



Blood, Sweat and Gears

Newsletter of the National Governing Body for Mountain Bike Orienteering.

bmbo.org.uk

January 2011

An important topic this month is the government proposal to sell forestry commission land. Please read the article and act on it.

More cheerfully, we have news of this year's MBO National League, an article about rule 9, and a bulging fixture list. And for now at least, it has stopped snowing.....

February is a short month, so articles for the newsletter to me by 15 Feb, please.

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FIXTURES

February 2011

Sat 12	Cartmel, S Lakes	MBO Score 2hr30m	Cross Cumbria Cyclists (XCC) Winter 5/5	Details
Sat 19	Leavening, Pocklington, Yorks	MBO Score 2hr	NYMBO Winter 4/4	Details
Sun 20	Borrowdale, Cumbria	MBO Score 2hr30m	West Coast MTB Winter 4/5	Details
Sun 20	Biggin/Hartington/White Peak	MBO Score 3hr	Dark & White Winter 5/6	Details
Sun 27	MOD Stafford change of venue	MBO Middle dist	Walton Chasers Orienteering Club National MBO 1/12	Details

March 2011

Wed 3	Cumbria	MBO Score 1hr45m	West Coast MTB Night Event 3 of 3	Details
Sat 05	Cowtons area, Darlington	Bike O 2hr	Cleveland Orienteering Klub Winter 3/3	Details
Sat 12	White Horse & Wass Forest, N Yorks	MBO Score 3hr	NYMBO Summer 1/9	Details
Sun 13	N Peak Dist	MBO Score 3hr	Dark & White Winter 6/6	Details
Sun 13	Braithwaite, Cumbria	MBO Score 3hr	West Coast MTB Winter 5/5	Details
Sat 19	Swinley Forest – Upper Star Posts	MBO Middle dist	Berkshire Orienteers Southern MBO 2/8 National MBO 2/12	Details
Sat 26	Orton, Cumbria date change	MBO Score 2hr30m	Cross Cumbria Cyclists (XCC) Winter 3/5	Details
Sat 26	North Ringwood	MBO Score 90min (& launch of Permanent MTBO Course)	Wimborne Orienteers Southern MBO 3/8	Details

April 2011

Sat 9	Swaledale, Yorks Dales	MBO Score 5hr	NYMBO Summer 2/9	Details
Sat 9	Wareham Forest & Gore Heath	MBO Middle dist	WSX Southern MBO 4/8 National MBO 3/12	Details
Sun 10	Pentlands date change	MBO Score 3hr	SMBO Summer 1/6	Details
Sun 10	Peak district	Enduro	Dark & White	Details
Sat 16	Blanchland, Northumberland	MBO Score 4hr	NEMBOS 1/5	Details
Sun 17	Endmoor near Kendal	MBO Score 3hr	XCC Summer 1/7	Details

Full calendar and lots more info on the BMBO website

<http://www.bmbo.org.uk>

National MBO League 2011

	Date	Venue	Category	Planner	Other details
1	27th Feb	MOD Stafford	Middle	WCH Mark Stodgell	
2	19th March	Star Posts, Berkshire	Middle	BKO	Southern Series
3	9th April	Wareham Forest, Dorset	Middle	WSX	Southern series
4	7th May	Swynnerton Camp, Cannock	Sprint	WCH Mark Stodgell	British Sprint Champs
5	8th May	Swynnerton Old Park, Cannock	Middle	WCH Mark Stodgell	British Middle Champs
6	25th June	Moors Valley	Score	WIM Trevor Bridle	Southern Series
7	26th June	Longleat, Warminster	Long	SARUM Nigel Benham	Southern/ British Long Champs
8	9th July	Endcliffe Village, Sheffield	Sprint	SHUOC Lucy Harris	
9	10th July	Wharnccliffe, Sheffield	Middle	SHUOC Lucy Harris	
10	Sept	Chopwell Woods, Hexham	Middle	TBB & ABB	
11	15 th Oct	Tankersley, Sheffield	?	Killian Lomas	
12	19th Nov	Gisburn, Lancashire	Long	Alan Hartley	

Best 7 from 12 to count

The events that have been selected for the MBO National League 2011 are listed above. Once again I have tried to get a fair spread of events around the country, although the far North is under represented this year due to lack of organisers. Also shown are the events that have been nominated as British Championship events including a first-ever British Sprint Champs. Hopefully there will be something to entertain everyone wherever you live. If there are no events in your area consider whether you could organise one for 2012!

Following feedback from last year I have made a number of changes to the league scoring system. To encourage beginners there are new short courses which will enable competitors to score points in the league without overstretching themselves on the longer courses. I have also introduced a percentage points system to make the league more competitive. It is hoped that the changes will make our sport more accessible to more people without creating more work for event organisers.

The details of these changes are shown in the following extract from the guidelines.

Age Classes and Courses

To score points in the National MBO League competitors must enter the course appropriate to their age class.

Age classes will correspond to the courses at events as follows:

A Course – M21 (Open men), M40, M20.

B Course – W21 (Open Women), W40, M50, W50, M60, M18, W18 & W20, M20S, M21S, M40S

C Course – W60, Youth, M18S, M50S, M60S, W18S, W20S, W21S, W40S, W50S.

D Course - Score (Non-competitive)

For the purposes of the league, competitors will only be ranked against those in the same age class.

Points System for League

Points will be awarded in each class according to the following formulae:

Standard courses: Winners Time / Your time x 100%

For short courses: Winners Time / Your time x 60%

Full details can be found on the BMBO website under the MBO tab

Please note that a number of the fixtures are still awaiting access confirmation and may be subject to change. Updated details will be posted on the BMBO calendar as soon as possible.

Tony Brand-Barker
MBO Coordinator.

FORESTRY COMMISSION SELL-OFF

Karen Blackburn's comments, not necessarily the official opinion of BMBO.

I'm sure you have all heard about this in the media. If the sell-off takes place, it could have a very damaging effect on our sport of mountain bike orienteering, and although BMBO are involved in the consultations, we all need to do something about it as individuals. Leaving it to someone else to sort out is not an option in this case.

I should point out that the proposals only apply to England (at present...)

Many of our events are heavily dependent on FC land. At present FC have a duty to encourage leisure use of the forests. You are probably aware that organised events, such as orienteering, MBO, car rallies etc do have to get permission and do pay for their use of the forest. At present we have a national agreement negotiated by the chairman to pay fees which are lower than the FC originally proposed. If the forests go into private ownership, every event organiser will have to negotiate separately with the forest owners over access and fees. This is not a strong position for organisers.

I have not had time to read all the documents and arguments. A lot has been and will be written on the topic, and I'll include some links to useful sites later, but to start you thinking here are a few statements to consider:

Public rights of way will remain - But the condition of bridleways in commercial forest plantations is often poor, which is why the forest roads and man made trails are so popular. And if car parking and other facilities are closed, it will be difficult for folks to access the RoW - there are plenty of ways for a landowner to discourage use of a RoW. Legally, we are not allowed to race on bridleways anyway, and the presence of a RoW does not allow you to hold an organised event, you still need the landowner's permission.

Open Access may be preserved in some areas - this does not apply to biking at all.

Woodlands will be available for charities and local communities to buy and manage - The money for this is not available, and will be difficult or impossible to raise in the time scale proposed. And there is no reason to assume that a charity or community group would include mountain biking in their plans. The main areas of "Heritage Woodlands" being specially mentioned for transfer to charitable trusts are The New Forest and Forest of Dean, so not much joy for northerners.

Large Commercial Forests (just Kielder according to the map on the website) have limited public benefits - but we know it is great for mountain biking.

Commercial Forests - can be sold or leased - with lease conditions to ensure that the public benefits of these woodlands are preserved while allowing the operators to maximise their commercial potential.

Civil servants do not have good record for drawing up contracts such as leases so that private lawyers can't find plenty of loopholes, so don't expect the public benefits to last long.

Private owners will be able to invest in infrastructure for leisure FC have already invested millions into building mtb trails and developing facilities, and we help to pay for it with car park fees and by supporting cafes etc. Private owners might well be interested in the most profitable centres, but will want a return on any investment, so I would expect price increases.

The possibility of forests being purchased by shooting syndicates "for sporting use" has not seen much publicity. For good conservation reasons, access is already limited at bird nesting time. If a shooting syndicate buys a woodland, they won't want folks in when birds or deer are breeding, or when shooting is taking place. And there will be gamekeepers around to deter poachers.

I would not like to say all private ownership is bad - there are good examples around. But can we afford to take the risk? By and large, I think the FC do a good job. We all own the forestry commission forests, not the government, and we need to have a loud say in what happens to them.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Sign the petition here: http://38degrees.org.uk/pages/save_our_forests_action_centre
2. Download, read and respond to the public consultation document here:
<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8D3G4M>
3. Read more info here, including links to local campaigns for Lakes, Cannock, Sherwood, Chopwell etc:
<http://saveourwoods.co.uk/>
4. Write to your MP.
5. Follow the news and have your say on the BMBO newspaper and forum:
www.bmbo.org.uk

Knowledge of an Event Area:

John Dixon writes about how much difference it can make....

Rule 9: Pre-riding an event area is not considered to be within the spirit of the event.

Last month's newsletter drew attention to the rule about head on riders meeting and passing by the right shoulder. It prompted me to consider rule 9. Presumably it is ok to ride *before* the controls have been placed but not afterwards.

Taking this to the extreme opposite, I recently had the opportunity to ride an event with full pre-knowledge of the control positions and terrain.

Did it make any difference? Yes!

The event had been run at Sutton Bank as an evening event in July and again on a Saturday morning in November. The best score in July was 325 (Andy Conn, who else?). I had the map from July, so using Memory Map I considered all the variations and came up with a 53km route that I thought was possible with a 400 points tally (out of 525). This only required an average of 24km/hr.

Easy-Peasy? No it wasn't!

Being realistic and allowing 10 minutes/15 penalty points I thought it better to go for 29 to the far east and be left with options near the finish. But trying to avoid too many ups and downs on the steep (very steep) escarpments was the next big problem. Also I didn't want to end up in the east with only one way home so I compromised by forfeiting the 30 points at control 29 and headed south using gravity to start with 24 and 15 on the steepest and roughest of the hills. This saved having to make the short STEEP climb for them later on. Control 17 was next, followed by 1, 4, 13, 4, 5 and 23 working anti-clockwise round the loop. Continuing at more than the required average speed (no climbing so far) I hit 16 and 27 – saving some time here as I knew the question was wrong so just made a note to that effect and carried on. Here was one of the problems raised by access to mapping software. It was much shorter to go downhill, due west, and sacrifice some speed on the short bridleway to 26 - but how slow would it be? On slicks I decided to take the longer, hillier route round sticking to the road. Other rider reports afterwards were favourable so maybe it was the wrong choice? Back to 12 and 7 then again on the road for no3. Despite all my planning I set off east instead of west here and then wasn't sure about the track to 6, going up at least one blind alley before getting it right! After 6 it was 22 and another decision about road or rough to get to no11. I should have played safe, as although it was a much shorter route down the bridleway it wasn't any quicker. On slicks, and with more uphill than I had expected, I was struggling to make any progress before eventually coming out breathless on the track to 11 - and then the road.

Running out of time I didn't bother with no2 but went northwest for 1. On the way I was trying to decide how much time I had to go for 21 and 28, not realising that for today 28 was actually out of bounds. Fearing the climb up White Horse Bank commonsense prevailed – and the cold facts from my computer – so I headed for no18 and home. How many hairpin bends and false summits are there on that road? Eventually it flattened out along with my heart rate and I pushed hard for the finish, coming in just on 10 minutes late.

In July the top score was 325. I had started by thinking 400 was possible, and maybe someone else could have done it, but I covered 54 km in 2 hours and 10 minutes to earn 295. Top score was 316 (another Andy - not Andy Conn this time but Andy Massey) so for an M60 riding non-competitive it was OK.