



Blood, Sweat and Gears

Newsletter of the National Governing Body for Mountain Bike Orienteering.

June 2009

TCA fixtures June - July 2009 - 16 events

Sat 20 June NYMBO 5hr Trailquest Fremington, Swaledale, Yorkshire Dales. round 5 of 11

National TQ league event 7 <http://www.nymbo.org.uk/>.

Tues 23 June Mintcake MTB 2hr Lakeland Lanequest round 4 of 6:

<http://www.mintcakemt看b.co.uk/>

Wed 24 June Leicestershire 1or 2hr Trailquest

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

Sun 28 June Manx Mountain Bike Club 3 or 5 hr Trailquest Laxey, Isle of Man

National TQ league event 8 <http://www.trailquest.manxtiming.com/>

Tues 30 June Mintcake MTB 2hr Lakeland Lanequest round 5 of 6:

<http://www.mintcakemt看b.co.uk/>

Wed 1 July West Coast MTB Series Wythop Forest, N.Lakes

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

Wed 1 July D+W Summer League 2hr Trailquest Peak Dist. round 5 of 6:

http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk

Tues 7 July Mintcake MTB 2hr Lakeland Lanequest round 6 of 6:

<http://www.mintcakemt看b.co.uk/>

Wed 08 July DVCC 2 hr Evening Lane Quests Daerham North Lakes Round 3 of 3

<http://www.derwentvalleycc-webeden.co.uk/>

North Yorkshire Trailquest weekend (enter either event or both)

Sat 11 July NYMBO 2hr Trailquest Cropton, N.Yorks round 6 of 11

Sun 12 July NYMBO 2hr Trailquest Newtondale Forest, Pickering, N.Yorks. round 7 of 11

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

Sat 11 July The Bike Place Marathon Series The Hot Trod, Keilder Forest round 3 of 4

http://www.thebikeplace.co.uk/index.php?option=static&page_id=2501&pname=Events

Wed 15 July NYMBO 2hr Summer Lanequest Bishop Wilton, N.Yorks

<http://nymbo.org.uk/summerlanequests2009.htm>

Wed 15 July D+W Summer League 2hr Trailquest Peak Dist. round 6 of 6:

http://www.darkandwhite.co.uk

Sun 19 July XCC 5hr Trailquest Heversham/Atheneum, South Cumbria

National TQ league event 9

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

Sun 26 July NEMBOS 4 hr Trailquest Allendale, North Pennines. round 4 of 6

Details later on TCA website events page

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

EUROPEAN MTBO CHAMPS

The European Championships and Junior World Championships are in Denmark 22nd - 28th June

The team selected to represent GB are:

Men	Women
Killian Lomas	Sarah Bayliss
James Taylor	Charlotte Somers-Cocks
Mark Stodgell	
Junior Men	Junior Women
Chris Brand-Barker	Emily Benham

We hope they all have good rides, and look forward to hearing all about it when they return.

If you can't wait that long, follow their progress on this website:

<http://www.eocmtbo2009.dk/eocmtbo2009/>

NATIONAL TQ LEAGUE after 6 events

Halfway through the series, and the national event at Wark has resulted in some changes in the league. Bryan Singleton (M40) had 2 punctures which scuppered his chance of increasing his overall lead, but he's still at the top with 396.5. The competition is narrowing at the top of M50, with Tony BB (359.2) just ahead of John Rawdon (353.8). In M21 Mark Stodgell and young Chris BB both had good rides and now have 266.5 and 228.9 respectively. With Mark, Chris and Tony away in Denmark, there's an opportunity for more changes after the national event in Swaledale. Ray Morriss got stacks of points at Wark and now leads M60 with 167%

Angela Brand Barker (W40) is way ahead of the other women on 305.5. Emily Brooks has had some eventful days, but has persisted and now leads W21 with 163.9, while Anne Plant's 75% at Wark puts her at the top of W50. Karen Blackburn is still in a class of her own in W60...

No changes in the lead for the mixed 21,40,50, generation or tandem teams, but the mixed X60 team of Morgan and Hazel Howe opened their account at Wark.

There are 3 more national TQ league events coming shortly, web links are in the fixtures list:

Swaledale in the Yorkshire Dales

Laxey in the Isle of Man

and Heversham in Cumbria

WARK FOREST TRAILQUEST – organiser's report

A glorious sunny morning greeted all who turned up at Stonehaugh Village Social Club on 31st May and there seemed to be a definite buzz of excitement amongst the competitors, most of whom had not been to Wark Forest before. Trevor and I had arrived early to set up the SI Computer as we were a bit nervous - this being our first time using it without the help of Geoff Moorhouse (who was on holiday). We, along with my son Grant, were just about getting to grips with it when Mark Stodgell arrived and his help and guidance were a godsend ...so a big thank you to him...and we were on our way.

Wark Forest was "discovered" purely by accident back in the days of Foot and Mouth when, on the way to Kielder (that being one of the few places seemingly by-passed by the disease), I turned up the road to Stonehaugh out of curiosity to take a look. I had no map with me and headed off into the forest to find lots of barely used forest roads, grassy tracks and bridleways, both old and newly constructed....all bike riders dream trails. On subsequent visits with friends, we soon realised this area would be perfect for Trailquesting. So began years of fantastic riding over many many weekends, usually without seeing a soul, exploring this superb area. Then, despite the OS maps being years out of date (an issue I have raised with them), we began to plan our first event which took place last year with just 29 entries.

With so much positive feedback from everyone involved, news spread, and this year we were invited to hold a National Event. I tried to plan a course to suit all abilities and offer a variety of route choices taking in the marvellous scenery this forest has to offer along with one or two surprises such as hidden bothies and a small fishing lake. With a lack of big climbs and with fast riding on most of the trails I realised that competitors would cover a lot of ground so had to use a large area (I believe several people covered over 70k). I also put in several "out and back" checkpoints which were chosen for their scenic beauty as much as anything - I hope you agree! Those of you not going too fast would probably have noticed the abundance of birdlife and may have been lucky enough to spot a deer or two as I have done many times whilst out on my recces.

I was so glad that the event went off without any major hitches, everyone back safely with no injuries or mishaps and was overwhelmed by the number of people who approached me at the end of the day to say how much they enjoyed both the event and the area. I had the forest all to myself again the next day, whilst collecting the remaining controls on a beautiful summer evening. Thank you to all who took part and hope to see you at Wark next year when we will be in the new Eco Centre Village Hall you saw nearing completion next door to the Social Club.

My thanks to all who helped, I couldn't have done it without you.... my son Grant on the computer, John, Emily, Barry and Clive for collecting controls, Pete Strong for his help, guidance and encouragement, to all who joined me on recce rides (you know who you are), Karen Blackburn for her help at registration and Trevor Naisbet our NEMBOS Co-ordinator who took on the job just as it looked like NEMBOS would fold two years ago - keep up the good work. Thanks also to Ian Bell of **The Bike Place** in Kielder for sponsoring and providing the prizes for the event.

There were a total of 49 entries this year so please tell all your riding buddies what they missed and bring them along next year!
Steve Watson

WARK FOREST TRAILQUEST A Competitor's report

I was looking forward to the Wark TQ and the drive over from Dumfries & Galloway (where we had been mountain biking for a week) included stopping for a short walk along a section of

Hadrians Wall.

After arriving at Stonehaugh and going through the usual routine faffing, it was time to look at the Master Map. A large area of forest and some open moorland filled up most of the map. However, the most noticeable element of the map for me was the lack of any brutally steep climbs. As I am nearly 2 metres tall and 90kg the terrain looked a bit more suited to my strengths than most Trailquests.

Upon receiving the competition map at the start and being informed of the 'harsh' penalties for being late, I quickly decided on what I thought was quite a compact route. In addition, as my legs were heavy I decided to start slow and pick up the cluster of CP's east and north of the start. Despite going slow, I made two navigational mistakes in the first ten minutes and each time I had to double back and pick up the right track.

After that everything was going to plan until I got to CP12 and realised that the bridleway from there to 23 looked pretty much non-existent. At this point, I stopped for a look at the map and completely changed my route and decided to keep my height and contour round in a big oval picking up 18, 19, 29, 6 and 23 before heading north via 17. From there I generally looped round the top of the map then back into the forest before heading into the southern forested area and picking up many of the checkpoints in the forest west of Henshaw Common. At CP 13 I felt pretty tired and dehydrated and decided against getting CP 20 and headed home and finished with 7mins to spare and 400 points.

Overall a hot, hard, dusty event that I thoroughly enjoyed. It was a bit of a shock to have won as I have not yet even managed an overall win in one of one of my local Trailquests (Dark and White). It was especially pleasing to find out that Maggie had won her category too, thus proving to herself that her Glentress category win was no fluke.

Hope to see you all at Swaledale. I will be the tallest one there struggling up those steep hills!

A big thankyou to the organisers.

Catch you soon,
Mark McPhillips

British MTBO Championships – Middle Report by Bryan Singleton

This years MTBO National Champs was held in the South in some fantastic terrain, plenty of complex track network and fast riding. The middle distance was held at Hamptsworth Estate near to The New Forest – some dense forest, plenty of singletrack and enough vegetation to make the navigation technical. Short sharp climbs and swooping descents made for an excellent course with plenty of route choice decisions to be made.

I made a steady start, 5mins behind Mark Stodgell, so that I could get used to the map scale. With the winning time estimated to be an hour and with John Houlihan behind me I knew I needed a clean ride. The first 6 CPs flowed fairly obviously and I began to pick up the pace a little. A quick turn over of the map revealed a much more complex network of tracks in the middle section. I headed for a quick in/out at CP7, but a 3min leg turned into nearly 8min as the badly trampled bracken between two tracks made it hard to locate. I was not the only one who found this difficult as I spotted Mark having difficulties too.

The race now took on a different turn as thoughts turned to tactics and how to 'drop' Mark. I knew I was going well but could I map read fast enough? CPs 9-13 were close packed and called for some close attention to the map and I was glad of the foot orienteering I had done through the winter – I now look for vegetation changes and do not need to look at the key anymore to identify map

symbols!!!

Mark and I leap frogged each other several times in this section. His navigation and flow through controls versus my speed. After he chose a better route via a main track to CP13 we all came back together between CPs14-18, a fantastic singletrack through the woods. Dropping down a fast descent to CP19 a cluster of twigs in Mark's back wheel gave me a small lead, turning into the CP I had exactly the same trouble and we 'dibbed' at the same time. CP20 was fairly straight forward and on the climb to CP21 I once again tried to pull away. It was here I lost time again by not paying enough attention to the map and thinking about the map scale. A quick relocate and negotiation of a series of tight tracks through thick conifers and I managed to pull the gap back by CP23 on the edge of a fenced area. Neck and neck we headed out to the final CP and on the wide track I nipped passed. My downfall comment was 'Your map skills, my legs!' as I missed the junction and lost a few seconds on the run in.

At the finish I knew my time would be reasonably quick and with other riders having made small errors this was enough to win overall. On reflection I think I would have gone better if we had not got caught up together, this led to me making more mistakes than I normally would have done. All credit to Mark he was very smooth and set a steady pace, making few stops or errors. Thanks again to the organizers of both events – fantastic areas, good maps and planning. If you missed it you missed out!

British MTBO Middle Distance Championships Report by Em Benham

After having had a slightly stressful few months, which saw me travel around Europe getting scores-on-the-doors at World Ranking Events, I spent the 3 weeks prior to the British Championships weekend recuperating in Sheffield. I was 'mapped out' my mid-May so didn't even consider picking up an MTBO map or anything Orienteering related during this time.

On Saturday I won the Long distance by 6 minutes to the top placed man on the B course, where I had had a near perfect race. I live about 10 minutes away from the area of the Middle distance, have only foot-O'ed there once 5 years ago and so have a familiarity with the map in terms of the layout of the terrain. Perhaps I was at a slight advantage over other competitors but with the size of MTBO in the UK, someone will always live near to the competition.

The long distance was hard and fast, and I kept up a high pace throughout the race. The middle distance was a complete contrast to the day before, so I opted for a more reserved race strategy of racing at 80% to get my navigation right in the trickier sections of the course. The terrain proved physical right from the start, so the stronger riders with better navigational skills were always going to do better.

The first half of the course was easy navigationally but care was needed to find the paths in all the grass and high bracken. Those competitors who could fit their entire course on the mapboard without folding map could see the technicality in the mid section of the course and took time to plan their routes. Those that had to fold their map became a little complacent with their navigation and got a surprise at around control 6!

The first few controls of the technical section provided much amusement at the download later, with some interesting routes going on, particularly for the A course. Several of the women made the same mistake of riding down the wrong path at control 6 stating 'a magnetic anomaly, where their compass pointed them down the path in question'. I managed to get through two controls here without error, but on the third I hadn't planned ahead so was stumped by the route choice decision. Once I'd made up my mind, I proceeded to ride off on the wrong path taking me back past the two previous controls. If this had been planned it would have possibly been the fastest route.

In the end the winning time on the B course was 2 minutes, with 3 minutes to third place. I was pleased to have won both days in a row, which I narrowly missed out on doing last year in Scotland.

The weekend was a great success; with some fierce competition in the men's A class seeing Andy Conn taking the Long distance title, and Bryan Singleton taking the Middle distance title. Many thanks to the two organising clubs Wimbourne and Sarum who put on some fantastic races.

Next News letter...

send us your report and views. Thanks.

