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Editor's Spur

Alan Rosen newsletter@herts-orienteeing.club

Happy O-Year to everyone and good luck with your running in 2024.

Thanks for all contributions and hopefully they will inspire you to even greater achievements this year!

Newsletter Articles Wanted

We are always on the look-out for contributions to this newsletter. Please consider submitting anything orienteering-related, for example reports from events you've attended, orienteering tips & tricks, photos, equipment reviews...

Please send material to Alan. Copy dates are typically a few days before the end of the month. The deadline for the February newsletter is **Sunday 28 January** – even better if articles arrive before the 25th...



Forthcoming HH Events

Date	Event	More Info
Sat 6 Jan 24 10:00 - 12:45	Hockeridge & Pancake Woods: Saturday Series. Beginners and newcomers welcome.	Event Details Location
Sat 20 Jan 24 11:00 - 12:00	Club Training – Hockeridge & Pancake Woods: Suitable for all club members	Event Details Location TBC
Sat 3 Feb 24 10:00 - 12:45	Sherrardspark Wood: Saturday Series & Youth League. Beginners and newcomers welcome.	Event Details Location
Sat 17 Feb 24 10:00 - 12:00	Club Training – Sherrardspark Wood: Suitable for all club members	Event Details Location TBC
Sun 25 Feb 24 10:00 - 12:00	Ashridge N, Ace of Herts: National level event, suitable for all from beginners upwards	Event Details Location
Sat 2 Mar 24 10:00 - 12:45	Mardley: Saturday Series & Youth League. Beginners and newcomers welcome.	Event Details Location
Sat 16 Mar 24 10:00 - 12:00	Club Training – Mardley: Suitable for all club members	Event Details Location

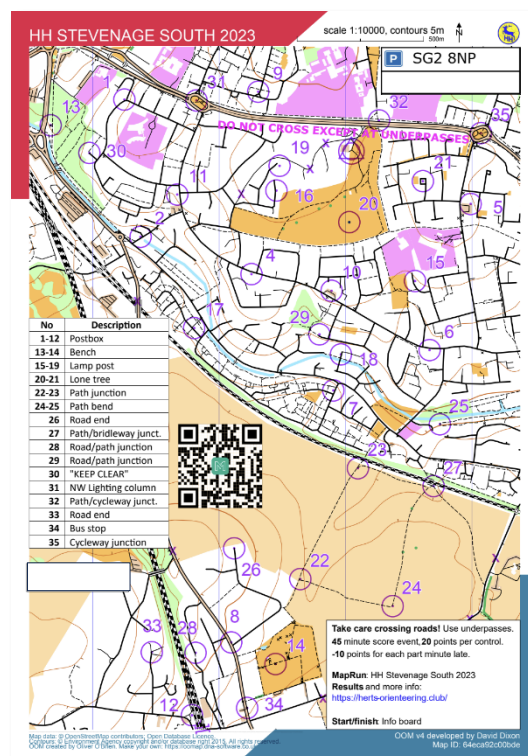
For up-to-date fixtures, go to <https://www.herts-orienteering.club/fixtures/>

Street-O 2024

David Dixon

Yes, it's that time of year again! We are looking for **volunteers to organise and plan** one of our Tuesday evening Street-O events over the lighter months (9 April to 3 September). We will provide all the help to get you going; it's a great way to dip your toe into planning as these events are both informal and straightforward. If you're interested please get in touch at street-o@herts-orienteering.club. If you already have an idea for dates or areas please let us know.

We also have a vacancy for the **overall Street-O coordinator**, which mainly involves coordinating with the individual event planner to make sure they have everything they need. The technical aspects of the role are currently being covered by the club's MapRun coordinator which lightens the load considerably. Please contact me (David) at chair@herts-orienteering.club if you are interested in taking this on.





A Perfect Urban Event?

Mark Adams

On 11th and 12th of November the 38th edition of “OriVenezia” took place after a gap of several years due to covid and flooding. Eliza and I decided it was a great excuse for a trip to Venice, as well as being an opportunity to mark my 60th birthday. So, we joined 31 other Brits in a field of over 1600.



(photo from [Tony Barr](#))



The format was an evening event followed by a day event, all based at the Palazzetto dello Sport in the east of the city (what3words throats.gearbox.mixture).

The start and finish were very close by. The photo shows the start in the foreground with the finish behind, and beyond that the gate to the Arsenale.

Why “A Perfect Urban Event”?

For a long time, I have fretted about misguided attempts by some urban orienteering planners to achieve a level of complexity equivalent to forest events. They try to make up for the loss of difficulty in *executing* a route by introducing complexity into *choosing* a route. Think of the legs which make you stop to work out which side of a wall the control is on, or if there is a way through a block. To me, the ethos of the sport requires that route choice should be transparent, to avoid introducing puzzle elements which are alien to what we should be testing and which reward advance knowledge of the map. I accept that maze-type puzzles are fun - think of the Barbican in London, or, at the extreme, the Stockholm Indoor Cup - but to me they do not belong in serious orienteering.

It is in this sense that OriVenezia was urban perfection. Venice is a unique environment which allows the planner to keep route choice reasonably transparent but route execution testing. To the right is a typical leg (controls 6-7).

Firstly, selection mode is straightforward. The canals provide long, clear, impassable barriers (we were forbidden to swim!). One can quickly assess how





wide of the straight line it is worth looking for a route (not far), followed equally quickly by homing in on a route. Admittedly there is a “gotcha” in Venice in the form of crowds, which on this leg might deter you from taking the route through St Mark’s Square.

Secondly, in execution mode, you must concentrate all the time because the next calle (street), campo (square), or sottoportego (covered passage) is always coming up fast! (There was an execution “gotcha” too on the day event because it took place at high tide. The new barrier which closes off the Venetian lagoon is not used to the extent of preventing all flooding, for environmental reasons. So, some streets had a few inches of water. At first, I walked through the water out of consideration for the tourists who were gingerly hopping from doorway to doorway. But when I saw my fellow competitors were splashing past at speed and gaining a lot of time, I started doing the same, causing childlike squeals of protest.)

You will have gathered by now that I enjoyed OriVenezia. More than any other urban event I can recall, planning ahead on the run was always under pressure from navigating the current leg. But I enjoyed that wonderful flow “in the zone” which is so rare for me these days. Perhaps also I benefitted from a reduced pace, as I’d had a summer of injuries and was only now rebuilding fitness. I lost almost no time, but still was astounded to end up 5th overall in M60, less than a minute off the podium.



Eliza equally had a good time, despite my grumbles about a late-then-early start allocation upsetting my eating pattern and recovery time. I had been a bit apprehensive about Venice being the venue for her first night event, but she loved it. Over two days she was 20th in W60 and was delighted by her solidly mid-pack results. A “proper” headlamp was requested for Christmas.



Incentive Awards

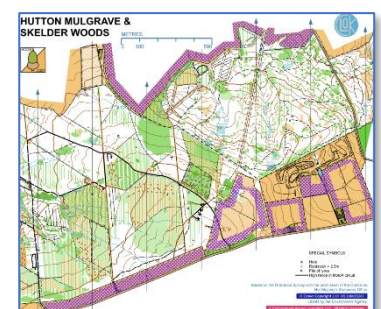
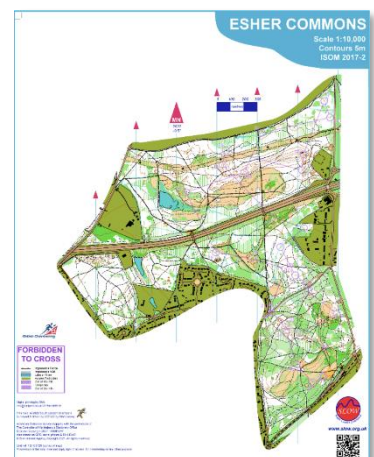
Congratulations to those gaining new awards this month:

Member	Certificates	Awarded
Csongor Farago	Racing Challenge: Gold Award ★★ ★	07/12/2023
	Racing Challenge: Silver Award ★★ ★	07/12/2023
Eloisa Kerry	Racing Challenge: Gold Award ★★	04/12/2023
Isabel Hawks	Racing Challenge: Silver Award ★★ ★★ ★	07/12/2023
	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award ★★ ★★ ★★	07/12/2023
	Navigation Challenge ★★ ★★ ★★	07/12/2023
Niamh Mitchell	Racing Challenge: Gold Award ★★	04/12/2023
Theodore Marsden	Racing Challenge: Silver Award ★★ ★	27/11/2023

CompassSport Cup 2024 Heat

This will be at Esher Common, on **Sunday 18 February**. It's the regional round of the national inter-club competition and this year we are facing TVOC, SO, SLOW and SN; all big clubs but beatable if we can field a full team. The advantage of this heat is that it's very accessible for all of us round the M25 (but beware the M25/A3 junction roadworks!).

The scoring system rewards quantity as well as quality – we need to make sure we have the right number of counting runners in every category – so please look out for the email from Tom in due course and for some of us it may mean a bit of running up to avoid the dreaded 'nul points' on any course.



Other 2024 team events to note are:

- | | | |
|----------|--|--|
| 1 April | JK Relays | Stanton Moor (Matlock) |
| 14 April | British Relay Champs | Hutton Mulgrave & Skelder Woods (Whitby) |
| | Yvette Baker Trophy Heats | tbc (for juniors) |
| | Yvette Baker Trophy Final | 7 July at Northaw Woods, run by HH! |
| | Peter Palmer Junior Team Relays | 8 September, venue tbc |



Countdown to Christmas (a bit late...)

On each of the first 24 days of December, [WorldofO.com](https://www.worldofO.com) posted an interesting leg from a 2023 course and invited people to show on a map how they might have tackled the leg.

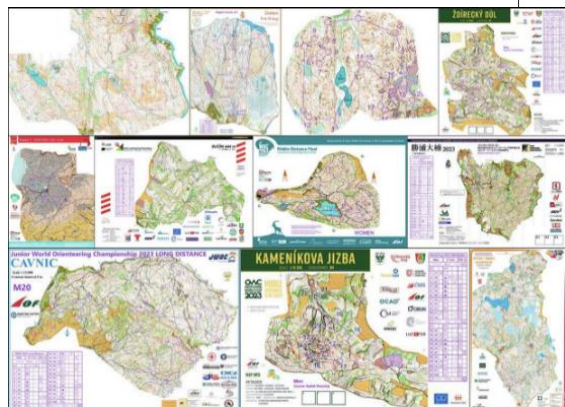
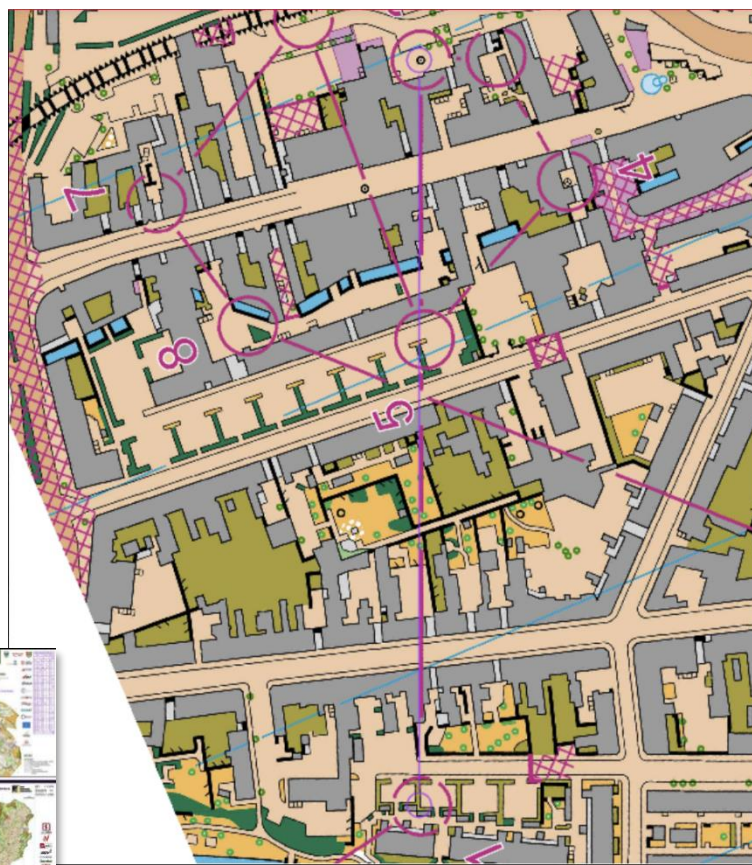
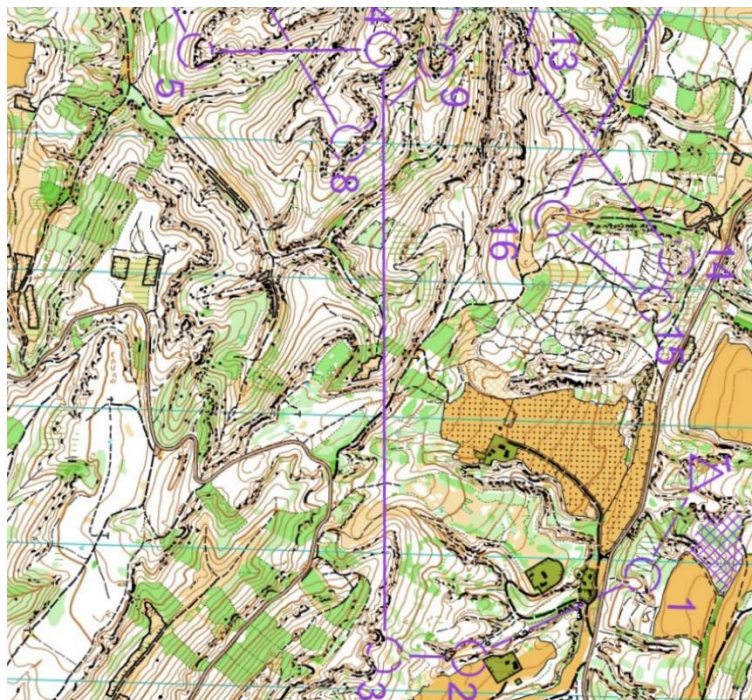
It will make you very envious of some of the terrain that other countries have available!

How would you do this leg from a World Cup race on a sandstone area in the Czech Republic? It's both difficult to plan and difficult to execute...

No sprint or urban courses this year so, if that's your preference, look at the selections from previous years (go to <https://news.worldofO.com/rtc/>) – here is a leg from 2022's World Sprint Champs.

First of all, how many viable routes can you spot in 5 seconds from #1-#2 and which one do you think would be best? Only then can you read the analysis and see if you could be World Champion! Worth looking at [Day 14 of 2022](#) as well.

Also, they have their 12 nominations for [Course of the Year](#) to look at:





UKOL

The **2023 UK Orienteering League** had the last of its 25 events at the November Classic. It has two parts: the Club League and the Individual League.

The **Club League** had 111 clubs taking part, although a number didn't manage to get the 15 runners (from a range of age classes) to field a full team. Notable HH results in the last 10 years have been **2022** 11th **2021** 7th **2019** ??? **2018** 10th **2017** 4th **2013** 4th

In 2023 we didn't do quite as well, coming in **18th**, mainly because not many runners managed to get to at least eight qualifying events (some of which were in Scotland and Northern Ireland...). Well done to the runners who counted towards our total:

Dickson Chungyin Tam (M45), Janet Rosen (W65), Alan Rosen (M65), Ian Marsden (M45), Helen Marsden (W45), Paul Langston (M70), David Hodson (M55), Daniel Hodson (M21), Eliza Hermann (W60), Ben Gostick (M18), Kevin Fielding (M55), Alex Fielding (M20), Simon Errington (M60), David Dixon (M50), Hedley Calderbank (M70)

In the **Individual League**, our top 20 runners were:

Pos.	Name	Class	Best 8 scores	Events	In Age Class
1	Janet Rosen	W65	395	15	3 rd
2	Simon Errington	M60	386	14	3 rd
3	Alan Rosen	M65	380	16	5 th
4	Alex Fielding	M20	328	8	6 th
4	Ben Gostick	M18	328	7	10 th
6	Helen Marsden	W45	301	7	16 th
7	Paul Langston	M70	246	6	25 th
8	David Dixon	M50	233	6	20 th
9	Ian Marsden	M45	221	7	26 th
10	Daniel Hodson	M21	217	5	32 nd
11	David Hodson	M55	215	6	32 nd
12	Hedley Calderbank	M70	196	5	35 th
13	Eliza Hermann	W60	193	8	36 th
14	Kevin Fielding	M55	181	6	42 nd
15	Dickson Chungyin Tam	M45	173	8	33 rd
16	Mike Bennett	M70	167	4	49 th
17	Sian Mitchell	W45	163	4	34 th
18	Maggie Soulsby	W18	158	5	26 th
19	Susan Hooper	W65	154	6	40 th
20	Mark Adams	M60	146	6	52 nd

INDIVIDUAL (M/W16+)

50 points for 1st, 49 for 2nd etc...

CLUB

3 from classes M/W 16 to M/W 21,
3 from classes M/W 35 to M/W 45,
3 from classes M/W 50 to M/W 55,
3 from classes M/W 60+,
plus any 3 additional scores.

Your **best 8 scores** count – can you put at least 8 dates in your 2024 diary? A lot of the fixtures are like buses – wait a while and then two or three come along together on the same weekend!

The 2024 UKOL [fixtures](#) are:

Date	Race	Competition (host club, location)	Date	Race	Competition (host club, location)
4-Feb	1	Southern Champs	23-Jun	14	British Sprint Champs Birmingham
10-Feb	2	British Night Championships, Lakes	6-Jul	15	YHOA Sprint Champs
11-Feb	3	Cumbrian Galloper, Lakes	7-Jul	16	Sprint Weekend Urban Leeds
9-Mar	4	Midland Champs	21-Jul	17	Croeso Day 1
29-Mar	5	JK Sprint	22-Jul	18	Croeso Day 2
30-Mar	6	JK Middle	14-Sep	19	Dales Weekend Day 1
31-Mar	7	JK Long	15-Sep	20	Dales Weekend Day 2
13-Apr	8	British Long Champs, Whitby	21-Sep	21	Caddihoe Chase Day 1
27-Apr	9	British Middle Champs	22-Sep	22	Caddihoe Chase Day 2
28-Apr	10	Northern Champs	12-Oct	23	DEE Middle Race
11-May	11	Glasgow City Race Weekend Event	13-Oct	24	Chester Urban Race
12-May	12	Glasgow Euro City Race	2-Nov	25	Salisbury Urban Race
25-May	13	Scottish Champs	3-Nov	26	November Classic, New Forest



HH Sprint Champs 2023

Mike Bennett

Sprinting round the Island

It was John Duffield's idea to use a corner of the CHIG Gunpowder Park map for club sprints. This part, Enfield Island Village, hadn't been used since 2010. He sorted out all the permissions then planned the courses...

We set it up as a social event, with a nice warm community centre to come back to for a cuppa and a bite to eat. There were trophies to present, people to talk to, and even the quiz answers didn't get more than the usual quota of groans.



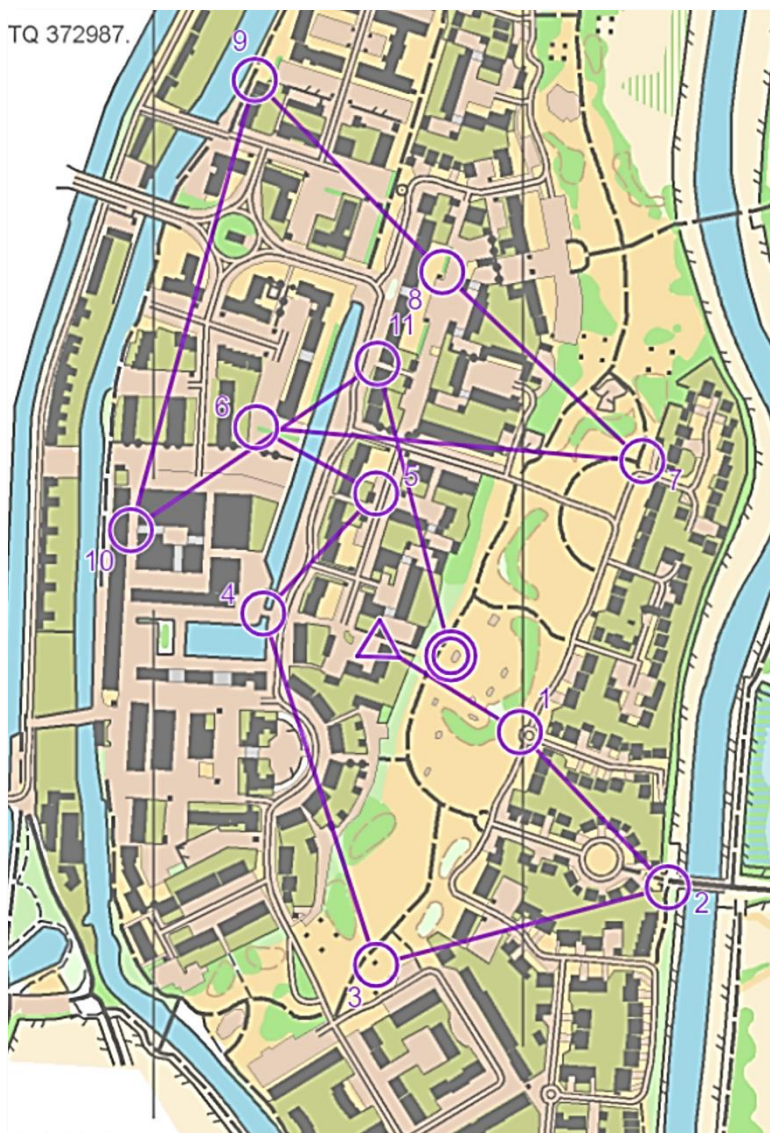
Thanks John!

The rain was scheduled to stop just before the event and so it did, it wasn't uncomfortable running. Spare a thought for those out hanging controls in quite heavy rain earlier.

We don't have a trophy for junior sprints, it's so rare to have an area we can run them on safely. Here it was mostly parkland with some runs down pavements, no need to cross any roads. **Darrio Tam** was the fastest boy and **Ella Mytton** the fastest girl.

Laura Parkes won the Women's trophy and **David Dixon** the Open. They were the first two people to finish the course; clearly they were not distracted by other runners. Waiting until the elephant tracks have formed was never a good tactic for urban events.

Many thanks to Enfield Island Village for use of the area and the community centre, to CHIG for use of the map, and to club members who (unbidden) mucked in to help out with tables, food prep and clearing up.







Volunteer Incentives

Mike Bennett, Volunteer Coordinator

You will remember that we are encouraging people to volunteer by giving club jackets (or other kit) to people who volunteer frequently. Last time this came up was when Kevin Parkes was the first to get there. In the last quarter he has been joined by **Ben Bardsley, Mike Bennett, Hedley Calderbank, David Dixon, Neil Gostick, Dan Hodson, Stu Levene, Penny Parkes, David Saunders and Hugh Wiltshire**. Well done all.

Please let Stu kit@herts-orienteeing.club know your preferred size (see <https://www.herts-orienteeing.club/members-section/club-kit/> for sizing) and if you want something other than a jacket.

A reminder of the scoring:

- 3 for taking a named role: Organiser, Planner or Controlling
- 1 for helping at an event or activity
- 0 for second and subsequent jobs you do at the same event
- 0 for things that are part of your committee "job" - issuing kit, setting up entries ...

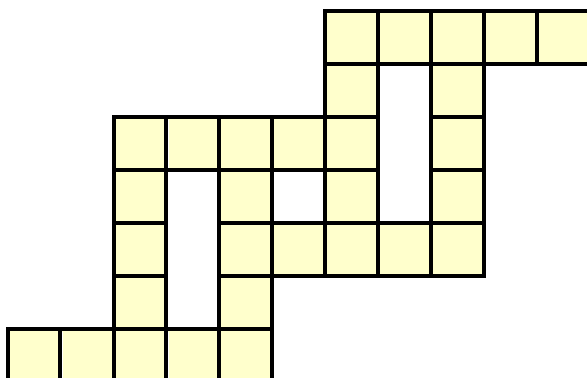
Other people are remarkably close to the magic 12 points. I'll give an update about every quarter.



O Puzzle

Thanks to John Duffield

Below is a grid, and nine words, all beginning with the letter O. Eight of the words fit into the grid. What is the word left over?




oboes
ogled
ousel
outed
ovals
overt
ovoid
owned
odour

[Answers](#)

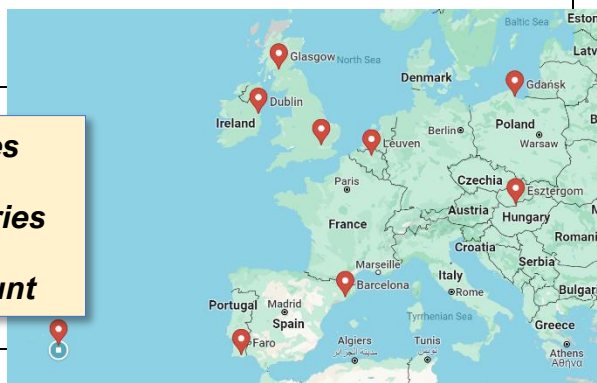


EuroCityRace Fixtures 2024

And while you start filling in your 2024 calendars, here are the [EuroCity Races](#), all of which have one or more other races attached to make it worth the travel. TBC but it's looking as though three will be in the UK so if you can get to a fourth you will have a good chance – not many people get to five (best five results to count).

Glasgow 10-12 May STAG	Friday 10/5 Saturday 11/5 Sunday 12/5	Indoor Orienteering Experience @ Glasgow Caledonian University. Sprint Races in Kelvingrove Park and Glasgow University Campus. EURO City Race , Glasgow City Centre. Middle Distance format.	 <p>Janet at the final control of the final 2023 race</p>
Leuven (Belgium) 18-21 May ASOM	Friday 17/5 Saturday 18/5 Sunday 19/5 Monday	Prologue sprint 1800 Two sprints 1400 & 1730 City race 1000 2x2 relay 1030	
Azores (Portugal) 31 May – 2 June Azores City Race	  		
Gdansk (Poland) Harpagan	Friday 30/8 Saturday 31/8 Sunday 1/9	17.00–19.00 – sprint distance 10.00–13.00 – middle distance 10.00–12.00 – long distance, City race [Same weekend as the Vienna Sprint Weekend]	
London (Barbican) SLOW	Friday 13/9 Saturday 14/9 Sunday 15/9	DFOK evening race at Burgess Park SLOW “ City of London Race ” at London LOK Ultrasprint	
Dublin	22 September tbc – may switch to Salford Quays		
Esztergom (Hungary)	5-6 October		
Barcelona (Spain)	1-3 November		
Faro (Portugal)	30 November – 1 December		

9 Races
7 countries
5 to count





Fairlands Valley Saturday Series, 2 December

Thanks to [David Dixon](#) for the photos

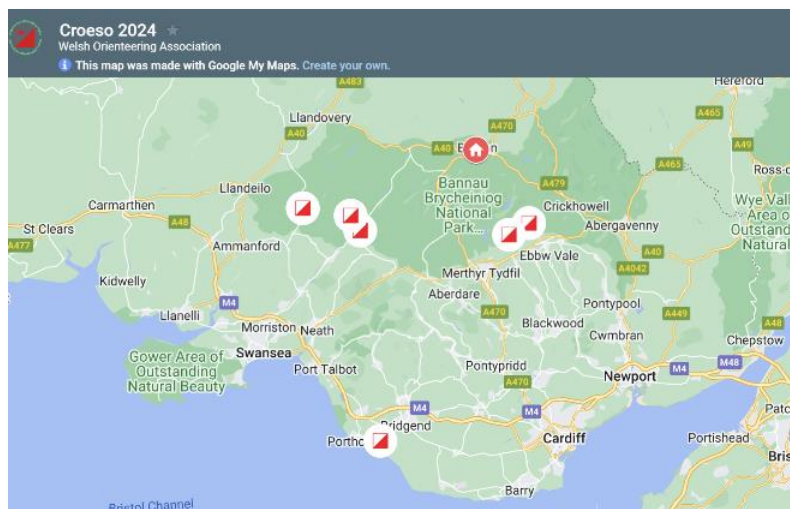




Croeso 2024

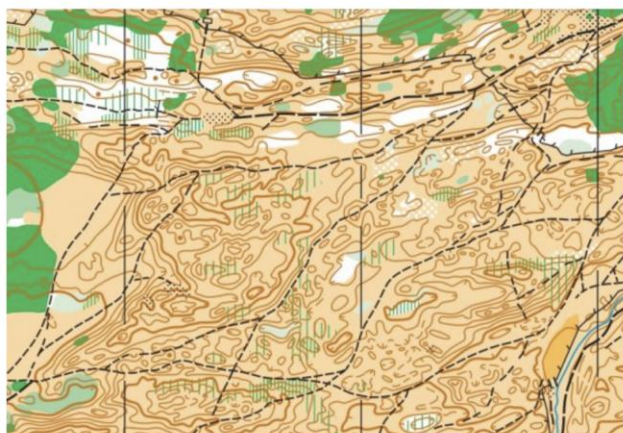
Between July 21-27 there will be 6 days of “top” orienteering in the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park and the legendary sand dunes of Merthyr Mawr.

- 6 Days: 4 Long and 2 Middle races
- Best 4 counts in overall standings
- Full range of courses
- Experts and novices, young and not so young all welcome.
- Urban event and training opportunities.
- Competition is divided into age categories: seniors have long and short categories, juniors are divided into A or B
- Two new areas, one much extended area and two used for JK2014.
- GREAT ORIENTEERING! And much else to do!



Entries Open 23 Dec 2023: <https://www.fabian4.co.uk/default.aspx?EventID=3617>

Website: <https://croeso.uk/>



Merthyr Mawr



Llangynidr

Southern England Urban Orienteering League 2023 Results

We are waiting for the last two events to be uploaded at [SEOUL](https://seoul.uk/) and anticipate some class winners and top 3 places...results in the February newsletter if available (and hopefully the 2024 fixtures).

The UK Urban League 2024 fixtures are [here](https://ukul.org.uk/) (and 2023 results were in the last newsletter).



Trent Park, Boxing Day Score

Thanks to [Tony Barr](#) and [Neil Gostick](#) for the photos



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Tony Barr





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WMOC 2024 & 2025

If you are planning your summer holidays already and are of a certain age (35+), do consider the [World Masters](#) in the oldest city of Finland, Turku, from 2-9 August. Entries are [open](#) and it's worth noting that entry fees go up on 31 January.

It may come as a surprise but you don't need to be world champion-material to take part – and HH members have done really well over the years.



[WMOC 2025](#) will be in Girona, Spain.



Training - January 2024 Update

Alex Soulsby

Xmas Night Score – Thursday 28 December

Kevin and Laura set up a mini-night activity with training and a score event on the Thursday between Christmas and New Year's Day. The venue was Fairlands Valley.

The south of the area has fairly decent woods when tackled in daylight but somehow became entirely more unnerving and complex once the light was gone. As a warm-up we started in daylight but were soon in full darkness and the area became surprisingly challenging. What was a path and what was not? How far have I gone? Why did I miss that control 2 feet away?

Last year's night event was held in deep snow and sub-zero temperatures. This year we hoped for something better. Fortunately the rain held off... until ten minutes before the start of the score when it started teeming. The score was a forty minute "Harris" style. We had a mass start off in to the woods with a yellow level "spine" to follow and optional extra controls to be tackled if you wanted more challenge. THE two fastest runners managed all of the controls in just under 40 minutes. Well done to David D although he was just beaten by Daniel Hodson who was 11 seconds faster.



It was a nice activity with a difference – we had a good range from novices to seasoned orienteers. Maybe HH can put on a full night event next season.

Club Training Days for the Winter

Here is the current schedule for our training events up until Easter. We will send out the usual invitation to the happy-herts@groups.io mailing list a few weeks in advance of each session. These are interesting areas so there'll be a good challenge for all levels.

Date	Event	Location	Time
Saturday, 20 January	Club Training	Hockeridge, Berkhamsted	10:00
Saturday, 17 February	Club Training	Sherrardspark Wood, WGC	10:00
Saturday, 16 March	Club Training	Mardley Heath, Welwyn	10:00

Juniors

Jenny Soulsby

Junior Captains

This is a new role and I am very pleased to announce Maggie Soulsby and Oliver Bardsley will be the HH Junior Captains for 2024. Maggie and Oliver are both great role models and contributors to the club and we look forward to their input as captains.

Junior Captain Role Description

- Develop camaraderie through participation as much as competition. Seek both to maximise the Club's competitive potential and to provide opportunities to take part without competitive pressure.
- To advise the club (Captain, Junior Co-Ordinator) on the sequence of junior runners in club teams (JK, British, SE Relays, Peter Palmer and Yvette Baker)
- To promote a good team spirit and encourage competitive success.
- To promote the wider participation of juniors in the club activities – planning courses, training etc.
- To ensure that a Junior team member writes a report for the club after each significant Junior event (Peter Palmer, JIRC's etc).
- To offer thoughts and suggestions on how to grow the Junior base.
- To help maintain and improve the Juniors section of the club website.



Event listings

[fixture lists]

[British Orienteering](#) you can filter by region and club

[WorldofO](#) international fixtures

[Mole Valley](#) user-friendly and includes local & international events

[British Army OC](#) for Wednesday Military League South events

[Ofixtures](#) filter in several ways

[entry systems]

www.fabian4.co.uk

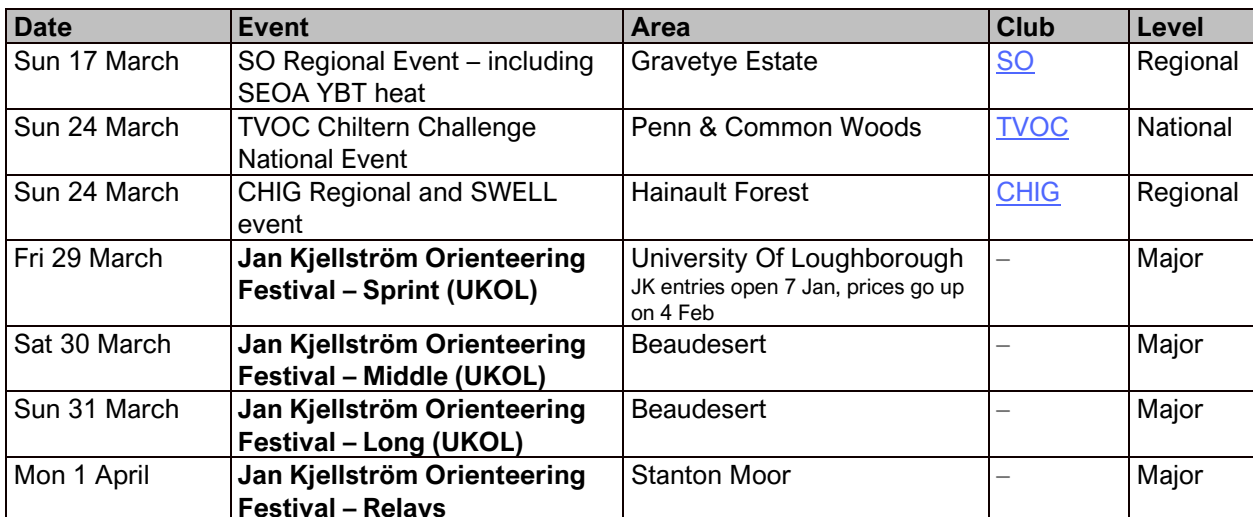
<https://www.sientries.co.uk/>

<https://racesignup.co.uk/>

Future Events

Here is a provisional list of events from HH and nearby clubs, plus some regional and national competitions that may be of interest.

Date	Event	Area	Club	Level
Sat 6 January	HH Saturday Series	Hockeridge Woods	HH	Local
Sun 7 January	Kings Wood	Kings Wood	SAX	Regional
Tue 9 January	SLOW London Street O Series	Chelsea	SLOW	Local
Sun 14 January	DFOK SE League event	Westerham	DFOK	National
Sun 21 January	Eyam Moor & Bretton Clough	Eyam Moor & Bretton Clough	DVO	National
Sun 21 January	HAVOC SWELL	Langdon Hills Country Park	HAVOC	Regional
Tue 23 January	SLOW Night O Series	Battersea Park	SLOW	Local
Sat 27 January	BKO Urban event	Birch Hill	BKO	Regional
Sun 28 January	Concorde Chase 2024	Barossa	BKO	National
Sun 28 January	Robin Hood Trophy	Sherwood Forest	NOC	National
Sat 3 February	Rowney Warren Night event	Rowney Warren	WAOC	Local
Sat 3 February	HH Saturday Series	Sherrards Park Wood	HH	Local
Sun 4 February	GO SE League event & Southern Champs (UKOL)	Redlands Entries will be on Racesignup	GO	National
Sun 4 February	Rowney Warren	Rowney Warren	WAOC	Regional
Tue 6 February	LOK London Street O Series	tbc	LOK	Local
Sat 10 February	TVOC Saturday Series		TVOC	Local
Sat 10 February	British Night Champs (UKOL)	Hawse End, Lake District Entries close 31 Jan	BNOC	Major
Sun 11 February	MV SE League event	Netley Heath	MV	National
Sun 18 February	CompassSport Cup Heat	Esher Common	SLOW	National
Sun 25 February	East Midlands Championships	Chambers Wood TBC	LOG	National
Sun 25 February	HH SE League event	Ashridge	HH	National
Tue 27 February	SLOW Night O Series	Wimbledon Common	SLOW	Local
Sun 3 March	SAX National event	Knole Park	SAX	National
Sat 9 March	Midland Champs (UKOL) and British Universities individual	Sandringham	NOR	National
Sun 10 March	Sarum Saunter		SARUM	National
Tue 12 March	SLOW London Street O Series	South Bank	SLOW	Local



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						U		W		
		O	B	O	E	S		N		
		V		V		E		E		
		E		O	G	L	E	D		
		R		I						
O	U	T	E	D						

19