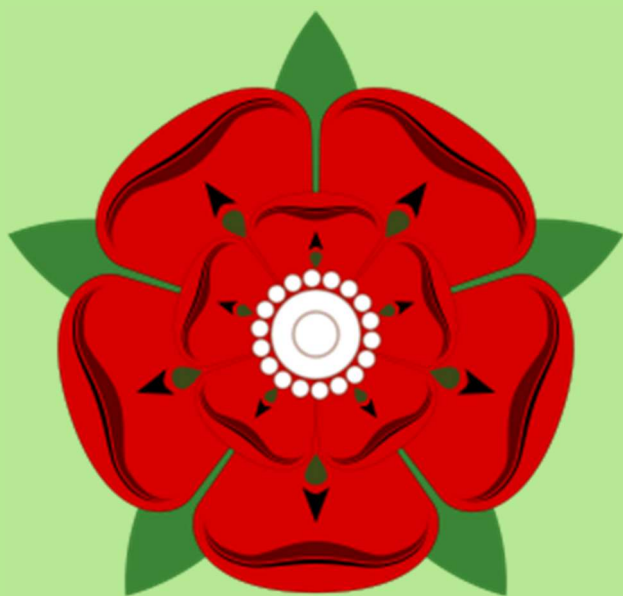


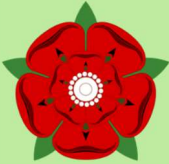


J.Preston ,Loch Morlich



Red Rose Orienteers  
**SROC Newsletter**

September 2021



A little collage of O-stamp images. Red and blue is Bulgarian-World Champs Ski-O. J.Preston. Image parts from PostBeeld.com.

## Editorial



Hello and welcome to the autumn edition of the SROC newsletter, this time from Julia Preston. The club has taken the decision to have a roving guest editor, and I believe I must have volunteered 😊. Thanks to Heather Roome for the handy template. All contributions are most welcome- please forward to Martyn Roome at [development@sroc.org](mailto:development@sroc.org) and he will pass on to the editor for the next edition.

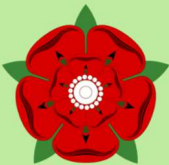
## Recent Events Round Up

### The Odds of a Great Picnic

**By Dawn Lock**

What a great picnic we had on Sunday 18th July 2021. On a stiflingly hot day, one step inside Hynings Scout Wood was to enter a different world: shady, full of interestingly-shaped lumpy rounded rocks covered in thick green moss and a delicious temperature. I've been there before but I didn't recognize it as the same place - it was altogether lovelier.

The twenty plus SROC members were well spread out in a forest clearing reducing Coronavirus threats by eating their own picnics and sitting on their own chairs. In the group were many diehards whose association with orienteering, like ours, stretches back decades. And talking with them again after the few opportunities presented in 2020's lockdown, was a great pleasure. I even reminded Jon Carberry that he organized the very first SROC picnic in the 80s when he cooked everyone burgers in a blackened halved oil drum.



Almost all small social orienteering 'dos' rely on score events to deliver easier course-setting, simultaneous runs and close finishes. Odds and Evens Scores are the preferred method of adding complications which, nevertheless, failed to slow highest scorer M60 Alex Finch who collected all controls and 300 points. I got a bit stuck on my first control - a "distinct tree" in a wood of thousands. Is there something of a "looking for a needle in a haystack" about this?

I can't remember when I last ran a score event that wasn't odds and evens although Julian Lailey introduced a subtle twist to the June 2019 picnic at Eggerslack Woods by demanding that every one visit a pointless 'magic' control #121 before making the odds-evens change.

A chance encounter at a funeral with Andrew White, an enthusiastic Midlands orienteer of long standing, introduced me to two interesting (devilish?) alternatives. Somewhat similar to odds and evens, is the front and back score. Maps are printed with different sets of controls on either side and also limited to a single transition which, I suspect, is much more demanding on memory.

Andrew's second suggestion was a hybrid between score and cross-country. The controls were labelled from 1 to ..... (whatever the highest number was) and had to be tackled in order with (1) and the highest number obligatory. In between an estimate had to be made of your own capacity to cover the controls and the best place(es) to jump.

My sincere thanks to organizers, planners and helpers: it was a great afternoon. I hope SROC will continue with the Picnic tradition in a long unbroken line dating back to Jon's original.

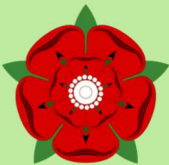
**Thanks Dawn! A great reminder that it's not just the 'big events' that can make for good orienteering. HOC Andrew's second suggestion sounds quite similar to a recent PFO evening event at Sunnyhurst Woods, it definitely made you use your brain and helped with using a smaller area.**

## The Scottish 6-Days

Several club members made it up to Lochaber for the Scottish 6-Days. The event was eventually put on in a modified format of 2x3 day events due to concerns/sensitivity around the viability of a large event in such a short time after Covid restrictions had been partially relaxed. The clubs were split into blocks, so SROC competed on Days 1,2 and 5. At a very late stage, the day 4 area was withdrawn, however the day 5 landowner kindly allowed both days 4 and 5 to go ahead in the same area, which meant that essentially the same competition ran twice, with different sets of competitors. I can't imagine how stressful everything must have been for the event team, but everyone seemed to have a great time.

In brief: Day 1 was an open area at Archattan. The starts were on a precipitous slope, nearly resulting in a speedy tumble from an aptly-named SROC competitor! It was warm and sunny with amazing views and an abundance of brown butterflies (apparently Argus, a Scottish native). The terrain was pretty physical and I ended up semi-retiring due to repeated falls on an ankle that I should have strapped, however I did at least just walk around the rest of the course admiring the views.

Day 2 was a middle-distance race near Fort William on the lower slopes of the golf course, then ascending into a more tricky, marshy wood.



Day 5 was at a newly mapped area Creag Dhubh just outside Newtonmore. The weather did turn on this day and I was wet through by the first control, but it brightened up later. I enjoyed this area- it was classic forest orienteering with some impressive boulders. My start to first control had 170m of the 240m course climb, however after that we mainly dropped down into the woods and contoured.

Some excellent short video clips have been produced of the recent 6-days, including some drone filming, so you can really see the terrain in full! SROC members are to be spotted especially in the Day 1 video. They are on the BOF website here:

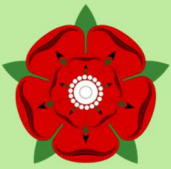
[https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/index.php?pg=news\\_archive&item=5707](https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/index.php?pg=news_archive&item=5707)

**Alex Matthew comments on the 6-days...we also look forwards to hearing more about Alex's recent selection training camp in late August- technically Stockholm but this year in Scotland.**

Group A Day One took orienteers across the Ardchattan moorland which was very runnable as the heather wasn't unreasonably high and all bogs seemed to be very dry at the time. My course started up on the moorland, did two laps of the hillside then headed down through a few final fields to finish. I prefer this open fell terrain to woodland orienteering because I like the visibility and being able to keep my running speed constant meaning the whole run flows better and I get less distracted by navigating across the little piece of ground I am on so I can focus more on the general direction I need to be running in and the features I am looking out for.

Days Two and Three for Group A were full of this difficult, slow terrain. Day Two, at Inverlochy, started and finished on the Fort William Golf Course but, though very few of my controls were actually on the golf course, I should have used it more as the navigation and running speed would both have been much faster than trying to go straight line through the trees and undergrowth. I had a late start on Days Two and Three so the trods through the woods were sometimes helpful in especially Day Three (Creag Dhubh) which was full of overhead high bracken which covered some very rocky ground. These trods helped a lot getting through the bracken but often they didn't lead in the right direction, pulling me off my line. Although I felt I did less well each well from the difficulty, I enjoyed every day and the days between competition days as there was generally great weather all week.

**Last but not least, the Talented Todhunter Trio sent in their wonderful reports! My highlight would have also been seeing a puppy sausage dog. Also love Ben's forgiving description of 'lush forest' (!) at Inverlochy....and that Ellie notes that the controls at Creag Dhubh were in the exact place that the map took you. Sounds like you guys have got the hang of this orienteering thing 😊**



Scottish 6 Days  
Lochaber 2021

My favorite area was when we went mountain biking and me and daddy saw a really cute baby sausage dog, and we saw the gondalors go up Ben Nevis and coming down Ben Nevis.

My favorite event was when we went Creag Dhubb. Because it was the right level for me in hardness and it was very sheltered by all the trees except some parts.

The best part of my holiday was when we did medals and played board games together after we had our dinner.

I loved the Scottish 6 day because I like being outside a doing gun thing in the forest.

I didn't like the Scottish 6 days because we only did 3 days.

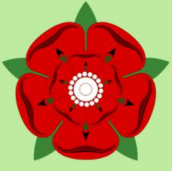
I will always have a memories of the Scottish 6 days because of the giant house we stayed in.

The rest days were really fun to because we went gillscrambling with some freinds.

Maisie Todhunter



'Strawberries and Cream', a relatively rare mushroom at Glenmore Forest. JP

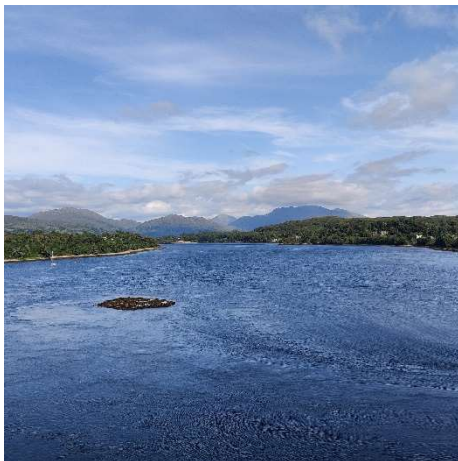


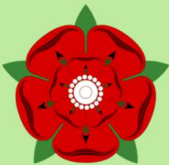
Ben Todhunter

My Scottish 6 Days experience was possibly one of the greatest orienteering trips ever. While staying in a large house with all my family, we all set off to go to our courses each day together.

My favourite area out of the three days might just be day two at Linnerloch. Set on a beautiful golf course surrounded by lush forest. What made it good was, it had all my favourite terrains all in one run! The other two days were enjoyable in their own way - with a hilly fell at day one and a marshy woodland with lots of overgrowth and high ferns on day 5.

Due to only having three events, we had a lot more the local area and do various activities. On the main rest day we met up with some of our friends and went Ghyll scrambling. On the others we went to the Nevis Range to go mountain biking and we did a large walk and stumbled upon 2 swings! I can't wait for Moray 2023!





## Scottish 6 days Lochaber 2021

My favourite area out of all 3 days was Creag Dhùbh because it was not too overgrown and in some parts it was open. The controls were in the exact place that the map took you and they weren't too hidden either.

My favourite run was definitely Inverlochy on day 2. It was really fast and the ground was flat which allowed you to sprint most of it. Also the navigation wasn't hard so you didn't have to look at the map alot.

⊙ The best part of my holiday was watching everyone sprint as fast as they could on the run-in.

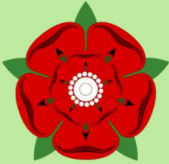
I love the Scottish 6 days because people from all over the world travel to Scotland to compete in it so it is a chance to meet new people that you wouldn't normally see. It is also great because you get to go orienteering 6 days in a row (or in this case, 3)!

It was a bit disappointing that we couldn't do all 6 days but I enjoyed the 3 that we did get to do. It was also a bit annoying that we weren't aloud to put up any tents by the finish.

I really liked the stall with refreshments on day 2 - Inverlochy. It was really nice to get a cold drink once you had been out on your run.

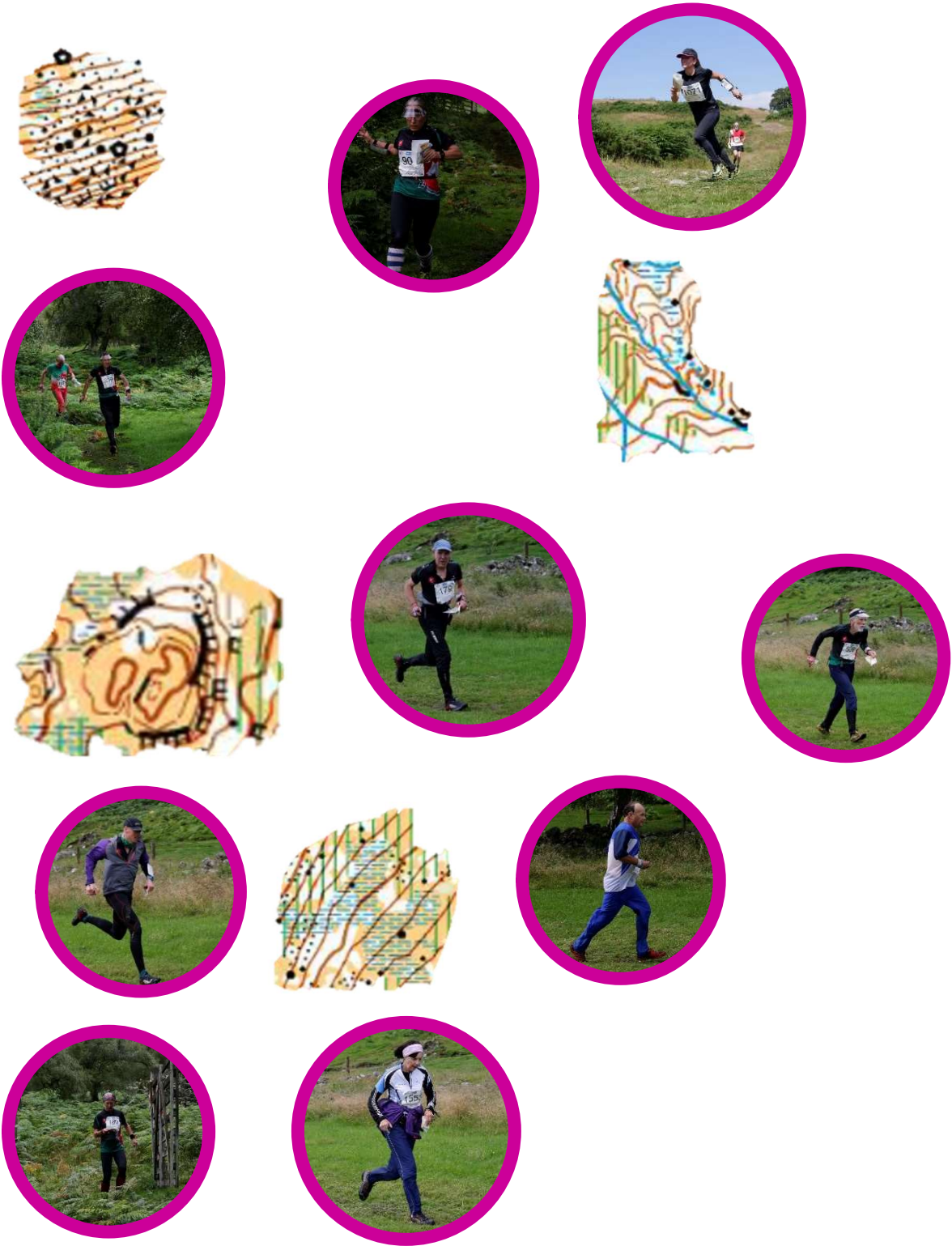
It was nice to have so many rest days because that meant that we could do other things than just orienteering. We got to explore around our house; we found a swing to play on, lots of walks and a river that we went ghyll scrambling up. We even went to a really nice beach on the last day.

Ellie Todhunter



A selection of sporty 'n' speedy (and sometimes soggy) SROCCers in Scotland

All original photo credits to Wendy Carlyle.







## The British Sprint Championships Weekend

by Karen Quickfall

Well ... it finally arrived. After months (years?) in the planning, thousands of emails and weeks of having my lounge and garden resemble the SROC equipment store, the British Sprint Championship weekend was about to happen!

Andrew had been asked to plan the Qualification races for the Individual Champs and I dutifully ignored it all until Race Day.

Saturday dawned dry but soon turned to showery and then heavier rain as we all assembled for the **Sprint Relay Championships**. On arrival at the grassy amphitheatre it was the most wonderful sight - CLUB TENTS and flags and people mingling! It seemed so long since this had been allowed to happen that it was easy to forget the past 18 months as we greeted our fellow orienteers and caught up on all the news.

Nerves began to kick in as the starts came closer and Cate Matthew was our first runner off in the Elite class - a great opportunity with no pressure (except that which Cate was putting on herself!). Tom Matthew ran second leg and then Alex Matthew the third leg, before Julia Preston brought the team home in a very creditable 6<sup>th</sup> place (out of 17 teams). An excellent result from SROC as 8 teams were disqualified in the Elite class!

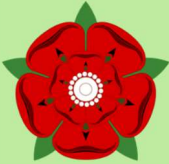
Our SuperVet 55+ team of Andrew Quickfall, Karen Quickfall and John Embrey also came in 6<sup>th</sup> position. And .. I didn't even slip back down the very steep slope at the end of the amphitheatre on the runout from the handover to the start control - a very real concern before I started! Our Vet 40+ team (Jo Matthew, Sarah Watkins and Jon Carberry) and our UltraVet 65+ team (Paul Ferguson, Miriam Rosen and Julian Lailey) both finished in 12<sup>th</sup> position in their respective classes. The highlight of the day for me, though, was being able to sit around and outside the club tent and chat to club members whom we hadn't seen for ages, cheering each other on and supporting each other. Positions didn't really matter!

Sunday morning found a larger collection of SROC members congregating at the Qualification Start for the **Individual Sprint Championships**, which we were helping to run. And then the rain started which made setting everything up a dismal affair. By the time the first runners were coming through it was brightening up and the day just got better and better.

The main aim of the Qualification Races is to sort everyone out into the 'A' Finals and the 'B' Finals (and sometimes a 'C' Final if there are large numbers entered in a particular class). Whilst some people had their eyes on medal positions, my aim was to get into the A Final, which is sometimes easier said than done! Any slight mistake in the Q race can lose you that coveted place. Seconds really do count!

The area used for the Q races was definitely technical enough to lose a few of those precious seconds - lots of blocks of houses and little 'cut throughs' which all looked identical, especially when running at speed. It's easy to lose count of how many corners you've gone round or canopies you've run under!





I felt I had a clean, smooth run and just had to wait until everyone was in to see if I was in the top half of my Q race - I'm not the fastest runner by a long way so was just hoping .In the end I did get into the A Final which meant a great deal to me - I wasn't even the slowest qualifier either so that was a bonus! Eight of the 16 SROC members present qualified for their respective A Finals and some only missed by a position or two.

The Finals area was also complex with a selection of underpasses to choose from to get to and from the different housing areas - the trick was not to lose concentration during this straight 'run' as it was all too easy to become complacent and then get lost.

In many classes the results were very close - I ended up in 14<sup>th</sup> place in W55A, but it was only 36 seconds up to 6<sup>th</sup> place - perhaps I should start training!

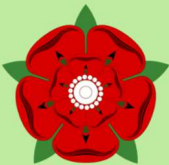
Our notable club successes were; **Finlay Johnson 2<sup>nd</sup> in M20A -Silver. Julia Preston 2<sup>nd</sup> in W35A – Silver. John Embrey 3<sup>rd</sup> in M60A - Bronze**

In the B Finals the best results were from Alex Matthew who was 1<sup>st</sup> in M18B, Deb Murrell 1<sup>st</sup> in W55B, Dave Hargreaves 2<sup>nd</sup> in M70B, Glenys Ferguson 2<sup>nd</sup> in W70B

In all, I felt it was a very successful and enjoyable British Sprint Championships Weekend and a welcome return to some 'normality' at orienteering events. And ... the sun shone for the prize giving! Unfortunately Finlay had to miss the prize giving as he was already on his way to Scotland for a training camp



SROC at the British Sprint Champs photo credits Wendy Carlyle/Karen Quickfall



## Talent Camp by Cate Matthew

The Talent Camp for M/W15s this year was held around the city of Stirling, and I was very excited to be invited to attend. I am also very grateful for SROC's contribution towards paying for the tour.

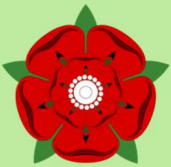
On the first day, we only had activities in the evening so that people had time to drive up and sort out their accommodation. It was really nice to be able to meet the other people on the tour that evening, some for the first time, others I already knew from events and the North West Squad. We did a very long warmup, going through the different stages for a thorough warmup, before engaging in a 3km time trial. It was very hot on the track, and tiring work, but I was happy with my time. In the evening, we had a Teams call on an ideal training plan over the whole year, and what intensities to run at during different times of year so that you reach your peak in competition season. This was very helpful to me, and assisted in making a training plan for the 2021-22 season.

The next day, we spent the day doing technical training at Auchingarrich (where day 1 was at the Scottish 6 Days 2019), and we did some compass bearing work in the morning, which was very effective for me because I recently got a new thumb compass, and after a sociable break for lunch we started on some corridor exercises around a slightly different part of the forest. I found the terrain much easier than last time I was there! We then went over some technical methods to use in terrains like Auchingarrich, such as aiming off the control, on that night's Teams call.

The second day involved two parts: in the morning, technical training at Dundurn (another site from the Scottish 6 in 2019), where we had to fight through some very demanding vegetation as well as distinguishing complex contour features. Everyone came away from that morning infested with ticks, which we picked off over lunch. In the afternoon we went to Macrosty Park in Crieff to have lunch and then engage in a sprint course around the park and the surrounding residential area. That was the hottest part of the day, and everyone was relieved to cool off in the shade of a large tree after the sprint while we did some refreshing sitting-down stretches.

The camp concluded on the fourth and final day with a mass-start, gaffled and dibber-recorded course at Polmaise. It was fun, but much of the area was covered in thick rhododendrons, and our route choice skills were tested on whether to take the long route round or fight through large areas of vegetation. After the course, we warmed down, and then gathered to compare routes and times, as well as generally chatting to each other. It was very exciting to meet these new people my age, and we all looked forward to seeing each other again at events across the country. One by one, people left, and we shared contact details and saw each other off.

***Congratulations Cate for getting selected for this tour, sounds like a lot was packed in and hope the technical training (minus ticks) was useful for you!***



## Fixtures

Keep an eye on the regular email from Martyn Roome, as well as the BOF Fixture List, regarding upcoming events. The CompassSport Cup event on 17<sup>th</sup> October should now be at Tankersley hosted by SYO. I have run on this area once and can guarantee you'll have an interesting experience 😊

## Club kit

SROC club kit can be ordered from Martyn Roome at [Development@sroc.org](mailto:Development@sroc.org). Tops are from £28 and come with a multitude of pocket, gender and arm length variations; Jackets are £33. Model not included.



## Links



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