

ISSUE 158

SLOWPRINT

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Anne Straube wins Trail-0 to become SLOW's first World Champion!



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Multi-day Madness

The O-Ringen was without a doubt a master stroke of organisation this year. The promise of chalet accommodation for "everyone" lured so many people to enter that they ended up oversubscribed by seven thousand! Fortunately they were giving priority to foreigners so none of the SLOW crowd ended up sleeping under a bush, or worse, in a tent. To add to the appeal, day four offered ski lifts to the start. Since the finish was below the bottom of the ski lift, it meant all the courses were virtually entirely down hill. Although the event was being held in the most northern location I've ever orienteered in, it was also one of the warmest. Starting off with brief threats of rain it gradually became warmer throughout the week and the final day was a scorcher. So hot in fact that I ended up retiring from dehydration. So with sun, chalets and ski-lifts it was an event worth reporting on. However, there was still a multi-day event to come that

was even more special. Areas at the French Six Day were so technical that only the locals stood a chance of getting round without a major mistake. Even World Champion GG found it tough. From his blog:



Owen Lindsell
SLOWprint Editor

"All the races were won in 59-66 minutes. I finished 2nd overall, but a massive 40 minutes down on TG."

Patrick gives a full report of the Six Days in Aveyron starting on page 19.

As you may have noticed from the front cover, SLOW now have their own World Champion. On behalf of all SLOW members, huge congratulations go out to Anne Straube, who beat the competition hands down, to become World Trail-O Champion. Anne has been kind enough to answer my request to write an article on her achievement. Anne's article can be found on page 13.

Enjoy the rest of the issue!
Owen

Front Cover: Anne Straube is held aloft by silver and bronze medalists at the trail-o medals ceremony.

If you wish to contribute to SLOWprint, please email any photos or articles to:

slowprint@sloweb.org.uk

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Pop-Up Tents

*Get one of these - they're great!
Review on page 23*



A Word from the Captain

The Compass Sport Cup Final was held at a windy Sutton Park, Birmingham, on Sunday October 19th. This is the most important club competition in the British calendar with teams qualifying from all over the country. South London had a great result to finish 3rd overall, our highest placing since 2000. The terrain varied from fast heath land to light green forest, but the trickiest parts were the intricate but well-mapped areas of gorse.

There were some fantastic results (www.cix.co.uk/~neper/csc08), especially by those scoring 90 points or more – that's what we need to average to win the competition! We were especially strong on Blue Men, and it was great to have seven juniors in the counters. It was a real team effort, so well done to all who were able to run.

Pete Huzan



Pete in training for the OMM

Don't Miss the AGM!

You are invited to the SLOW AGM in only a few days time!
There are any number of reasons you may wish to come along:

- just for a pizza and a beer,
- to have your input about some major issue of policy
- or, to try to prevent the re-election of the current chairman!

Whatever your reasons, you can look forward to an enjoyable and sociable evening with your fellow orienteers:

Tuesday 25th November
Upstairs function room, Pizza Express
144 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, SW15 2SW

Please arrive 7.00 to 7.45 if you want to eat.
Meeting will start at 8.30.

Thanks, Don

News

London City Race

City Race Success

After over a year from event conception, it was thrilling to see the early starters set off into the city in the Saturday morning sunshine, and it was even better to hear the many positive comments on their return.

My first ever visit to the Barbican made me want to stage some sort of race there, but I wondered whether it would be possible for it to be suitably mapped. My first view of the map many months ago showed that Ollie had indeed managed to map it, and the rest of the City, in considerable detail, and confirmed that

this race was going to be particularly special.

Huge credit must go to the fantastic work of Ollie, not just in producing a superb map (with seemingly endless iterations) and excellent planning, but also for a large amount of organising which made the role much easier for both Vince Roper and myself. Ollie and I both had a fairly clear vision of how we would like to see the event turn out, and I can certainly say that my expectations were met, if not exceeded.

The number of competitors, and their appearance from around Europe, was particularly pleasing (as were the



News

London City Race

comments received). I hope that the event can one day be as much a fixture on the international orienteering calendar as Venice is.

Further thanks must go to the large number of SLOW members who turned out to help. Having already hosted two large events in the space of a few weeks, there was slight concern that we were asking a lot for them to offer yet more of their time to the club, but the response was fantastic and they all contributed greatly to the event's success.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone return for a similar race in 2009, hopefully this time as a fellow competitor!

Brooner

SLOW would also like to say a special thankyou to Graham Gristwood for coming along to present the prizes and producing an excellent video of the event: <http://grahamgristwood.blogspot.com/2008/10/london-city-race.html>

The SLOW Committee



Anita Ray(left) and Kate Mckerrow analysing the map after their runs

News

Welcome Isaac, Trail Challenge

Welcome Charlie, Cassie and Isaac



Charlie Whetham and his wife Cassie returned in April from 2 years in Bangkok, where Charlie was working in the Embassy, and Cassie teaching in an International School.

Their first son, Isaac John, was born in Guildford, at 3am on 28th May, weighing 8lbs 6oz.



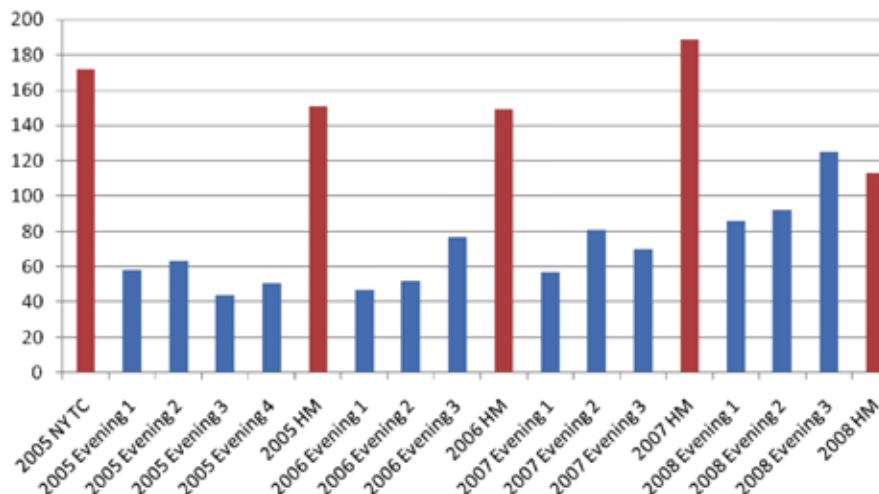
Issac honing his map reading skills

Trail Challenge Big Ideas Wanted!

The first Trail Challenge was in Wimbledon in June 2002 and was part of a BOF campaign week to get people orienteering. The next was combined with the Holmwood colour coded event in March 2003 and, if you remember, we all rushed off to do the colour coded event instead! Under Andy Robinson's leadership we have had many successes

News

Trail Challenge: Big Ideas



since 2002 but the challenge for us now is how to take this race format to the next level and really increase the number of runners who take part.

This summer evening series had the largest number of runners ever but sadly we also had the lowest number of runners for a half-marathon day. (See graph above for the total number of runners who took part in a race during on each Trail Challenge day since 2005). The race format has stayed very consistent since the start of Trail Challenges with the races designed to be fast and exciting for the experienced orienteer but also easy and relaxed for the non-

orienteering runner.

The innovations have only really been limited to having on-line entries, an email database of previous runners, on-line marketing and most recently our very own professional photographer!

We have been successful but I would really like to break-through the current glass ceiling of around 150 runners for a Sunday and around 80 runners for an evening. I would also like to convert more runners to orienteering proper.... If anyone has any big ideas – please let me know!

News

OK Nuts

Mark Vyvyan-Robinson

OK Nuts, Planner's Report

What a horrible wet day! Thanks to everyone for coming and braving the weather - I hope you all had an enjoyable run despite the conditions. We had 288 competitors starting (after 301 pre-entries), so the drop out rate wasn't as high as it might have been, although there were very few entries on the day. It was great to be able to offer an area brand new to orienteering - a very rare occurrence these days in the south-east!

We have Charlie Turner to thank for 'discovering' the area some years ago and for persevering over an extended period to try and track down the various landowners, which didn't prove to be an easy task. Such a small area was never going to be able to host a regular regional or district event, but we thought the quality was such that a good standard race could be held here, so the idea of running the inaugural South East middle distance championships was born. We hope you enjoyed doing something a little different from the 'bog standard' regional event.

As you will have noted from the final details, the courses were carefully planned to minimise the number of

stream crossings and offer reasonable crossing point opportunities where possible – partly because of the sensitivity of the stream to environmental concerns, and partly because in the event of bad weather we realised that the stream could prove quite difficult to cross in places – as many of you will have found out! This clearly proved to be the correct decision given how conditions turned out on the day, so thanks to Keith Tonkin, the controller, for insisting on this (my original draft courses had quite a few more stream crossings involved). The stream doubled in size in places during the day between me putting out controls



Event planner Paul Nixon

News

and collecting them in afterwards, and there were certainly plenty of very wet and muddy people arriving at the finish!

All courses finished with a fairly boring last leg north along the path to the last control – this was the only option available to avoid going into the light green triangular block south-west of the start (which was definitely best avoided), whilst allowing for a start close to assembly and keeping the run-

in in the finish field, which I think is always the best option to create a bit of atmosphere – although spectators were in short supply given the weather!

I hope that everyone enjoyed the race despite the weather, and hopefully another club will take on the baton of hosting the SE middle distance championships next year.

Paul Nixon



**Craig Purchase, planner of the String course ;) (left)
with Peter Stratford and two small Stratfords**

Reports

World Trail-O Championships

If you love pushing through brambles and nettles, stomping through knee-deep mud and feeling the wind in your hair on speedy downhill, but think that carrying a map and visiting controls on your way is necessary to have a valid excuse for adults getting terribly dirty outdoors, then Trail-O is probably not a sport you like. But if you always liked puzzles, brain teasers, logic games and enjoy the navigational side of orienteering as much or even more than the running bit, then Trail-O is definitely something you should try from time to time.

Trail-O is the purely technical training session in-between that opens your eyes for just a bit more map detail, trains your visualization skills, requires all your concentration, challenges your decision making abilities and leaves you as a better orienteer.

If you are already a decent navigator, there's no need to try anything else than the best Trail-O you can get. You probably find this in Scandinavia or there's a good chance at the annual World Champs. Being held together with WOC, competing in WTOC makes a good combination of brain teasing yourself, having a run in



A typical Trail-O control site





**Patrick practices his one-handed handstands at the French 6 Day
See page 19 for a full report**

Reports

World Trail-0 Championships

really nice terrain at the public events to untangle your synapses and a good hunk of watching the orienteering highlight of the year live. This probably sums up why you find us repeatedly spending summer holidays at and around WTOC. And from now on there'll be another reason – a title to defend.

WTOC in the Czech Republic was as close as home ground could get for me. Having spent all my childhood multiday in Bohemia and Moravia, I am seriously in love with Czech maps and forests.

The settings for the two stages of Trail-0 competitions this year were a castle park with beautiful old trees and a golf course with all its softly undulating shapes. While the first area was providing plenty solid fix points along the way and around controls (trees), things got much more vague and blurry on the second day. Having somehow managed to get every single control correct on the first day (you don't want me to get into detail about the 90 minutes hard thinking involved), there was quite a bit of pressure on me on the second day.

Being the leader means starting last. So I was sitting 3 hours in the club house trying not to get too nervous.

It's usually the time controls that wait right after the start. And these are the

most frightening bit as they are so easy to miss in a hurry. Having 60 seconds maximum, a stop watch ticking and knowing that every second might be important in the end is not going to help in making a careful decision about 5 flags in a sand bunker. As a missed time control is so costly (you loose a point and get 60 seconds penalty) and I always managed to destroy a good result with a rushed time control at the WTOCs before, I had a different strategy this time. I would not make a decision until I was 100% sure I was right and had checked it once again and maybe again – no matter how long this was going to take.

60 seconds are surprisingly long if you concentrate on the task rather than spend your time panicking. So I spent about 30 seconds on average rather than 8 and got all six of them right this year. All other decisions involved a lot of running back and forth, balancing different answers obtained with different techniques to find the most reliable for the specific problem and always keep a watch on the time. Having about 5 minutes per control to spend you cannot afford many of these endless struggles with yourself about a tricky decision that can easily take 15 minutes or more at some controls. Coming home late gives penalty points and you don't have any to loose.

Reports

World Trail-O Championships

So returning after 2 hours and 10 minutes nerve wrecking on day 2 I had no idea how I did. I was struggling for a decision on so many controls with always

a chance of finally taking the wrong one; I could have easily lost my little cushion of 1 point and much more.

Being the last competitor to finish does shorten the time of uncertainty as the solutions are then released. So I found out soon that I missed two. So there could not have been too many taking me over. A quick check with the Finish guys made clear they haven't been better today either. Only the Swede Martin Fredholm, having quite an impressive record of one Gold, one Silver and two top 7 finishes at the 4 previous World champs plus making the Swedish team every time probably being the biggest achievement of all, could have snatched the victory.



Reports

World Trail-O Championships

It didn't take long and his result was posted with 36 points and 225 seconds. I knew I had 36 as well and started calculating my decision times. I had 85 seconds on day one and a very safe play today where I wasted a hell lot of time, but should not be much above 200 seconds. The speaker started musing

whether I knew more than him, but it did not take too long and I had the confirmation: 36 points and 200 seconds, the World Championship was mine!

Anne Straube



Anne Straube - Trail-O World Champion

Reports

French 6 Day

In the first week of August, a conglomerate of SLOW and JOK members made their way to Millau, in the South of France for the 6 Days of Aveyron carnival.

Camped out in a cluster of chalets just off the River Tarn and looking out over the Old Town of Millau and the famous viaduct, whether you were going for

a dip in the river to escape the baking heat, scoffing some local bread, cheese and wine, or kicking back on the veranda as the sun sets and flood lights illuminate the surrounding cliffs, you couldn't have asked for a better place to spend the week and chill out after six gruelling orienteering races.

Speaking of which, the area chosen for



The SLOW crowd enjoying the excellent weather

Reports

French 6 Day

this year's six day event was based on the Larzac plateau. This region is all about limestone and is renowned for brain bendingly complex terrain, made up of epic rock features, subtle negative counters, constant changes in vegetation and only a few linear features to give you a break from the constant mental gymnastics.

But the terrain was not the only challenge. Being early August and in the South of France meant the temperatures were peaking in the low thirties some days, combining that with the lack of extensive tree cover in the terrain (the maps were predominately yellow) made for some hard going. Unfortunately for our group, on the second day we scored the last start which also turned out to be

the most physical and most exposed day. Rehydrating and making the most of the drink stations was of vital importance.

What soon became apparent after the first few days was that good runs were hard to come by in the unrelenting and unforgiving terrain. Losing concentration for even a minute, or going by the standard, 'I'll just run in the general direction and work it out in the circle', (which often works so well in the South of England) would be punished not by seconds, but by minutes and often tens or twenties of minutes. This also made post-mortems great fun, as leads of half an hour or more could be wiped out on one leg.

To give an idea of the complexity of the



Phil Marsland

Reports

French 6 Day



The girls geek out over Route Gadget

area, apart from Day 1 having a scale of 1:10,000, Days 2 to 4 (which shared the same assembly area) were mapped at 1:7,500 and the final two days were at 1:5,000. There was some discussion back at the chalets as to whether the area was over mapped and if the scale was appropriate for classic length courses, but there was no denying that they were a work of art, with every feature and vegetation change being meticulously depicted. It also allowed the organisers to make good use of the unique features, with controls beneath rock arches or in the many caves that were scratched into

the crazy cliffscapes.

This author's personal favourite day was Day 3. The Western half of the map contained sections of what seemed like a rock village, with grids of limestone monoliths (complete with contour detail) or long strips of bare rock jutting out of the group with crazy people clambering all over them in search of the most efficient route. This is the kind of terrain that keeps me going in this sport.

There weren't a lot of impressive results in the JOK/SLOW camp at the end of

Reports

French 6 Day

the six days, with the big blunders taking their toll on most of our times. In order to be part of the chasing start on the final day your cumulative time needed to be within one hour of the winner. Of our camp only Di Leakey, running D50 was able to manage this illustrious honour scraping within the hour of the course leader by 43 seconds. It should also be noted that although not travelling with this group of JOkers, SLOW's Ralph Street showed the continental lads how

it's done, impressively finishing 2nd overall in H18.

And the next day, bruised, bloodied and sunburnt, we left. I'm sure given the chance we'd all head back to try and tame the Larzac Beast again – just maybe if they could turn the furnace down next time!

Patrick Saile



Oliver O'Brien canoeing on the rest day

Reviews

Pop-Up Tents

Perhaps I was a bit optimistic when I issued a call for owners' comments on their pop-up tents. Apparently not that many people own them. Fortunately I got just enough replies to put together an article. Special thanks go to Andy Jones whose creativity and literary acumen enabled him to write an article even though he doesn't own a pop-up tent. To fill the remaining space I reserved for this article I will start with my own review and a nice big picture!

Owen



Tent: Blacks Magic 2XT
Owner: Owen Lindsell
Price: £59.99

Reviews

Pop-Up Tents

Black's Magic 2XT

I bought my tent after it was recommended by a colleague at work. The Magic 2XT is a two skin, two man tent and it assembles in approximately two seconds. Literally you just take it out of the bag, throw it in the air and hey-presto you have a tent. After that it's a good idea to peg it to the ground and if you want a touch more head room you can insert two poles which make a small dome on top. Packing it away is almost as quick once you've got the knack of it. Once it is unpegged you grab the two ends of the tent, fold into a flat circle and slip it into a bag. The circle has a diameter that is half the width of the tent. However, getting the knack of this folding process can be a bit tricky. The first time, with the help of a colleague, it took about 5 minutes. The second time it took about 45 seconds. The couple of times since then it took about 30 seconds, but I'm sure if you practised it you could do it in under 10.

I got the chance to give it a proper test for weather-proofness (yes that's real word!) at the White Rose. It held up very well in the heavy rain and seemed easily as stable as my previous two man Euro Hike tent. It's definitely not the kind of

tent you could take on a mountaineering expedition, but for two or three day orienteering events it's ideal.

Owen



The Magic 2XT folded up in the bag is 80cm in diameter and is approximately 5cm thick.

Other Members' Tents

Hi there!

I borrowed a 2 man pop up tent from a friend to go to the Isle of Wight Festival this year. This was obviously very helpful when arriving at the campsite after midnight and wanting to get some sleep, as it was up in literally seconds.

There were a couple of problems, though. Firstly it was not really big enough to fit my double blow up mattress, mainly due

Reviews

Pop-Up Tents

to the sloping front and back design and therefore, being 6' 1", I was reduced to sleeping across the tent diagonally. This was then a problem when I had to share the tent with a friend on the second night, especially as we both had 65 litre rucksacks as well.

The other potential problem is getting the tent back in the bag once you have put it down, I would recommend practising this at home first, as it can

be tricky, despite the easy to understand instructions sewn onto the bag.

*I hope that helps,
Phil Ball*

Other Member's Comments

Haven't got a pop-up tent, but we do have 'pop-up pirate', an excellent family game in which players take turns to extract cutlasses from the outside of a large barrel. Eventually someone pulls out the cutlass that makes the pirate pop out of the barrel - that person is THE LOSER. Its one of those games that you win by consistently not being THE LOSER.

P.S. The cutlasses are made of plastic, to reduce (but not eliminate) the chance of injury.

*Best wishes
Andy Jones*



Pop-Up Pirate Now Available with a Built-in USB Hub!
Available from www.firebox.com, price £29.95

Events to Try

European Forestry Relay Champs



Ginny enjoying herself on run-in

Whenever we can, Richard and I go orienteering with our Czech friend Pavla Fialova, whom we met when she was au pairing here in Surrey a few years ago. So at the end of June Richard and I went to Regensburg, in Bavaria, to join Pavla and the Czech team in the European Forestry Orienteering Association Relay Championships.



The terrain, assembly area and facilities and weather were all wonderful. As an extra bonus I ended up in a podium position (2nd in the 'Open short' class), which was rather surreal, as I am neither Czech nor a forester (and not really an orienteer!). Details at www.efol.de

Ginny Catmur

Hot Picks!

Hot Picks are recommended events for SLOW members to attend. SLOW can offer transport to events from south west London. To arrange transport, contact Teresa Turner (membership@sloweb.org.uk). For the Sunday events we suggest start times from 11.00-12.00. We intend to meet afterwards for a drink and Sunday lunch at a nearby pub - these are listed below if known. Otherwise, see us at the event to find out where we're going.

CD = Closing Date.

EOD = Entry On the Day.

For events with a CD, it is sometimes possible to get a late entry or EOD – check the organising club's web site.

Street Orienteering – 2nd Tuesday of each month

SLOW is putting on a Street-O event once a month between September and April. Each evening consists of a night street orienteering event, as well as a social event to meet up with club members. Next Events: 9th Dec – Putney, 13th Jan – Wimbledon, 10th Feb – Kingston, 10th Mar – Surbiton. Details: www.sloweb.org.uk

Tue 25th November - SLOW AGM - Everyone Welcome!

Just for a pizza and a beer or to have your input about some major issue of policy. Please arrive 7.00 to 7.45 if you want to eat. Meeting will start at 8.30. Pizza Express, 144 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, SW15 2SW

Sun 30th November - Broadstone Warren Regional Event near Forest Row

Terrain: 50% runnable forest, 50% heath land and woods. Age class courses and limited EOD colour coded. CD: 16/11/08 and 29/11/08. Après-O Pub: The Roebuck, Wych Cross. Details: www.southdowns-orienteers.org.uk

Sun 28th December - Long Valley North Regional Event near Aldershot

No Details Yet. Website: www.southernnavigators.com

Sat 17th January - SLOW South East Night League Event – Putney Heath

Part of the South East Night League Series with three courses: Ochre, Olive and Navy. All courses are Entry on the day. Series Website: www.senile.org.uk Event Details: www.sloweb.org.uk Après-O pub: The Telegraph Inn, Putney Heath.

Sun 22nd February - Burnham Beeches National Event and Southern Champs

Undulating mature beech wood in south, runnable deciduous and coniferous mix in north. Details: www.happyherts.org.uk Après-O: The Crown Inn, Crown Lane

Simon Evans (Social Secretary)

Who's New?



**CLUB
MARK**