



Blood, Sweat and Gears

Newsletter of the National Governing Body for Mountain Bike Orienteering.

Sept 2009

TCA Fixtures October - December 2009

The 2009 National and Regional Leagues are reaching their conclusion in October, as the summer season winds down. We have some dates for winter events, but there will be more to come, so keep an eye on the events page of the TCA website.

Sun 4 October Epic Trailquest 3 hr Trailquest STAVELEY, Cumbria Round 3 of 3
<http://www.epictrailquest.com>

Sat 10 October The Bike Place 4 hr marathon KEILDER FOREST, Northumberland Round 4 of 4
[Oktoberfest/ Kielder Forest Kielder Trail Reavers](#)

Sun 11 October XCC 3 hr Trailquest COCKERMOUTH, North Lakes Round 6 of 6
<http://www.crosscumbria.co.uk>

Sat 17 October NYMBO 4 hr Trailquest MASHAM, Lower Wensleydale Round 11 of 11
<http://www.nymbo.org.uk/>

National TQ league event 12

Sun 18 October D & W 4 hr Enduro/Trailquest SHERWOOD PINES Round 1 of 1
<http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/>

Sun 08/11 Manx Mountain Bike Club 3hr Late Autumn Trailquest CROSBY Round 1 of 1
<http://www.trailquest.manxtiming.com/>

Sun 08/11 D&W 3hr trailquest PEAK DISTRICT Winter League 1 of 8.
<http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/>

Sun 22/11 D&W 3 hr trailquest PEAK DISTRICT Winter League 2 of 8
<http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/>

Sun 13/12 D&W 3hr trailquest PEAK DISTRICT Winter League 3 of 8
<http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/>

Saturday 21 November CLOK Winter Lanequest WESTERDALE (Castleton) N.York Moors
2 hours, Treasure Hunt style, minor country roads and dry bridleways. Round 1 of 3
Parking, registration and warm drinks will be available at the events, which are all based at village halls
www.clok.org.uk

Sat 14th Nov NYMBO Winter MBO The Holly Hill, Richmond
2 hours, Treasure Hunt style, minor country roads and dry bridleways Round 1 of 4
Based on a pub, where meals are available afterwards. www.nymbo.org.uk

Sat 5th Dec NYMBO Winter MBO The New Inn, Eccup
2 hours, Treasure Hunt style, minor country roads and dry bridleways Round 2 of 4

TCA AGM 2009 Saturday 21 November. Peak District

This years AGM is in Youlgreave Youth Hostel with a D+W winter league event on the sunday a few miles ride away. We have 20 beds booked so places are limited. Book breakfast and evening meal, should you want them, when you book your bed.

Bed £18

Breakfast £5

Dinner £7

Usual Saturday social ride leaving at 12 noon, AGM, Prize giving and a few social drinks for the hardy.

For booking and you discussion topics please contact chairman@trailquest.co.uk

TQ National League 2009 Positions after 11 rounds.

The latest National League positions are in the "Results Archive" or try this link:

[National League after 11 rounds](#)

Currently category winners are Bryan Singleton of Cat C/M40, Angela Brand-Barker of Cat D/W40 and Karen Blackburn of Cat K/W60. Excellent results and congratulations to you all.

Quite a few categories have not completed 6 events to be eligible for winning the category, so no winners will be in categories T, G, L, Z, X, Q & F. So check your positions and whether you need more events to qualify.

Now the final event at Masham (17 October) will decide the winners of Cat A/M21, CatE/M50 and the Overall National League Champion.

Good luck to you all, hopefully see you there to see who wins.....

Peter Strong.

World Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships, Israel 2009

Report by Mark Stogell

Mid July saw a team of three British men and five women travel to Tel Aviv in Israel to take part in the 7th World Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships. The events spread over the week consisted of long distance qualifier, middle distance, sprint, relay and long final.

Getting bikes out to international competitions is always a headache but luckily British Midland came to the rescue giving the team extra baggage allowance free of charge and a special concession to carry the gas cartridges needed for inflating tyres during the races. The gas was essential as were the severe anti puncture measures taken by competitors as it was apparent on arrival that the warnings given by organisers about Israeli thorns were not to be underestimated. The team used various methods from Kevlar tyre liners and slime tubes to extra 'wheel milk' and tubeless tyres, which were successful in preventing punctures out on the course, though the nightly ritual of thorn pulling did yield a harvest of spikes.

Temperature was the other factor that the organisers made sure the competitors did not lose focus

on, with a lecture about how to stay healthy in the Israeli summer heat. The weather was the same every day, at least 32 in the shade and 36 – 40 in the sun ! Luckily the team had air conditioned accommodation at the Ben Shemen Youth education village where all the competitors were housed, giving the competition a very social atmosphere with everyone eating together.

The model event areas adjacent to the accommodation gave the team a fair indication of what was to come; dusty gravel tracks, rocky single tracks, dense prickly vegetation and of course the heat. The riding was exciting and challenging and the navigation difficult because the rough terrain bouncing the mapboard around made reading it harder.

The Long qualification event was held some distance away in an area of farmland and orchards mixed with small stands of pine forest. The top 20 from each of the 3 qualification races went through to the final to be held later in the week. In the Women's race Emily Benham's 6th place headed up good results from the rest of the team, but unfortunately Charlotte Somers-Cox missed a control after being distracted by a nasty fall from fellow Brit Lucy Harris and she failed to qualify. The men really were up against it to qualify with a very competitive field. Andy Conn was the only one to manage it, with Mark Stodgell missing by just 1 position. Bryan Singleton, after a huge parallel error cost him 20 mins, also failed to make the cut. The event finished in a pool area (well not in it which might have been interesting perhaps) where the competitors could cool off swimming in the shade whilst waiting in race quarantine, a pleasant change from quarantines in previous European races.

The middle race was held a short ride from the event centre on Ben Shemen Forest, though the climb up to the start area on a dusty track in full sun was tough in itself. However bottles of ice cold water in the pre start area were a nice touch by the organisers. In the men's race it was neck and neck between Andy and Mark with Mark eventually piping Andy by 6 seconds to take 55th place with Bryan 3 mins behind. The women's race saw Emily's form return with a fantastic 8th position, just 12 secs from a place on the podium, her best senior international performance to date and a great prospect for the future of MTBO in the UK. Newcomer Helen Clayton (just 18) also had a great result, 41st, beating the experienced Sarah Bayliss and Charlotte in this her first senior international. The 3rd Sheffield University junior of the team, Lucy Harris struggled with the technical mountain biking, taking several falls but managed to finish 49th. The WOC circus then had a rest day where the team enjoyed the therapeutic muds of The Dead Sea before moving on to the relay.

The relay was back on the middle race area of Ben Shemen but didn't start until 4 pm, with the first leg riders really feeling the effects of the build up of the afternoons heat. Mark got a fantastic start in the men's race and reached the distant start flag in 3rd position after the Le Mans style race to the bikes. He managed to stay with the main pack until the top riders strength showed through on the hills and they pulled away. Unfortunately this effort caused several mistakes and he then spent the rest of the race clawing his way back up the field handing over to Andy 12 mins down. A solid ride from Andy gained several places before handing over to Bryan who after a very nasty crash brought the team home in 16th position. Emily rode first leg for the ladies but didn't manage a repeat of her middle race performance and was disappointed not to set the team up for a better result as she handed over to Helen who continued to gain experience on the world stage. Sarah had the best ride of the three girls on last leg but was unable to chase down the Danish team.

Sprint racing on mountain bikes is always very exciting and the courses at Neot Kdumim did not disappoint. Set in terraced olive groves with a mixture of gravel and complex winding asphalt tracks with sharp climbs the course planning gave lots of route choice options. In the Women's race all four of the British competitors gained world ranking points with Charlotte, Sarah and Helen all finishing within a minute of each other. Emily had another great ride, matching her best

international result with another 8th place just 30 secs off of a podium place after losing a little time through hesitations at some of the complex track junctions. In the men's race, Bryan was first starter and had an unfortunate ride, making too many mistakes for his fast riding ability, finishing 55th. Andy Conn had a solid ride, but was again unlucky to make a few too many small mistakes which proved costly. Mark was in the coveted last start slot for the GBR men, and retained his position as the top British man in these shorter races completing the course just 30 seconds outside of world ranking points in 44th position.

The week's finale was the long race, held again some distance to the south of the event centre in a steep and forested series of very hot dry valleys, criss crossed by a network of large gravel roads and tracks. It was a very well planned event with huge route choice legs traversing the 1:20000 scale with 10 metre contour map. In the men's race Andy being the only man to qualify started early on what was the hottest day of the event, with temperatures pushing 40 degrees C. He rode solidly making few mistakes to secure a very creditable 43rd. Bryan and Mark both rode in the B final later in the day which utilised the women's long course where Mark had a strong ride to finish 3rd, with Bryan not far behind in 5th. The end of a long and tiring week and the heat really told on the British Women. Lucy, an experienced adventure racer commented that it was the hardest race she had ever done. Sarah's efforts in endurance cross country mountain bike racing this year perhaps rewarded her with the best result, 35th, 30 secs clear of Emily and 10 minutes ahead of Helen and Lucy.

The team continued to learn a great deal during the competition, with the younger and less experienced members now hoping to get a solid winters training behind them ready for improved results next year, with Emily showing huge potential for the future as she transfers to the senior category.

For Sale/Wanted/Swaps

Would you like a section for sales, swaps etc included in the newsletter? If so send the details to the editor before the 15th of each month titanium@waitrose.com

Tabletop Sales

Anyone interested in organising a table top sale of bike components at one of the larger events, or at the AGM, perhaps? You would need to get the permission of the event organiser, then I could advertise in the newsletter for sellers to bring stuff along and buyers to bring some cash.

Blanchland National Trailquest 6th September 2009

report by Rik Thompson

I was looking forward to this event in such a lovely part of the country, having competed in the Whitley Chapel event a few years back only to retire due to injury. I knew what the area had to offer, big hills with great views along with some cracking moor land single track.

Having studied the map, it was obvious there would be a long slog back to the finish. Apart from returning through the forest, there was only the big climb up Embley Fell. My plan was to head straight North over Cowbyers Fell to Slaley Forest and then drop down Embley Fell as I'd heard it was a lovely single track drop. Things did not go to plan when I got to CP#4 but I could not see it anywhere. I then headed North to #5 then #8. The draw of the Forest was too much so I had a blast round, collecting most of the Southern controls thinking I had the option of a few routes on the way back to collect the rest, time permitting.

I headed to the Byway for #13 but got a little confused riding up and down the fire road before

realising I needed to go out onto the Byway. I was beginning to think it was going to be one of those days! I continued down the cracking bridleway from Embley Fell, along with John Rawdon. Once at the bottom, we both took a wrong turn and had a few minutes ride along the stream. Very scenic, but not ideal in a competition. There is a pattern appearing here...

Next up I decided to go for the 50 pointer at #23 via the climb up past #22. The rain that was forecast for the afternoon was holding off but the wind was making the going hard. I just hoped I wouldn't regret it later. I was glad to see the trail was more of a newly laid dirt track and made good time to the junction on Hangman Hill, if only I'd seen the name on the day I might have given it a miss. I presume the trail follows a slightly different path to the bridleway as I could not find the trail heading North. Much head scratching and 8 min later, I stumbled upon it and went off into the drizzle that had just started. All I can say at this point is I can see why they put a 50 pointer there, and boy, was I glad I'd bothered. What followed was a few minutes of riding bliss. Just me, my bike and a sinuous stretch of single track with plenty of small rocks thrown into the mix.

By now time was getting on so it was time to return, head down at 30mph to Rawgreen and dive down the track to the right. I realised I was still travelling way too fast, but somehow I stopped before the stream at the bottom then continued up (on foot) to pick up some more in the Forest. Fortunately I saw control#17 which was on the end of the wrong track and headed over to Dukesfield and Townhead so I could pick up the road back to the finish.

I was not a happy man when I saw the climb ahead of me with only 16 mins left and nearly the full length of the map to cover, so I dug deep and pictured the drop down from Cowbyers to the finish. Finally I reached the houses at the top and dropped down hitting 45 mph on the way whilst fast catching the cars in front, through the village to the hall and finish.

All in all a great day out, the weather cleared up as fast as it had turned damp. I got lost too many times to count and I won my class and finished joint top with John Rawdon.

To me the good thing about doing these events is the fact that you go and ride in parts of the country you would not normally think of going, even if it's only down the road from where you live. I will miss doing them next year. Due to my family gaining another member and the fact I've decided to concentrate more on the endurance racing side of the sport means I'm taking a year out from Trailquests. Who knows, I might not be able to stay away that long!!

Newsletter Articles

If you have any contributions for the newsletter – event reports, good ideas, opinions etc – please send them to the editor at titanium@waitrose.com