



# Blood, Sweat and Gears

Newsletter of the National Governing Body for Mountain Bike Orienteering.

April 2009

## Calendar, 6 weeks, 20 events, outrageous!

6 May - D+W Summer evening TQ round 1:

[http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/challenge-events-outdoor-activities.asp?race\\_id=238](http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/challenge-events-outdoor-activities.asp?race_id=238)

9 May - Peebles Cycling Club round 2 of 6, online entry below:

<http://www.entrycentral.com/index.php?raceID=100531>

10 May - Endurance Life CTQ last round of 7:

<http://www.endurancelife.com/event.asp?series=11&location=27>

16 May - TCA Championship Weekend MTBO

17 May - TCA Championship Weekend TQ

<http://www.nymbo.org.uk/gillingflier2009.htm>

<http://www.nymbo.org.uk/duncombeflier2009.htm>

16 May -The Bike Place Marathon Series Keilder:

<http://www.thebikeplace.co.uk/>

17 May - XCC series round 3 of 6:

<http://xcc.byethost7.com/events.html>

17 May - Grampian Orienteers MTBO round1 of 3

<http://www.grampoc.com/>

17 May - Northern Ireland Trailblazers TQ League round 3 of 6:

<http://trailblazersmtbo.wordpress.com/>

20 May - D+W Summer League round 2 of 6:

[http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/challenge-events-outdoor-activities.asp?race\\_id=239](http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/challenge-events-outdoor-activities.asp?race_id=239)

31 May - Nembos Wark Forest round 3 of 6:

[http://www.trailquest.co.uk/plugins/tcaresults\\_menu/events.php](http://www.trailquest.co.uk/plugins/tcaresults_menu/events.php)

2 June - Mintcake MTB Lakeland Lanequests round 1 of 6:

<http://www.mintcakemt看b.co.uk/>

4 June - D+W Summer League 3 of 6:

[http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/challenge-events-outdoor-activities.asp?race\\_id=240](http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk/challenge-events-outdoor-activities.asp?race_id=240)

7 June - XCC series round 4 of 6:

<http://xcc.byethost7.com/events.html>

7 June - Northern Ireland Trailblazers TQ League round 4 of 6:

<http://trailblazersmtbo.wordpress.com/>

9 June - Mintcake MTB Lakeland Lanequests round 2 of 6:

<http://www.mintcakemt看b.co.uk/>

13/14 th June - MTBO Championship Weekend: See TCA website when flyer is out.

13/14 th June - Endurance Life 2 Day TQ, a 2 day event for TQ purists:

<http://www.endurancelife.com/index.asp>

### **TCA National Championship Weekend TQ and MTBO events**

Get your entries in! Steve Willis is getting prizes sorted courtesy of the TCA and his league sponsors. Jens Strain has done some amazing maps. MTBO and TQ courses are complex and navigators dream events.

The overall winners will compete in both events, no prizes for one event results. MTBO times will be converted to percentages for the weekend league using the formula:

$$100 - (((\text{Competitors time} - \text{winners time}) / \text{winners time}) * 100)$$

Competitor times longer than 100% of the winner will get zero. This is similar to TQ competitors over 30 minutes late getting zero.

Classes will map to the 3 courses as follows:

A Course – M21 (Open men), M40, M20.

B Course – W21 (Open Women), W40, M50, M/W 18 & W20

C Course – M60 and W50, W60.

### **MTBO league scoring and classes**

MTBO league scores will use the IOF point system for WOC and EOC events: The first 40 competitors will score points as follows: **60, 54, 49, 45, 42, 39, 37, 35, 33, 31, 30, 29, .....**, 1.

Classes will map to the 3 courses at events as follows:

A Course – M21 (Open men), M40, M20.

B Course – W21 (Open Women), W40, M50, M/W 18 & W20

C Course – M60 and W50, W60.

Expected winning times will vary depending on the area, but will be displayed at the event.

### **Legal rights of way**

At an event earlier this year, we had several riders use a field as a short cut to and from a control.

TCA policy is that competitors found using illegal routes will be disqualified from the event. Repeat offenders will be barred from TCA events.

Right to Roam areas do not apply to bicycles, you have NO right to roam on your bicycle. Next month we will have an article on legal rights of way, so brush up for a test.

### **Membership Renewals**

From the TCA membership system when online in January 2008. All TCA members have an online account. To renew membership:

- 1, login to your account from the login page.
- 2, If you have forgotten your password request a new one from the login page.
- 3, If you have forgotten your login name, request a new password from the login page.
- 4, If you have forgotten login or password and changed email address, contact the membership sec.
- 5, Renew your membership.
- 6, Passwords can be changed by editing your details.

Any problems contact: [membership@trailquest.co.uk](mailto:membership@trailquest.co.uk)

### Trailquest National League after 3 events.

First things first: If you haven't yet found the National League results, look for them on the TCA home page. On the left, click results archive then 2009 tca national league, say OK to everything and you will get the results spreadsheet.

The first events have been well scattered across the country - I don't think anyone has managed to do all three, although Mark Stogell went to Devon and Sheffield he couldn't compete at Cannock as he was the organiser! The three way tie at Cannock ( lots of photos on Walton Chasers website <http://www.walton-chasers.co.uk> ) means that the leading men's placings depend on their results at Sheffield. So at present Steve Heading (M40) is just leading Liam Corner (M21) and Bryan Singleton (M40). The W21s have only done one event each so far, but already there are some impressive scores, with Ali Northcott and Ruth Hollinger well into 80%. In W40, Angela BB has completed two events, so the rest are going to have to try and catch her up. There's more overlap in the M50s and 60s, with Philip Green leading M50 from Tony BB, but Roger de Faye (M60) in the middle. Clare de Faye is lonely in W50 and Karen Blackburn really is a W60! The mixed and generation teams have only done one event each so far, so those classes also still have to take shape. Three events gone - that's a quarter of the season! And by the time you read this, Furness will probably be a happy memory. Make sure you enter Glentress and Wark in May and start piling up some league points.

### Why you should enter events in good time

With the busy lives we all seem to lead, it can be difficult to plan ahead, and its easy to think you will just turn up and enter an event on the day. While most organisers are prepared for this, it does make sense on both sides to get your entry in at least a week before the race.

#### **From the competitors point of view:**

You are making a commitment to go to the event and are less likely to wimp out if it rains.

You won't have so long to wait in the registration queue.

You can make sure before the event that you have joined the TCA for this year - it's free online and saves you time and money.

You are sure to get a map.

#### **From the organisers point of view:**

They know if they are going to have enough competitors to make the event worthwhile. Amongst other jobs, the organiser/planner have to arrange headquarters, draw maps, plan control sites, source equipment, liaise with landowners, farmers etc. It's miserable to have to cancel an event because not enough competitors have entered.

Its easier to estimate how many maps to print.

Reduces paperwork and manpower needed on the day.

#### **So let's be nice to organisers and get entries in early.....**

*(Sorry Henry, I was a bit late entering Furness! Karen Blackburn confesses)*

### **Yorkshire Wolds TQ 21st March 2009**

After a week of warm dry weather, a 4 hour TQ in the Yorkshire Wolds - a limestone plateau with deep, steep sided dry valleys and lots of rideable bridleways was sure to be a treat.

Starting from Pocklington school, in the South West corner of the map, the trick was to devise a route which reduced the number of times I had to heave myself and bike up and down those valley

sides. There were some tempting high-scoring controls north of the A166, but that was a long way, and with limited options for road crossings, I folded my map and concentrated on the rest. I was very tempted to mop up the controls on the south of the map first, as they were mainly on or near the tarmac, but decided it would be better to tackle the hills and longer bridleways before I got too tired.

So off I trundled in a clockwise direction through controls in Warrendale, Givendale, Millington Heights and Great Plantation. It's always difficult to choose the best route to controls (23 and 7) on the bridleways near Barn Farm. This time I climbed on tarmac to West Field, then doglegged to control 23 on the northern b/w, then doglegged to 7 on the southern bridleway as well. This is a long way round but reduces the climb, which for me, means I can stay on the bike. Chris Wright went by the shorter b/w route, but it wasn't much quicker. Some folks decided it would be even quicker to take an illegal shortcut across the fields, which is blatant cheating, and does not make us popular with farmers and other land users - don't do it!

The next bit was nice and easy, east along Minster Way collecting two more controls before turning south past Blanch Farm to Lavender Dale. I remembered this area - it confused us on the Polaris 2007, because the b/w does not follow the bottom of the dale, but is a small track clinging to the side. Got it right this time, but the control had been removed, only the sticky tape remained to show I was in the right place. I still had an hour to collect some of the controls south of the B1246 before the downhill dash home with a couple of minutes to spare.

Thanks to Dave Evans (planner) and Steve Willis (organiser) for a grand day out in Yorkshire. Full results and details of future events on the NYMBO website <http://nymbo.org.uk/index.htm>

### **Denmark Training Camp 2009 – Emily Benham reports**

The annual training camp in Denmark has become popular since it began three years ago. Many elite athletes treat it as a season opener in April. This year, the Junior World Championships and Senior European Championships are being held in Hillerod, Denmark at the end of June. The training camp became the 'must do' other event of the year, with 450 international athletes in attendance. The camp runs for four days, there are one or two 'races' per day and your best four results count towards the camp cup series.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April. Arriving late on Friday evening, a rushed dinner and bike building session, we wake up at 0730 to get to breakfast promptly at 0800. Breakfast itself may have surprised me a few years ago, but continental breakfast of cereal with yoghurt, and bread with a mixture of cheeses and ham has become something to look forward to.

It was awesome to arrive at the first race on a bright, sunny, warm day to see hundreds of bikes and cyclists, a relaxed atmosphere and less rivalry between competitors! I made the decision in December to ride against the senior elites, despite this being my final year junior (W20). I had several goals to achieve during the week. First I wanted to compare my current form against the elites I will be racing at the World Championships in Israel. Second, I wanted to learn more about why I make mistakes, and finally to 'kick some ass'!! I knew I was in good form before I left, as I had won a national MTBO series race by 5minutes 2 weeks before, and had been practicing my MTBO skills around Sheffield all winter.

Despite start times being allocated, the lack of a clock made this difficult, so most people started when they were ready. I chose to start within 10minutes of the Russian and Swiss girls who,

although first year seniors, beat me last year at JWOC, so I fancied having them in front of me to chase. I had caught up my rivals early on, and was riding so well that pulling away was easy. In the end I finished 5<sup>th</sup>, but within a minute of second place, which was surprising as I was aiming for top 20's all week.

In the afternoon, the training was a hare and hounds type session. The aim was to practice racing under pressure on an area with a high density of paths. It is fair to say I was fairly tired by this point, so took my time on the way round so as to conserve energy for the night sprint.

Perfect start time: one minute behind Michaela Gigon from Austria, and a minute ahead of Line Pedersen from Denmark, both of whom have many world championship medals. By the second control I had caught Michaela and held on until the 5<sup>th</sup> control, where her strength and years of cycling (compared to my two) enabled her to slowly and agonisingly pull away, despite my best efforts to stay on her wheel. A mistake on the penultimate control dropped me from second place to 4<sup>th</sup> which was my finish position. Night MTBO'ing is easier than I was expecting, and the bigger and brighter your light, the better it is!

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April saw the international relay, which was not a camp cup race, but teams of 4 from different countries. I was allocated the final 20km leg, which I then mis-punched on, due to being absolutely shattered from the day before. It was not a good day for my legs, which didn't really want to ride and would have preferred bed, but, it was good practice and I still learnt about my navigation both strengths and weaknesses. Training in the afternoon didn't happen for me, so I sat in the sun and let myself recover. It was important for me to do well in the races and killing myself in training wouldn't help this.

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April. Another two races today and I had my good legs on. The day dawned sunny and warm once again, and began with a middle distance race. Unfortunately, the map printing was inferior to previous days, with the tone of the purple and green merging together making it really difficult to read the map. I made a fair few mistakes and found I was unable to pull away from anyone so ended up continuously seeing the same people, which was disheartening. I finished 10<sup>th</sup>, which was better than expected after making mistakes from the start. It goes to show, that although you may be struggling, everyone else might be too.

A couple of hours to recover, and then it was straight off to the sprint race. It is easy when you are in the start lane looking at your map, to plan the best route to the first 5 controls, but I have learnt that these choices need to be under constant review until you get there. I missed the best route choice and lost a minute because I didn't think about the route choice enough. I pulled my head into gear and navigated perfectly from controls 5 to 11. Controls after this were in the technical part of the map, short sharp steep climbs, and lots of paths. I made a parallel error here, due mostly to my brain being oxygen deficient and allowing myself to be distracted. I ended up at control 13 by some luck, which made it easier to plan my way back to control 12. Again I finished 10<sup>th</sup>, still above what I expected before I went to Denmark, but below par from Saturday.

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April. The mass start ultralong race. Need I say more? I hadn't done a 40km straight line mass start race before, so was a little nervous, but I decided to ride at my own speed. After 30mins the leaders had left me, and I had left the pack, so it was an interesting situation. I then made a mistake which saw the pack overtake me, so once again I was on my own. And that was how it stayed for 2/3's of the course, just me, riding alone. Once at the 25<sup>th</sup> control, I was ready to

finish, and saw another 5 controls on the map. I had just caught up a small pack of Eastern European riders, so was being pushed along with them.

At the 30<sup>th</sup> control, I turned over my map expecting to see the finish. Another hour of cycling was awaiting us. I had no water left and was low on food, it was mentally the toughest hour I've had to race. Winning times were 2 hours 50 minutes, but I was some way down on this with 3 hours 20 minutes. Despite getting back and feeling completely exhausted, I was pleased to have finished.

We packed our bikes that evening and settled down to a social meal and drinks with the Swiss team. I should point out here that I was staying with the Austrian team, spent most of my German lessons doodling and so didn't ever really learn German!

All in all, the week was a success. I finished 7<sup>th</sup> in the overall rankings, a disappointment after my good start, but also a good motivator for the rest of the season. My competitors from 2008 didn't beat me all week and of the two races that were the same as the junior class (my correct age group) I was 10 minutes ahead of the leader, who was a close rival last year.

My performances were not a million miles away from the top elites. I need to practice long legs, and keep 100% focussed at the end of a race. These things will come with practice and experience of hard racing. I achieved my goals this trip and I am spending my summer travelling around Europe to the World Cup races. There are 15 races on my schedule between now and the end of June, so this summer looks to be a good 'un.

Next year's camp is in South Sweden, so a change will be good, as Sweden has an amazing network of paths. Put this event in your diary diary for next year.

### **The next newsletter**

We issue the news letters in the middle of the month to miss the mass mailings that go out on the first of each month. Each Newsletter has a 6 week calendar roundup to overlap. Occasionally a newsletter will slip a bit, like this month, but expect the next issue in mid May after the national championship weekend.

Please submit event reports or articles to [newsletter@trailquest.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@trailquest.co.uk)

See you next month.