



# SLOWprint

## Winter 2009/2010

Issue 160



## Have a wonderful O-filled Christmas & New Year & all the best for 2010!

**Congratulations** to SLOW's **Anne Straube**, who won W21 (Women's Open) at the **Southern Night Championships** on Saturday evening, then on Sunday won the Open class at the **British Trail Orienteering Championships** in Warrington.

A big well done also to **Mattias Mahr**, for some much-acclaimed planning in this year's Venice city race—comments on sports website attackpoint.org include:

"he did a great job, creating a bizarre combination of sprint-like map reading, middle-like concentration and technical, and long-like endurance and route choice. Absolutely amazing combination!"

"Wow, he should do it every year"

"Congratulations and very big applause to Mattias Mahr"

Congrats also to our World Masters Sprint Bronze medallist **Ursula Oxburgh**!



### Next SLOW events:

**Tuesday 12th January - Street-O, Kingston**

**Saturday 23rd January - Box Hill Fell Race, Box Hill**

**Tuesday 9th February - Street-O, Hammersmith**



**Saturday 23rd February - South-East Night Championships, Glovers Wood**



### words from the chairman...

I don't know exactly when this SLOWprint will hit your mats, or screens, but may I wish you the season's greetings and best wishes for 2010. I have no doubt that the coming year will see many of you win medals, beat rivals, and attain other goals as orienteers. Is there any way that we as SLOW can help you to get even more out of orienteering? Are there other types of events you would like to see; should we be organising more training; or, would you like to see more foreign club trips? Do you think our events are spoiled by the lack of some piece of equipment we should buy? Is there anything at all we can do to help you enjoy your orienteering more. If so, please let me, or anyone on the committee, know. I don't promise to make you world champion; I don't even promise that we will do what you ask; what I do promise is that I will listen and that we will do our best to make SLOW what our members want it to be.

Don McKerrow

SLOW Chairman



### and something from your editor...

2009 has, for me, been a year of many different orienteering experiences, particularly since I moved to Stockholm in January. Highlights have included my first Tio-Mila (Swedish 10-person relay), playing paparazzo and witnessing the UK bring home medals from WMOC in rainy Australia, cross-country skiing and the Stockholm City Cup (which featured rather a lot of forest). I have also enjoyed the multitude of unnamed, uncategorised orienteering competitions in and around Stockholm—just turn up with a small amount of cash, register your SI card, select course A, B or C and off you go! Of course, with the larger number of orienteers and the ease of land access, it is likely to be less of an administrative burden for organisers in Sweden, but I have to admit it is refreshing to go to an event, unconcerned with whether it is "regional", "colour-coded", "L2" or some other mildly confusing category. However, whilst entry may be simple, I have enjoyed the challenge of technical forest on my doorstep.



Given the expanse of water between London and my current home, I will need plenty of SLOW news updates from the more local club members! If there's anything you feel should have been in this edition—email [slowprint@sloweb.org.uk](mailto:slowprint@sloweb.org.uk) next time to get it in print!

I hope you enjoy the issue and have a fun-filled 2010.

Sarah-Jane

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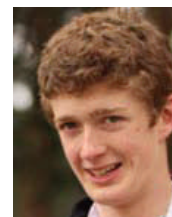
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## Garage Music by Chris Fry

*This article was written for the proposed 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of SLOWprint in 2001 - an edition that has never actually appeared. I've left it as it was rather than bringing it up to date, although obviously there have been a few more turns of the wheel since then, but I've added a couple of footnotes.*

Standing in the garage of 35 Burdenshott Avenue and looking around, you get a fair sense of the history of the club, which possibly tells you more about my inability to throw anything away than about anything else. Tucked up in the rafters above the door there is still a collection of aluminium T-stakes which must date back to the late seventies when they were made (possibly by Trevor Jones) as a solution to the problem of setting out controls: with the punches bolted to the stakes there were no cords to entangle. These were eventually rejected as being too heavy to carry around - also they tended to buckle when driven into hard ground with too much force. After a period of tying punches to bamboo canes and putting up with the tangles someone had the bright idea of fixing lengths of flexible plastic tubing to the tops of canes and tying the punches to the end of the tube - this was achieved with very little loose cord thus minimising the tangles. Pete and Kathy Haynes kindly did the fixing for us as a quid pro quo for the loan of the canes for a British Relay Champs in East Anglia in 1992. These "danglies" (or "Triffids" or "Hi-Ho"s depending on which film you favoured) lasted through until 2000 or so when they were overtaken by the march of technology in the form of electronic punching. Guess what shares the rafter space in my garage with the old aluminium stakes? You've got it! New aluminium stakes for the SI units; and now we are busy bolting old-style punches to them<sup>1</sup>. Is this the lesson of History?

Nearby a mailbag leans up against the wall - this contains a backbreaking load of String Course Control Boards: large panels with punches attached and bearing a variety of ingeniously designed pictures. Many clubmates have contributed to the contents of this bag but none more notably than Richard and Oliver Weston.

On the ancient grey shelving that I inherited from Andy Stevens all those years ago are boxes containing dozens of staplers, hundreds of raffle tickets and thousands of staples. Newcomers to the sport may not be aware that the Finish used to be manned by a tightly disciplined team of experts - one to press the stopwatch button, one or two to keep finishers in order in the funnel, at least two to staple raffle tickets onto the control cards (remember control cards? I still have hundreds of them!)- and all these backed up by a tentful of people keying numbers into a computer, writing and handing out DIY results slips, matching control cards to stubs, trying to

identify the scanty traces left by hurried punching. Does anyone long for a return to the old days?

Over the years we have spent quite a lot of SLOW's money on clocks of various sorts - quite early in my term of office we bought a Seiko stopwatch with a thermal printer attached - at the time this was considered a great leap forward, although changing paper rolls in the middle of an event could be a nightmare even in fine weather. Much later this was replaced by a very superior Tag Heuer watch which not only printed times but also allowed you to download its memory into a computer - useful at a time when computer-aided results were becoming the norm - it also allowed you to turn off the printer temporarily while you changed the roll! At much the same time we splashed out on two clocks for the Start - a beep-clock and a flip-



over call-up clock. These were a significant enhancement but not easy to set up, unless you could read Swedish in which case you could understand the instructions. Also stacked on the grey shelves (along with a constantly growing variety of signs) is a pile of hard-board map-boards - will these eventually be overtaken by technology when we just take a printer to the event and print off over-printed maps on demand<sup>2</sup>?

Leaning in a nearby corner is a bag of white plastic poles with sharp metal tips - the tread-ins (originally designed for agricultural purposes) that have replaced bamboo poles in the construction of finish funnels and takeover lanes, thanks to Kay Denny's inspiration. A nearby pile of mysteriously labelled poles will, when sufficient intelligence is applied (along with some nuts and bolts), form itself into a triangular "scaffold" for the display of results - this and many other ingenious structures emanated from the workshops of the inventive Mike Murray<sup>3</sup>.

Taking up more than their fair share of shelf space are four beer fermentation vats. Before anyone gets too excited I should point out that these are used for serving nothing stronger than orange squash. These appeared in 1993 replacing some elderly jerricans which were easy to carry but quite impossible to clean and dry.

Tents have always occupied a good deal of space, as well as much discussion time in committee. When I took over the equipment in the early eighties SLOW had recently bought a Club Tent, the standard Regnly shelter that all clubs seemed to



have. Ours was dark green. As the club grew and developed it became obvious that we needed a second tent - one to change and shelter in and one to park all the push-chairs and buggies in. Soon a bright yellow tent took its place beside the green one. Not long after that the long-running discussion about having a club banner came to fruition: Di Leakey provided the banner itself, I manufactured a collapsible frame and Richard Catmur came up with a suitably guyed pole. No more problems about finding the SLOW encampment at a busy event<sup>4</sup>. The year 2002, however, has been a tough one for SLOW tents - first the CompassSport Cup local round found the yellow tent pitched in an exposed spot where the wind gradually tore it apart as we hung on to it despairingly. SLOW decided that a new one must be bought soon and the new tunnel-type tents were discussed. In the end, however, it was a slight administrative problem (the equipment officer forgetting to pack any tent-pegs for the JK weekend) that precipitated the purchase of the blue tunnel tent that has graced events since April. Sadly, this tent has also suffered wind-damage; we hope that it will soon be replaced under warranty but we are, in effect, back to where we started just for the moment with just the original green tent<sup>5</sup>. They don't make 'em like they used to.

Finally, in the furthest corner of the garage where they have languished untouched an unloved for many years, are four Elsan loos along with their strange tall thin tents and a nearby roll of hessian - these relics could be said to have suffered a portaloo sunset, but I don't suppose anybody misses them.

Chris Fry - 2001

### *Footnotes - 2009*

<sup>1</sup> *In the last few weeks we have moved on to the next generation of SI equipment - little red boxes on carbon-fibre canes, which made their debut at the OK Nuts at Bramshott. The old T-stakes have gone.*

<sup>2</sup> *The map boards have finally gone. We don't yet print maps on demand on site, but we can order maps on waterproof paper with only a few days notice, which is nearly as good. We also have a few thousand polythene map bags which I bought just before pretext became the norm.*

<sup>3</sup> *Later replaced by a bigger and better (and much simpler) MM design.*

<sup>4</sup> *Feather flags replaced this type of banner some years ago.*

<sup>5</sup> *The warranty replacement lasted little more than a year before falling apart. It was replaced by the current blue tunnel tent which seems much more rugged.*

## Orienteering in Carcassonne by Ollie O'Brien

*Unashamedly thieved from the wonderful blog of our webmonkey, Ollie O'Brien (<http://blog.oobrien.com/>) here are a few excerpts about the trip he made with Jayne Sales to the Carcassonne orienteering event in Oct/Nov 2009 (<http://www.sportnat.com/alarico/>). I want to go...*

I wouldn't normally fly several hundred miles just to go to an orienteering event - but then, an orienteering event in the Cité de Carcassonne in southern France was never going to be just another orienteering event.



Actually there were three events in the one weekend, a middle race on the Saturday afternoon, the Carcassonne sprint in the evening, and a long race on the Sunday morning, which made it an even better reason to travel down.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the weekend was that I enjoyed the other two events as much as the "headline" sprint in Carcassonne - indeed, I thought the middle race, held near Montlaur,

around 20km away, was on some of the most amazing terrain I have ever run on in fourteen years of competing. It is difficult to describe - imagine tinder-dry bare earth ridges and gullies - stable enough to run on, but often too steep to run off the edge of. The steepest edges, typically those steeper than 45 degrees, were marked with "impassable cliff" lines on the map. There were two pockets of this intense terrain separated by a run through some of the very many vineyards in the area. The bottoms of the gullies tended to be guarded by very prickly bushes, so staying high was the less painful, if more technical, option. *(Ed: in fact, the organisers were as thrilled as Ollie with this area, saying "the terrain is very hilly with some very steep slopes and detailed contour features. We were smitten by this unusual terrain and its lunar landscapes, we're sure you'll enjoy them.")* I was pleased with my time of

just over an hour for the 3.8km course - getting up any speed was difficult in the intensely technical and physical terrain. Orienteering doesn't really get any technical - or enjoyable - than this. Multiple world-champion and local boy Thierry was also running my course - and finished in exactly half my time - amazing!



Then in the evening, it was time for the sprint race through the medieval cobbled streets of old Carcassonne. The walled city is quite small but is on a steep hill and has two complete sets of walls, with various doorways, passages and other intricate map detail.

The race itself was short and intense, with 17 controls and 190m of climb in the 2.7km course. The route led in and out of the city several times, including a steep climb up a grassbank, and running through the (dry!) moat to the finish line. The walls are floodlit at night, but there were plenty of dark passages and alleyways where headtorches were needed.

Finally, on Sunday, was the long race, back in Montlaur. The distance was less than 10km (with 400m of climb), but I was bracing myself for an epic, and so it proved to be. I made it back in 110 minutes, having spent 15 minutes on the wrong hillside about half-way around the course - one of those awful mis-

takes compounded by various features apparently fitting to the map. Although the landscape was largely open, it was full of vineyards, a blaze of yellows and reds, but tricky (and painful) to get around. There were some pockets of extreme complexity on the map, and also some epic legs - No. 2 to 3 was 2.2km across the valley and up a hill. Still, a rewarding challenge & a top quality orienteering weekend.



Jayne punching in the middle race

## Reasons to train by Andy Jones

So there I was on Thursday morning, walking through Manchester heading for Piccadilly Station, when my mobile rang. Robbo.

"Hello Jones, Robbo here." That's how we communicate, much more explicit than "Hello Andy, Andy here."

"Did you get my text last night?"

I did. I was at my employer's annual awards ceremony (not to receive an award, by the way). I enjoyed showing it to several colleagues at the do. "Look at this text I've just received from a fruitcake running mate." Through the dimmed celebratory lighting you could just make out *do u want 2 do KIMM this w/e med score*. Advice ranged from "Not unless you know where it is and what the weather forecast is" to "have another glass of wine old chap." I pictured Robbo being blown kite-like across the gale-battered Lake District and opted for the rioja.

"Ignore it. I've found a bloke up north who can do it. I think I've seen his name before in the results. I'm a bit crocked anyway. Next year perhaps." Phew, that was a close call. I've got 11 months to train before the 2010 text.

So there I was on Sunday morning, setting out from Frensham Little Pond on my first KIMM training run. The plan was a long run on paths and tracks to Guildford. Karen and the boys took the map for their walk to the Devils Jumps, so I had the extra excitement of 'following my nose.' If I got lost, it would just turn into a longer run.

What a glorious morning it was, fresh and sunny with a SW breeze coaxing the autumn leaves from the trees. Running isn't as easy as it used to be, what with an aching hip, broken toe, dodgy calf, receding hairline etc, but even so I was soon getting into it. The path followed the right bank of the River Wey with shafts of sunlight sparkling on the water. Out across the green at Tilford, over the bridge, up the hill and onto a footpath I've never run along before.

Twenty minutes in and I'm going well. The path drops between fences into a little valley, mixed beech and pinewood. Two women walkers appear from round a corner on the other side. Time to concentrate on style - I don't want to look like a jogger. Just before I get to them, a man comes round the corner walking just behind them. Flip me, it's Seb Coe! Seb flipping Coe! He doesn't recognise me, so I just say "Hi!" and do my best to smile in a not too cheesy way. And he says "Hi!" in return.

Sebastian Coe, Steve Ovett, Harrison Ford, Sting, Elvis Costello - they were my heroes as a young man. The next hundred minutes had their moments, but I know why I'll remember the run. I might even mark the spot on the map. Two met, three to go.

## Some SLOWies in action at the World Masters





## SLOW Bridge report by Dick Clark

Another year and another campaign for our bridge team in the London Trophy. This year we have excelled ourselves by winning our first round match and hence progressing in the Cup competition rather than going into the Plate.

We played Bookham U3A Croquet Club (we also played the last year). The result was an easy win by over 3,000 points and Paul Street played instead of regular Peter Huzan who was on holiday. Andy and Paul played together while I played with Kjell. We beat our opponents in both rooms over both sessions which is quite an achievement.

This was a lucky hand for SLOW

S A Q x	S J T x x	
H K Q x x x E	H A x	W
D A K x x	D Q J T x	
C K	C x x x	

Bidding was as follows (uncontested) 1H - 1S - 3D - P

Seeing as 3D was supposed to be unconditionally forcing the Pass was an unpleasant surprise and even more so when dummy appeared. On a Spade lead 12 tricks rolled in. But when we scored up we found that our opponents had bid 3N which we defeated by 1 trick. So we gained a plus score through a bidding misunderstanding! It is true that West had a difficult bid and on a club lead and continuous club forces it would have been difficult to make 11 tricks in diamonds.

## and finally...

How do crazy people run through the forest?

They take the psychopath

What's the difference between roast beef and pea soup?

Anyone can roast beef...

Last year I entered the New Forest Marathon. The race started and immediately I was the last of the runners. It was embarrassing. The guy who was in front of me, second to last, was making fun of me. He said, "*Hey mate, how does it feel to be last?*" I replied: "*Do you want to know?*" and I dropped out.

Where do you find a dog with no legs?

Right where you left him...



I was sent out to hang a control  
Where the map marked a scary  
deep hole

Dark as a well

With a brimstone smell

And now I'm a sorry lost soul

By R. Mulford of the Earth, the  
Universe

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue. Photo credits: Ollie O'Brien, Chris Fry,  
Mark Cheesman & Sarah-Jane Gaffney ([www.compasssport.co.uk](http://www.compasssport.co.uk))