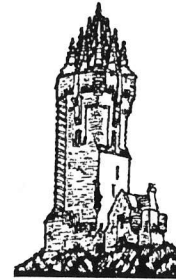


Forth Columnist

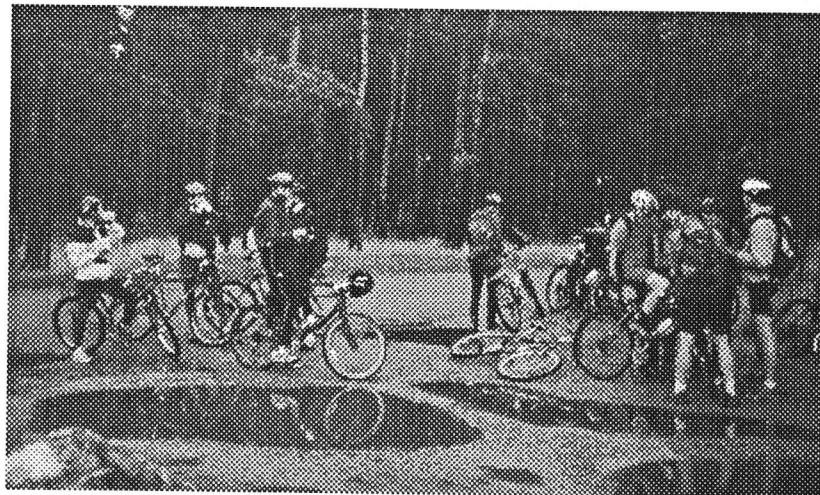


Issue 144

May/June 2001

ORIENTEERING CURTAILED

There are not many events at present due to the Foot and Mouth outbreak, though at least in Scotland there are a few events, such as our Wednesday Evening Series. See inside for details.



Above looks back to the Glenmore Lodge weekend last October, with a group of Club Members on the mountain bike trip.

I thought this would be a very slim issue due to the lack of events, but I'm glad to say that I've had plenty of contributions to keep up the Forth Columnist so you will find quite a bit to read.

It is now time to be thinking about this year's Scottish Six-Day, Lochaber 2001 in August. At present we are not certain that the event can go ahead but we are all keeping our fingers crossed. As you probably know FVO are running Day 2 (Monday 6th August), at Strathmashie, near Newtonmore, together with RR and we need as many helpers as possible on the day. Providing we get enough people to help most of you should be able to run; if you enter for Day 2 and are unable to compete due to helping you will get a full refund (at the rate you paid). The final decision on whether the event is on or not will be made at the end of May so as soon as we know that it is on, please let me know if you are available on the day. (Thanks to those of you who have already done so.)

As well as help on the day some work will be needed on the Saturday and Sunday. As much as possible of the preparation will be done on the Saturday so that members can run on the Sunday, Day 1. Any work on the Sunday will be arranged to allow you to run first. I'll contact people nearer the time about availability for those days.

There was only a small turnout for this year's Mountain Bike Day but the five of us who were there enjoyed ourselves in the forest around Aberfoyle. I had hoped that with the lack of events we might have had a few more takers!

The following (Easter) weekend saw nine FVO members travel to Bordeaux for a 3-day event, in the same area as used for the 1999 French 5-day. It was a very popular event with the Brits as an alternative to the cancelled JK. Congratulations to Lisa Brown for winning D20E against some strong opposition from the British Squad.

Copy date for the next issue will be 30th June.

Dave

SCOTLANDSGALLOPEN 2001

The whole series has been postponed until 2002, with similar dates to this year for most events. However some of the individual events may take place this year but not be part of any Gallopen (i.e. points) system.

President's Column

Thank goodness - some orienteering at last! Weeks of being confined to running on pavements resulted in a great turnout at our first Wednesday Evening Event at Plean this week - even the relentless rain did little to dampen enthusiasm. I returned from the long course splattered with mud, dripping from head to foot and blissfully happy, and judging by the number of other cheery faces, we were all glad to be back doing what we love! The resumption of orienteering is indeed a great relief as I was beginning to fear that my presidency would be ingloriously remembered for its complete lack of any orienteering!

Following discussions with landowners, the first part of our Wednesday Evening series seems to be safe, at least up until Touch and Dollarbank at the end of June. My thanks to Peggy Purves for co-ordinating the whole operation, and to all the people who have agreed to put on one of the events in the series. What we need now is for lots of people to come along each week and support these events. It was great to see so many people at Plean and maybe even more of you will be tempted to join us once the weather improves.

The new O Suits have arrived and look great. More thanks to Peggy Purves for organising the orders - please make sure you pay up promptly. I look forward to seeing you whizzing around the Wednesday Evening Events in your sexy new gear!

You might imagine that with so many events being cancelled the committee has been sitting around twiddling its collective thumbs for the past two months - wrong!! On the contrary, we have been busy with a large number of activities. Many of these have been initiated by our Junior Development Officer, Fran Loots, and I hope you'll read the separate report on these elsewhere in the Forth Columnist.

I would like to pay tribute to the huge amount of work put in by several club members in preparation for the World Ranking Event in the Trossachs which should have taken place on 25 March. Plans for this got underway over a year ago, and since then Beccy Osborn (Organiser), Brian Bullen and Dave Coustick (Planners), Ted Finch (IOF Controller), Susan and Sandy Sinclair (Entries) have all worked incredibly hard to pull it all together. Unfortunately the event had to be postponed - probably until the same date next year - and this was obviously very disappointing for all those involved. Thanks to everyone who had volunteered to help on the day - the list has been put in a folder for next year, so don't book any holidays for the end of March 2002!

We have been honoured to have visits from FVO's overseas members in recent weeks: Cathy Tilbrook and Doug Flint, currently resident in Bolivia, came home to stock up on some home comforts in March, and Jonathan Oxley was showing off his "Look at me, I live in the South of France - tan" at the Plean Wednesday Evening Event. The whole Oxley family will be here during the first week in June so look out for them at the Fun Day on Sunday 3 June! We are also looking forward to the imminent return of Gareth and Jan Bryan-Jones from their trip to New Zealand. Yesterday, Maureen Brown and I attended the SOA AGM at Glenmore Lodge. This was my debut appearance at this illustrious gathering and I must confess to having enjoyed myself immensely. The drive up was beautiful, through snow-capped mountains and warm sunshine, and there were lots of familiar faces there to greet us on arrival. The meeting itself moved along briskly with the membership seemingly a very content bunch. You will appreciate that, as a newcomer, I had hoped

o sit quietly at the back, looking knowledgeable and not causing any trouble. But oh no, the FVO committee had other plans in mind, and had sent me along armed with a lengthy list of objections concerning the changes to the guidelines covering the Scotlandsgalopen series. Swallowing nervously I launched into my speech, finished, and then waited for rotten tomatoes to start approaching at speed. It's fair to say that a lively debate ensued but all the points were constructive and it emerged that a fair number of people agreed with our views. I am pleased to report that the changes will now be looked at again in light of the discussion and since the whole SG series has now been postponed till 2002.

Those of you who are interested in such matters will have read about the proposed changes in SCORE (Jan/Feb edition) and you can read the committee's response in the letter reproduced in this Forth Columnist. Please get in touch if you have any thoughts on these matters.

Finally, a plea - it looks like we're going to have a massive number of children coming along to our Schools' Festival on Wednesday 23 May and we desperately need help. We may have around 300 participants (more than a Scotlandsgalopen!) so if you're free that afternoon please come and help us in any way you can, even if it's only for a while. Volunteers phone me - thanks!

Rona Molloy

Below is the letter sent from FVO to SG Organising Committee, as mentioned by Rona.

The FVO committee would like to raise a number of points in relation to the proposed new rules for the SG series.

Firstly we would like to express our wholehearted support for the SG series. We feel it is a good series which helps to maintain the quality of competition in Scotland and the quality of our elite runners. It also gives officials experience of high standard events. Bearing these points in mind, we feel that some of the proposed changes will detract from this and erode the standard of the events.

One concern we have is with the proposal to revert to master maps. It is our view that this would undermine the quality of the event by automatically penalising those who fail to enter on time so that competitors won't be competing on an equal basis. We are aware that the SOA has recently purchased a laser printer, which could allow quality overprinted maps to be produced at very short notice.

We think that using master maps at events does not reduce the workload of officials and other helpers, but that on the contrary, the workload increases. Much greater manpower is needed on the day for greater numbers of EOD, inputting of SI data at short notice, assembling of extra tents / tarpaulins and master map boards for master maps. This may make it difficult, particularly for smaller clubs, to put on SG events.

There is also the issue of potential unfairness if spare overprinted maps are used for EOD entries. We are unsure of what is intended in this respect, but can see a situation arising whereby those that arrive early may get a left over overprinted map, saving themselves several minutes on their course and a competitor who

arrives several minutes later at registration may have to use a master map and lose several minutes. Alternatively the spare overprinted maps are not used and this would seem to be a waste.

Another concern we have relates to the guidelines on closing dates. Our feeling is that the compulsory setting of a closing date of postmarked 13 days before the event is very late, and that this does not help to reduce the workload of officials, nor does it appear to improve the quality of the event. If a competitor sends their entry 13 days before the event with a second class stamp it may not arrive until 9 or 10 days before the event. This leaves little time for overprinting maps and ensuring the controller has checked them. It is recommended that guidelines state that entries should arrive 14 days before the event, which would mean postmarked 17 or 18 days before the event. However, we think that it should be left to the discretion of the individual organisers to make the final decision on this.

Until clubs are in a position to produce overprinted maps on site at events, we would prefer to avoid the approach of encouraging large numbers of people to enter on the day. It is our view that organising and planning such events would be made more difficult by having only a rough idea of competitor numbers before the day.

In addition to the issues relating to the proposed changes, we wish to express our concern over the way in which the changes were agreed and issued. We support the existence of forums such as the Technical Conference, but would prefer that, after discussion, any significant changes were put forward and voted on at the SOA AGM. Alternatively, proposed significant changes could be circulated in advance for clubs to gather views for a vote at the Technical Conference. In the case of FVO, the Technical Conference took place on the same day as our Club Championships and Dinner Dance, making it very difficult for anyone to attend as our representative.

The timing of publishing new guidelines is also important and we feel that at least six months notice should be given where significant changes such as these are involved. In the case of our event, SG2, scheduled to take place on 25 March 2001, the organiser had already produced a budget incorporating late entry fees and had produced publicity detailing fees and closing dates. The issue of the new guidelines caused considerable confusion at such short notice.

Given the postponement of this year's SG events until 2002, it is our hope that the points raised in this letter can be considered and that perhaps some of the initial changes may be reviewed in light of the concerns we have mentioned.

Suggested recommendations are:

- Publish the full list of SG events for the year in the Jan/Feb issue of SCORE

- Advertise any proposed changes to rules for 2002 series by September 2001

- Issue guidelines as soon as they are produced to all event officials via club secretaries

- Abandon use of master maps for EOD competitors

- Encourage event officials to use new SOA laser printer to allow all overprinted maps to be produced within 2 weeks of the event

- Bring forward set closing date so that all entries arrive 2 weeks before the event, or allow setting of closing dates to be at the discretion of individual events

- Allow clubs to charge late fees for late entries and EOD for Badge courses if they wish

- Allow some flexibility for course combination variations which may require slight changes due to the technical or physical nature of an area

Thank you very much for your consideration of these points.

Junior Development Officer, Reported by Hugh Buchanan

One of the Club's initiatives over recent years has been the appointment of a part-time Junior Development Officer, currently Fran Loots of KFO, whose time is partly paid for by an Awards for All lottery grant. That same grant is also paying for simple maps of primary schools, and updated maps of beginner areas. One of the highlights of Fran's work is the Schools Orienteering Festival on Wednesday May 23 at Stirling University. It looks like this event will attract several hundred schoolchildren (yes, really!) as participants, who will be coming along in large groups from their schools. The event takes place during the afternoon of that day, and will require helpers. If you fancy a half day off work that day to come along and help, you could help secure the biggest children's orienteering participation round here ever!

For some teachers, the Schools Festival will be the culmination of another of Fran's activities on our behalf: an 8 week training course for school teachers. In summary, the course introduces the teachers to the sport, and gives them enough confidence to take groups to events, and to coach new participants. The first 4 weeks were largely classroom based, bringing the teachers up to the basic teacher leader certificate level, and since then the teachers have been working outdoors in Callendar Park and other local areas, concentrating on improving their own skill levels and getting to instructor level. 7 teachers are about to complete the first course, each from a different primary school across our area. To help them get started we are getting Stirling Surveys to produce a high quality black and white map of their school and grounds (again using the Lottery grant), and we are also offering membership of FVO to those teachers.

But there's more! Fran has also got us involved in running an orienteering session within a national convention of Scout leaders, over the last weekend of April, in collaboration with KFO. On that day, over 100 Scout leaders from across Scotland took part in orienteering training, on a new map funded through SportScotland at the National Scout activity centre at Fordell Firs near Dunfermline. Good quality orienteering on a good quality map: that should get them interested!

Finally, Fran has arranged our participation in Greenspace, which is a festival of outdoor activities in Grangemouth over the weekend of 16-18 May. Rona wrote to club members about this a couple of weeks ago. At this three day event, we will be offering an off-string course where the pupils collect words to make up a sentence based on their theme of recycling, reducing rubbish, sustainability, etc. Fran will be setting up the off-string course, but we will need FVO helpers to man the course.

This feels like some of the most productive money that FVO has spent in a long time. Several other clubs have approached us to hear more about how a small amount of paid time can result in hugely raised awareness of orienteering in schools and among young people.

TO TERRAIN OR NOT TO TERRAIN

Ever heard of a chap called Foxdahl? He is a Swedish Sports Scientist and Physiologist who has been Fitness testing the British Squad and prescribing them training schedules. His approach is based around intervals, which are to be done more like a fartlek (speed-play) session lasting 45 – 60 minutes. Foxdahl intervals are not done flat out but at a perceived exertion of moderate to hard for the longer intervals (e.g. 180 secs. on, 60 secs. off) and hard to very hard for shorter intervals (45 on 15 off). Depending on an athlete's test results, Foxdahl will assign a priority figure for each of his 5 interval sessions. (See Fig 1).

Fig 1 The different Foxdahl Sessions.

Time 'ON' the Interval (secs)	Time 'OFF' the Interval (secs)
15	15
45	15
90	30
180	60
300	60

What
I wish
to

focus on, is the fact that Foxdahl suggest that all intervals should be done in the terrain. I will indeed go further to discuss the point that all your running should be done in the terrain.

If you want to be good at something, you must train in doing exactly that. I was always very impressed that a past university cross-country captain could do 200 press-ups. But what did that mean? Would it make him run faster? Could Sebastian Coe or Jörgen Mårtensson boast this when they were at their peak? Would they want to?? General body strength is undoubtedly a good thing and should feature somewhere in your training schedule in the form of, for example, a circuit session or weight-training. But just where should you stop?

Stay Focused. What is the goal of your training? If you do not care where you finish in a race, never look at your map again after you spot the finish tent, race infrequently and think training is what you do to animals to stop them making a mess on your carpet, then read no more.

As soon as you start to care about your performance you have set yourself a goal or an aim, be it on a very informal and probably personal level. Orienteering is physically demanding and in a specific way. This has to be acknowledged before any training is embarked upon if you want your training to be most EFFECTIVE in improving your orienteering.

You have probably heard of the experiment that was published where a Kenyan Athlete was asked to follow a top Elite Swedish Orienteer through the forest. He could not keep up. This proved scientifically that as an Orienteer you need to train different muscles and develop a different "running economy" compared to your average track/road runner. Again

we should go back to your aims and goals. To improve you orienteering you should be 'fit' to run in the terrain.

So how much running are you doing in terrain? In the UK it is far too easy to run on the roads and paths. Putting your head torch on or getting your feet wet and muddy can often seem like too much effort. Getting to a wood or a bit of forest can seem a real chore and going off the paths can be difficult if vegetation is prolific or "unfavourable". However the effort should be made if you want to improve your Orienteering Fitness, even if it does mean revisiting the runnable bits of a small wood or forest near you, many times.

Foxdahl realises that intervals should be done in your target terrain. Intervals are when you train your body to work at a high level of output, such as you need in a race environment. There is no point doing all your slow running in the terrain as your body will not be able to produce the goods when it is needed in a race. That does beg the question of why Orienteers do intervals on tracks or roads (and especially flat ones at that!)

Practicalities:-

As a general rule, Orienteers should be looking to run on soft ground (i.e. not tarmac) whenever possible. Verges by the sides of roads, playing fields, parks should all be regularly visited if you can't get to 'real' terrain. We should purposely head for the hills when we run, rather than sticking to flatter areas.

One idea which is quite common in Scandinavia is the use of what they call 'reflexes'. These are small bits of reflective tape, stapled to trees to mark a control or a 'reflex course' in the terrain. Setting up a reflex course for use at night in a nearby forest or wood means you can make a course through all the good bits of the forest. Make it as long as you can – twists and turns optimise small areas – and put it out at night! You can then do your Foxdahl intervals on this course without having to think where the brambles are!

So what of the question – "why not do all our training in the terrain?" In an ideal world this is possible – for some Scottish people perhaps and many Scandywegians! This is a difficult question to answer, and for me is dependent on the terrain type and variety available to train on. A Scottish heather moor will require a lot of 'terrain strength' whereas Penhale sand dunes (or Kilnsey Moor) requires a lot of speed – it doesn't really need you to lift your knees up very high at all! The running economy needed to perform well on Penhale will be more like a cross-country runner than a high knee lift heather runner. It is fair to say, I think, that terrain training is a form of resistance training. Ground vegetation and how hard/soft the ground is will affect the resistance. Too much running in high resistance terrain will kill all your speed, leaving you strong, but only up to a certain speed. Running on tracks, roads and paths has much less resistance than running in the terrain and there is some need for this sort of running in Orienteering – although it is limited on more technical areas. 'Recovery runs' therefore (runs in between your quality interval sessions) in which you want a non-lactic acid producing work-out, done on the roads and tracks, may therefore benefit your muscles (there being less resistance on your feet).

Just like an exam question where you must keep looking back at the question to make sure you are answering the question, we must constantly refer to our goals to see if we are taking steps each time we train towards achieving them.

Happy running!
Nick Barrable

PS Some references to Foxdahl are inferences from his published literature.

SCHOOLS ORIENTEERING FESTIVAL 2001

This year Forth Valley Orienteers are organising a schools orienteering festival for the first time. This is aimed at children of all ages and abilities. The festival will be held at **Stirling University from 1pm – 3.30pm**. There will be opportunities to try out orienteering for those who have never had the chance as well as opportunities to improve skills for children who have had a go before. Below is a summary of the information sent out to schools.

Helpers are needed for the event please contact Rona. (There will be the usual Wednesday evening event later in the day).

Orienteering provides a fun way to cover some of the curricula areas such as environmental studies and personal and social development. Trained instructors will be on hand to help out those who have not tried orienteering before. Courses can cater for physical and learning disabilities.

If you would like to attend the festival, please contact Forth Valley Orienteers - Fran Loots, Junior Development Officer 01383 880813
Or e-mail breathingspace@aol.com asap as entries close on 4th May.

For children who have not orienteered before, the string, star and trail courses are recommended. Children may want to take part in all of these courses as they are not very long and they are easy to complete.

For those with a little experience of orienteering and map reading, the white/yellow course is recommended.

For senior pupils with some map reading skills the orange course is recommended.

The light green course is recommended only for senior pupils with good map reading skills and experience of orienteering.

All courses except for the light green course can be done in pairs or small groups. We recommend that in most cases children get more out of the activities if they are in pairs rather than larger groups.

Thanks to Tiso's the Outdoor specialists and Scottish Power for sponsorship of this event

WEDNESDAY EVENING EVENTS

Note re FOOT & MOUTH: Events up to and including 13 June are confirmed though some doubt on Barrwood but Touch and Cambusbarron are still subject to confirmation. If an event is not taking place there will be a notice at the previous week's event and an email will be sent out to the FVO Email List. If you're not on this list check with Peggy or any committee member during the week before. Hopefully by the next issue we will be able to say that the later events will all be on.

Date Area

9 May Alva House Estate, Alva
16 May Barrwood, Stirling
23 May Hermitage Woods, Stir. Uni. (Inc. Schools Festival)
30 May Beecraigs Country Park, Linlithgow
6 June Gartmorn Dam, Alloa (+BBQ)
13 June Muiravonside Country Park, Polmont
20 June Touch, Cambusbarron
27 June Dollar Bank, Dollar

SUMMER BREAK

22 Aug Coilehallen, Callander
29 Aug Callander Park, Falkirk
5 Sept Abbey Craig, Stirling - ORGANISER STILL REQUIRED PLEASE
12 Sept Laighills, Dunblane
19 Sept Street-O, Bridge of Allan

Peggy

Note that Clyde are running a series of evening events on Thursdays; details can be found in Score.

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WHAT'S ON IN AND AROUND FVO

May-August

I've included events further away than usual as there is so little on!

May 9 FVO Evening event, Alva House estate

May 16 FVO Evening event, Barrwood

May 23 FVO Evening event & Schools Festival, Hermitage Woods

May 27 BASOC Colour Coded Inshriach

Jun 6 FVO Evening event, Gartmorn Dam, Alloa (+BBQ)

Jun 10 Maroc Colour Coded, near Banchory

Jun 13 FVO Evening event, Muiravonside Country Park, Polmont

Jun 17 Gramp Badge Event, Docharn & Deishar

Jun 20 FVO Evening event, Touch, Cambusbarron

Jun 23 Ted Finch's Housewarming

Jun 27 FVO Evening event, Dollar Bank, Dollar

Aug 5-11 Scottish Six-Day LOCHABER

**NOTE THAT ANY EVENT MAY BE CANCELLED OR POST-
PONED DUE TO FOOT & MOUTH—CHECK SOA WEBSITE
www.scottish-orienteering.org/Fix2000.htm FOR LATEST INFO
ON EVENTS.**

Scottish Orienteering Association - Policy on Foot & Mouth Re- strictions

The Scottish Orienteering Association has agreed the following policy on access for all orienteering in Scotland while the current Foot & Mouth crisis and restrictions are in place:

All event officials – Organisers, Planners and Controllers, should liaise fully with land owners, farmers and anyone else involved in land management, to ensure access to the area concerned for officials and for competition only takes place with their full knowledge and co-operation. Any restrictions or bans requested should be adhered to.

All orienteers are also requested to avoid all areas of countryside for any purpose, including training, until the restrictions are lifted.