



Blood, Sweat and Gears

Newsletter of the National Governing Body for Mountain Bike Orienteering.

August 2009

TCA Fixtures August - September 2009

Early August has been a bit quiet for events, but now it's time to start planning your Autumn competition season, because from the Bank Holiday onwards there's one or more events almost every weekend for a couple of months. So get your calendar organised and get your entries in early.

Sat 29 August Malham Show 4 hr Trailquest. MALHAM, Yorkshire Dales.
Round 8 of 11 in NYMBO, and round 4 of 5 in NEMBOS leagues

National TQ league event 10

[Malham Show Trailquest](#)

Sat 29 August Mar Orienteering Club MTBO BEN NEWE North East Scotland series 2 of 3
<http://www.marocscotland.org.uk>

Mon 31 August NYMBO 2 hr Trailquest BICKLEY FOREST, Pickering. round 9 of 11
<http://www.nymbo.org.uk/>

Sun 6 September NEMBOS 4 hr Trailquest BLANCHLAND, Northumberland. Round 6 of 6
(between Hexham and Weardale) Note - Closing date for entries is 3rd Sept

National TQ league event 11

Details now available via TCA website

http://www.trailquest.co.uk/plugins/tcaresults_menu/events.php

Sun 6 September Epic Trailquests 3 hr Trailquest CLAPHAM, N Yorks Round 2 of 3
<http://www.epictrailquest.com>

Cancelled Sun 6 September Harlequins Orienteering Club MTBO. WOOLHOPE, Hereford

Sun 13 September XCC 3hr Trailquest CALDERBRIDGE, West Cumbria Round 5 of 6
<http://www.crosscumbria.co.uk>

Fri 18 September Grampian Orienteers MTBO Kirkhill, North East Scotland series Round 3 of 3
<http://www.grampoc.com/>

Sat 19 September NYMBO 2 hr Trailquest DALBY FOREST, Pickering Round 10 of 11
<http://www.nymbo.org.uk/>

Sun 20th Sept NYMBO Marathon - 3 routes from DALBY, North York Moors
<http://www.nymbo.org.uk/>

Cancelled Event

Sun 6 September Harlequins Orienteering Club MTBO. WOOLHOPE, Hereford

Colin Palmer has reluctantly cancelled this event after FE imposed more restrictions on forest use. The event would not have been up to Colins high standards so cancellation was the only course of action.

TCA AGM 2009

The AGM is being planned for the 21nd November in the Peak District. Details out in a few weeks now that the summer holidays have finished.

World MTBO Champs August 2009 Israel

Eight riders represented GB at these championships. The highlights were 8th place for Emily Benham in both the middle distance and sprint events – and she is still a junior. Well done, Emily!

Emily also found time to write these reports from the championships.

WOC Long Qualifier



The Long Qualifier race was held in the farmland and orchards 40km south of Tel Aviv and the Event Centre at Ben Shemen Youth Village. The terrain was moderately hilly, with some fast riding combined with technical sections of

rocky singletrack and a scattering of small thorny plants on the tracks. Many athletes from other nations got punctures due to the tough nature of the thorns, but Team GBR were blessed with puncture free rides thanks to a combination of tyres, tubes and slime!

The starts began at 0930, 0730 GMT, which meant the team were eating breakfast at the British time of 4am. Temperatures were relatively low for the first starters, at about 26 degrees, but quickly warmed up in the shade to the low 30's. Scattered clouds and a warm breeze from the Mediterranean cooled competitors significantly in the shade of the trees,

but once in the open farmland which made up 65% of the courses, the sun was unrelenting.

The women had two qualification heats with all finishers making the A final, and the men had 3 heats, with the top 20 from each course qualifying for next Saturday's race. Charlotte Somers-Cocks was the last start for the GBR women and was unfortunate to miss a control (for the first time ever) on the course, which led to her disqualification. Sarah Bayliss was first starter in the women and had a good steady performance and finished in a time of 73.37 which put her in 14th place. Emily Benham started shortly after Sarah, in the A heat, and had a very clean race finishing in 6th place in a time of 66.44, a mere 30 seconds from 4th. This will see Emily start in the top 25% of the women's field next Saturday for the final. Helen Clayton took the race at a steady pace, and had some difficulty in the technical rocky sections of the course, which saw her finish in 93.22 and 21st place. Lucy Harris, Team GBR debutant, had a minor crash but nevertheless had a good race to finish in 25th place in 85.34.

The men's races, were more competitive, with only the top 20 in each heat qualifying for the final. Mark Stodgell was first out of the GBR team and was unfortunate to make a few mistakes, costing a chunk of time which saw him narrowly miss out on the A final. He finished in 21st place in a time of 71.14. Bryan Singleton had a 'mare on his way to the 8th control, and lost over 20 minutes in the technical orchards due to a parallel error. He finished in a time of 94.22 in 25th place.

Andy Conn was the star of the GB men, just making the A final in 19th place. Andy had a good race making a few small mistakes, but nothing which was too costly and he finished in a time of 69.11.

The team enjoyed a post race swim in the pool at the event, and are now relaxing and preparing bikes and kit for tomorrow's middle distance race. Starts will commence at 0930 (GMT +2) and the team will be aiming for some good times and results.

WOC Middle Distance

Today's middle distance was held close to the event centre at Ben Shemen Youth Centre, with the start 2km from the team's hut. The weather was considerably hotter and more humid than yesterday's races, with less breeze in the forest to cool competitors down during the race.

Lucy Harris was the first starter for the women, and was unfortunate to make a lot of errors resulting in her being caught by Sarah Bayliss and Helen Clayton towards the end of the course. Helen Clayton started 4 minutes behind Sarah, and caught her at the 4th control. The two were then neck-and-neck for the course, but frequently took different route choices on the longer legs, but Sarah's experience at international races, saw her reach the finish 30 seconds ahead of Helen. Helen finished in a highly credible 41st position in her first W21 race, gaining some world ranking points in the process. Her time of 70.02



was just ahead of Sarah in 44th place and 73.17. Emily Benham had a very good race, making less than a minute of mistakes on the very technical course and finished in 8th place, her highest result to date at the senior World Championships, but finished a mere 12 seconds from 6th place. Charlotte Somers-Cocks made a mistake, and shortly later suffered a mechanical where her back wheel fell out on the technical singletracks which thus lost her a good 5 minutes to repair the damage.

Charlie S-C and Andy Conn finishing - Copyright M. Stodgell

In the men's race, Mark Stodgell had a good ride and finished 6 seconds ahead of Andy Conn, despite his early start. Mark finished in 55th place which was his highest result at an international race to date, in a time of 73.30 with Andy in 56th place and 73.36. Bryan Singleton was 61st in a time of 76.25 with a disappointing ride, seeing him make numerous small mistakes.

Videos of the first 2 days of competition and photos can be found at www.nivut.org.il where British team members are frequently seen in personal interviews and during the races.

WOC Sprint

The Sprint distance today was held at the biblical archeological site of Neot Kdumin. The terrain was hilly with a complex mixture of tracks and tarmaced paths which made navigation technical with some gruelling climbs.

Charlie Somers-Cocks was first starter for the women, and made a few mistakes and hesitations in the complex path network, which saw her take 39th a minute behind Helen Clayton in 38th. This is Helen's best result to date at her first senior championships, and all four women were able to get World Ranking Points for their efforts. Sarah Bayliss had a good race to finish a mere 11 seconds ahead of Helen in 37th position in a time of 32.44. Emily Benham was the final starter for the British women, just ahead of the 'red' start group, which consists of the current top 10 women in the world based on ranking points. Emily caught up athletes who started 5 minutes ahead of her, and finished in 8th position 90 seconds down on the leader, Hana Bajtsova from Slovakia. Emily had a fast race making a few hesitations to get the correct paths in the middle stages of the course and she was only 28 seconds from a top 4 placing.

In the men's races, Bryan Singleton was first starter and had an unfortunate ride, making too many mistakes for his fast riding ability. He finished in 55th place. Andy Conn had a solid ride, but was again unlucky to make a few too many small mistakes which proved costly seeing him finish in 51st with a time of 33.29. Mark Stodgell was in the coveted last start for the GBR men, and retained his position as the top British man in these races. He was 30 seconds outside of world ranking points, an achievement which has been attained by few British men this year. His time of 29.48 saw Mark take 44th position which is the men's best result of the week.

The team are looking forward to the Long distance final tomorrow, with Andy Conn riding in the A final, and Bryan and Mark in the B. The men's B course is the same as the women's A final with Emily Benham, Helen Clayton, Lucy Harris and Sarah Bayliss all hoping to achieve a good result, with clean races. The terrain will be very hilly, with many stones and rocks combined with a complex path network, which will make for some physically tough racing. First starts will be at 10am (GMT+2) with the winners finishing at approximately 2pm.

Reports are on the TCA website news page.

Heversham National TQ 19 July 2009

The weather forecast threatened showers, but on the day, it was actually quite warm and sunny for this four and a half hour event. Ray had set out a very cunning map for Heversham TQ, especially in the NE corner where there was plenty of route choice between controls, though some were more obvious than others. The area covered was mainly to the east of the HQ, reaching right over into the Lune valley. There were also a couple of controls on Farleton Knot, the wonderful limestone outcrop overlooking junction 36 on the M6.

A total of 84 riders made it to the National event, I was even lured into taking part myself after a 3 year lay-off. It is a shame that the same old problem of people leaving gates open is still with us. Many had to be closed by the organiser when collecting controls up the next day. A lovely spread awaited returning competitors in the village hall. More sandwiches than you could shake a stick at, gingerbread, chocolate brownie and a bottomless teapot!

Huge thanks to Ray Morriss for his time, effort and thought in organising an enjoyable event, not forgetting his big entourage of helpers for making the day a great success. There were many contented folk about afterwards and a reasonable sum of money was raised for the village hall funds.

Paul Allen

Mutterings from the car park:

“We all met up at control 35, and none of us meant to be there!”
[Newtondale TQ]

“So I said to myself – if Wiggo can get up Mt Ventoux, I can get up this hill.”
[In need of inspiration at Allendale National TQ]

ALLENDALE TRAILQUEST 26 JULY 2009

I woke up about 6am to torrential rain and wind, but I do live in West Cumbria so that's not unusual. I had a very slow drive over Hartside behind three Transit buses en route to Alston Youth Hostel, with rain all the way, but arrived in good time at the cricket ground at Allendale and it was dry!

I chose a route north to the first crossroads and then headed south west through controls 2 and 12, and followed the line of the lead flues towards the chimneys and 27. By now it was raining lightly and the wind was in my face all the way but even so the views were great and after reaching the road I dropped down a bridleway to control 19 at a stream crossing. It was a bit of a push back to the road and then the wind was at my back and the gradient was downhill so good time was made to control 8. Then it was back in to the wind again as I headed south picking up controls 17, 7, and 21 on the way to the 50 pointer at Knockshield Moor. These tracks are what me and my mate call "proper" - that is not too easy but not unrideable so the riding was still great fun. I dropped down into the wind through Swinhope to 15 then to 11 at the footbridge near Spartylea - what a great place name! This was when I realised I hadn't been going as fast as I should have been and decided against climbing towards Tedham Moss and instead started my return towards the finish via controls 26, 13, 22, (phew) , 9 and 4 to finish with just a few minutes of wasted time. There was now a cricket match taking place in the sunshine! Weather can be a funny thing.

It was a shame to find the computer had decided to malfunction and I really felt for Trevor after all the work and effort he had put in to what was a great event in one of the best areas I have ever ridden. I hope no one else let the computer hiccup spoil an otherwise enjoyable day. Shame about not being able to check the split times but respect to all the winners - their scores make me feel as if I've been going backwards - but at least I was there. So thanks to Trevor for putting on yet another superb event and "divn't" worry too much 'cos everybody I've spoken to enjoyed it too, keep up the good work and look forward to the next one.

John Johnston .

*[P.S. Sparty Lea means the clearing in the Sparty grass
Swinhope means vally of the swine - same as Grizedale - Karen]*