

Chairman's Comments – Roy Denney

The AGM minutes are given elsewhere and need little further comment from me.

John Woodall told me that the best way to guarantee a good turn out was to try changing the constitution and our suggestions in that regard produced a strong turn out and we ran out of chairs. After constructive discussions on several points a new constitution was adopted which is also given in this news letter and will be updated on the web site.

James Allen is still looking after our Sport Ident equipment and clubs must press the members who expressed some interest in replacing him as he is very busy on the domestic front and will not be able to carry on once our season gets busy. If storage is a problem the committee will consider acquiring some sort of storage if a willing volunteer has space in the garden.

Our Treasurer will be more directly involved in the financial side of E hire in future, and we have reviewed the charging structures. As you will see from the AGM minutes we have made changes to simplify matters.

Gallopen and Night League fixtures are now agreed and details are given elsewhere but if the Night League is to actually produce a winner we need someone to correlate the results which should not be a major task given the small number of events and competitors.

On a less positive note there appears to be an increase in the number of people using old maps to have a run round courses laid out for events without registering to officially take part. Quite apart from depriving the organising club of justified event revenue there are insurance considerations if anything should happen to them and clubs are advised to try and prevent such activity.

“it was decided that we would try the new event classes for juniors at badge events. “

On a similar front there was a recent case where car keys left at the registration area went missing. Fortunately the car did not but again there are risks of possible litigation and clubs are advised to consider the implications and at the very least to have a disclaimer notice where keys may be dropped, pointing out that it is at the owners own risk.

At our recent committee meeting it was decided that we would try the new event classes for juniors at badge events. This has to be tested in a number of regions with apparent success and may be rolled out by BOF in due course. Hopefully this will encourage more youngsters to participate, as they will be able to run at levels appropriate to their ability regardless of age. We will in any event try it at all badge events in the region for the next 12 months.

As I start my last year as your Chairman I trust you will all enjoy a good season.

Roy Denney, Chairman - October 2002

MINUTES OF THE 38th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE EAST MIDLANDS ORIENTEERING ASSOCIATION HELD ON MONDAY SEPTEMBER 23rd 2002 AT THE RED LION, KEGWORTH

Present : J.Woodall (NOC), M.Godfree (DVO), L.Godfree (DVO), D. Walker (DVO), R.Barnes (NOC), J. Palmer (NOC), H.Palmer (NOC), E.Williams (LEI), R.Denney (LEI), J.Bennett (LOG), R.Edwards (LEI), R.Alderson (NOC), G.Johnson (DVO), A. Portsmouth (LEI), C. Phillips (LEI), R. Phillips (LEI), M. Lucking (NOC), R. Macdonald (DVO), M. Gardner (DVO), R. Shooter (DVO), E. Williams (LEI), G. Davis, V. Davis, K. Pickworth, R. Pickworth A.Hawkins (DVO).

1. Apologies for absence : T. Spalton, H. Rice, D. Woodall, P. Leake, P. Olivant.

2. Minutes of the 37th AGM. These were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Proposer H. Palmer

Seconder E. Williams

3. Chairman's report

This year can best be described as normal service has been restored. After last year's problems with foot and mouth it has been a pleasure to have a full programme of events to choose from.

Electronic punching is becoming widespread and is a great improvement, and we hope to address the funding arrangements within the region to encourage even more use of this kit.

I would like to congratulate all winners in our championships and galloppen and those successful juniors who have made the representative teams.

I must thank all the committee for their efforts and support, and especially Roger Edwards who has taken over as Treasurer since the last AGM. I must also thank James Allen and Kevin Bradley for their help during the year. We are still looking for someone to take over from James as our E-kit supremo.

We also have a vacancy for a development officer and I would press clubs to ask amongst their members for both these roles.

This has been a year of changes in the administration of the sport, perhaps not as great as had once been expected and your committee have decided not to recommend any dramatic change in how EMOA is constituted. We did however start looking at our constitution with possible change in mind, and several good ideas which came out of that exercise are to be put to you this evening with the support of your committee.

4. Secretary's report

EMOA had just over 400 members last season. We have some 110 areas mapped, including 6 new ones mapped this year. We put on a total of 109 events of various levels, and have a total of 38 controllers at the various Grades. 15 coaching skills courses, 3 courses for coaches and 1 planning course have been held in the region last season.

5. Treasurer's report .

Foot and mouth in 2001 resulted in a drop in income, and also a drop in expenditure. In 2002 things have returned to nearly normal. Income from electronic punching has increased substantially, and no lost equipment has yet been replaced. This has resulted in a surplus of just over £300.

The Balance Sheet showed that several separate funds have been amalgamated into the main EMOA fund. Electronic Equipment hire monies are currently coming in at such a rate that there should be enough to replace all the equipment in three to four years, should this be necessary.

6. Approval of Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Statement

Thanks were given to Dave Walker for his work in "independently financially examining" the Association's books. The final accounts for the year ended 30.06.02 were circulated and accepted.

Proposer: E. Williams

Seconder: J. Woodall

7. Amendments to the Constitution

Proposal 1) That we adopt the amended constitution.

The amended constitution consisted of some 25 changes, some only changing one word, while others were whole new sections.

There was a robust and wide ranging discussion about the sort of constitution the region wanted. It was felt by many that a looser form of wording, that gave the Executive Committee and its officers freedom to act in the region's interests, was preferable to a tightly worded version, which might in some circumstances tie the committee's hands and was anyway not needed.

The meeting then went through the changes one by one, approving 13 of these changes (as shown elsewhere)

Proposer: R. Macdonald

Seconder: M. Lucking

All these changes were carried with only one vote against.

Proposal 2) that the Constitution be renamed 'Constitution and Standing Orders' was not put to the meeting in the light of the above discussion.

8. Election of principal officers

The following were re-elected unopposed.

Chairman -	Roy Denney (who then resumed chair)
Vice Chairman -	Ranald Macdonald
Secretary -	Andy Hawkins
Treasurer -	Roger Edwards

Clubs are reminded that a new Secretary will be needed before the next AGM.

9 Election of other officers

Mapping Adviser -	Mike Godfree
BOF Event Standards Committee -	Ernie Williams
BOF Coaching Committee -	Hilary Palmer
Emews Editor -	Mike Gardner
Webmaster -	Andy Portsmouth

The above were re-elected unopposed

BOF Council -	Ray Barnes wished to step down, and will be replaced in the short term by Roy Denney
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Fixtures Secretary -
Development Officer -

There were no volunteers for either post at this meeting, and clubs are urged to try to find volunteers.

10 Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner

Dave Walker agreed to continue in this role.

11 Budget projections (for year to 30.6.2003)

EMOA can afford to run a deficit next financial year, in view of the healthy reserves. EMEWS has moved back to six issues per year.

13 Fixing of charges

The Treasurer introduced plans to halve subscription rates, but double event levies. This would keep income at roughly the same total, but now coming more from people who actually attended events, including people from outside the region.

Electronic equipment hire charges to be changed to a rate per competitor, with a lesser rate for juniors. This will make it cheaper for small events, while Badge events may end up paying more. E-kit remains free for coaching events.

Proposer : R. Macdonald

Seconder : J. Woodall

14 Plans for the coming year

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Chairman: We have allocated events to the end of the year as being part of the Gallopen and hope to finalise the programme next month. Similarly the night league is not yet complete. It is always a bit of a rush getting these matters sorted in time for this meeting but it should be less of a problem next year when our constitution allows us to put back the meeting a little. The gallopen normally runs from mid-October to mid-June, and next year's AGM should be held just before its start.

Next year we hope to have four Badge events in the region, and should be hosting the Midlands Championships. Our own Championships will be at Belvoir in March. Preparation will get underway in earnest for our day of JK2004.

Mike Gardner and Andy Portsmouth will continue in their new roles further developing our newsletter and website respectively.

New rules for events are coming in and we will organise seminars to ensure they are interpreted consistently by club officials.

In this my last year as your Chairman I will continue to work to ensure EMOA serves its members well with those matters where a regional body is best suited but that it leaves clubs to do what they can do best at a local level.

Enjoy your running this winter.

Roy Denney.

Meeting closed at 9p.m., and was followed by an interesting and thought-provoking open forum on abuse of officials by competitors, and the new junior age-classes.

CONSTITUTION THE EAST MIDLANDS ORIENTEERING ASSOCIATION

1. TITLE & OBJECTS.

1.1 The association shall be called the East Midlands Orienteering Association.

Its objectives shall be to co-ordinate and develop the sport of orienteering, as defined by the British Orienteering Federation, within the East Midlands, and so to further the development of and participation in the sport of orienteering.

1.2 Its objectives shall also include representing the interests of members and affiliated clubs and groups on representative bodies and to support their activities within the sport.

2. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2.1 The affairs of the Association shall be administered by an executive committee composed of the following voting members :

a) the four Principal Officers : Chairperson, Vice chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer

b) additional officers : Fixtures secretary, BOF Council representative, BOF committee representatives, Regional Newsletter Editor, Regional Webmaster, Mapping Adviser, Development Officer

c) Club representatives: Each affiliated club may nominate one representative to the committee. The club secretary shall advise the Secretary of the Association of the person nominated.

2.2 To be eligible for election members must have expressed a willingness to serve and to have been nominated by not less than two other members.

2.3 The principal officers may not stand for election for more than three consecutive years.

2.4 The members at a General Meeting may also elect a President who shall have no voting rights on the Executive Committee.

2.5 No more than three Principal Officers shall be from the same club.

2.6 No more than 50% rounded down, of the other elected members of the Executive Committee should be from the same club unless all voting members of the Committee agree at the first Committee meeting after the AGM.

2.7 The Executive Committee shall meet as necessary but at least once within any given period of three months.

2.8 All Committee members shall be advised of such meetings at least seven days in advance.

2.9 A minute book shall be kept of all meetings with the minutes circulated to all members of the Executive Committee and the minutes shall be approved at the next meeting and signed to that effect by the Chairperson or Acting Chairperson.

2.10 A quorum shall consist of not less than one third of the total strength of the Executive Committee and at least two members must be Principal Officers.

2.11 In the interests of continuity the immediate past chairperson may be invited to be an additional member of the Executive Committee (with full voting rights) for a period of one year following his or her period of office.

3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POWERS:

The Executive Committee shall be empowered to carry out the following activities :

3.1 Appoint additional officials, but if these come from outside the committee they shall not have a vote.

3.2 Constitute sub-committees or working groups as may be deemed necessary.

3.3 At the first committee meeting after the AGM elect from within its members persons to fill any of the other positions not filled at the AGM or will allocate those duties amongst themselves. If any post becomes vacant during the year they may fill it until the next AGM by a member from outside the Committee.

3.4 Purchase, hire, lease and/or insure any property or equipment for the benefit of the Association or its members.

3.5 Nominate delegates to other bodies who shall exercise any voting rights on behalf of the Association.

3.6 Accept or reject clubs wishing to affiliate to the Association subject to ratification at the next AGM.

4 MEMBERSHIP & VOTING

4.1 The Secretary shall maintain a register of Affiliated Clubs accepted in accordance with paragraph 3.6 of this constitution.

4.2 Members of the Association are defined thus :

a) Individual

i) A member of an affiliated club for whom the club has paid the EMOA membership fee to the Association.

ii) An individual who is a direct member of the Association.

b) Family Families (parent(s) and his/her/their children under the age of 19 on 31st December in the year of

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membership, or partners) :

- i) For whom an affiliated Club has paid an appropriate membership fee to the Association, or
 - ii) Who are direct members of the Association.
- c) Groups or organisations which cover a number of activities and whose members only take part in orienteering competitions on an occasional basis, (i.e. no member eligible for M20/W20 or older takes part in more than three open competitions per year), and which have paid the appropriate membership fee to the Association.
- c) Honorary Life Members Honorary Life Members as approved by the membership at the AGM.

4.3 All members of the Association present at a General Meeting have the right to vote at the meeting provided that they have been a member for at least 28 days as follows :

- a) Each individual member shall have one vote.
- b) Each family member over the age of 18 at the date of the meeting shall have one vote.
- c) Each group shall have one vote.
- d) Each Honorary Life Member shall have one vote.

4.4 No proxy votes will be allowed.

4.5 The Chairperson of any meeting shall only be allowed a casting vote.

5 FINANCE

5.1 The financial year of the Association shall run to 30th June. The accounts of the Association will be balanced at 30th June each year and submitted, for approval, to the following Annual General Meeting after independent examination.

5.2 The funds of the Association shall be held in a bank, post office or building society account and used in accordance with the objectives of the Association.

5.3 All cheques or other instructions written against the Association funds shall be signed by any officers nominated by, and in such combinations as are agreed by, the Executive Committee.

5.4 Expenses may be paid to any member of the Executive Committee and representatives of the region engaged on Association business.;

5.5 The Executive Committee shall ensure that an Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet is prepared each year that fairly represents the financial transactions of the Association for the year and the balances held at the Balance Sheet date and that these be seen by an Independent Financial Examiner who should express an opinion in writing as to whether they represent a true and accurate picture.

5.6 The Independent Financial Examiner shall be a person with experience in financial matters and shall not be a member of the Executive Committee of the Association. The Independent Financial Examiner shall not be involved in or associated with any significant financial transactions with the Association or the Treasurer, and should be from a different Club to the Treasurer.

5.7 The Independent Financial Examiner shall, at the AGM each year, be appointed for the coming financial year, and may have been nominated by the Executive Committee. The Independent Financial Examiner may only be removed from office by the members of the Association at a General Meeting although the Executive Committee shall be able to fill any vacancy that arises during the course of the year.

5.8 The Treasurer shall be responsible for retaining the accounting records to meet statutory requirements

and those of outside funding sources.

6 GENERAL MEETINGS

6.1 The Association shall hold an AGM within 120 days of the end of the financial year.

6.2 The Secretary shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting upon receipt of a written application from 10% of the voting membership of the Association, or if requested to do so by the Executive Committee. The Secretary must call the meeting within 14 days of receipt of the application or request, with the meeting then to be held between 14 and 28 days later. When convening the meeting the Secretary must advise the membership of the number of voting members of the Association at that time.

6.3 Notice of the AGM or an E.G.M. must reach voting members 14 days before the meeting. Included with the notice should be an agenda and any proposed amendments to the constitution. In the case of an AGM, all proposed amendments must be received before August 15th, and notice may only be given after that date. A quorum at a General Meeting shall be 15 voting members.

6.4 At the AGM the Chairperson's report shall give an account of the Association since the AGM was last held and the accounts shall be voted upon by the members present.

6.5 Members of the Executive Committee as defined by 2.2a) and 2.2b) shall be elected at the AGM.

6.6 At the AGM, the retiring Treasurer shall produce, as guidance to the members of the Association, a projected budget covering the likely income and expenditure for the following year and any proposals for changes in the levels of subscription, event levies, equipment hire-out fees and any other funding arrangements.

6.7 All these funding arrangements will then be voted upon by the members present who may offer amendments to the suggested figures.

7 MATTERS NOT COVERED BY THE CONSTITUTION

It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to decide upon matters not covered by the constitution.

8 DISSOLUTION

8.1 In the event of the possible dissolution of the Association, an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened to agree this course of action, or otherwise, and to decide the disposal of the assets. In the event that possible dissolution is an agenda item a quorum for that item shall be one delegate from every surviving club. The assets may only be disposed of to one or more non profit-making organisation (s) whose objects are similar to those in paragraph 1 of this constitution.

Bad behaviour threatens orienteering

As if the sport did not have enough problems the increasing incidence of rude and threatening behaviour against officials and helpers is increasingly discouraging volunteers from coming forward.

Orienteering has always been a labour intensive sport and we can ill afford to chase away willing hands.

There have been many recent cases but one grade 2 controller will never control again after comments about their work and another regular helper has refused to ever assist with car parking again after a tirade of abuse.

It has long been felt that the first essential of our sport is somewhere to run followed by somewhere to park nearby. These are very real considerations but at some level we can always compete even if only on street-O courses. The first essential is actually someone to put the often hours of work in to put on events and we are in danger of drying up our pool of workers.

Our sport is also under threat, along with many other events, by proposed changes to present planning regulations; Temporary Users Provisions have permitted use of land for any purpose for not more than 28 days in any year (less days for especially noisy sports).

The final shape of the proposed legislation is not decided but a strong proposal is to do away with these provisions and require planning applications for each event. This particular aspect appears to have arisen out of concerns about car boot sales but can you imagine the impact on our sport if obtaining permission is expanded to applying for planning permission.

It has also been suggested that in granting any permission, a size threshold will be imposed. Do you have confidence that local government official could assess how many orienteers an area would sustain before it would have a detrimental effect?

We have all felt that we have had a bad course on an appalling map and sometimes it is actually true. We must not however lose track of the fact that we are all volunteers and comments should be restricted to constructive criticism in the cold light of day and not in bad tempered outbursts in the heat of the moment.

Planners have felt that they are working with over zealous and nit picking controllers with elements of truth in both points of view but in the long-term interests of the sport we must bight our lips and make the best of things without allowing disputes to become personal.

The sport is general and this region in particular is working to improve standards and levels of consistent interpretation. We hold regular planners and controller's courses and we hope to make these more like workshops for the swapping of ideas as it has to be admitted that some controllers have never been on any sort of refresher since

qualifying of ten many years ago.

BOF is very concerned about the problem and as a region we wish to keep a close look on the situation at our events and would ask all clubs and members to advise a member of the committee of EMOA of any occurrences of this nature and if any pattern or recurrence by specific individuals is noted we can and will take action.

There are a range of sanctions permitted to us and we will not hesitate to use them in the interests of the majority of well behaved and appreciative members.

It is possible that problems arise from what used to be known as 'independents'. BOF is recommending that these be priced into membership by differential charging and if they are encouraged to join a club they may get to better appreciate the effort that other members put in to provide their sport but if not they will at least be paying clubs a more realistic sum for their participation. For a badge event BOF recommend that they should pay at least £3 more than members.

Please ensure you show proper consideration for the efforts of our volunteers and do let us know of any problems to enable us to keep on top of developing problems.

Roy Denney

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Junior Reports

2002 SO FAR (John Rocke):

Being a member of East Midlands Junior Squad has brought me many benefits. The year started with a coaching weekend based at Sherwood Pines and then Crich on the second day. We practised all basic techniques including pace counting, aiming off and putting our techniques into a competitive setting.

I was unable to join the weekend in Yorkshire in March, but went with the squad to the National Event at Bigland and had a training day on the Saturday. We all stayed in a scout house and slept on the floor. The food as always was good and there was plenty to eat. I did not run well at Bigland as I had a tiring week running with my athletics club.

I was chosen to represent East Midlands in the Junior Inter Regional Championships. The events were held in the South Lakes, near where my granddad lives, but I had never been to the competition areas which were Barrowfield Wood for the individual and Helsington Barrows for the relay. The terrain at Barrowfield was an intricately contoured limestone wood. It rained so hard on the relay day that my number came off. As a region we came fourth over all which was a very good result.

The highlight of the year so far was going to Lagganlia. I travelled by train to Aviemore. Rhys Roberts and Andrew Llwellyn from East Midlands also went on this tour. The coaching was really good and we all improved over the week. We trained in great areas

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such as Inshriach, Achlean, Anagach and Strathmashie. I was familiar with Strathmashie as two days of the Scottish 6 days were held there last year. The other areas were new to me although I had visited two of them when my mum had competed in the World Veterans Championship. One of the best things about going Lagganlia was making friends with other junior athletes from across the country. Now I know who I am racing against.

The week after that I went to the Lakes 5 days and met my parents.

I am looking forward to more coaching opportunities. The East Midlands coaches are excellent and have helped me develop and improve as an orienteer.

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Helen Palmer reporting from Eurometing 2002, Jihlava, Czech Republic.

After achieving some good results during my DIY tour of Scandinavia this summer I was lucky enough to be selected for a development team to race in Eurometing in the Czech Republic. Eurometing always boasts strong fields as teams from all over Europe compete and usually send athletes who are just outside their national teams. This year was no exception with particularly strong teams from the host nation, all the Scandinavian countries, and Switzerland including some World Cup runners and medalists from the World Student Champs.

The weekend comprised sprint, classic and relay races. Having run on a rather out of date training map we knew we'd have to be on our toes that afternoon for the sprint race which included a section through Jihlava zoo! Despite the freezing cold weather, steep slopes and tricky 'zoo-navigation' racing was fast and furious. The Swedish and Czech runners dominated but I had a good run with less than a minute lost (that's quite a lot in a sprint race, but I reckon is good for me in sprint races.) I was pleased until I went to download and was told I'd completely missed one control. Guttled! I wasn't the only one but this fact didn't make me feel any less frustrated. Best Brit was Kim Buckley who came around 10th, with the seconds for the missed control added I would have done a similar time. At least I won't make that mistake again.

As well as being physically tough multi-race competitions or championships are always psychologically draining. Even with just three races to think about you really have to focus in order to forget about any successes or failures and concentrate on the next race. In the Junior Squad I learnt that as soon as you finish one race it's time to start thinking about the next, that means doing a good cool down, refueling and mentally moving on. I felt I did that well at Euromet but still had a disastrous classic race. No excuses, I was fit and ready but just didn't pull it together on the day. Something I realised over the weekend was to be prepared for all eventualities. The day of the classic race was very very cold, and wet. I decided I would be warm enough in just an O-top (only jessies wear thermals!) I warmed up thoroughly and on the start line was

raring to go. With each miss I got colder and wetter and angrier. Not helpful. The Scandis wore thermal tops. And won. Another lesson learnt.

Abi Weeds and myself were relegated to the B-team for the relay. Pride was at stake, we had to redeem ourselves. At the banquet/disco/quiet gathering we recruited a Ukrainian girl to run last leg for us. She had come last in the classic. It didn't look good..

On the start line I sized up my rivals, it was an intimidatingly strong line up and I was quite scared. I went off steadily and ran out of the field dead last, furiously studying my map. If you miss at the first two that's it you lose the pack and have to struggle round alone (it happened to me at JWOC '98!) So I concentrated and ran hard and found myself in a small leading group. There were very few common controls and the "gaffling" was so clever you couldn't count on anyone having exactly the same course. I had a near perfect run and came in with the main pack only a couple of minutes down on the Swede who was well ahead (she had a much shorter course tho! No really.) I felt I had redeemed myself. Abi ran well too and our Ukrainian managed to hang on so that we finished well ahead of the GB `A' team.

All in all it was a fantastic experience and I learnt loads. Well that's what mistakes are for! My relay run gave me confidence and motivation for the winter and I know I will come back stronger next year and more able to find those darn red and white flags.. quickly. I just have to say a huge thank you to both NOC and EMOA, without their support this experience would not have been possible. Thanks guys!

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Editorial

Sorry for the delay in getting EMEWS out. A number of holidays for different people (including myself) meant that it took longer to pull together this issue than usual. However, I'm back, sunned from Menorca and ready to go for another O-season. Just so you know who to look out for at events to pass your contributions to, alongside is a picture of me taken at the start of the DVO Club Champs in October by Steve Kimberley.

No Sports Personality nominations this month – please send any to me if you have them for next edition.

The National Forest

The winners of this year's successful tender schemes were announced during September. Under the unique Tender Scheme, which is run jointly by the National Forest Company and the Forestry Commission, private landowners bid competitively for funds to convert land to woodlands and other Forest purposes as their contribution to the creation of The National Forest.



This year the National Forest Company chose 16 winners from 20 competing schemes. This represents the highest success rate since the Scheme was introduced eight years ago and shows the very high quality of schemes now being submitted. Three of the winners are in Staffordshire, five in Derbyshire and eight in Leicestershire and together they will share £2.3m in grants to pay for the conversion work. The public can look forward to informal access across 96% of the total land submitted by the winning schemes.

In total 360 hectares of new woodland will be created by the Tender Scheme this year. Highlights of the winning schemes include the largest scheme ever submitted for consideration (104.17 hectares) which is on the Derbyshire and Leicestershire border and has already been introduced to DVO, and a number of schemes with archaeological and local heritage interest, including

ridge and furrow, manorial earthworks, a medieval trout pond and even an early 20th century water ram.

There is a 35 acre site by Foremark reservoir which may make that area more useable and a cluster of small sites near Smisby in South Derbyshire which may combine to be of some interest.

The new National Forest means very different things to different people and organisations. The first essential of our woodlands must be to provide havens for all forms of wildlife and to be the 'lungs' keeping our air quality up but the provision of sporting and recreational facilities ranks very high. Unfortunately these varied interests are often seen as conflicting but in reality need not be.

One of the great difficulties in the past with woodlands throughout the country has been the reluctance of some users to co-operate with other interests and after the promotion of new plantings I see one of the main secondary roles of The National Forest Company to be to act as a catalyst and point of contact to bring all interests together and foster an understanding of other users' sensibilities. The working group on which I serve as your representative, has successfully done this, helping me to maximise opportunities for our sport whilst at the same time promoting conservation and avoiding any nuisance to adjoining landowners and other interests.

It is a common misconception that our sport has a negative impact on wildlife but numerous environmental assessments

have shown this not to be the case and I welcome any opportunity to demonstrate this.

One target that I keep promoting is in the provision of links. I argue that if the public is really to be able to wander at length many of the smaller blocks need to be joined by proactive measures even to the extent of direct acquisition of land by the national Forest in it's own name if necessary.

85% of the land planted or committed to the forest since 1995 has some form of free public access and increasingly landowners are having the confidence to give full informal access.

When the National Forest was launched there was only 6% woodland in the area designated as the new forest. Even this was deceptive as it was concentrated in two largish blocks and much of the area was very poorly served with trees. This

figure now stands at 13% and is far more widely spread about.

Nearly 2000 acres of new woodland has been created before this years tenders and about 5 million trees planted. Much of this has been on reclaimed and previously derelict land and has changed the countryside of this region out of all recognition and as the trees mature will increasingly do so.

LEI have seen extensions to 6 major areas including the near doubling of Ratby Woodlands and have one new C4 area with another in the pipeline. Two others are agreed which will take a few years to mature but which will both be capable of sustaining badge events in due course.

The forest covers 200 square miles in all and will provide increasing opportunities for our sport.

Roy Denney

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Letters To The Editor

It seems that John Bennett's letter entitled 'Apathy or Not' IN EMEWS 189 got a couple of people going.

Apathy or What – a Reply

I read with interest the letter from your correspondent John Bennett in EMEWS 189. It seems to me that John has confused two separate issues, the unpopularity of relay events in general with the unpopularity of two events in particular.

Why do I not like relays in general?

There are a number of reasons for this (bearing in mind that not all these points will apply to the specific events mentioned in John's letter):

- If I make a mistake in an individual event, I only have myself to blame, I only ruin one person's run. If I make a mistake in a relay event, I ruin the runs of at least two other people and become the subject of derision and opprobrium. Life is full of heartaches enough; why risk increasing them?

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- (Related to the first point) it is difficult to get a balanced relay team. Either I will be part of a team where I am the dead weight devaluing the competitive runs of the other two, or alternatively, the run into which I have put 100% effort for the sake of the team will be nullified by someone else who, through no fault of their own, is too inexperienced or unfit, or simply cannot be bothered, to make a similar contribution. Either way the feeling is of dissatisfaction.
- If I take part in a local event, the chances are that the above uncertainties will be compounded. It is probable that I will not know in advance in whose team I will be, the overall field will be smaller, the chances of finding myself part of a team of equals therefore marginal and the likelihood of coming away from the event with lasting memories of an enjoyable experience remote.
- If I turn up to a club event, I will run a Brown course and can usually be guaranteed to be out for between 60 and 90 minutes. If I wanted to enter a shorter course, I could do, but choose not to. If I go to a local relay event, it is virtually guaranteed that I will be running a course no longer than and no more complicated than a Light Green. Chances are I will be out for substantially less than an hour. Why should I travel as far as I would to a colour-coded event, have choice removed from me and do a course which is too short and too simple?
- Relays tend to be expensive and represent poor value for money. The only relays which I do enter are the JK, the British and occasionally the Harvester, the last for its novelty factor as much as anything. The first two have me as a captive audience; I have already travelled a long distance for the Individual event(s) and might as well join in the spirit of it. However in doing so, I know I will be paying a Badge event price for a course up to half as short. In fact, that is not strictly correct, because DVO, in common with many other clubs, have, in recognition of the expense and unpopularity of Championship Relays, been forced to introduce a financial inducement to get its members to take part, subsidising fees.

Perhaps I should add, in the interests of balance, that JK and British Relays can be enormous fun and valuable in building up club identity and spirit; many a happy hour have I spent huddled in the DVO tent yelling insults to bedraggled individuals struggling on the run-in, outside in the pouring rain.

- Most relay event classes are meaningless. If I take part in an M45 Badge event course and come in the top half, I can look down the list with a certain amount of satisfaction and say to myself that I was better than half the competitors within 2½ years either side of me. It may not mean a great deal, but it has some significance. The same would apply if I was part of a similarly placed M45 relay team, but that happens perhaps once a year. Instead I have to be part of a M120 or M150 team. What satisfaction is there in finding that your team is better than half the other teams taking part whose collective age is greater than 150 ? The alternative is even worse; because three are required for every relay team, I may be remaindered and join the

bargain box of others in the same position to run a meaningless Ad Hoc course or Men's Short Open, and which represents even less value for money. I pity the poor team manager who has to square all these circles.

Why did I not attend the Bulwell Park Relays ?

For many years NOC have run a relay event under the 'Little John Relays' banner. I have even taken part in one or two of them myself. They have tended to attract an audience of overwhelmingly NOC members. So far as I am aware there was no huge campaign on behalf of East Midlands orienteers, clamouring that a void in the orienteering calendar, the omission of an inter-club relay competition, be filled. (If this was intended to be an official East Midlands competition, an article in EMEWS explaining and publicising this might have assisted).

When I saw that this year's Little John Relays had been designated an Inter-Club relay competition, I perhaps cynically thought that this was a NOC re-branding exercise to attract wider numbers to their event. Absolutely nothing wrong in that, but the mere addition of the words 'Inter-Club Relay' event, as John Bennett appears to believe, does not give rise to an obligation on me as a club member to attend or on DVO as a club to send a team or teams. This is not 'Field of Dreams' either.

John Bennett is fortunate at the moment in having his weekends free to go to orienteering events. It will be interesting to see how easily he finds it to attend two events in a weekend in a year's time when he is the proud father of twins, as I understand he expects to be. In point of fact, one influencing factor explaining (one member apart) the absence of DVO from Bulwell Park is the fact that several of its members had chosen to give up their Saturday to organise an orienteering event and coach over a hundred youngsters at Osmaston Park in connection with the Derbyshire Youth Games, something the club has done for a number of years now and to which it was committed long before the Little John Relay event was announced.

However, I cannot pretend that even if I had had a free Saturday, I would have gone to the event. Many of the points made in the first part of the letter applied to this event, and some more so. None of John's team took longer than 30 minutes to do their course, and one only 21 minutes. It probably took him longer to get ready for the event than to take part in it. There is simply not enough inducement for me to spend the best part of two hours getting to and from an event for a run of 20-30 minutes on an area which I know nothing about and which I am guessing from a position of complete ignorance is not of the most technical.

The point about meaningless relay classes applies. I am very pleased for John that he won but the most that he can say is that an all-male team from the same club but who otherwise had little in common beat four other teams (one of which was disqualified – see my point above) most of whom were not all males and who also did not otherwise have much in common either. I do not intend in the slightest to denigrate this event (despite appearances!), I have no doubt it was intended as a low key, fun affair, and it

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achieved this aim. What I do object to is the criticism of others who exercised a choice not to attend it or indeed who had no choice.

Why did I not attend the LOG Summer Relays ?

I couldn't because like a substantial number of fellow orienteers I was on holiday at the time (orienteering). If I wanted to choose a Sunday when I wanted the least number of orienteers to attend an event, I think I would choose the first Sunday in August when I knew there was already a five day event organised in the Holy Land of English orienteering, the Lake District, and when I knew that this was probably the day when I could guarantee the largest portion of my target audience was on holiday. I cannot believe that it is John's genuine view that, muddy car parks or not, anyone in their right mind would swap a five day competition in the Lakes for a quick dash round South Common.

Even if I had been at home, I know that Lincoln is over 80 minutes away, and once again I am not prepared to spend nearly three hours on the road for a half hour run when I can spend an hour or more running in the beautiful Derbyshire countryside on my doorstep.

DVO has organised events this year when literally **no-one** has turned up. What we did not do is assume that just because we put on an event, we had a divine right to expect people to turn up. What we did do was to discuss in committee why this was and how next time we could rectify our errors.

Yours individually,

Graham Johnson

PS I don't particularly like relays, in case you hadn't guessed.

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A Reply to Apathy or What?

I was very angry when I read 'Apathy or What?' in the September issue of EMEWS.

John Bennett claims that the Inter-Club Relays were "well trailed". I would dispute that. In the April/May EMEWS the date given for NOC's Little-John Relays is Sunday 2nd June – Bank Holiday weekend. Some of our club-members were going to the Tamar Quadruple while I, as Club Captain, was co-ordinating DVO's entry at the Scottish Relay Champs. But traditionally teams are made up on the day for the Little John Relays, mixed clubs if necessary, so why involve the Club Captain? Anyway, who needs a team? Does no-one remember the LSOC student who ran all 6 legs at Bramcote one year and still beat off all the teams to come back in first place? Take a bow GW!

In the June/July EMEWS we suddenly had NOC Inter Club Relays on Saturday July 13th. A short promotional article might have alerted people to what was going on. Pre-knowledge of the format is always useful, even necessary if you are to attract a large

number of competitors, yet there was none of this. In DVO's case this new date was the same day as the Derbyshire Youth Games to which DVO was already committed. A dozen or so of DVO's stalwarts were to introduce 150 youngsters to orienteering. As club captain I could have encouraged other club members to go along on the day and make up teams on the day but I had no details.

LOG Relays? No mention of them in EMEWS.

And before you say all the information was on the EM website let me say I am an old-fashioned sort of person who prefers to pick up a book/ magazine to read. I collect 'flyers' at events and pin them on the board in the kitchen, marking dates on the calendar for important events. I don't 'surf the web' nightly for nuggets of new information.

As for attending 2 events that weekend well, yes John, I did. And yes, I was in earshot at Bagworth when you finished. At the time I was making exactly the same point about illegible master maps to the planner. Nonetheless I enjoyed a good leg stretch around Bagworth Heath even if it will be better when it grows up. But my 1st event of the weekend was on Friday evening, part of DVO's summer series, not a "bog-standard colour coded event" but a Bike-O from Foremark Reservoir. Admittedly attendance there was low as well but those who came enjoyed it and the Scout Group attending their second event really enjoyed the football afterwards!

I agree with John that non-conventional events like Score, Relay, Norwegian, Bike-O etc. don't appeal to everyone but those who come to such events enjoy them. We should not stop putting them on due to the low turn out although I accept that the planner puts in as much work be it for 20, 100 or 500 competitors. We have to accept that whereas some of us are committed and dedicated to orienteering in all its guises others aren't.

So yes, stage the Inter-Club relays again next year. But choose a Sunday that doesn't clash with major events. Make the format simple and publicise it in good time in both EMEWS and widely distributed flyers.

Liz Godfree, DVO retiring Club-Captain

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