



Orienteering

Newcastle and Tyneside



British Orienteering

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Newcastle Urban (UKOL) (UKUL) Event 15th June 2025

Photos: Kim Sanderson

Orienteering in Madeira – Graham Scott



In May I went on holiday to Madeira, the Portuguese island in the Atlantic Ocean. I have been several times. Before going this time, via a website, I obtained a list of orienteering events on Madeira for 2025.

There was an urban event at Camacha (pronounced Camasha) on a Saturday. Previously I have visited Camacha on a minibus tour of the east of the island. The small township was previously noted for making items of wickerwork from 1850; everything from mini-animals to baskets to large items of furniture.

On the island I eventually made contact by email with the organising club who said I could enter on the day. I did not have to pre-enter like I discovered most competitors had. The reply to my cell phone was in perfect English, giving all the information I needed including a Google mini map of the location of the event centre, ("Mother Church" of Camacha in what appeared to be the centre of Camacha), the start time window from 3 o'clock to 4:30, a pre-start from 2:30, prize giving at 6 o'clock etc.

As a user of public transport at 1:30 I caught a less frequent Saturday bus from Funchal, the large main town on Madeira, to Camacha. At Camacha centre the bus driver pointed out the "Mother Church". It was downhill and looked like a mini version of the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Liverpool, "Paddy's Wigwam".



I could see no signs of the orienteering event. Then from a large car park below the church appeared an orienteer, a man in his 30s dressed in "the gear" with a race number on his top. I later saw that nearly everybody had their own unique number "printed" on the fabric of their club O-top. I assume it was their National number for Portugal like our B.O.F. number.

We introduced ourselves. Together we walked uphill to the "old" Mother Church about 10 minutes up the steep road past the bus stop. He had been orienteering about a year but had done some orienteering in the army. He suggested that I did the "Amarelo" course. At registration in the courtyard of the "old" church I was welcomed, entered as Graham Scott, a Portuguese national as I could not provide any I.D. as to who I really was or how old I was from a passport or driving licence (Safely in the room safe), loaned a dibber free of charge, given a place to store my spare clothing and haversack, inserted in the start list of Amarelo for 3:01 so that I could catch a return bus at 4:30, shown the final control on the boundary of the courtyard, everything done in Perfect English. I now had time to look around.

The club names on their O-tops showed that all parts of the island were there. On the hot, very sunny day there was no excess clothing worn. I wore a peaked cap but that did not prevent sunburn on the back of my neck!



I could find nobody for the pre-start so I set off following the red and white tapes to the start, first down hill, then along and then a very steep climb. I was overtaken by someone who said they had told the pre-start that I had gone already to the start. As the only English person and the only one over 80 I seemed to be already known by many.

With 15 minutes to the first starts I was joined by many others, being asked by a man in his early 20s which way was north as I had a compass. The sun was blazing down ! Teenagers had their mobiles in hand perhaps to use the compass function.

At 2:56, at T-4 minutes, for 3 o'clock starts, a boy of 10 started to call out names. One minute later in perfect English, I was called up. Graham is a difficult name for some non-English speakers. When I go to Italy I often say "Call me Mario!"

On the course I stuck to the paths, alleys, narrow roads and steep staircases with handrails. On 3 occasions I found later the planner had obtained local permissions on my course to use a route under a covered veranda on a private house; the wrought iron gates to a large private house with grounds to be opened, and multiple tall iron gates to be left open around the many church buildings close to the "old" Mother Church and finish.

My course was 2.1 km, 65m climb and the same as D14 and H14. I was 9th out of 19 finishers. My time was 37.11; winning time 25:07 The fastest H14 was 27:44 and the fastest D14 was 38:06. As for ages there was only one person on D65 and 7 on H55.

The first time I ran in to the finish I was applauded and photographed but had to confess at download that I had missed a control, control 16 out of 17. But now the mapper-cum-planner escorted me back to control 16 and did agree that since 2023 the vegetation had grown. So he encouraged me to punch 16, 17 and the finish again so that I finished "illegally" but download printout said all was OK. I asked if I could keep my map as last time in Madeira it was taken from me. I could. Water, plastic cups and 2 trays of bananas were available at the finish.

I was shown the poster for the first event of the World Orienteering Tour of 2026 which is traditionally held in January in Madeira.

No time to stay for any prize giving. The return bus to Funchal was on time. **Graham Scott**

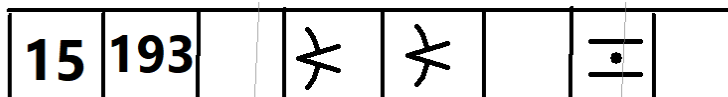


Description Challenge from Patrick

In the last edition Patrick highlighted an unusual control site and description encountered at a CLARO event at Plumpton Rocks and challenged readers to propose a description from a photograph of the control. A bottle shaped prize was on offer for a correct suggestion, but that remains on his shelf. Here is a slightly different view. *(Photo credit: Wendy Carlyle)*



Answer: Between the Caves!



Patrick comments that it is the first time he has been rock climbing on a course. If CLARO host another event at Plumpton Rocks it is an experience not to be missed.

British Orienteering Ranking List

1	Jonathan Malley	M21
2	Francis Shillitoe	M50
3	Lewis Balfour	M45
4	George Hare	M60
5	Patrick Smyth	M65
6	Allie Wilson Craw	W70
7	Gwenda Cavill	W60
8	Jane Malley	W60
9	Roy Dawson	M75
10	Fred Miller	M70

Congratulations to the top ten club runners in the British Orienteering's ranking list.

Points are awarded for performance in events of regional status and above to those running correct age course with at least ten participants. The points total is derived from totalling the top six scores in a twelve month period.

The full ranking list is available at:

<https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/rankings>



Spring Local Series

This series of four Saturday morning events concluded at Gallagher Park (Bedlington) on 28th June. Thanks go to the individual Organisers – Patrick, Tim, Jeremy and Les. Altogether 39 people participated in at least one event, 9 of whom took part in at least three to qualify for class leader status.

NEWCASTLE & TYNESIDE ORIENTEERS SPRING 2025 LOCAL SERIES - Scores

#	Name	Class	Club	29/3/25 Stocksfield		12/4/25 Newburn		10/5/25 SeatonSluice		28/6/25 Bedlington		TOTAL	BEST THREE
				Pos	Pts	Pos	Pts	Pos	Pts	Pos	Pts		
OR	Patrick Smyth	M65	NATO		100*	5	101	1	105	3	103	409	309
LO	George Hare	M60	NATO	2	99	3	98			1	100	297	297
OR	Fred Miller	M70	NATO	3	98	1	100	3	98	6	95	391	296
OR	Catherine Lawlor	W55	NN	6	95	2	99	2	99	4	97	390	295
OR	Bob Cooper	M80	NN	6	100	11	95	7	99			294	294
OR	Mary Rack	W65	NATO	8	93	3	98			1	100	291	291
LO	Jim Gardner	M50	NATO	3	98	6	95	3	98	5	96	387	292
LO	Tim Jenkins	M55	NATO	5	96		100*	6	95	11	90	381	291
LO	Joanne Field	W50	NATO			8	93	5	96	8	93	282	282
	Class Leader Award	Minimum of three scores to qualify											

Summer Local Series

Wednesday evenings (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. starts) during School Summer Break with a League for regular participants. Six events this time. Details on the club website

www.newcastleorienteering.org



Nuns Moor 16th July



Northumberlandia 23rd July



Wallsend Parks 30th July



Leazes Park 13th August



Exhibition Park 20th August



North Tyneside Coast 27th August
Precise Location TBC

Club Kit update

We have used the current club kit supplier, Bryzos, for a few years now. One issue with them is that kit takes a long time to arrive. Also some members have commented that the quality could be improved. Additionally, we would like to keep a small stock for new members (so that they don't have to wait for a group order). We could also offer a few more options of style like long sleeved, short sleeved, mesh, vest, and so on.

Therefore, the committee would like to canvas opinion about what members would like (or not like). We have a few options, including some decisions about the design. Watch out for a survey coming out via email. There will be no expectation to buy new kit, whatever decisions are made.

Fire Sale

In view of the above plans, there are a very few remaining tops of the current design, all of small sizes. If anyone has any use for any of them, please let Peter Firth know. Free of charge or donation to the Orienteering Foundation. Sizes (cm.) are according to the manufacturer's chart.

Uni	140	Long Sleeve used	Height 135 – 144 Chest 68-73
Uni	150	Long Sleeve	Height 145 – 154 Chest 73-78
Women XS		Short Sleeve	Height 162 – 166 Chest 82 - 88
Women XS		Short Sleeve used	Height 162 – 166 Chest 82 - 88
Women XS		Long Sleeve used	Height 162 – 166 Chest 82 - 88
Women Small		Short Sleeve used	Height 166 – 170 Chest 88 - 94
Uni		Small used x2 Short Sleeve	Height 166 – 170 Chest 88 - 94



An enthusiastic William at the British Orienteering Championships, Grizedale Forest

October Odyssey Weekend

Each of the three North East clubs takes it in turn to mount this weekend on behalf of the region. This year it is NATO's turn on 18th & 19th October at Cramlington and Beanley.



Do make a note in your diary.



Maze at School Fair

On Friday 20th June club member Lewis Balfour ran a maze at the Ponteland Primary School summer fair, ably assisted by his son, Alistair. Two other parents helped him set up, and that proved a mental workout for everyone, particularly as the sun was beating down on us. The ground was so hard that getting some of the control stakes in was difficult!

When the visitors arrived, it was frantic; *'here's the map, yes in order, no you don't have to run, put this on your finger, the other way, no the other way like this, put them in the hole until it bleeps, well done, put the dibber in there, no too quick, there's your printout, have a sweet'*. Imagine that what felt like hundreds of times! Great fun for everyone though. After I was told that we had the most people and the longest queue!

If anyone fancies setting up a similar event, it is reasonably easy to set up. One of those things where second time it is easy! It makes a great activity for a fair or work event and only needs a space on grass of about 10m. x 10m.



Maze for the Guides

Katherine Brown was also a provider of a maze, this time as part of an evening of orienteering she organised for some Cramlington Guides.

