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### Editor's Spur

Alan Rosen [newsletter@herts-orienteeing.club](mailto:newsletter@herts-orienteeing.club)

Great to see 69 HH names on the Ashridge results and everyone enjoying Mike's courses on Simon's map at Dave's event.

Of course, the list of credits doesn't stop there; the event worked so well because of the control hangers and collectors, sign creators and hangers, parking team, enquiries, start and finish and string course teams, road marshals, SI processors and all the other on-the-day helpers who I've forgotten.

And a well done to all those in Team HH who liaised with the farmers, National Trust, first aid, loos, tracking mats, marquee and Tom's catering, organised the equipment, wrote the risk assessment, put the fixture on the fixture list months or years in advance, updated the HH website many times, set up the SIEntries online entry system, published the results, uploaded the courses to Routegadget, took the photos, submitted the results to British Orienteering and dealt calmly with the potential loss of the car park field, etc.

Kit and shoes washed and looking forward to the next one...



## Forthcoming HH Events

Date	Event	More Info
<b>Sat 2 Mar 24</b> 10:00 - 12:45	<b>Mardley:</b> Saturday Series & Youth League. Beginners and newcomers welcome.	<a href="#">Event Details</a> <a href="#">Location</a>
<b>Sat 16 Mar 24</b> 10:00 - 12:00	<b>Club Training – Mardley:</b> Suitable for all club members including beginners	<a href="#">Event Details</a> <a href="#">Location</a>
<b>Sat 23 Mar 24</b> 14:00	<b>Juniors Training and YBT preparation – St Albans</b>	<b>TBC</b>
<b>Sat 6 Apr 24</b> 10:00 - 11:30	<b>Chipperfield:</b> Saturday Series. Beginners and newcomers welcome.	<a href="#">Event Details</a> <a href="#">Location</a>
<b>Sun 18 Aug 24</b> 10:00 - 12:00	<b>Hatfield Urban:</b> University campus and South Hatfield	<a href="#">Event Details</a> <a href="#">Location</a>

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

## Volunteers please

Neil Gostick [events@herts-orienteeing.club](mailto:events@herts-orienteeing.club)

This is the matrix of the events we have planned for 2024 and who is doing what. We had an events' planning meeting last week and have scheduled events to the end of the year. It has the added benefit of everyone being able to see what is coming up.

Necessarily this is just the first stage, and we will need to get permissions, so things may change. Northaw for YBT is still TBC, as we are having fun trying to get car parking, and sensible prices, so the area may also change.

**So if you see an event you would like to plan, organise or control please email me - [jngostick@ntlworld.com](mailto:jngostick@ntlworld.com).**

Many Thanks

Date	Level	Type	Area	Organiser	Planner	Controller
02/03	D	Saturday	Mardley	Penny Parkes	Maggie Soulsby	Laura Parkes
06/04	D	Saturday	Chipperfield	Tim Bywater-Lees	David Heale	
04/05	D	Saturday	Ellenbrook			Simon Errington
01/06	D	Saturday	Nomansland	Ben Bardsley	Oliver Bardsley	David Saunders TBC
06/07	D	Saturday	N/A -YB Trophy next day			
07/07	B	YBT	Yvette Baker - Northaw TBC	Nigel Quinton	Hedley Calderbank	
18/08	C	Urban	South Hatfield & University	Adam Leaf	Stu Levene	
07/09	D	Saturday	Panshanger			
05/10	D	Saturday	Verulamium			
13/10	C	Jack of Herts	Whippendell			
02/11	D	Saturday	Fairlands			
07/12	D	Saturday	Stanborough			



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## Chair's Platform

David Dixon [chair@herts-orienteeing.club](mailto:chair@herts-orienteeing.club)

### Why are orienteering events so cheap?

I'll cut to the chase – it's because we rely on volunteers.

I accidentally found myself running alongside participants in a Welwyn Garden City 10k race earlier this month. I looked up the details: £22 for a non-affiliated runner to take part. This is for a pretty straightforward event (the same 2-lap course, mainly on streets, that was used last year; a few volunteer marshals around the course who get a free alternative race as a result), with start/finish timing and a completion medal.

Our Saturday series events are £7 for an adult non-member + dibber hire. As well as the on-the-day logistics, timing and marshals/helpers, we have a significant amount of pre-planning in the course, mapping, map printing and other logistics. Even our biggest event of the year, our Ace of Herts, is cheaper despite the significant extra expenses of parking and parking logistics, toilets and lots more.

This low price is entirely down to our amazing volunteers, and in particular those who take on the larger event roles of organising, planning, mapping and controlling. Our problem is that it's often the "usual suspects" who step forward and we're getting close to exhausting this pool. You'll have seen Neil's pleas for new volunteers and we're considering having to cancel events if we can't resource them. So, *especially* if you have never taken on an event role before, please do consider stepping forward.

We recognise that this can be daunting but we will provide all the support necessary. In addition there are detailed guides for each role at: <https://sites.google.com/view/hh-know-how/saturday-series> Please contact Neil at [events@herts-orienteeing.club](mailto:events@herts-orienteeing.club) if you'd like to discuss opportunities, and me (David) at [chair@herts-orienteeing.club](mailto:chair@herts-orienteeing.club) if you could organise a Street-O.

Thanks!

### 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 **April** newsletter is **Thursday 28 March**.

### Read Your Own...?

Do you forward this newsletter to others in your house? If so, why not get them to subscribe to the HH club members' email group and get their own, personal, individual copy hot off the printing press? Ask them to click [here](#) and follow the instructions.



## Captain's Niche

Tom Cochrane [captain@herts-orienteering.club](mailto:captain@herts-orienteering.club)

### JK and British Championships relays



The UK's most prestigious relay competitions - the JK and the British Championships - will be taking place on 1 April and 14 April respectively. For those of you running (or thinking about running) the individual competitions these are an excellent way to round off the weekend's competition.

**Please let Tom Cochrane know at [captain@herts-orienteering.club](mailto:captain@herts-orienteering.club) by 3 March for the JK and 17 March for the British if you would like to run.** See last month's newsletter or the group email on 18 February for full details. If you've any questions or are unsure - please just ask!

### British Night Championships 2024

A hardy band of four HH members travelled to Keswick in the Lake District for the British Night Championships. Congratulations to both Rosens for making it on to the podium!

Alan Rosen	2 <sup>nd</sup> M65
Janet Rosen	3 <sup>rd</sup> W65
Tom Cochrane	4 <sup>th</sup> M40
Sian Mitchell	5 <sup>th</sup> W45

### Compass Sport Cup - results

More than 40 of us travelled to Esher Common for the SE heat of the Compass Sport Cup today.

The promise in the final details that "brambles have been particularly virulent over the past year or so" was very much fulfilled! Well done to all who fought their way round.

It was always likely to be a tough heat and we couldn't qualify this time. We came fourth, beating TVOC at least and getting a good number of runners out.

The summary results table is below with a list of the HH counters - well done especially to Maggie and Alan who won their courses and Hannah who came second. Full results are here:

<https://www.sportident.co.uk/results/SLOW/2024/CompassSportCupHeatEsherCommons/index.html>



## Compass Sport Cup

Pos	Club	Scorers	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8A	8B	9A	9B	10
1st	<b>SLOW</b>	25	2393	191 (2)	378 (4)	383 (4)	286 (3)	386 (4)	95 (1)	288 (3)	98 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	96 (1)	192 (2)
2nd	<b>SN</b>	25	2371	198 (2)	198 (2)	183 (2)	379 (4)	283 (3)	283 (3)	373 (4)	96 (1)	0 (0)	192 (2)	186 (2)	0 (0)
3rd	<b>SO</b>	25	2350	285 (3)	182 (2)	90 (1)	100 (1)	186 (2)	284 (3)	179 (2)	190 (2)	192 (2)	190 (2)	198 (2)	274 (3)
4th	<b>HH</b>	25	2324	269 (3)	190 (2)	282 (3)	271 (3)	279 (3)	375 (4)	182 (2)	186 (2)	196 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	94 (1)
5th	<b>TVOC</b>	24	2133	276 (3)	183 (2)	191 (2)	344 (4)	246 (3)	337 (4)	360 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	98 (1)	0 (0)	98 (1)

Name	Course	Score
Maggie Soulsby	8B	100
Alan Rosen	6	100
Hannah Freeman	3	99
Tom Cochrane	2	97
Sian Mitchell	5	97
Poppy Chorlton	8B	96
Laura Parkes	3	96
David Dixon	4	96
Rory Nesbit	8	94
Mick Smith	7	94
Sue Hooper	10	94
David Hodson	6	93
Simon Errington	2	93
Hannah Nesbit	5	93

Name	Course	Score
Oliver Bardsley	8A	92
Richard Freeman	6	92
James Errington	1	92
Daniel Hodson	1	91
Mark Adams	6	90
Kate Hawks	5	89
David Tookey	7	88
Ben Bardsley	4	88
Sebastien Flesch	4	87
Charlotte Coles	3	87
Daniel Figg	1	86

## O Puzzle

*Thanks to John Duffield*

The grid below contains the official abbreviations of sixteen O clubs. They read in a straight line, horizontally from left to right, or vertically from top to bottom. All must be connected by one or more letters of the abbreviation. Abbreviations within another abbreviation do not count. When you have crossed off all the letters of these clubs, the remaining letters will give you another club abbreviation when written down left to right and top to bottom. What is that club abbreviation?

[Answers](#)

<b>A</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>S</b>
<b>O</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>R</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>O</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>X</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>P</b>



## WOC 2024 – are you going?

Simon Errington [simon@maprunner.co.uk](mailto:simon@maprunner.co.uk)

The [World Orienteering Championships](#) return to Scotland this year after previous versions in 1976, 1999 and 2015. This is a sprint year and the races will take place in Edinburgh from July 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>. As ever there will be [spectator races](#) as well so you have the chance to run on some of the World Championship maps and prove you should have made the team after all.



I have recently taken on the role of Media Operations Manager for WOC2024. I haven't yet worked out exactly what that covers but it certainly involves things like media accreditation, media facilities at events (desks, internet access, results, printers, tea, coffee, cake), press conferences and supervision of photographers around the arenas and out on the courses. I've had media accreditation at previous WOCs (which apparently qualifies me for this role) and this is a great opportunity to see what happens behind the scenes at a World Championships.

I need to build a small team to do whatever turns out to be necessary. If anybody is interested in volunteering for this then please have a word with me.

## Incentive Awards

Congratulations to those gaining new awards this month:

Member	Certificates	Awarded
Benjamin Casserley	Navigation Challenge ★★★★★	05/02/2024
Richard Dew	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award ★★★★★	05/02/2024
	Navigation Challenge ★★★★★	05/02/2024
Sebastian Elder	Racing Challenge: Gold Award ★★★	05/02/2024
Simon Wightman	Racing Challenge: Silver Award ★★★★★	05/02/2024
	Racing Challenge: Bronze Award ★★★★★	05/02/2024
	Navigation Challenge ★★★★★	05/02/2024
Trenna Axon	Racing Challenge: Silver Award ★★★★★	19/02/2024





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## Training

Alex Soulsby [training@herts-orienteeing.club](mailto:training@herts-orienteeing.club)

## Upcoming Training Events:

We have a nice set of training locations coming up. These will offer a challenge for all orienteers. We are also promoting an "Introduction to Orienteering" alongside the main club training. This went well at Sherrardspark Wood where we had our first session. So please tell your friends and family who would like to get the basics under their belt.

There will be a regular training for everyone else

We are also planning to have a special juniors' session before Easter. Please could those interested give an indication by 8<sup>th</sup> March so can decide if it is viable.

Email [training@herts-orienteeing.club](mailto:training@herts-orienteeing.club)

Date	Event	Location	Time
Saturday, 16 March	Club Training – including introduction to Orienteering	Mardley Heath, Welwyn	10:00
TBC Saturday 23 March	Juniors Training and YBT prep	St Albans TBC	14:00

### Sherrardspark Wood Club Training – Saturday 3 February

We had a great group join us for training in a very very muddy Sherrardspark Wood. We promise that we did tell the newcomers to wear clothes they were happy to trash!

The adults were led by Kevin on a series of tasks looking at route choice and when it is best to use a path due to vegetation. Sherrardspark brambles made a good case in point and all were suitably challenged. Maggie took the older juniors through a selection of route choices, map symbols and compass work. I took the younger ones on a map walk focusing on relating the map to the ground, orientating the map, marking your progression with your thumb and they all had a great time spotting gullies and earth walls. We then had a big game of sardine O which is proving a popular way to end the session. Jennie

Thanks to all of those who coached and helped with permissions.

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## Southern Championships 2024

Well done to everyone who took part at Redlands on 4 February and especially to our Southern Champions!

<b>M12A</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Darrio MukYiu Tam</b>	<b>W10A</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup>(?)</b>	<b>Tunde Farago</b>
M20E	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Benjamin Gostick	W16A	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Isabel Hawks
M60L	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Simon Errington	W21E	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Hannah Freeman
M70L	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mike Bennett	<b>W45L</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Helen Marsden</b>



## Juniors

Jennie Soulsby [juniors@herts-orienteering.club](mailto:juniors@herts-orienteering.club)

### REMINDER: Save the date for the Yvette Baker Heats, Sunday 21 April

The Yvette Baker Trophy (YBT) is the main inter-club competition for Juniors. Any team can enter a heat and if you do well in that you can go to the finals which are held in July [and being run by HH this year].

The team last year did really well in the heats but were pipped by TVOC. This year we would really like to be able to get a strong team out and try to get back into the finals again.

The heat event for us is coming up and we need you to let us know if you can come along and represent your club. If you haven't been part of YBT before it is a really fun event and all of our runners can make a difference whether you are a top 17-year old or a beginner.

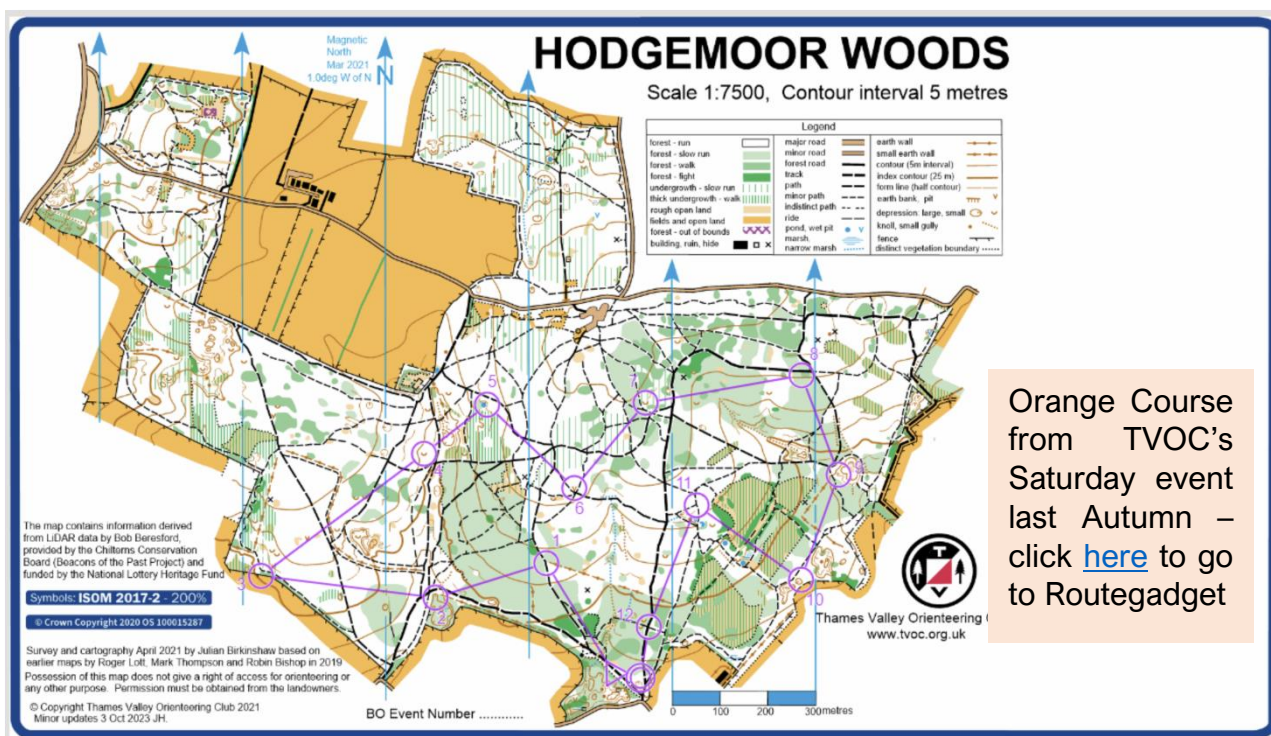
**Date:** Sunday 21 April    **Location:** Hodgemoor Wood, near Beaconsfield (~40 mins)

More details can be found here <https://tvoc.org.uk/events/scol7-and-tvoc-regional-event-scoa-ybt-round/>

**Please can you let us know if you can run by 7<sup>th</sup> April?** Can you bring a friend? Do you need a lift / or can give a lift?

Do not worry about entering as once we have responses we will do that for you. Just make sure you keep the date free. Don't worry we will send out reminders!

If you have any questions or to let me know you are available please email: [juniors@herts-orienteering.club](mailto:juniors@herts-orienteering.club)







## Top Ten Technological Advances [2004]

Simon Errington [simon@maprunner.co.uk](mailto:simon@maprunner.co.uk)

Simon looks back over 25 years of orienteering and picks his top 10 technological advances since he took up the sport in 1977. *(Simon says: Originally written in May 2004 when I was desperately looking for material whilst editor of Pacemaker. But that was 20 years ago so many people will not have read it, and those who are old enough to have been around back then will have forgotten it. I warn you I have quite a lot more of these if the need arises.)* **Readers – what's on your top five/ten list today in 2024???**



### 1 - The Portaloo

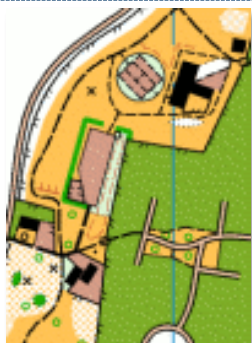
No contest at the top for those who remember the bad old days of latrine pits, toilet tents, cardboard toilets, the flappy hessian screening, and even rubbish skips with planks. Nobody who has experienced the alternatives should ever complain about the queue for the Portaloo. BOF thought they were such a good idea that the cost of toilets used to be tax-deductible when calculating the levy to be paid by an event. Recent [in 2004] bad publicity about toilets blowing over at the British Championships this year doesn't even begin to approach the true horrors of how it used to be.



### 2 - Electronic punching

To some people this is the way it has always been, but it was not until 1997 that we saw the first electronic punching events in this country. The leap from nothing to standard practice has been remarkably quick and painless. This was undoubtedly helped by the Lottery money that was available at just the right time to help out the clubs and associations brave enough to make the jump. There was a time when Tyvek control cards would have been near the top of this list, but they are all but irrelevant now for big events. There are people around who have never known the joy of checking 2000 soaking wet control cards in a cold, dark tent. You really don't know what you are missing.





### 3 - Digital printing

In the bad old days you sent off your map (on at least five separate drawing films) and waited with crossed fingers. Several weeks later you got back the map, or rather several thousand of them, since it was cheaper that way. Nowadays I can sit at home and print direct to a colour inkjet or laser printer, and out comes an almost perfect and certainly usable map. The blind alley of colour photocopying caught a few people out for a while (don't do it unless there is no alternative) but the latest laser printed offerings from the depths of Kallkwik in Leamington Spa are almost indistinguishable from offset printing. Printing on demand (at registration or even in the start lane) will be the next big thing.



### 4 - The Internet

The information is out there if you only know where to look. Fixture lists, event details, start lists, results, split times, club contact information, scandal, gossip, and even scurrilous newsletter articles can all be found from the comfort of home. Many people will have already worked out you can find details of and enter just about any event anywhere in the world by email if you try hard enough. My latest achievement was to discover that the Mallorcan Orienteering Championships happened to coincide with a holiday in Mallorca. Two emails later and Helen and I were Mallorcan Orienteering Champions for 2003.



### 5 - OCAD

Producing an orienteering map is never going to be an easy process, but OCAD has at least made it something that mortals can attempt. My 1985 copy of Mapmaking for Orienteers lays out in great detail the pros and cons of scribing over drawing, along with details of pen widths, light tables, Letraset symbols and much more. OCAD reduces all this to a mouse, keyboard and whatever artistic talent you may have to add. Gone are the days of separate drawing films for each colour, all drawn in black just to confuse the novices. Now the colour separations are done for you and what you see is (nearly) what you get. Why not download a free version of OCAD from the internet to see what it is all about and find if you could be the club's next expert cartographer?



## 6 - Split time watches

Somewhen in the early 80s a watch hit the streets that allowed you to record 30 split times. Suddenly it was possible to compare individual leg times and find out what was really happening in the forest. Huddles would form at the finish as people compared route choices and times and argued about how much time they had lost. This has largely been replaced now by split time print-outs, but look round an orienteering car park and spot the ones wearing a split time watch. I still take split times at all races, just to check up on the electronics.



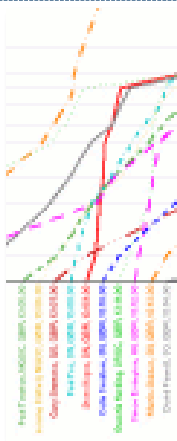
## 7 - Dobb spikes

It's clearly difficult to design something that will give you grip on the range of terrain that you encounter on even a small orienteering event in the south east, let alone deepest, hilliest, rockiest, muddiest Scotland or Scandinavia. Rubber studs alone were not enough, and there was a period when O-shoes came with screw-in cross-country spikes. These lethal items had a tendency to inflict bone-deep ankle lacerations during mass starts, as well as picking up small tree trunks and M10s that you ran over on the course. Then someone worked out that you could put the metal bit inside the rubber bit, and the Dobb spike was born.



## 8 - Fast compass needles

There was you thinking you just needed to run faster, but what you really needed was for your compass to be faster as well. A mysterious design of fat needles or extra bolt-on magnets turns out to produce a compass that settles faster than a traditional thin needle compass. People who have just bought such an item are easily identified since they spend the next 30 minutes flicking the compass backward and forwards and insisting that their friends watch how fantastic it is. We're talking the difference between about two seconds and about one second for the needle to settle, and you still need to remember to take the bearing in the first place, but if every second counts then this is the gadget for you. For those who still think that induction damping is the latest craze it may be time for a new toy.



## 9 - Winsplits

Now that split times are commonplace you really need a way of interpreting what all the numbers really mean. Bring on Winsplits and spend hours watching little runner icons rerun the race whilst cheering on your favourites and groaning as you miss the depression at number 5 yet again and your greatest rival pulls ahead. The various options allow you to spot who ran the fastest (and slowest) times on each leg, who that person was who led you astray at control 10, what time you really lost tying up your shoe laces on the run-in and even how much you would have won by if you hadn't made any mistakes at all. But seriously this is a fantastic program, and should be the first place to look for anyone trying to work out what they are doing wrong and where the time is going.

*[Ed...and Simon's Routegadget wasn't around in 2004 but should definitely be on our 2024 list]*



## 10 - Lycra running bottoms

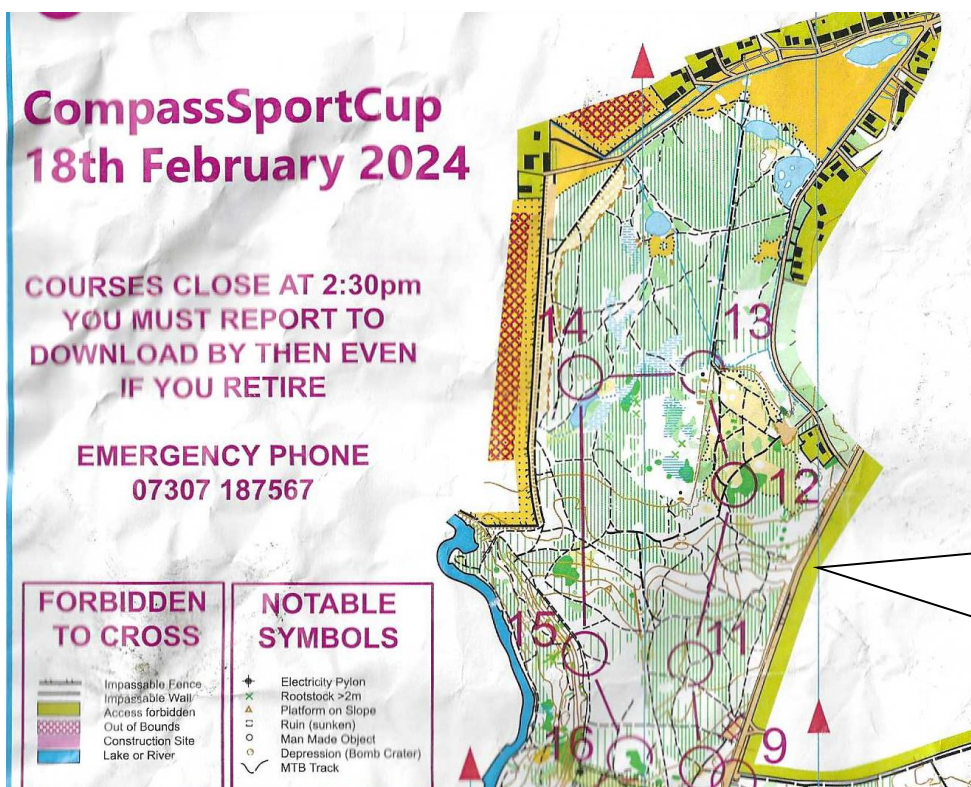
In the good old days everybody wore nylon O trousers in a range of dark colours so as not to offend the senses or put off other competitors. *[Ed...and you weren't meant to wear red clothing in case someone mistook you for a control]* Then people began to realise that they weren't really all that pleasant to run in, especially when wet. Bring on the Lycra bottoms, and suddenly everybody was out there sporting the go-faster look, no matter what size of body they needed to squeeze in. My first pair were a result of getting to the JK assembly area and realising my O trousers were 2.5km away in the car, whilst my start was 5 minutes away in the corner of the field. Ultrasport to the rescue, as ever, and it has been Lycra ever since.

*[Ed...You may or may not want to know this:.....Lycra is a brand name for elastane or spandex, invented in 1958 to improve garments that previously had used silk and/or rubber. And why 'spandex'? It's an anagram of expands!]*





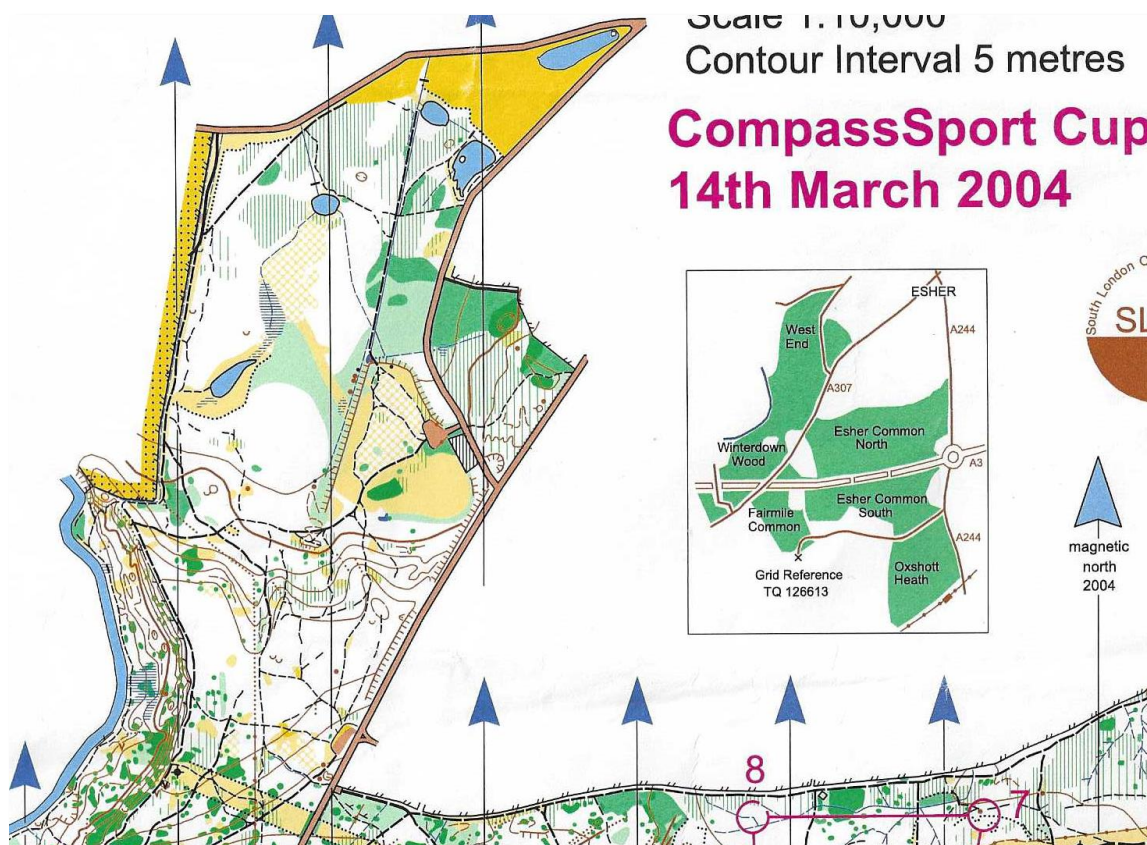
## Esher Commons then and now



Here's the NW part of the [slightly crumpled] Esher map that we used two weeks ago. It includes the brambly and flooded area (eg 13-14) which was 'memorable', and where lots of people lost time.

Interesting that the road direction seems to have changed relative to magnetic North over 20 years, presumably because of magnetic declination?

Here's the same area from **2004's** CompassSport Cup Heat (although we didn't visit the NW area on the courses):



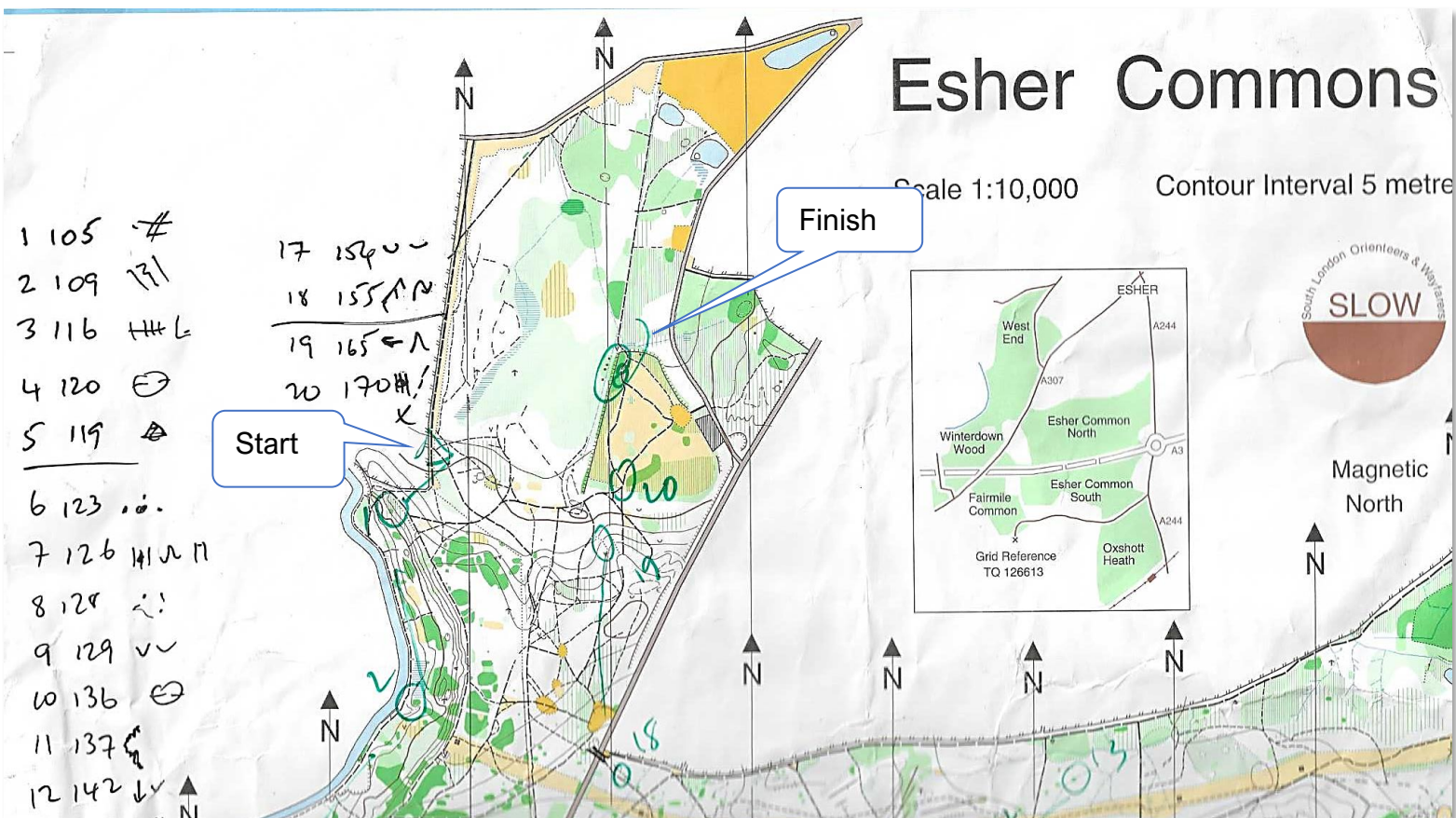




Also out of the filing cabinet...a map from **1998**:

Note:

- Scribbling the control descriptions onto the map. The lines between 5 & 6 and 18 & 19 indicate crossing the road.
- Copying the course from 'Master Maps' which were on boards on the ground. All done after starting, hence the very rough writing/circles and not spending time joining them up. Not sure why I used a green pen on a green map.



## How I survived the CompassSport Cup aka the Bog Snorkeling Championships on Esher Commons

*A testimonial by Eliza Hermann*

Judging from comments in the assembly area afterwards, I was not the only one to have had a pretty miserable time in the water, mud and brambles.

But the good news was my feet stayed warm and dry, despite the continuous ankle-deep bog between controls 5, 6, 7 and 8. I had on my Sealskinz waterproof socks! I had never heard of waterproof socks until I read the December HH Newsletter, in which our esteemed Editor extolled their virtues. I promptly bought myself a pair and tried them out and, well, I am no faster nor any better at navigating, but I am a much happier orienteer for having dry feet. Thank you Alan!



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## Ace of Herts reflections

*Dave Tookey, Organiser*

We always get good competitor numbers for Ashridge and this can give a few problems in the winter months as the ground can get wet and become unusable for parking, greatly limiting our options on where we can base the event.

Early tasks for the Organiser were the usual ones – drafting a Risk Assessment and preparing a budget which was needed in order to calculate how much the entry fee needed to be assuming we had the expected level of entrants. Then the most important– recruiting team leaders for SI, the Start and Car Parking. Once Kevin Parkes, Janet & Alan Rosen and Ian Byford were recruited to the cause, my life became very much easier.

With the previous locations near the Monument unavailable to us, Neil found a really excellent field belonging to the Real Christmas Tree farm at Ringshall, ideally placed for the northern section of the forest. Arrangements were proceeding nicely until the continuously wet weather throughout January and the weeks leading up to the event became an increasing concern. There was a real possibility that we would be forced to cancel as the area got wetter and wetter. We'd always planned to have tracking down to protect the immediate entrance area but after yet more rain midweek, we decided on the Friday to reduce the traffic in the field by off-loading some of the cars to the farmyard; this was close enough to the event centre to be usable and fully supported by the farmer.

Other than being at a larger scale than a Saturday Series (so more helpers required and a span of longer time between first starts and courses closing), the main difference in organising was more engagement with external suppliers – medical cover, porta-loos, the ground protection matting already mentioned, catering and the kit vendors.

The event did require a lot of helpers but as usual, HH members came forward and we got everything covered off. Those who offered to help even though they were not intending to run deserve a special thank-you.

And the weekend weather was fine! We did quite a lot of preparation on the Saturday – Mike put out the control stakes in the southern part of the area and then joined a small group of us to assemble the marquees– thanks to those involved for that. The team leaders did a great job, the helpers all turned up on time with a smile and got on with things in their quite competent manner.

The Raftery family kindly put on a string course which also gains HH points for the South East Orienteering League. In retrospect, the only things we might have done differently would have been to increase the number of control hangers / collectors and to take some photos of the event centre. We didn't take the greater number of controls fully into account, so they had rather more to deal with than usual.

Most importantly, the competitors seemed very happy with the event centre, Mike's super courses and Simon's newly updated and most excellent map. All the feedback I heard was very positive. Thanks to the Controller Mark Thompson (TVOC) who worked closely with Mike to ensure that the courses were well planned and fair and to the farm for their support and help when the field was starting to look doubtful.



## Ace of Herts – a meteorological perspective

*Mike Bennett, Planner*

Brits are reputed to obsess about the weather, and orienteers are worse than most. Not because of the weather while we're running – we're pretty robust on that – but on what it means for the terrain and courses.

Simon (mapper), Mark (controller) and I (planner) spent many hours on Ashridge in various combinations. On the day all 3 of us were there we agreed that a particular blip in the LiDAR Terrain Model was mappable, not quite a small depression but platform worked. That became control 140, the last to be defined. But I digress.

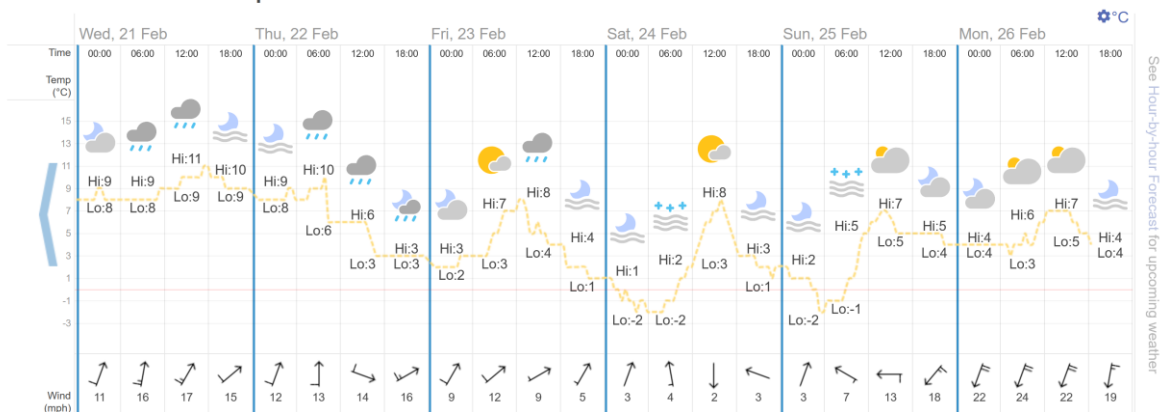
January visits were in between named storms, so each time anyone went back the paths were muddier and there were more fallen trees. The tree near the start was all the way across the path until Mark and I decided it would be public-spirited to make sure the public footpath was usable. Some of the branches took both of us to shift.



Late January and early February were fine, the forest became very runnable and there were only occasional muddy patches on the paths. The forecast was for a mostly dry last fortnight so we were hopeful.

Then what happened? The jet stream buckled and it rained almost every day. Here's a diagram courtesy of timeanddate.com of weather at Luton airport, the nearest weather station.

Past Weather in Luton — Graph



Note the rain on Wednesday and Thursday, and there had been quite a lot more in the preceding week. But we were lucky. Friday and Saturday were mostly dry so the parking field was a lot better than we had feared. The day itself was even brighter than shown above. But the really lucky part was those wind speeds at the bottom. We'd have been worried about the marquees in the 10-15mph speeds of Wednesday and Thursday, the 20mph Northerlies today, gusting well above that, would have been unmanageable.

So when was the best time to run? I'd say dawn on Sunday in the freezing fog. The ground had a light crust but wasn't slippery. And visibility of ~50m means you need to maintain map contact, which would have made for a great event. A bit difficult to get 400 competitors off in the same conditions, though.





## Ace of Herts photos

Thanks to David Dixon for the photos <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBfvWa>











## Saturday Series Sherrardspark Woods photos

Thanks to David Dixon for the photos <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBcQwj>





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## 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](http://www.fabian4.co.uk)  
<https://www.sientries.co.uk/>  
<https://racesignup.co.uk/>

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## 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 02 March	HH Saturday Series	Mardley Heath	<a href="#">HH</a>	Local
Sun 03 March	SAX National event	Knole Park	<a href="#">SAX</a>	National
Wed 06 March	MapRun League 2024	Hinchingbrooke Country Park	<a href="#">WAOC</a>	Local
Sat 09 March	Midland Champs (UKOL) and BUCS individual	Sandringham	<a href="#">NOR</a>	National
Sat 09 March	TVOC Saturday Series – TBC	Shotover	<a href="#">TVOC</a>	Local
Sun 10 March	BUCS Relay	Trumpington Meadows	<a href="#">CUOC</a>	National
Sun 10 March	Sarum Saunter	Cannimore	<a href="#">SARUM</a>	National
Tue 12 March	SLOW London Street O Series	South Bank	<a href="#">SLOW</a>	Local
Sat 16 March	HH Club Training – including introduction to Orienteering	Mardley Heath, Welwyn	<a href="#">HH</a>	
Sun 17 March	SO Regional Event – including SEOA YBT heat	Gravetye Estate	<a href="#">SO</a>	Regional
Sun 17 March	SCOL6 and BKO regional event	Rushall Woods	<a href="#">BKO</a>	Regional
Sun 24 March	TVOC Chiltern Challenge National Event	Penn & Common Woods	<a href="#">TVOC</a>	National
Sun 24 March	CHIG Regional and SWELL event	Hainault forest.	<a href="#">CHIG</a>	Regional
Fri 29 March	Jan Kjellström Orienteering Festival – Sprint (UKOL)	University of Loughborough	<a href="#">JK</a>	Major
Sat 30 March	Jan Kjellström Orienteering Festival – Middle (UKOL)	Beaudesert	<a href="#">JK</a>	Major





Date	Event	Area	Club	Level
Sun 31 March	Jan Kjellström Orienteering Festival – Long (UKOL)	Beautesert	<a href="#">JK</a>	Major
Mon 01 April	Jan Kjellström Orienteering Festival – Relays	Stanton Moor	<a href="#">JK</a>	Major
<b>Sat 06 April</b>	<b>HH Saturday Series</b>	<b>Chipperfield Common</b>	<a href="#">HH</a>	<b>Local</b>
Sun 07 April	(Cancelled) HAVOC SWELL	Dagnam Park	<a href="#">HAVOC</a>	Regional
Tue 09 April	SLOW London Street O Series	Wandsworth	<a href="#">SLOW</a>	Local
Sat 13 April	British Long Distance Champs	Mulgrave Woods	<a href="#">CLOK</a>	Major
Sun 14 April	British Relay Champs	Hutton Mulgrave & Skelder Woods	<a href="#">NEOA</a>	Major
Sun 21 April	SCOL7 and TVOC Regional Event & SCOA <b>Yvette Baker Trophy round</b>	Hodgemoor Wood	<a href="#">TVOC</a>	Regional
Sun 28 April	Keyne-O 1	Great Linford	<a href="#">SMOC</a>	Local
Sun 05 May	Sarum Saunter	Shearwater	<a href="#">SARUM</a>	National
Sat 11 May	SO Sunny Sussex Weekend – middle distance	Eartham Wood (north)	<a href="#">SO</a>	Regional
Sat 11 May	SO Sunny Sussex Weekend – 2/3 – Evening Sprint **SEOUL event**	Chichester University & Oaklands Park	<a href="#">SO</a>	Regional
Sat 11 May	TVOC Saturday Series – TBC	Cuttleslowe Park	<a href="#">TVOC</a>	Local
Sun 12 May	SO Sunny Sussex Weekend – 3/3 – SE League event	Houghton Forest, Arundel	<a href="#">SO</a>	National
Sun 12 May	Keyne-O 2	Ouzel Valley Park	<a href="#">SMOC</a>	Local
Tue 14 May	SLOW London Street O Series	Clapham	<a href="#">SLOW</a>	Local
Sun 19 May	SAX Regional event	Ightham	<a href="#">SAX</a>	Regional

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## Puzzle Answers

Horizontal clubs: AIRE, SN, SARUM, DFOK, SO, HALO, INT, GRAMP

Vertical clubs: OD, SAX, FVO, RSOC, CHIG, SROC, SLOW, MAROC

Answer: SUFFOC