

This bulletin provides a brief summary of current SCOA issues, including those items discussed at the recent AGM and Committee meeting.

Committee appointments

SCOA's AGM took place on Thursday 18th June, when the following new appointments were made:

Chairman	Di Smith (SOC)
Coaching	Liz Yeadon (SARUM)
Junior Squad	Simon Kippin (TVOC) and Laurence Townley (SN) jointly.

The other officials, listed below, are unchanged:

Treasurer	Jerry Newcombe (BADO)
Secretary	Fiona Clough (BKO)
Technical	Katy Stubbs (BKO)
Fixtures	Richard Sharp (TVOC)
Development	Liz Yeadon (SARUM)

Di has written a brief note introducing herself, which you will find at the end of this Bulletin.

British Sprint and Middle Distance Championships

It was SCOA's turn to organise these events this year. The Sprints were held at Aldershot Garrison on Saturday 8th May, with the Middles at Bradenham (just outside High Wycombe) the following day. Those of you who were there will know that both events were very successful. Our thanks go to the Organisers, Planners, Mappers and Controllers for all the work they put in, and to the many people who helped on one or other of the days.

Junior World Orienteering Championships

Fiona Bunn (TVOC) and Dane Blomquist (BAOC) are to be congratulated for winning selection to the British team for the Junior World Orienteering Championships which are being held in Rauland, Norway on 2nd to 11th July 2015.

Athletes have to fund the £1,000+ cost of their attendance themselves - British Orienteering do not make any contribution to the cost. To help Fiona and Dane find this substantial amount, SCOA has made grants of £500 to both individuals. Needless to say, we wish them well in Norway.

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SCOA's finances

SCOA's finances are, naturally, considered in some detail at the AGM. Generally SCOA makes a deficit in most years, supported by the surplus made when it hosts a major event.

2014 was no exception. Without a major event last year, we incurred a deficit of around £1,800, which was somewhat better than budgeted due to some favourable variances. Our financial position remains strong with net assets of around £11,800, which partly reflects the very significant surplus arising from the 2013 JK.

The AGM determined that SCOA's membership fees and levies remain unchanged for 2016. For information, these are:

Membership fees (payable by clubs, not individuals)	£2 per senior member.
Levy (payable on Levels A, B and C events only)	45p per participant (with juniors charged as 1/3rd)

JK 2019

This may seem a very long way away. However the JK is a Level A event, for which areas need to be identified and key officials appointed three years in advance, ie by next April.

BKO have already kindly offered Cold Ash as an area for the Long Distance race. But other clubs now need to consider what areas they can offer for the other three competition days – Sprint, Middle / Long Distance and Relay.

Meanwhile if you would like to volunteer to plan or organise one of the days, please write to chairman@scoa-orienteeing.org.uk. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to officiate at a top level event. Ideally you will already have experience of organising or planning at Level B.

SCOA League 2014/15

This season's SCOA League is drawing to a close with just one more event to go, which is TVOC's event at Great Hampden on Sunday 5th July. You can see the up-to-date League scores on the SCOA website at <http://www.scoa-orienteeing.org.uk/league-results-page/1/9>

The Committee discussed the future of the SCOA League at last week's meeting. Whilst there are no plans to make changes for the forthcoming 2015-16 SCOA League, it was agreed that the present arrangement might not be serving the needs of the region. Before making any decision on changes, views of members will be canvassed; a questionnaire will be developed and circulated in early autumn.

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SCOA Junior Squad

The 2015 SCOA AGM signified the end of Craig Blackford's time as SCOA Junior Squad manager. His dedication and enthusiasm, inspired numerous juniors across the region to improve their orienteering skills and challenge the other junior squads at the annual junior inter-regionals. Laurence Townley (SN) and Simon Kippin (TVOC) have agreed to take on the role from Craig and are now working on a programme of training events for the autumn. They are hoping that experienced coaches across the region will also lend their support to the Squad.

The Junior Squad is responsible for training junior orienteers within the region to achieve a high standard, both personally and when running for the region. The Squad is always glad to welcome new members. The next training event is being planned for 18 July at Common Wood, Penn. To find out more, please contact Simon at juniorsquad@scoa-orienteering.org.uk

How about becoming a Controller?

If you have planned at Level C, what about qualifying to become a Controller? Controllers are a vital part of the orienteering framework, ensuring that events meet the quality criteria that competitors expect. And a few more Controllers in the region would be invaluable. A Level C Controllers course is being held near Ringwood on 3rd October, where prospective controllers would be most welcome. Please contact Katy Stubbs at technical@scoa-orienteering.org.uk for more details or to book your place.

Meanwhile one of SCOA's key roles is to provide training on planning, controlling, organising, mapping and coaching. But we need to know there is a demand for something before we go ahead and put on a training session. So if you want some training, please contact Katy on the above email address and she will see what we can provide.

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Meet your new SCOA Chairperson

My name is Di Smith. I am currently the Permissions Officer for SOC and have served on the SOC committee, in various roles, over most of the past 30 years. On June 18th I took on the role of Chair of the South Central Orienteering Association. What's SCOA?, you may ask. To quote its constitution "The Association is one of the constituent associations of the British Orienteering Federation. Its area is Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Oxfordshire."

What is SCOA's purpose or role?

In summary: to promote the sport, its rules and guidelines; to co-ordinate the fixtures; to organise regional championships and leagues; to provide technical training for the junior squad; to provide training of mappers, planners, organisers, controllers and coaches; to provide grants for training, junior tours and international competition; to co-ordinate the work involved in major events eg when the JK or British Championships are hosted by our region; and to act as a conduit between British Orienteering and its members.

Between them, the clubs in our region have close to 900 members and a wealth of experience and expertise to share. Last year the region's clubs put on 112 events level A to D and 135 registered activities, involving over 19,000 participations. All of these events need volunteers with adequate experience or training to lead them and one of the great things about orienteering is the range of ways that individuals can get involved, build experience and develop transferable skills for life. If you haven't thought about training as a coach, planner, controller, etc, why not find out more and sign up for training in the next year. The more trained volunteers we have, the easier the tasks become. The region's juniors have wonderful opportunities to develop skills, attend training camps and make friends across the country. This summer two SCOA juniors – Dane Blomquist and Fiona Bunn - are competing in the Junior World Championships, with some financial support from the region.

You are part of a very active and vibrant region. If you have any great ideas or thoughts on how the region can work better for you, I'd love to hear about them. I can't make any promises but I do want to ensure that all club members can contribute to, and benefit from, the region's role.

Di Smith, chairman@SCOA-orienteering.org.uk

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