

MDOC AGM 14/10/2021

Chairman's Report

Even more than in the last club year, orienteering and the club's activities since October 2020 were disrupted by public health restrictions. Moreover, the risks surrounding Covid-19 continue to have an effect on event organisation and planning.

Membership

However, the pandemic has not affected the number of people joining the club. Over the course of the last year, the club has gained 12 new members.

MDOC MEMBERSHIP FIGURES 2021			
Club Members	Male	Female	TOTAL
Adult	96 (-1)	51 (-1)	147 (-2)
Junior	25 (-6)	21 (-1)	46 (-7) ⁽¹⁾
TOTAL	121 (-7)	72 (-2)	193 (-9) ⁽²⁾
Friends			12 (+4)
Notes 1. This year, just under half (25) of the club's individual junior members are secondary pupils at the Fallibroome Academy, Macclesfield. 2. BOF membership unit breakdown: 28 family units (66 members), 96 Individual Seniors and 31 Individual Juniors (Total: 155 units)			

Club events such as the New Year Social and Wednesday runs did not take place due to the lockdown or national restrictions on indoor gathering, and even after these were lifted, members were hesitant to gather again until they felt safer. Weekly social meetings continued by Zoom every Wednesday evening until July.

The Wednesday runs have now resumed, alternately hosted in homes as before and at neutral locations, but numbers are slightly down. There is also some interest among older members in meeting regularly for a daytime walk, possibly followed by a pub lunch.

The number of qualified first aiders in the club is still quite low, with courses temporarily suspended during lockdown. Having only a dozen or so qualified members means that those few people have to be on call to help for any of our events. It is hoped that another course in the near future will attract new First Aid volunteers as well as those whose certificates have expired.

Sam Drinkwater has continued to produce entertaining and informative newsletters for the club. For club information, this is supported by the club website edited by Julie Brook, emails sent by SimpleLists and Twitter and Facebook posts provided by Matthew Snarr and Nick Taylor, respectively.

Club development

After a long delay, three club members, Cecilia Fenerty, Pete Hayes and David Wathey, have now started their training as Level 2 orienteering coaches, lead by professional trainer Pat Mee, who is also an MDOC member.

Sue Birkinshaw is organising a controller's course with Ian Watson to help support planners.

In-club coach John Kewley also continued to share his international Trail-O experience to mentor members taking part in virtual TempO competitions with considerable success.

Schools and junior development

The club's junior representatives, Dominic Wathey and Catriona Beynon, have continued in that role.

For much of the year, schools were operating remotely or in a self-contained bubble, so the club's Schools Representative, Pete Hayes, could do little work on school premises. However, he was able to continue mapping schools from a distance and to develop new teaching materials.

As schools have opened up, contact and enquiries have increased, including from some new schools, and Pete hopes that he will be able to organise some competitions for the schools in the Spring term.

At Fallibroome Academy, older students continue to take a lead in coaching orienteering at the school, and Pete hopes to be able to provide some training for young coaches.

Events and fixtures

The club could only hold one major event this year, the Northern Championships, but it was also heavily involved in providing manpower for the British Sprint Championships for the North West Orienteering Association.

The Northern Championship was held on 9th June on High Dam in the southern Lake District as part of a joint weekend with the British Middle-Distance Championships hosted by Lakeland OC. Postponed from May 2020, MDOC organiser Trevor Roberts and planners Karen and Dan Parker from Borderliners had some testing times waiting for government restrictions to lift sufficiently for the event to take place. There were also several reiterations of the courses and start procedures to meet additional requirements from landowners and British Orienteering. Finally, though, the whole weekend was very much enjoyed by about 1200 competitors. Assistant organiser Sam Drinkwater and a happy band of volunteers from MDOC and other clubs helped to make it such a success in the Spring sunshine.

The British Sprint Championships were held in Skelmersdale on 22nd August paired with the British Sprint Relays the day before under the overall responsibility of NWOA. Club member John Kewley was the day organiser for the Individual Championships with help from Chris Kirkham and several volunteer helpers from the club. The intricate housing estates in the town provided an enjoyable challenge to the competitors. Many thanks to all the volunteer helpers.

As for our smaller local events, the last two events of the 2020 Autumn Series could not take place due to public health fears by the local council. Then, with winter infections rising and the introduction of local travel restrictions, the whole of the Night Street League was called off so the club's Winter fixtures were effectively cancelled.

A Winter Series of events was organised using MapRun6. Thank you to planners Grahame Crawshaw, Dave Mawdsley, Mike Wharton and David Gray for keeping the MapRun fans among us entertained. Peter Ross also launched the M60 O-Ringen, a circumnavigation of Manchester in twelve legs, using the MapRun app and an element of route choice to take 12 of 15 possible controls on each leg.

Once restrictions eased, the club had permission to hold its traditional New Year charity event in Lyme Park, but as a closed event for club members only, in April. The weather on the day was more suited to the New Year, however, and treated runners to a blanket of recent snow.

As time passed, the club could resume its usual programme, with three Summer evening events and, so far, two Saturday morning local events.

We must also thank Ian Watson for his entry system for local events, which is now well established, together with contactless payment on the day.

A list detailing all the club's events in the past year has been compiled and circulated by the club's Fixtures Secretary, Sue Birkinshaw. Very many thanks to all the planners, organisers, series organisers and helpers on the day who made them happen.

Sue is now appealing for volunteers to join a dedicated Fixtures Committee to help spread the load of arranging all the elements of the club's fixtures programme more widely.

Club successes

Club member Peter Bray represented Great Britain at the World Orienteering Championships in the Czech Republic with the GB Squad. More later, as Peter is talking to us about the experience after the main AGM business.

In national and regional championships, the club gained a number of successes.

British Middle Distance Championships, Summerhouse Knott – 8th June

M21 – 2nd - Peter Bray

M70 - 3rd - John Britton

M80 - 4th - Dave Mawdsley

W35 - 3rd - Cerys Manning

W80 - 4th - Sue Birkinshaw

Northern Championships, High Dam – 9th June

W35A - 4th - Cerys Manning

W80 – 3rd - Sue Birkinshaw

BO Individual Sprint Championships, Skelmersdale – 22nd August

M Open B - 3rd - River Edis Smith

M80 – 1st - Dave Mawdsley

W Open B – 5th – Anna Mackenzie

W80 - 3rd - Sue Birkinshaw

BO Long Distance Championships, Braunton Burrows, North Devon – 3rd October

M70L - 5th - John Britton

W35L - 2nd - Cerys Manning

Several members also took part in the reduced Scottish 'Six' Days in August, with notable wins from Sue Birkinshaw (1st – W80 x 3), Dave Mawdsley (2nd – M80 x 2), Michele Dawson (1st & 3rd x 2 – W21L), John Britton (3rd – M70L) and Cerys Manning (1st – W35L).

During lockdown, several club members had notable success in the online Trail-O discipline called TempO, notably Ben Kyd, who won one of the eight series and five top 10 positions in the international competition. The MDOC club team were 2nd five times and 3rd twice – a fantastic success – and Ben, John Kewley, Dominic Wathey, River Edis-Smith and Sam Drinkwater all had top 10 positions in individual stages.

Ben Kyd was also nominated for British Orienteering's national Young Volunteer of the Year Award for his coaching work at Fallibroome Academy.

Long-standing MDOC member and coach, John Kewley, has been elected to the Athletes Advisory Group for Trail-O of the International Orienteering Federation (IOF) and was then elected onto the all-discipline IOF Athlete's Council.

Catriona Beynon (W14) Ben Kyd (M18) and Dominic Wathey (M16) remained on the North West Junior Squad, which has now resumed training.

Maps

A new map of Knutsford was commissioned, surveyed and drawn in preparation for the East Cheshire urban weekend later this month. In addition, Eddie Speak has prepared a new urban map of Macclesfield West for the NW Urban Sprint Championships the same weekend.

Committee changes

Dave Mawdsley has decided to step down from the committee. Dave has served the club for many years, both on and off the committee, including a very active stint as chair, and we thank him for all his contributions to the club's development.

Tom Fellbaum has also asked to relinquish his cap as club captain. We wish him well and thank him for his efficient undertaking of that task.