

AGM 2016. Chairman's report.

As always it has been a very busy year with rather a lot of activities and events having taken place over the last year and so to keep the meeting reasonably brief I am only going to report, as it were, on the headlines.

After the 2015 AGM the Club's Executive Committee spent some time thinking about and redrafting the club's Development Plan. A synopsis of this was published in the Summer 2016 Newsletter and the full version is on the club web site. Since then the committee and the principal officers have been looking at ways to implement the plan.

In March of this year we gathered at Kirby Muxloe Golf Club for our Annual Dinner and Awards Evening. Our guest speaker was Mike Hamilton, Chief Executive of British Orienteering. Mike had some very complimentary things to say about the club including that we were reckoned as one of the top clubs in the country. Of course we knew that but were too modest to say so.

However before we get too carried away I would like to quote our Club Captain:-

"2016 is a familiar tale of poor performing LEI adults and top performing juniors. Hopefully after 5 years of junior success, these top performing juniors will return as top performing adults. Junior success has not been an accident, recruiting new juniors into the LEI Junior Squad has been done via the hard work of the Monday Club Night"

Which brings me neatly to the subject of Club Nights. These are continuing at three locations, Ashby, Groby and Glenfield. Numbers attending are virtually static with Ashby and Glenfield having their core of regular adult attendees. There is a turnover of members at the Groby club on Mondays as the older teenagers leave and are replaced by younger primary school children. A lot of effort is put in by the three club night coordinators and the club's coaching team to make them happen.

To return to the comments by the Club Captain. In March we competed in the Compass Sport Cup heat at Haywood Warren with 59 club members attending. Thank you all for turning out that day. We came 5th out of 6 competing teams, 267 points behind the winning club OD. Our best placed 25 runners count. So we only need to score another 11 points each! So lots of hard training at Club Nights please, before the 2017 heat. As the Club Captain is wont to point out, perhaps our problem is too much post event socialising!

In February we hosted the British Night Championships at Cademan. Those of you who were helping are probably aware that a significant numbers of competitors turned up expecting a easy run in an East Midlands park. Thanks to Steve Edgar's excellent courses they didn't get it, with many of the top competitors having really tough runs. The entry was on of the largest for the event in recent years. There was

a superb atmosphere during the evening and the start had an appearance of a softly lit fairy grotto surrounded by the pitch black of the forest. I never thought I would say that at an LEI AGM! Thank you to all those who helped deliver a really first class event.

In February we transferred our permanent orienteering courses maps to the British Orienteering download facility. Since then we have had 4,000 downloads. Maps have been used at nearly all our courses. Jane Dring-Morris who organises the POC wardens could use some more volunteers.

April saw the regional heat of the Yvette Baker Trophy. 25 of our juniors competed for the club and for the 5th year in a row we became Regional Champions. Well done the juniors. At the national final in July down in Happy Herts. land we were 7th out of 13 teams. Only 36 points behind the winning team.

18 Events, 770 starts, an average attendance of 43 and £823 paid in event levies. Just a few statistics from the 2016 Summer League. And a very wet summer league it was! One of my personal memories is at Watermead, wading knee deep in water to reach a control and going back later to collect the control when the water was nearly waist high. Thank you to every one who organised and planned. I feel a special thanks is due to Ursula who because of permission and vegetation problems planned the Score Cup at three different venues. Thank you to Bob for coordinating the league.

Early autumn was junior competition time. Starting with the Peter Palmers in early September, based at Groby Community College and attracting an entry double that of 2015 it was a fantastic weekend. Although I must admit that when my alarm went off at 3.45am on Sunday morning "fantastic weekend" was not what I said. When the subject of the club hosting the Peter Palmers was first mooted a couple of years ago I was rather doubtful about it. On reflection I feel that, probably because it was so different from normal orienteering, it was, from many aspects, one of the best events we have done. I of course, on behalf of the club, need to thank a lot of people who put in a very hard shift that weekend. Firstly thanks to Iain Tebbutt, the planner and Mick Lucking who controlled the event. They went out at 2.15 am to put the controls out. When I asked why, Mick said it seem like a good idea at the time. Thank you to Ursula Williamson for organising and spending a huge amount of time "sorting out" parents and other adults. Thanks to Tracey and Andy for masterminding the catering. I am still waiting for a photo of Andy in a pinny to appear on his facebook page! Thank you to our juniors for acting as hosts and general gofor's on the Saturday evening and all the adult members of the club who turned out over the weekend to help.

Next up in early October was the British Schools Score Championships at Bagworth. The Development team took this as an opportunity in the year before the event, to engage with schools in North West Leicestershire and a number of events and training sessions were held including the NW Leicestershire Primary Schools Championships which attracted an entry of over 450.

The British Schools itself attracted an entry of nearly 400. Iain Tebbutt once again was the planner. I was the organiser. This is an event where lots of children received prizes. Pushing a trolley around Tesco full of 180 bars of chocolate, and 28 assorted boxes of sweets produced some strange looks and I don't think the cashier at the checkout was totally convinced by my explanation of why I was buying this rather large amount of confectionery. The sun shone, the children enjoyed themselves and club members Daisy Rennie, Charlie Rennie, Ethan Tebbutt and Finn Lydon all won their age class. Unfortunately the day was slight marred by the attitude of some parents and teachers who could not grasp that Orienteering has a set of rules that we are supposed to follow and also we were not helped by antics of one member of the BSOA Committee. Again thank you to everybody who helped - you make this club chairman's job very easy.

The Membership report indicates that membership numbers have stayed more or less static. That is not quite the correct picture. Each year about 10% of our membership does not renew, usually for very good reason. So what the membership report for this year does not show is that, in order to for the membership numbers to remain fairly static in the last year, we have recruited 21 new members. I intend returning to the subject of membership recruiting later in the evening.

This year our Club Mark accreditation was up for renewal and Alison Hardy took on the mammoth task of gathering all the required information needed and putting that together in some reasonable coherent format. We have been advised informally that our reaccreditations will go through and we are just awaiting the formal acknowledgment. Many thanks to Alison for all the work that she has put in on this on the last year.

Congratulations to Iain Phillips who completed his level 2 coaching qualification during the year.

As a club we have supported the work of the East Midlands Orienteering Association over the last year. Bob Haskins is the club delegate to the Association's committee. Ursula Williamson is the Regional Fixtures Secretary and I am the Regional Development Coordinator, so we are well represented on the Association's committee and I would like to think that the three of us provide a firm basis for ensuring that the Region does its job of delivering support to the member clubs.

The regional junior squad, EMJOS is very active. The majority of its members are from LEI. Again this is a reflection of the success that Birthe and the team have on Monday nights. Earlier in the year at the request of John Hurley we appointed a link person between the club and EMJOS. Julie Ferris, who is one of our coaches involved with EMJOS, agreed to take on this role and we now have a much better idea as to EMJOS's programme of activities.

The club's executive committee has met four times during the year and the Events Sub Committee and the Development Sub Committee have met at regular intervals throughout the last 12 months. My thanks to the committee for all the work that has been put in over the last year. It makes my job as chairman very much easier having the support of such a good committee.

The treasurer will report in due course on the club's financial health, which looks good. One new innovation this year has been accepting card payments at events. We are still looking at ways of improving the system and as yet have not solved the problem of using it at events where there is a poor phone signal. One of the important strands in the club's life is the Newsletter; I should say our award winning Newsletter. I have almost forgotten how many times we have won awards but I know it is several. A high quality newsletter is important to the club for many reasons. It is an effective communication tool within the club and it is also a signal to non club members and the outside world that we are an organisation of quality. As a club we owe a very great vote of thanks to Alan and Wendy.

As always at an AGM there are going to be some changes in post holders. Laurie, after a fairly long stint as Club Secretary, is retiring but will be staying on the committee as Permissions Secretary. Permissions Secretary is one of those key behind the scenes jobs that if it was not well done there would be no orienteering. Many thanks Laurie for all the work you have done.

Our Junior Captain Hannah has relinquished her role on moving to University. The committee were able to say goodbye and thank you to Hannah at the August meeting. Hannah has been a first class Captain and a wonderful role model for our junior members and we wish her well in the future.

Our President will shortly be going into hospital for a new pair of go faster legs. Ernie, we wish you all the best and hope it will not be long before you are running round the forest again.

Ladies and Gentlemen that concludes the Chairman's report.