. It was an enjoyable novelty to get a couple of public buses from the airport to the sports park in the nearby suburbs, that was the venue for the weekend. Essentially the Jukola assembly area becomes a small town for the weekend as it becomes home for over 16,558 orienteers and a large number of non-running spectators. There are mass kitchens/dining areas, orienteering shops the size of supermarkets, an assembly field that takes 10 minutes to walk across, multiple big screens, mass showers/saunas and fields and fields of tents. Arriving early, it was somewhat surreal to see all this infrastructure set-up with only a handful of people wandering around.

I dumped my bag at the army tent we were sleeping and quickly changed to go for a training run at a nearby area. I say nearby but it involved getting another local bus and map-memory to recall where to get off and then the direction to walk in to get onto the edge of the map. After a few nervous moments, I did finally relocate and reassure myself I was in the correct forest (there are a lot of woods in Finland!). I then had a mixed run around a training run, when I concentrated I was okay, when my mind wandered (i.e. thinking how much nicer it was to be running in the wood of a Friday afternoon rather than being sat at my desk in work), then I also went for a bit of a wander.

After my training run I then had to return to the bus stop and hope there would be a bus coming at some point. After waiting 15 minutes I was pleased to have a car pull up and the familiar face of Mark Saunders from BOK offer me a lift back to assembly (luxury of a hire car!). By this time Rich and Andy had arrived so we went to find food and watch the England vs Sweden Euro 2012 match. Thankfully the rest of OK Ravinen weren't arriving till the next day so we didn't have to contain our glee at celebrating the win. Since I was running a night leg, I went out for another short training session in the small wood directly beside the assembly area. This was a bit of a wake up call as to how much more difficult it is to navigate (and especially relocate) at night. The only positive I took was that it was a good opportunity to get (nearly) all my mistakes out of the system.

The next day saw the venue rapidly filling up as the swarms descended and filled up every spare space in the previously vacant fields. This included our clubmates who'd got the overnight ferry from Stockholm. There wasn't much reference to the football result, but was a good opportunity to meet and for final team adjustments to be made. Due to various injuries the 1st team got invaded by British runners, with myself (2nd leg) and Rich (7th), joined by Jonny Crickmore (1st) and Dave Schorah (6th). The club star, Swedish #1 Gustav Bergman was running 3rd leg (long night) and I had the opportunity to set him off - no pressure there then! Andy Llewellyn was also running 2nd leg for the second team.

During the afternoon is the Venla, the women's relay with 1,245 teams each with 4 runners, this is a great opportunity to experience the excitement of top class relay racing without the pressure of taking part. Segments of the map were shown on the big screen and interviews with runners started to help give the feel of what we'd be facing that night. From a NOC point of view, there was interest in Team Wing, where Helen Palmer had a strong run on leg 3 to pull her team from 225th to 126nd, which was finished off by her last leg runner bringing the team up to 64th. One place ahead was the first OK Ravinen girls team, anchored by Charlotte Watson.

The evening was then spent trying to have a short nap and getting the timing right of when to eat, given that I was probably going to start running around 00:30 local time. The club also gave me the opportunity of borrowing the club's newest headlamp which was essentially the brightness of a car headlamp, powered from a tiny battery pack. I thought my moonshine torch was bright, but this was incredible! All too soon it was time to watch the mass-start, which involves over 1,600 runners racing out the field with their head-torches blazing, it's hard to put this into words, so instead, watch it: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D62vH58WEBs>

Although first leg was due to take 70 minutes, I could only contain myself for another 30 minutes before I went into the changeover area to spend a nervous time checking the big screens to follow progress, checking computer screens for Jonny's splits at the radio controls and some nervous jogging - including occasionally switching on the torch to check that yes it really is that bright. The excitement in the assembly field grew to a frenzy when Edgars Bertuks (who later in the summer won the WOC Middle Champs) came back with a 1 minute lead (pretty much unheard of). Jonny hadn't had a great run and came in 263rd over 18 minutes down, but there was still a continuous stream of teams as I ran out and despite it being over 1km to the start triangle I was soon thrown into the forest.

To be honest the race itself was a bit of a blur as it was a continuous stream of trying to concentrate on the navigation whilst running within the bubble of light. There were constantly trains of runners forming and splitting up as people chose different routes or divided up to go for their gaffed controls - these were sometimes useful but occasionally dangerous as they'd drag you off line or you'd lose contact with your map reading. I had a strong start and had the thrill of spiking controls cleanly in the technical Finnish forest in the dark - probably the best feeling an orienteer can have. During this time I overtook 70 teams in the first 3km, but then made two big mistakes within 6 controls which probably cost me 3 minutes each.

This middle part of the race I seemed to be catching and re-catching the same teams, but then held it together at the end to also finish well to bring the team up to 178th place.

As it turns out I only passed Andy L in the last couple of kilometres of the course after he'd had a strong race (I'd noticed that his 1st leg runner had come in ~5mins before mine) and we met up in the download for a debrief and sharing of stories. It was at this point I noticed my ankle was pretty sore and recalled that I'd twisted it fairly heavily on the way to the first control. Such is the adrenalin that it didn't particularly affect my run, but as that wore off I spent the rest of the time increasingly hobbling and it ended up fairly purple. Another post-Jukola tradition (or at least for me) is drinking a beer or two after the run in the beer tent whilst you watch the big names doing battle on the 'long night' leg. I then realised that I'm too old to try and do an all-nighter so went off to bed, safe in the knowledge that I'd find out how the team had got on when I woke up.

As it turns out Gustav had a strong run to pull us into the 70s which the team largely maintained, including Rich Robinson having a good final leg (14.7km at 5am) to bring the team home in 73rd place. This was probably a bit further down than was hoped for but no one had a disastrous run and probably augers well for next year - if everyone finds only 5mins of technical improvement then the team would have been in the low 40s.

The worst part of any Jukola is leaving and that was redoubled when 9am was the time the heavens decided to open and kicked off a torrential downpour that continued for most of the morning. After huddling in the tent for a while I decided just to brave the weather and set off to negotiate my way back through the local bus network to the safety of Helsinki airport and home. Rich and Andy went on from Jukola across to Estonia and Tallinn for a multi-day orienteering event/holiday, thereby proving you can never have too much orienteering!

Ant Squire

Welsh Six Day Summary

After a summer of rain and the prospect of another wet week of orienteering, what a pleasure it was to arrive at the wonderful accommodation provided by Aberystwyth university. 'Fully equipped' it claimed, and most certainly wasn't, but what a luxury to have a room to ourselves and a hot shower in preference to the usual queue for the shower block, and wondering if my tent would still be where it was when I went to sleep.

Surprisingly, the weather was beautiful for the whole week, enabling us to appreciate the stunning Welsh hills and moorland, which were a challenge in the dry, sunny conditions. Rain and mud just didn't bear thinking about.

As if 6 days of orienteering on steep and challenging terrain, with hefty walks to the start each day weren't enough, some of us even took on the might of Snowdon on our day off. Some even said that was the easiest day of the week physically; at least you couldn't get lost.

As usual, the social events were real treat, and a chance to unwind and let off some steam. The live band

proving to be the big hit for us, albeit with a small turnout. The few who did try it had a fantastic night !

It was fitting that the Olympic opening ceremony took place on the final evening, with hundreds all crammed into the bar to witness the start of the wonderful summer of Olympic and Paralympic sport. Little did we know then the outstanding and quite brilliant success it would all turn out to be. We may not be olympians ourselves but we certainly felt we had reached our own personal endurance limits this week.

My best memory of the week was visiting the beach and pier and going in the sea even though it was freezing. I managed to avoid KFC on the way back to the university, yet some found it too tempting.

Jordan Webster

NOC members are invited to the NOC AGM which will take place after the upcoming Bramcote Hills fixture, food and drink will be served prior to the meeting. Club champions as well as the top 3 on each course in the Winter and Summer leagues will all receive prizes for their achievements.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ORIENTEERING CLUB

Sunday, October 14th 2012 at 1:30 p.m.

Bramcote Park School (entry off Derby road past the Leisure centre)

AGENDA

- 1 Members Present
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Review the Minutes of the 2011 AGM
- 4 Matters arising from Minutes
- 5 Chairman's Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report
- 7 Election of Auditor
- 8 2013 NOC Membership Fees (already set at last a.g.m.)
- 9 Election of Officers and Life Members
Current Committee members are prepared (and are eligible) to stand for re-election to their positions with the exception of Mapping Co-ordinator and Junior captain for which nominations are required.
- 10 Plans for the Forthcoming Year
- 11 Open Forum
- 12 Close of Meeting

The minutes from last year's meeting (2011) are available at
<http://www.noc-uk.org/Documents/minutes/agm11.doc>

Forthcoming EMOA events



22/09/12 DVO Shipley Park

23/09/12 NOC Brierley Country Park

29/09/12 LEI Wistow maize

06/10/12 LEI Willesley woodlands

07/10/12 DVO Wirksworth

14/10/12 NOC Bramcote Hills

20/10/12 LEI Ashby de la Zouch

21/10/12 NOC Byrons Walk

Guest editor

Did you know we now have a waiting list to be the next editor of the newsletter?

Those currently in the queue are

- 1) Richard Robinson
- 2) Peter Hodkinson

If you fancy adding your name to the list then please get in touch with the current editor and he will let you know more details of how easy it is to get involved with putting together a fantastic newsletter.