

British TrailO Newsletter

September
2026



Full ETOC Reports

Introduction from the Editor

Most of this issue is devoted to the various events associated with the 2026 European TrailO Championships (ETOC) in Poland in late July/early August.

Certainly the highlight came on the final day when, after some considerable delay, the Relay results were confirmed. Our Open team consisting of **Tom Dobra, Charles Bromley Gardner** and **Ben Kyd** gained second place, missing out on the first place by just 6 seconds from the very strong Finnish team. It was an outstanding performance representing the best GBR TrailO team result at any major championship. Although missing from the relay podium by one place, our three juniors (**James Curtis, Jack Knight** and **Tom Knight**) had some excellent results over the week - perhaps Tom's 6th positions on the two PreO days being the best achievement although, combining the two days, his 7th overall position meant he also just missed a podium place. The inclusion of the Juniors in their own separate championships was a welcome innovation this year which added complexity but gave significant additional opportunities for them.

The whole week, including the two preETOC events, provided an excellent opportunity to be tested at the highest level of the sport. Much of this is thanks to the Polish organisers who will have spent days, weeks and even years in preparation. However, they were supported by two Senior Event Advisors who will have helped guide them. These were our own **John Kewley** and the Norwegian, **Lars Jakob Waaler**. Although my personal results were at times disappointing (probably all team members can say that!), being a part of a friendly and supportive team was a privilege and worth the effort to achieve selection

David Jukes (davidjukes@sky.com)



Cover Picture:

With a new Junior Championships being incorporated into ETOC for the first time, the GBR team included 3 Juniors. Attending their first international Championships, the photo shows the brothers Tom (left) and Jack Knight (right) at the Opening Ceremony.

Event Calendar

The table below lists some of the main TrailO events currently scheduled to be taking place in the future. Included in the table are all currently announced UK TrailO events and all designated World Ranking Events (**WRE**).

- P = PreO; T = TempO; PSp = PreO Sprint; ECTO = European Cup in TrailO



Date	Event	Status	Country
2026			
19-20 September	Lahti TrailO Nordic Match (P + T+ PSp)	3 WRE / 2 ECTO	Finland
17-18 October	Dragon Cup - Polish TrailO Championships 2026 (P + T+ PSp)	3 WRE / 2 ECTO	Poland
24-25 October	Trail-O Adriatic Meeting (T+ PSp)	2 WRE	Italy
5-6 December	Hong Kong Annual Trail Orienteering Championships 2026 (P + T)	2 WRE	Hong Kong
2027			
13-15 March	Budapest TrailO Weekend (PSp + P + T)	3 WRE	Hungary
2-4 April	Falco Cup 2027 (PSp + 2P + T)	4 WRE	Lithuania
9-14 November	World TrailO Championships (WTOC)		USA

Since the last Newsletter in June, there have been 4 WRE PreO events in Sweden alongside the O-Ringen and the various Championship events linked to ETOC which were also WREs.

The current status (as at 12 September) is given below and on the next page. This data has been taken from the Trail Open Project website using the 'series' link - see: [TOP Series page](#). This has the advantage over the main IOF World Ranking page in that it separates out the different classes in each of the different formats.

A new table design has been used for the tables below. Each class is now given a separate table with any GBR competitors appearing in any of the 3 formats (PreO, Tempo and Sprint) being listed. The order of listing is however based on the overall position which incorporates a competitor's top 6 scores in any format. The leader and their score in each format is also indicated. The 'score' columns show a competitor's score based on their best 6 events but also included, in brackets, is the number of events which contribute to that competitor's score.

In the last issue, it was commented that the ranking list for the Sprint format is still in its early days - this still applies as there have been no additional Sprint WREs since then. As several GBR competitors have attended 5 or 6 of the 8 WRE Sprint events held so far this year, their total scores put them towards the top of the Sprint ranking. Several top TrailO competitors are lower down the list as many have only competed in 3 or 4 events so far.

For the WR scheme rules, see: [Competition Rules for Trail Orienteering](#)

For the IOF listing, see: [IOF World Ranking - TrailO](#)

For the TOP listings, see: [Trail Open Project - Series](#)

Open class								
	Overall		PreO		TempO		Sprint	
	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)
<i>Krystian Petersburski (POL)</i>	1	5996 (6)			1	5978 (6)		
<i>Pinja Makinen (FIN)</i>			1	5966 (6)				
<i>Anders Haugskott (NOR)</i>							1	5839 (6)
Ben Kyd	11	5912 (6)	28	5713 (6)	7	5826 (6)	3	5699 (6)
Tom Dobra	38	5758 (6)	33	5678 (6)	37	5398 (6)	29	2805 (3)
John Kewley	44	5727 (6)	48	5604 (6)	34	5419 (6)	4	5610 (6)
Charles Bromley Gardner	52	5660 (6)	51	5556 (6)	43	5315 (6)	10	4402 (5)
Iain Phillips	107	5287 (6)	98	5080 (6)	54	5067 (6)	9	4887 (6)
David Jukes	120	5211 (6)	101	5035 (6)	60	4965 (6)	12	3972 (5)
<i>Michael Chun Chi Tsang (HKG)</i>	122	5176 (6)	109	4802 (6)	71	4647 (6)	8	4921 (6)
Graham Urquhart	134	5117 (6)	116	4644 (6)	70	4760 (6)	11	4150 (5)
Elizabeth Urquhart	167	4585 (6)	150	3645 (6)	94	3886 (6)	17	3515 (5)
Peter Dobra	223	3231 (4)	237	1603 (2)	179	1628 (2)		
River Edis-Smith	344	1512 (2)	249	1512 (2)				
Ian Curtis	369	1275 (2)	360	682 (1)	348	593 (1)		

P class								
	Overall		PreO		TempO		Sprint	
	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)
Alejandro Aguilar Lara (ESP)	1	5642 (6)	1	5527 (6)				
Jana Kost'ová (CZE)					1	5061 (6)		
Zbigniew Bąk (POL)							1	4234 (5)
Colin Duckworth	31	4400 (6)	35	3489(5)	40	1525 (2)	30	688 (1)

Junior class								
	Overall		PreO		TempO		Sprint	
	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)	Place	Score (n)
Albert Forst (CZE)	1	5642 (6)			1	5866 (6)	1	5696 (6)
Jonatán Furucz (SVK)			1	5814 (6)				
James Curtis	24	4935 (6)	24	3375 (4)	39	1559 (2)		
Tom Knight	50	2561 (3)	41	1818 (2)	60	743 (1)		
Jack Knight	51	2538 (3)	44	1684 (2)	48	853 (1)		
Max Straube Roth	70	1541 (2)	53	1055 (2)	73	494 (1)		

British Trail Orienteering Facebook Page

Remember to 'like' or 'follow' the **British Trail Orienteering** Facebook page. It is the best place to be kept informed of news and updates relating to British TrailO activities.



MS Publisher - R.I.P.

This will be the last Newsletter created using MS Publisher. I have used Publisher for about 30 years to prepare many documents including the family Christmas annual update, orienteering newsletters for Berkshire Orienteers as well as this relatively recent TrailO Newsletter. Microsoft are discontinuing it from October and I will need to find an alternative. I expect I will find something but it will take time to get used to different features. I will certainly miss Publisher which has been perfect for my work. David Jukes



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On-Line TempO Update

Hungarian TORUS TempO Trophy 2026

This 'Trophy' has 12 monthly events throughout 2026 with the final result coming from a competitor's best 9 events. At the time of writing, there have been 8 events (January - August). Current standings are shown in the table on the right.

Ben Kyd has maintained his leading position, just ahead of Pavel and Kajetan. There is now quite a pack of chasing competitors making the next few events critical for a good final place. **Samuel Drinkwater** remains the second placed GBR competitor but, following a 5th place in the June event, his position has improved from 35th place that was reported in the June Newsletter.

In the club rankings, MDOC remains in 4th place. The leading club has however changed - now it is Nydalens SK (NOR). In the country rankings, having been overtaken by Sweden, GBR has slipped to 5th place behind CZE, ITA, NOR and SWE.

Norwegian Training Series

This series started in May with events typically on alternate Thursdays (but there were none in July). There have been 6 events so far with a total of about 10 planned for the whole series.

Top GBR performers are again **Samuel Drinkwater** and **Ben Kyd** with Samuel just leading by less than half a point. Both of them have only competed in 5 of the 6 events whereas all but one of the 9 above them have competed in all the events so far - hence able to drop their two worst scores. It will be interesting to see if Sam and Ben are able to get nearer the top before the series finishes.

In this event, with both Samuel and Ben competing for them, MDOC are in second place to Matfyz Praha (RSA).

If you haven't yet found the **TORUS** website, take a look at: <http://torus.yq.cz/>

Entry is free but you do need to register first.

Hungarian Trophy 2026 - Top 10 GBR

(based on best 6 scores from 8 events)

1	Ben Kyd	MDOC	589.7
2	<i>Pavel Ptáček</i>	CZE	583.9
3	<i>Kajetan Kociuba</i>	POL	578.4
21	Samuel Drinkwater	MDOC	560.1
42	James Curtis	SO	544.8
64	Tom Dobra	TVOC	535.5
94	John Kewley	MDOC	518.3
103	Iain Phillips	LEI	513.4
110	Nicola Morris	BOK	508.6
190	David Pilling	BOK	476.0
203	Ian Ditchfield	MV	469.5
217	Robert Finch	NGOC	466.9

Norwegian Training Series - Top 10 GBR

(based on best 4 scores from 6 events)

1	<i>Isak Jonsson</i>	NOR	392.0
2	<i>Tommi Hakuli</i>	FIN	391.3
3	<i>Pavel Ptáček</i>	CZE	390.0
10	Samuel Drinkwater	MDOC	384.8
11	Ben Kyd	MDOC	384.5
33	Robert Finch	NGOC	376.9
37	James Curtis	SO	375.9
46	John Kewley	TVOC	369.5
66	Jack Knight	KERNO	363.1
85	Owen Jones	BOK	355.6
114	Tom Dobra	TVOC	349.0
160	Iain Phillips	LEI	339.1
176	David Pilling	BOK	336.1

Next Newsletter

It is currently expected that the next issue will probably appear in November.

Offers of reports or any interesting articles would be welcomed!



TrailO at the O-Ringen, Sweden 20-24 July 2026

Before focussing on ETOC, let's not forget that there were 4 World Ranking Events staged alongside the annual O-Ringen in Sweden. Here **Charles Bromley Gardner** provides a short summary.

There's a certain magnetism to the annual O-Ringen: since 1965, it consists of 5 competition days of orienteering in different Swedish terrain as the event base moves from city to city. Over 21,000 orienteers competed in FootO, MTBO and TrailO this year in and around Gothenburg. Those numbers stress the organising company, with a huge area provided for camping, with its own supermarket, but also limiting the areas that can be used for competition.

Gothenburg has a good PreO pedigree, so it was reasonable to award WRE status to the first 4 days, slightly offsetting the huge cost of the 'standard' Elite entry fee of £38 per day. It is certainly usually possible to compete in both FootO and TrailO, as some did. Given my lack of running training, I eventually baulked at the additional cost of late stage-only entries, and thus had a far more relaxing time. The £12 on-the-day entry for a challenging Indoor Event at a University Building on the Rest Day was a very worthwhile 51 minutes (I hadn't yet reached #6 of 18 controls by the time the M21 winner had finished – and was still 673rd of 984 competitors)!

The TrailO event organisation also seemed somewhat 'second class' compared to the main event: I never found any TrailO final details until arrival at the event; limited directions were focused on those driving to a signed junction, with identified bus stops being somewhere else, often on the other side of the competition area making the final approach interesting. Most TrailO areas were well within the city transport network, even within walking/running distance when doubly uncertain!

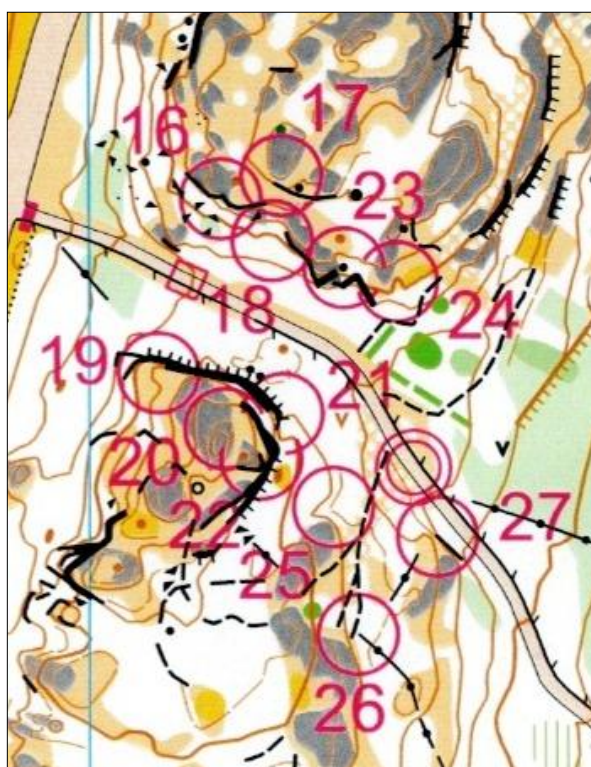
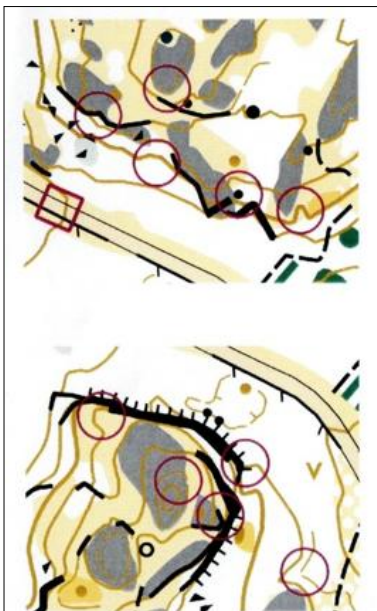
I cannot really explain what went so wrong with my performances: 52nd, 62nd, 23rd, 32nd, 12th out of 70+ competitors. I certainly didn't fully understand the mappers or planners, until possibly the last day. 24 controls (almost 5 per day) behind the overall winner, Juha Hiirsalmi, who himself made 12 errors. It is some consolation that there were very few consistent performers across the 5 days. For example, the table on the right shows the daily positions for certain selected competitors (a statistician could have fun with these).

Competitor	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
A	19 th	10 th	1 st	1 st	1 st
B	10 th	1 st	4 th	8 th	10 th
C	29 th	27 th	9 th	2 nd	5 th
D	1 st	39 th	15 th	31 st	50 th
E	21 st	40 th	42 nd	4 th	37 th
F	14 th	42 nd	37 th	34 th	55 th

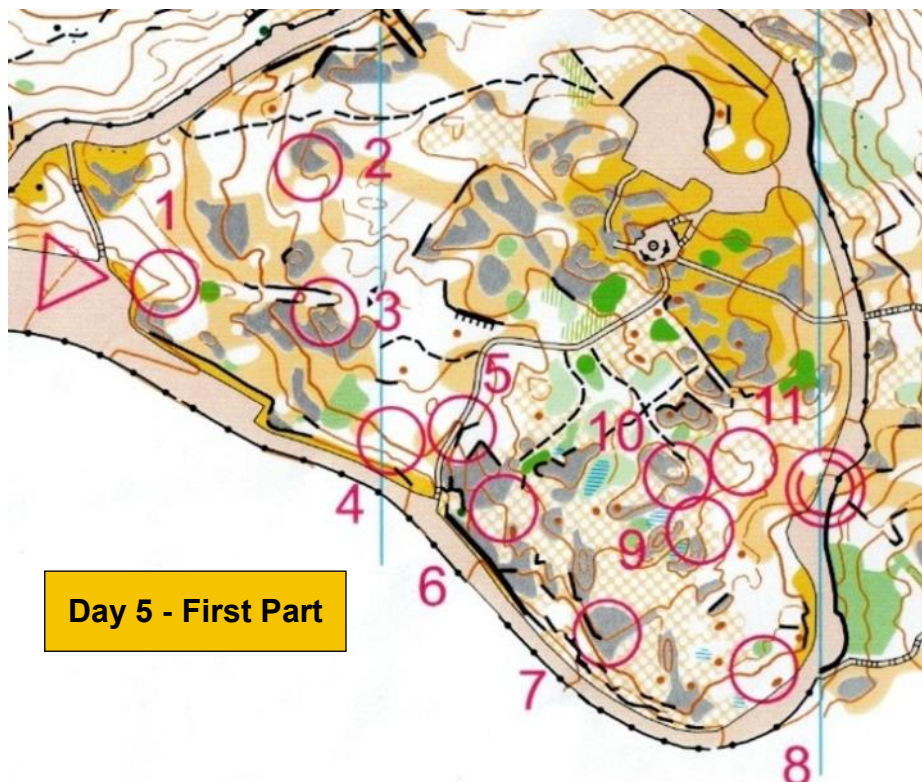
I wonder if the map extracts from Day 1 and 5 (provided below and on the next page) give

Pre-E	0,3 km	
16 A	∩	∩
17 A-B	○	○
18 A-B		∩
19 A-B		∩
20 A	∩	∩
21 A	↑	∩
22 A	∩	∩
23 A-D	▲	♀
24 A-D	↑	∩
25 A-C	∩	∩
26 A-C	∩	∩
27 A-B	∩	∩

Day 1 - Second Part



PreE		0,6 km		
▷				
1	A-C ←	∩		
2	A-C	∩		
3	A-B ↓	∩		
4	A-C →	∩	—	○
5	A ↖	∩		└
6	A	∩		
7	A	∩		
8	A-E	∩	—	
9	A-C	∩		
10	A-C	○		○
11	A-C	∩		
○		○		▷
○		900 m		→▷



any explanation for this variance. On Day 1, #23 (*right*) was ‘interesting’ mapping: was the control boulder based on a crack in the crag face, and therefore the symbol was far too small, and had to be unrealistically moved away from the crag according to mapping rules? Or was it the just visible small boulder up the hill to NE, which deserved some mapping? The Planner determined it to be the former.

O-Ringen 2027 will be hosted in Stockholm, 25 – 31 July. Although the TrailO locations will be close to FootO areas, a car appears necessary, even to the organisers, for Days 1 & 2. I’m unlikely to attend unless my priority would be FootO.



23	A-D	▲		♀
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TrailO Development Steering Group

As an orienteering discipline, TrailO in the United Kingdom comes under the jurisdiction of British Orienteering. Many aspects of the organisation of TrailO are delegated to the TrailO Development Steering Group. Included within its responsibilities are:

- Monitoring and reviewing all Trail Orienteering activities and programmes
- Production of a programme to deliver sustainable international success and capable of supporting athletes to achieve the annual targets; reviewing the programme on an annual basis
- Supporting, volunteers and staff in the delivery of the programmes and the international team by ensuring it is given the opportunity to achieve the agreed goals and medal performances
- Advising the Board on disability awareness and other matters concerned with the involvement of disabled people in orienteering activities

Current membership of the Steering Group:

Graham Urquhart (Chair), Iain Phillips, John Kewley, Colin Duckworth, Ian Ditchfield, Richard Keighley, Christine Roberts, Keith Willdig (*British Orienteering Rep.*), Elizabeth Urquhart (*Team Manager*), Charles Bromley Gardner, Nick Barrable, Tom Dobra (*IT/Software*), David Jukes (*Publicity*), Wilbert Hollinger, Anne Hickling, Clive Allen (*IOF liaison*)

TrailO Development Steering Group Update

There has been no meeting of the Steering Group since the last Newsletter but one is scheduled for the coming week

The **Steering Group** Chair can be contacted at:
trailocommitteechair@britishorienteering.org.uk

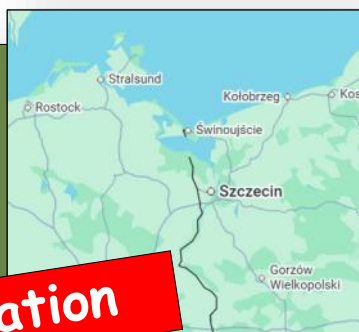
European TrailO Championships 2026, Szczecin, Poland

28 July - 3 August



Overview

The Location



Pre-ETOC

27th July	GBR Training
28th July	PreO
29th July	TempO

ETOC

30th July	Model Event TempO/Relay Model Event PreO Opening Ceremony
31st July	TempO Qualification TempO Final
1st August	PreO1
2nd August	PreO2
3rd August	Relay

The Schedule

Open Class

Charles Bromley Gardner (BAOC)
Tom Dobra (TVOC)
Peter Dobra (SAX) (TempO only)
River Edis-Smith (SYO) (PreO only)
David Jukes (BKO)
Ben Kyd (MDOC)
Iain Phillips (LEI)

P Class

Colin Duckworth (HALO)

Junior Class

James Curtis (SO)
Jack Knight (KERN)
Tom Knight (KERN)

The GBR Team



GBR Training - 27th July

The team had agreed that, where possible, team members would be in Szczecin by early afternoon on Monday 27th. For some, this meant early morning flights on Monday to Berlin. Thanks to Tom Dobra's excellent knowledge of German rail networks, we had incredibly cheap onward transfers to Szczecin although it did include a bus-replacement to actually reach the city.

The plan was to provide some GBR training on terrain similar to that of the Championships. With several team members being new to European TrailO, it was a good opportunity to point out some of the key issues that we were expecting during the coming events - and a useful reminder for those with experience!

With some kites packed into suit cases and some bamboo canes purchased on arrival, we were able to set out some controls based on the courses used by competitors at the Bukowa Cup in 2025. This included a PreO timed control and a short section of a PreO course.

As a training exercise, it was certainly valuable. Team members were able to initially consider a control on their own, then to hear other opinions, then to discuss the challenge and, finally, to also go into the terrain and check on what the feature actually involved.

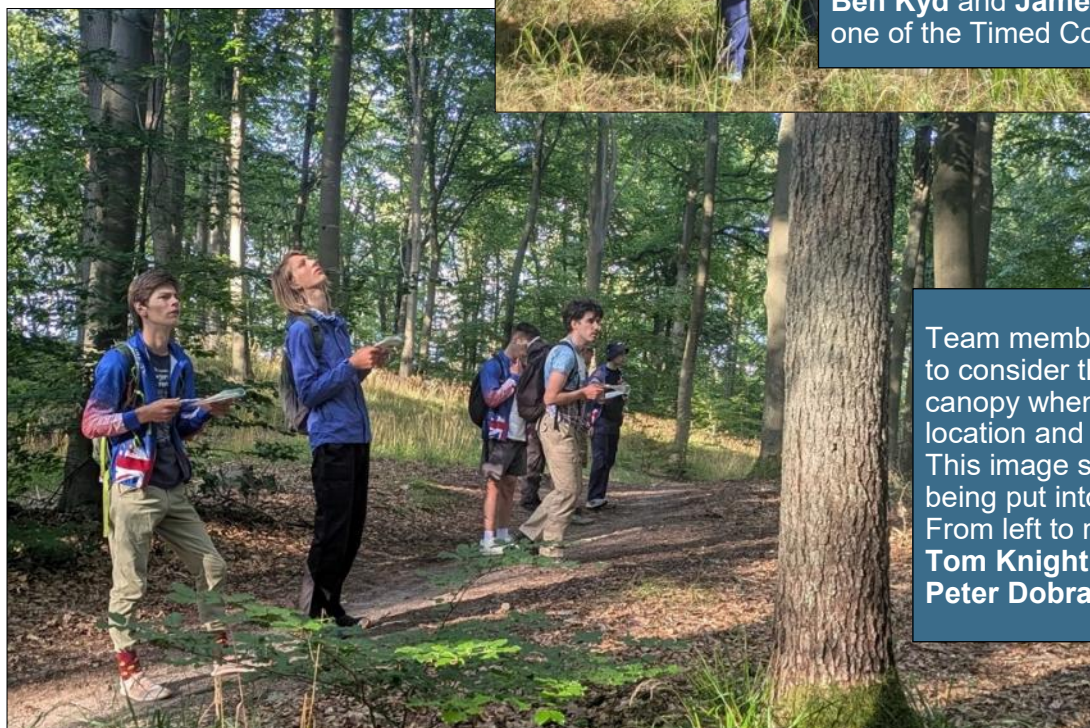
It was a long day but well worth the extra effort.



Above: **Jack Knight** is discussing with **Iain Phillips** how to solve the problem set at a PreO Timed Control in the 2025 event



Ben Kyd and **James Curtis** considering one of the Timed Control kites.



Team members were encouraged to consider the extent of the tree canopy when assessing the location and extent of 'clearings'. This image shows the advice being put into effect. From left to right: **Jack Knight**, **Tom Knight**, **James Curtis**, **Peter Dobra** and **Ben Kyd**



Although not classified as World Ranking Events, two 'PreETOC' events were staged in the two days preceding the Championships - a PreO and a TempO. Both were well attended with 125 competing in the PreO and 144 in the TempO. They were a good opportunity for competitors to gain additional experience of the terrain being used for ETOC itself.

With most top TrailO competitors present, gaining top positions was tough. In the PreO, with just 3 errors on the course and no errors at the 2 time controls, **Peter Dobra** was top GBR achieving 8th place. In the TempO, **Ben Kyd** did excellently by winning the TempO event. He was one of just 5 competitors to go completely clear but his time was over 30 seconds faster than the second placed competitor (*meaning he could have made one error and he still would have won!*).

PreO - 28th July

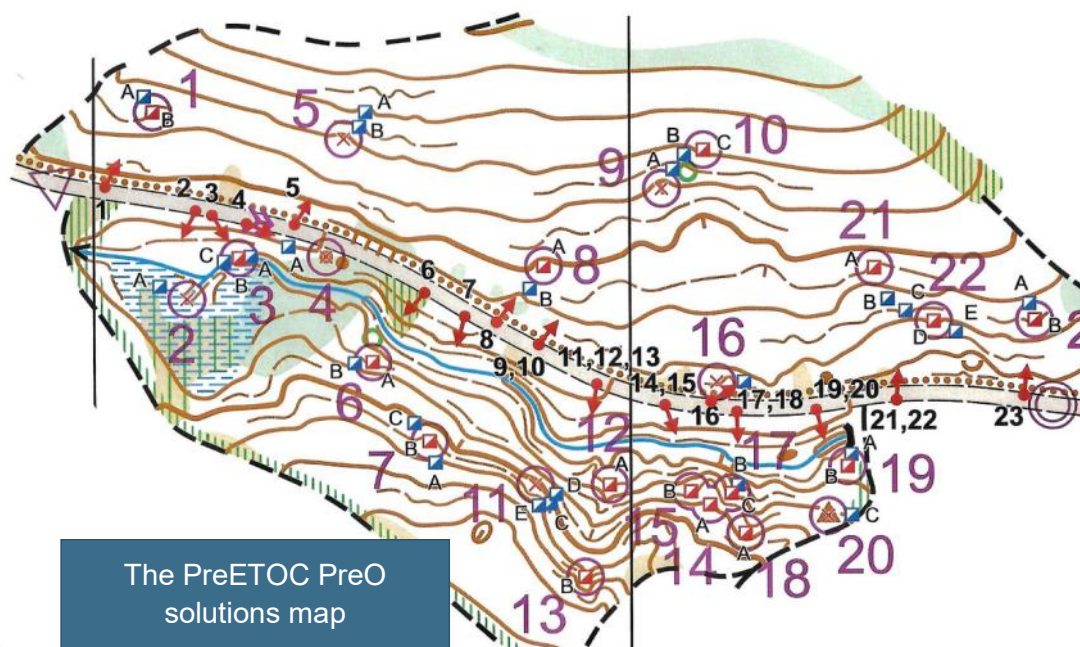
David Jukes reports

We had a leisurely start for our first day of competition. Presumably to allow competitors travel time, the starts were scheduled for between 14.00 and 18.00. Luckily, all the GBR team were together in the first hour. The course was short (only 210 metres) with 23 controls making for quite a dense set - less than 10m per control. As a result, the controls were spread out over 3 bits of map so care was needed to ensure that the correct control circle was being used at each decision point and that none were missed.

There were several controls which proved hard with only a low percentage of correct answers - these included #1 at 32%, #5 at 31%, #9 at 16% and #21 at 37%. There was considerable debate about the positioning of the kites for #9. Compared to what was shown on the solutions map, it appeared that the **A** kite was closer to the track than the significant tree leading to most competitors giving **A** as their answer. The required re-entrant was shown as closer, and a bit lower down the slope than the tree, giving **Z** as the correct answer. Well done to our 3 new GBR team members (Peter Dobra, Tom and Jack Knight) who correctly said **Z**. There were also some easier controls. With a decision having to be made before a one-way gate, most people spotted that the kite for #4 was much too close with the correct knoll being obscured in an area of younger trees further down the track (92% got this correct).

There were some interesting challenges with the second half having several controls looking across the valley to the complex slope on the other side.

With the event being a preliminary to the Championships, it was a good opportunity to recall the care that was needed in considering problems. And with no ranking points at stake, any concerns about kite placements could be put down to the planner perhaps having limited time to prepare the course.



The PreETOC PreO solutions map

1	A-B	↘			B
2	A	↘		✓	Z
3	A-C	↘		⊙	B
4	A	←	●		Z
--ONE WAY--→					
5	A-B	↘			Z
6	A-B	↘	↘		A
7	A-C	↘		⊙	B
8	A-B	↘			A
9	A-C	↘			Z
10	A-C	↘			C
11	A-E	↘		⊙	Z
12	A-E	↓	↘		A
13	A-E	↘			B
14	A-B	↘	↘		A
15	A-B	↘			B
16	A	←	↘		Z
17	A-C	↘			C
18	A-C	↘			A
19	A-C	●			B
20	A-C	↘			Z
21	A-E	↑	↘		A
22	A-E	↘	↘		D
23	A-B	→	↘		B

TempO - 29th July

Ian Curtis, father of James and a relative newcomer to the sport, joined the GBR team from a hiking holiday in southern Poland. Here he describes his experience in competing in the TempO event.

This was a shortish drive from Szczecin city centre, and we avoided embargoed areas. We parked up and sat in the shade before taking the short paved walk to meet our allocated start slots. Each of the 6 TempO stations had a seat under a gazebo, with juniors shielding our eyes with umbrellas on the route from the wait line at each station. I chose loose rather than bound sheets for a change and to see if that would magically improve my TempO abilities. All stations had kites a relatively short distance from the observation point in rough open terrain with clumps of bushes and slopes with some re-entrants.

The first station required evaluation of the different bushes and trees, with a helpful high fence as part of our backdrop. The fourth of the 5 problems was nearby with the flag clearly in the re-entrant near our feet, the only real distinguishing contour feature.

Some advice I took into the day was to look hard at the terrain as you approach the station to optimise your chances of identifying your viewing position on the map. The incised parking bays were good for this, and I used this at #2 as well as the 2 distinctive trees to the north of me, to gauge another set of flags adjacent to trees and bushes.

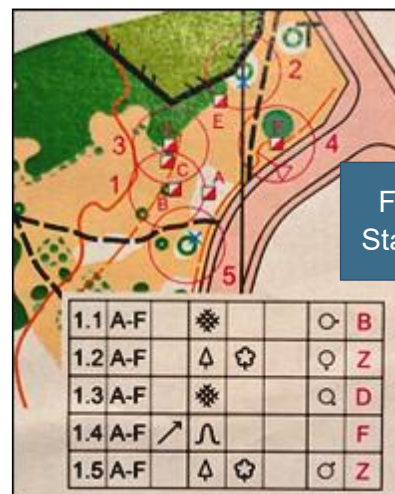
The viewing point for #3 was very easy to identify as in a parking bay. The challenge for the spur shown on the map was about gauging the distance up the slope, using the form lines and its proximity to the vegetation leading to the correct Zero answer.

I enjoyed #4, making good use of the path (that I felt was more visible and useable than at the other stations) leading off from the right of me, to help gauge distance and position features in the terrain.

#5 was harder to use the path as hard to see. The trees and bushes made the nearer flags easier than the further ones.

I made a stupid error at #6 dithering between the choice of **A** and **Z** for the embarrassingly easy first problem, whilst the remainder of the problems were significantly harder looking side on at the small steep side of a vegetated spur and where interpretation of the contours was key.

In retrospect I realised that the choice between loose and bound was the least of my worries...



First Station



Third Station



Sixth Station

PreO: 23 controls, 210m, 76 mins (O/J) / 85 mins (P); 2 TCs with 3 tasks
TempO: 6 stations x 5 tasks

PreETOC	PreO (Top 6 GBR)	Pts	Time (s)
1	Anders Höije (SWE)	22	104
8	Peter Dobra	20	68
34	John Kewley	18	74
37	Iain Phillips	18	115
62	Tom Dobra	16	117
68	David Jukes	16	182
69	Colin Duckworth	16	191

PreETOC	TempO (Top 6 GBR)	Time (s)
1	Ben Kyd (GBR)	130
5	Tom Dobra	304
9	Peter Dobra	308
15	John Kewley	329
22	James Curtis	423
23	River Edis-Smith	442



IOF Rule 11.2 states the following:

On the day prior to the first competition of an event, the organiser must put on a model event to demonstrate the terrain type, map quality, control features and the set-up of the controls, including a Timed Control, a TempO Control, refreshment points and marked routes. If the terrain for the two days of competition is very different, a second model event must be put on.

Although this actually only is a requirement for the World TrailO Championships, the concept is excellent and is good practice for any regional championships such as ETOC.

As the terrains for the PreO and the TempO were very different in Poland, there were 2 separate Model events. Teams were allocated to do one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The GBR team went first to the PreO in typical beech forest before driving around the forest boundary to reach the TempO/Relay event using very different scrubland. Each event was short but provided key examples relevant to the forthcoming events.

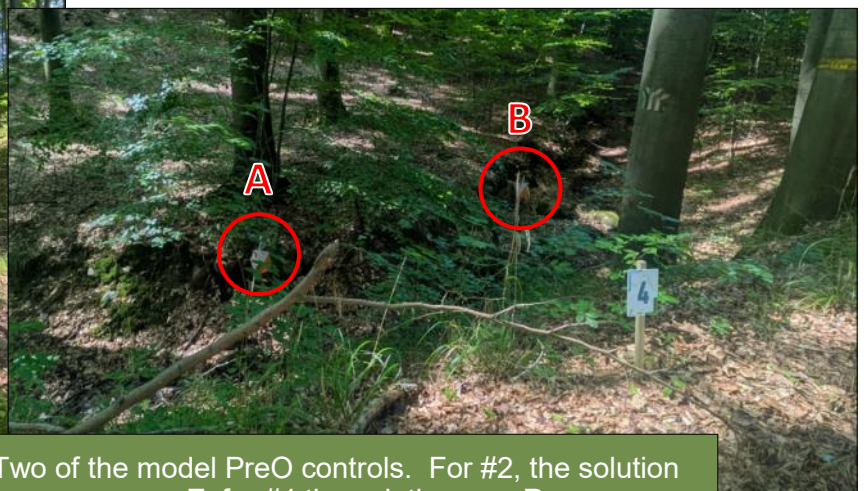
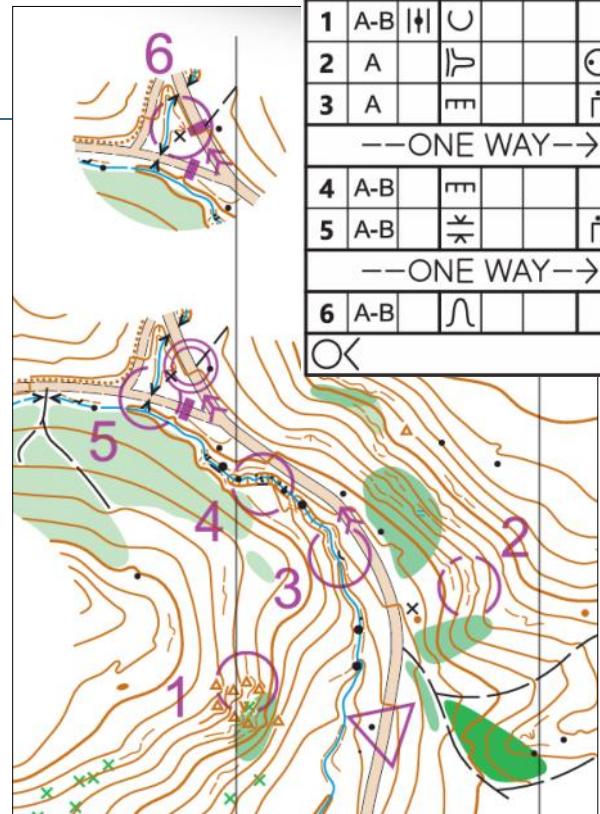
For those who had attended the Bukowa Cup earlier in the year, both areas were familiar as they had been used for that competition. Here **Ian Curtis** continues his reporting.

Model PreO:

Things were tough straight from the start with the #1 feature being a small depression uphill of you. I tried triangulating two lines of sight, one from the start and the other by lining up a path junction and a mapped boulder, combining with a gauge of the height and visualising the tiny form lines on the map, to select **B** as the right option.

The second control was also challenging. I'd gauged that the sole flag was left of the line between the left and right light green, but convinced myself from what I could interpret of the ground that the flag was on balance of probability in the right place. Wrong, I

Model	0,3 km	
▷		/
1 A-B		U
2 A		⊙
3 A	≡	⊙
--ONE WAY--→		
4 A-B	≡	
5 A-B	≡	⊙
--ONE WAY--→		
6 A-B	∩	
⊙		⊙



Two of the model PreO controls. For #2, the solution was Z; for #4 the solution was B

should have stuck with my rather simplistic view gained from the denser vegetation to the left and right.

A couple of one-way barriers were in place along the track to make things harder for some of the first 6 sites. This was to model what would occur in the real competition, and without it control 3 would have been a lot simpler with greater views into the stream. Control 4 also required strong eyesight and I determined that taking glasses on and off would be better for me for Pre O and using contact lenses for Temp O.

Controls 5 and 6 felt simpler, #5 being about depth perception and comparing the line of the stream on the ground to the map, #6 being about gauging the mapped position vs the nearby sign board.

The second part of the course had a challenging #7 as the ground features were uphill of you, so I used the wider shape of the hill to solve. I missed the clue at 8 that the marked point on the map would have been less clear on the ground due to the mapped vegetation. 9 and 10 were straightforward, but one needed to ensure sufficient time remained to not snatch at the incorrect answer. You know who you are...

Model Relay

6 PreO controls on a 1:4000 map with 2m contours and a 19-minute time limit. All controls were viewed from a square pen marked by tape, and shared with other competitors. The challenges required differentiating bushes, masses of vegetation and position on a slope. Control 6 also required viewing a flag 200m away, a good warm up for the Relay final. The single timed control had a longer-range viewing with a nearby path and Tower providing a couple of anchor points to aid solving.

As well as the long-distance #6 being a model for the actual relay, the use of two small pens, one for Open and one for the J and P classes was also a 'model' for the Relay Championships. Also modelled was the use of a tape to divide kites for a more distant problem from kites for a closer problem. This was described in the Bulletin but was a useful thing to see modelled in the terrain.

Model TempO

The final model included 3 TempO stations. For those who had attended the 2026 Bukowa Cup earlier in the year, it was a case of 'deja vue'. The area was the same as that used for that TempO competition.

Overall, the models were excellent in showing examples of the type of issues to be faced during the following days.

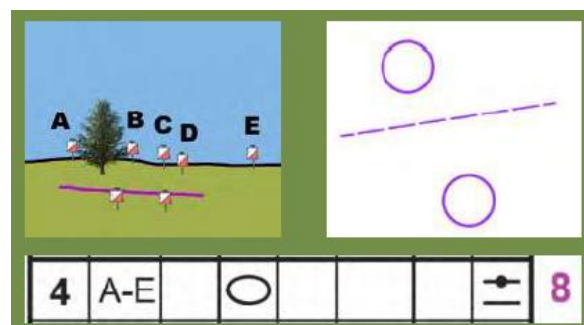
Model PreO: 10 (6+4) controls, 260m (in 2 parts), 38 mins (O/J) / 45 mins (P); 2 TCs x 3 tasks

Model TempO: 2 stations x 5 tasks

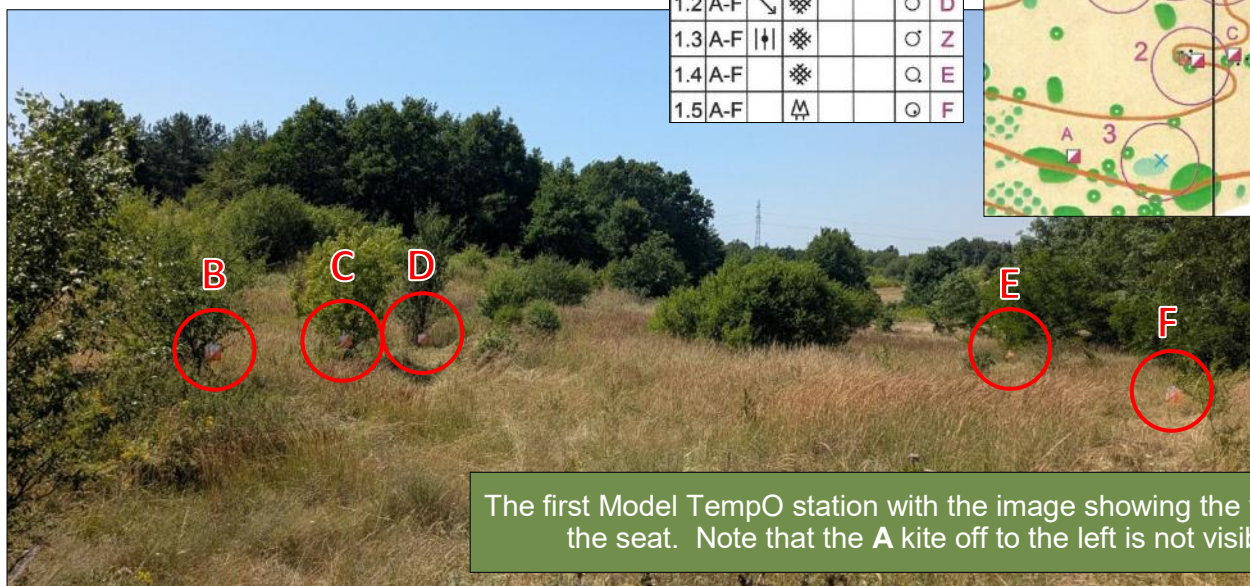
Model Relay: 6 PreO controls, 20m, 19 mins (O/J) / 23 mins (P); 1 TempO station x 5 tasks

For online results, see:

[Model PreO](#) / [Model TempO](#) / [Model Relay](#)



Extract from the Bulletin



The first Model TempO station with the image showing the view from the seat. Note that the A kite off to the left is not visible.

TempO: Heats and Final - 31st July



The rules for TempO specify that there will be a qualification event (which can be split into separate heats) and a final for the top qualifiers. The qualification events were held in the morning with the final scheduled for the afternoon. With 90 competitors in the Open class, there were two heats (A and B) with each having 7 different stations. The P class (with 37 competitors) and the Junior class (with 42 competitors) tackled the same stations, but with different problems, as the two Open heats - A for the Juniors and B for the P class. With several delays to the planned schedule, it was a long day but luckily the weather was good and the quarantine included various play/fitness equipment to allow the younger competitors a chance to keep active whilst waiting. Here **Ben Kyd** reports on how he set about tackling his heat (A) and the subsequent final.

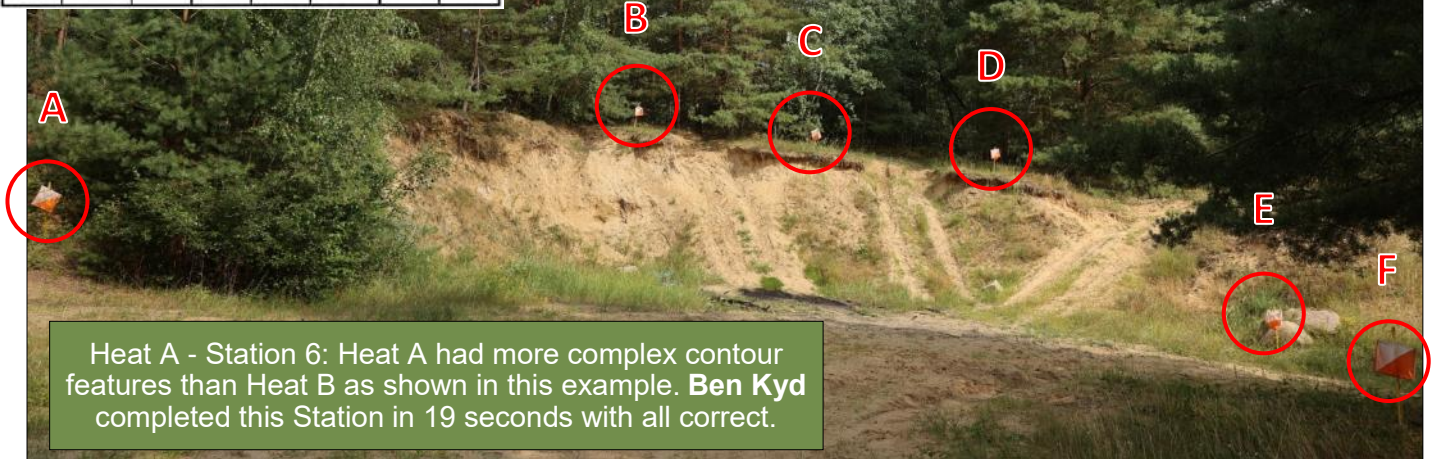
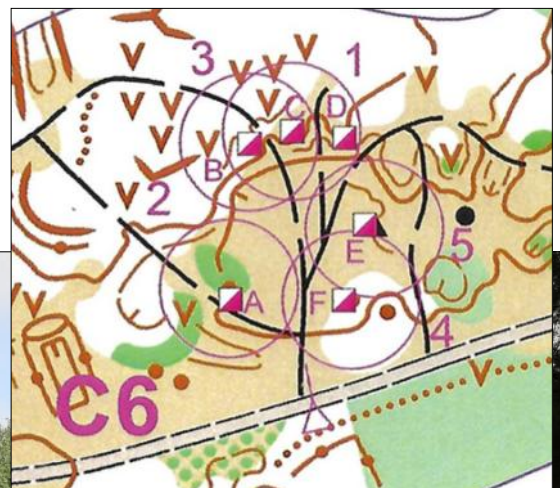
The TempO competition was the event I was most looking forward to going into ETOC this year. Although I've competed in multiple World Champs, this would be my first Europeans and I was hoping to put in a strong performance to start off the week of competition, particularly following my win in the PreETOC TempO 2 days prior.

With the addition of both P class and Juniors in separate categories, this was already expected to be a long day, with an early morning dash for an 8:30am closure of quarantine situated in a park on the edge of the Bukowa forest. The time in there was passed taking part in the inaugural 'European Trail Orienteer Zipline Long Jump Championships', before I eventually boarded the bus to take me up to the qualification area, and after an hour delay waiting at the start, it was finally my time to get out on the course.

My thinking going into the qualifier was to take it steady on the course and focus on getting things right. With the change of rules for this year, only 28 people would qualify for the final rather than the previous 36, but I was confident, based on past performance, I could still qualify safely with a solid result. This plan went quickly out the window, after making a mistake in the first station misreading the mapped copse and spending longer than I was expecting to on it (although it turned out to still be a quick time for that station), leaving me on the cusp of qualifying in 14th place, but with a lot of stations still to go.

The feeling of being slow prompted me to push harder on the course, which seemed to pay off as I had strong performances through the rest of the stations, taking well to the complex contours and shrubbery that we were presented with. That mistake in station 1 was my only one on the course, and I won station 6 outright which was a good confidence boost as I qualified in 3rd place in my heat for the final.

6.1	A-F	⌋				C
6.2	A-F	•			♀	A
6.3	A-F	⌋				B
6.4	A-F	•			LO	F
6.5	A-F	▲			•○	E



Heat A - Station 6: Heat A had more complex contour features than Heat B as shown in this example. **Ben Kyd** completed this Station in 19 seconds with all correct.

I was pleased to see I'd have company in the final, as Tom Dobra also progressed by finishing 11th in the other heat. Sadly no other Brits qualified, with the closest being a strong performance from David Jukes to miss out by just 16 seconds, and our top two juniors in Jack Knight and James Curtis were sadly both made around 1 mistake too many, narrowly costing them a place in the first ever junior TempO final.

It's at this point that I should give a special mention to Ian Curtis and River Edis-Smith, who had sat around all morning in the park waiting for a chance to have a go at the public race, before going to complete it without any marshals running the stations on the course (which was understandable as they deserved their own break between the qualifier and final). To rectify this, River took charge and ran every station for himself, Ian and a few others who had joined them in the public competition, and I'm reliably informed he did so extremely well.

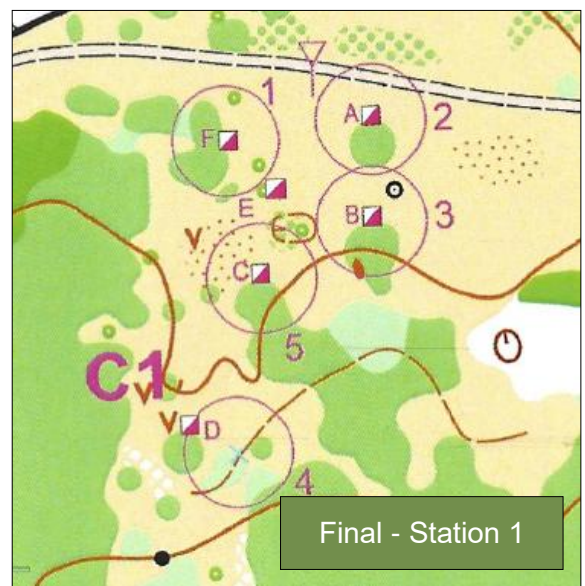


Ben Kyd being shown the kites at one of the Final stations

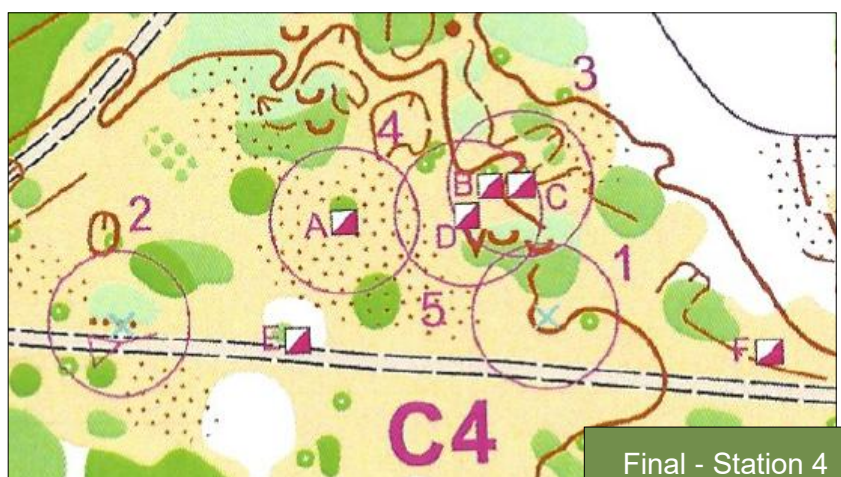
Soon it was time for Tom and I to head back into the play park quarantine, and relax ahead of a final course of 9 stations. The combination of the Open class Final starting after the P and Junior classes and, as I had qualified in a top position, all meant that I was one of the last to start, but none of that mattered as all scores were reset, and the medals were being decided on the Final alone. As the group of athletes slowly shrunk to just the remaining few, it was finally time to venture back out on the bus to compete once again.

The final took place in the adjacent area to where the qualifiers had been, which meant it was going to be more of the same rough terrain with scattered bushes and interesting contour features. I knew people would be pushing harder and going quicker than before, but I was confident after my morning's performance that I could produce another strong result on this terrain, and I kept that thought with me as I was umbrella-ed into the first station.

I moved through the first few stations with what I thought was a decently fast pace, averaging 20 seconds per station and feeling confident with every answer. I later learnt that I wasn't completely correct, as I'd fallen for a task in the first station very similar to one I'd messed up in the model as well, choosing a very convincing kite on a bush when the correct one was actually tucked behind another out of sight. It also seemed like my times weren't super quick either, when you then compare them to Juha Hiirsalmi's times and find he was leading after 3 stations with a total time of 39 seconds! Still, 10th place was a strong position to be in at this stage, with a long way still to go.



The next few stations were more of the same, with station 4 starting with a pair of difficult distance judgement problems along the long straight pathway we were looking up, the first of which lots of people made a mistake at, including me. Stations 5 and 6 then switched back to having all the controls up close, with more complex contour features in amongst thick vegetation requiring some precise map reading, but having successfully navigated this style of station in the qualifiers, I confidently got both these stations correct,

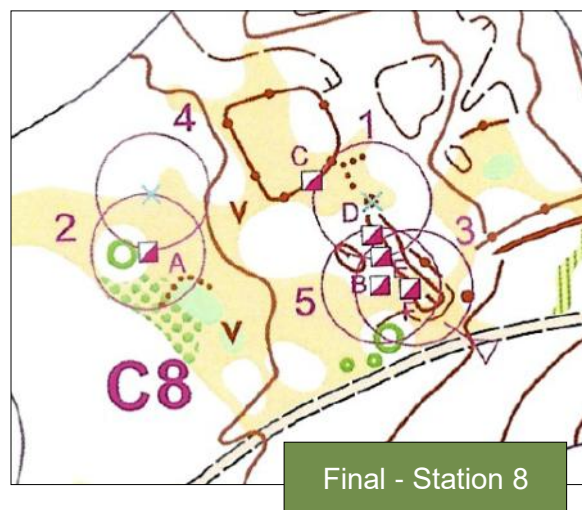


spotting the beginning Zs with the decoy spurs and reentrants before honing in nicely on the correct kites. With only one more mistake in this section of 3, I'd moved up a few more positions into 7th place, and was knocking on the door of my first individual championship podium.

The course then took a turn heading into the final stations, as the path headed into the woodland for a sudden change in problem style, this time reading contours within areas of "runnable" woodland. The first of these caused minimal problem for me, keeping me in 7th place overall, but station 8 is unfortunately where I lost it. Despite managing it for the rest of the course, I just didn't judge the scale right amongst most of the controls along the re-entrant in front of me, causing me to have 2 errors in comfortably my slowest station time, and dropped me back into 12th position.

One last station waited back amongst the scattered bushes, with one more mistake meaning I finished in joint 15th, equal with 3rd place from the other heat, 77 seconds off the podium, and over 2 and a half minutes behind the winner, Finland's Teemu Niskanen, who cleared the course with just one mistake in an incredibly quick time. Tom, our other British representative in the final, also gave a strong performance, finishing in 25th with only 6 mistakes across the course.

Overall, it wasn't the result I wanted, but it was still a good performance on an incredibly well planned TempO course, in a sport where even the best can have a very varied set of results. And although one event was out of the way, there were still two others to complete over the long week, with plenty of potential for better results to come...



TempO Qualification & Open Heats A/ B: 7 stations x 5 tasks TempO Final: 9 stations x 5 tasks

TempO - Junior Qualification		Time (s)
1	Sebastiano Lambertini(ITA)	174
17	Jack Knight	382
19	James Curtis	386
35	Tom Knight	554

TempO - P class Qualification		Time (s)
1	Alejandro Aguilar Lara (ESP)	301
22	Colin Duckworth	722

TempO - Open Heat A		Time (s)
1	Simone Frascaroli (ITA)	180
3	Ben Kyd	215
17	David Jukes	367
31	Charles Bromley Gardner	519

TempO - Open Heat B		Time (s)
1	Robertas Stankevič (LTU)	188
11	Tom Dobra	293
38	Peter Dobra	553
39	Iain Phillips	564

TempO - Open Final		Time (s)
1	Teemu Niskanen (FIN)	225
15	Ben Kyd	383
25	Tom Dobra	567



The IOF TrailO rules specify that the Championships must include a two-day PreO competition with one course on each day. At ETOC both events were in similar terrain: the beech forest covering the hills and valleys derived from glacial moraine deposits. Although the mature woodland often gave good views, with it being mid-summer, areas of younger trees in full leaf made solving some controls harder.

The 31-control Day 1 involved 3 parts with separate maps for each part. For Day 2, there were 34 controls all on a single map but care was needed as there were 5 one-way sections with controls in each section having to be solved before heading through the one-way 'gate'. Here **River Edis-Smith** gives his account of the two days. For River, this was his first experience of a PreO course outside the UK - he had unfortunately been unable to get to Poland in time for the PreETOC PreO event.



Day 1

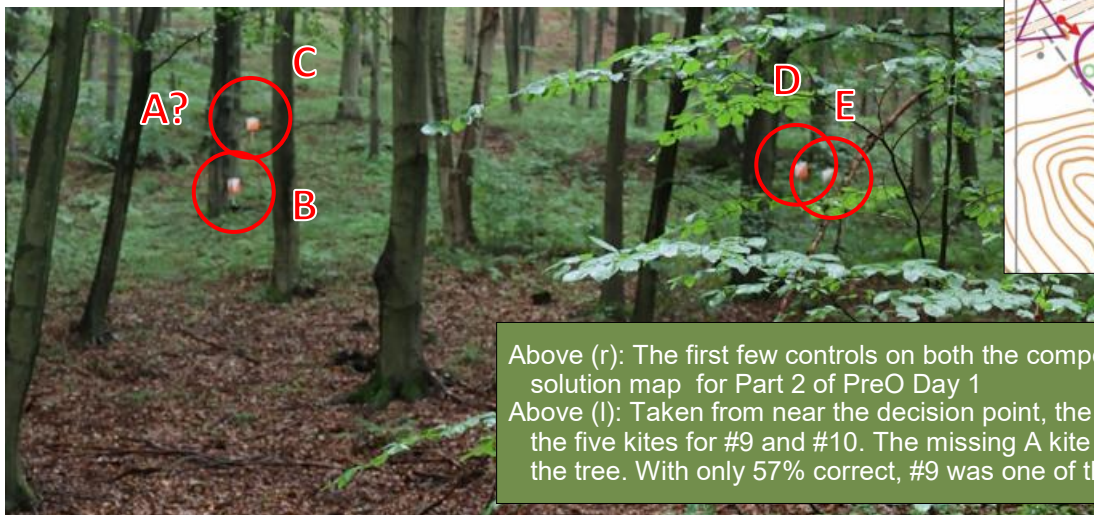
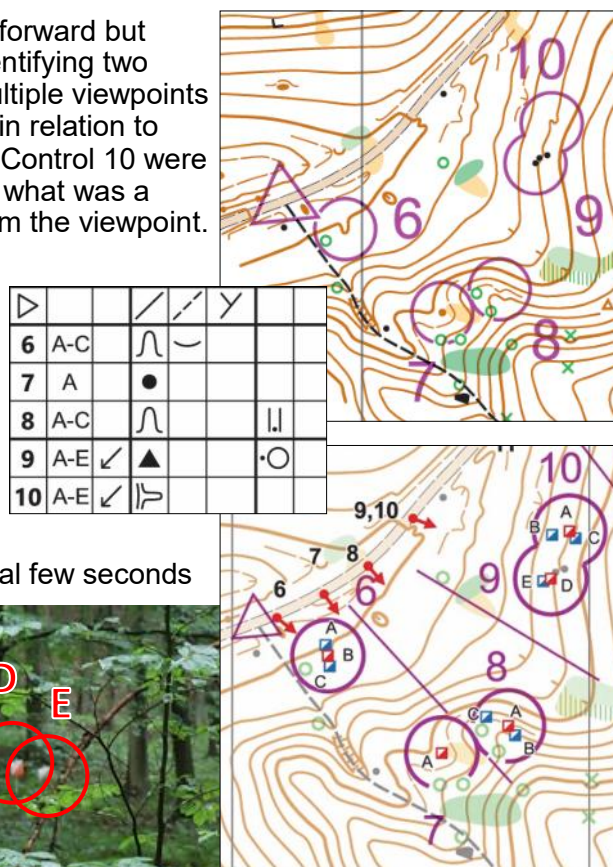
For me, as a first timer at a European event (never mind the European Championships!), it was a different experience having 30+ controls on a PreO course. There was certainly a lot of strategy required to ensure you had enough time for the later sections of the course, given that you could not return to previous sections.

Part 1 only had 5 controls but with the first 3 controls being zeroes and plenty of vegetation covering up key features on Control 1 and Control 3 – it made for a very cautious start for many competitors. We also had a taste for some of the further distance controls later in the course, where visibility was limited with an overcast forecast.

In Part 2, there were 18 controls – some were very straight forward but others took a very long time to solve. Control 8 relied on identifying two prominent trees at the top of the hill, but you had to take multiple viewpoints to convince yourself where the Alpha and Bravo kites were in relation to them and the contours surrounding the area. Control 9 and Control 10 were solved as a pair and personally I found it difficult in spotting what was a boulder and what wasn't and whether if any were visible from the viewpoint. We had a taste of this in the model event but getting the incorrect answer here meant the lineups in Control 10 also would be wrong as well. A tough set of two.

At this point, I only had 20 minutes left on the clock to do Part 3 consisting of 8 controls. I was relieved to turn the map to realize it was A-Z controls only. If it had been more flag counting, I would have very likely run out of time!

There was a good range of short and long-distance controls and inevitably there was going to be the very last control (Control 31) trying to catch out competitors in the final few seconds



Above (r): The first few controls on both the competitor's map and the solution map for Part 2 of PreO Day 1
 Above (l): Taken from near the decision point, the image shows four of the five kites for #9 and #10. The missing A kite is probably just behind the tree. With only 57% correct, #9 was one of the lowest on the course.

of their time. A hidden boulder at all viewpoints from the path made this a tricky final control under pressure. We also had two timed controls between each part of the course – most competitors were speedy in their responses and correct!

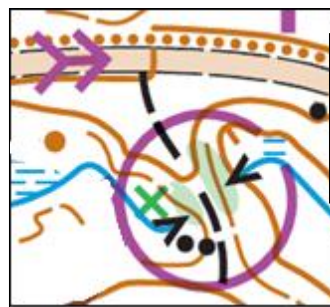
Day 2

The second day had more point feature based controls and a huge river running parallel to the path. We were able to plan our time better at the beginning as we were able to view the whole course on one map, however with 5 one-way sections – we couldn't stay too long in one area!

Controls 1-9 relied on trusting the map as a lot of the key features required for navigating were hidden. Control 4 had a set of 3 boulders which were almost not visible from the viewpoint and using a mixture of contours close to the flag points and the river bends were most beneficial to solving this problem despite a potential perfect line-up of the 3 boulders.

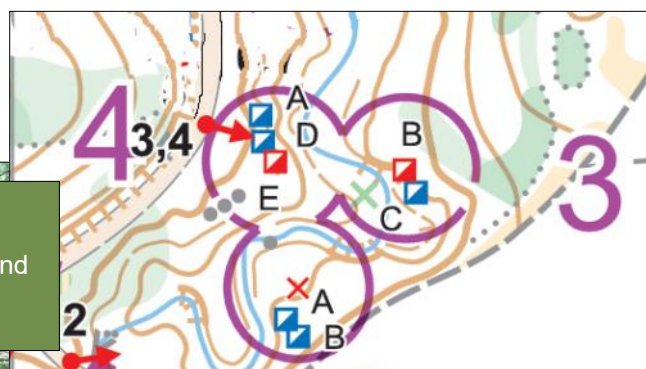
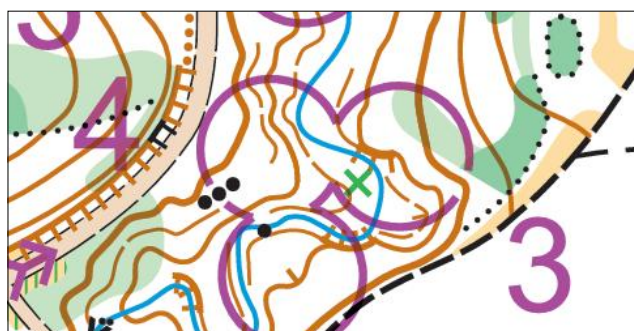
I spent an unfathomable amount of time at Control 16, a bridge across the river and three controls. The one-way section in front of it meant we only had limited visibility. Going backwards and seeing all three kites from afar did help in reducing the options to Bravo and Charlie however the angle of the tunnel and river underneath the path was key to solving this problem – something that I didn't clock onto until passing the one-way section afterwards.

Towards the end of the course, Control 33 had a number of complaints submitted. One singular kite was placed on the top of a fallen down tree and the control description did suggest that the control was in the 'lower part' of the re-entrant. Despite thinking I solved it correctly by taking two viewpoints (one from the CP and one towards the end of the course) – the

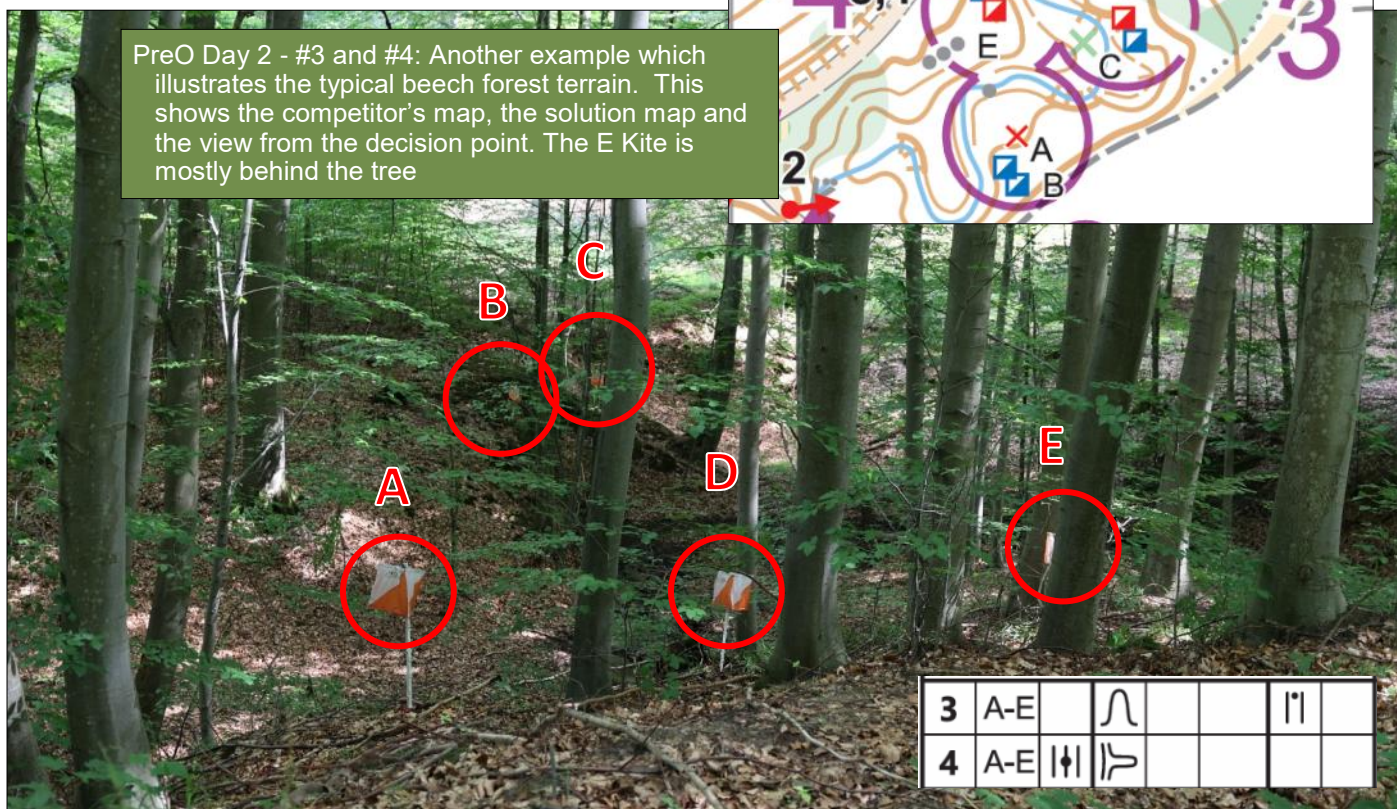


PreO Day 2 - #16: The angle of the tunnel made getting the right answer tricky. Only 54% correctly said B.

16	A-C						
--ONE WAY-->							



PreO Day 2 - #3 and #4: Another example which illustrates the typical beech forest terrain. This shows the competitor's map, the solution map and the view from the decision point. The E Kite is mostly behind the tree



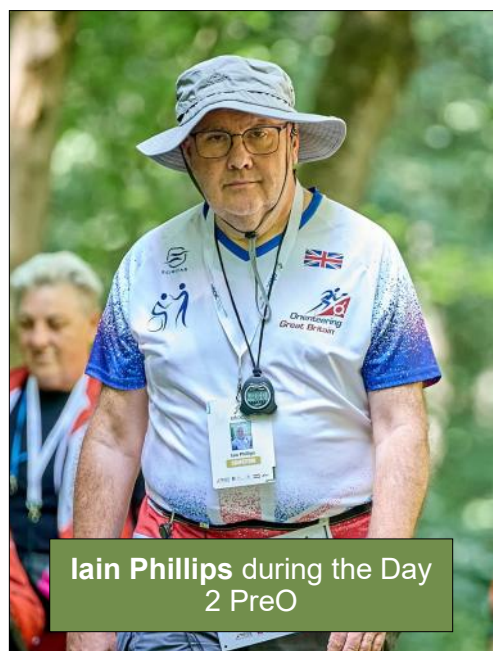
3	A-E						
4	A-E						



River Edis-Smith during the Day 2 PreO

fact that the control was too high lead it to being a zero. A large proportion of competitors got this wrong and did lead to some interesting discussions about control descriptions and vertical/horizontal height when it comes to zero tolerances.

I was slightly better with my time on Day 2 than I was with Day 1 but it did seem like from the results, having more point features/riders in the terrain does lead to everyone doing better overall on Day 2 than Day 1. It was a real eye-opening experience for me and realising how much more difficult PreO Trail-O can be in terrain beyond the UK!



Iain Phillips during the Day 2 PreO

PreO Day 1: 31 controls; 700 m; Time limit 108 mins (O/J), 128 mins (P); 2 TCs x 3 tasks

PreO Day 2: 34 controls, 700 m; time limit 123 mins (O/J), 143 mins (P); 2 TCs x 3 tasks

PreO Day 1 - Open		Pts	Time (s)
1	Anders Haugskott (NOR)	31	89
23	Charles Bromley Gardner	27	105
24	Tom Dobra	27	113
38	Ben Kyd	25	85
61	River Edis-Smith	22	67
65	Iain Phillips	22	134
77	David Jukes	20	65

PreO Day 2 - Open		Pts	Time (s)
1	Aaron Gaio (ITA)	34	32
22	Tom Dobra	32	64
56	Ben Kyd	29	25
72	Charles Bromley Gardner	27	116
73	David Jukes	27	142
76	Iain Phillips	27	276
77	River Edis-Smith	26	66

PreO Overall - Open		Pts	Time (s)
1	Anders Haugskott (NOR)	64	135
21	Tom Dobra	59	177
45	Ben Kyd	54	110
49	Charles Bromley Gardner	54	221
69	Iain Phillips	49	410
70	River Edis-Smith	48	133
75	David Jukes	47	207

PreO Day 1 - Junior		Pts	Time (s)
1	Carolina Mullis (CZE)	31	89
6	Tom Knight	25	290
10	James Curtis	24	139
21	Jack Knight	22	195

PreO Day 2 - Junior		Pts	Time (s)
1	Jonatán Furucz (SVK)	33	35
6	Tom Knight	31	114
20	James Curtis	29	46
26	Jack Knight	28	49

PreO Overall - Junior		Pts	Time (s)
1	Jonatán Furucz (SVK)	58	165
7	Tom Knight	56	404
15	James Curtis	52	188
19	Jack Knight	51	241

PreO Day 1 - P class		Pts	Time (s)
1	Ola Jansson (SWE)	24	71
13	Colin Duckworth	20	163

PreO Day 2 - P class		Pts	Time (s)
1	Ola Jansson (SWE)	32	56
23	Colin Duckworth	23	126

PreO Overall - P class		Pts	Time (s)
1	Ola Jansson (SWE)	56	127
17	Colin Duckworth	43	289

The Relay - 3rd August



And so to the final element of the Championship - the Relay. We had two Open teams and one Junior team. Each national team consists of 3 members who have to tackle a short PreO course and then some TempO controls. For this event, the PreO consisted of 10 controls (but with each team member having a designated variant: A, B or C) and there were 2 TempO stations each with 5 tasks. The area for the event was a golf course on the edge of the main forest. As competitors went to the quarantine marquee, they walked passed the course - this meant that the kites could not be hung on their stakes until after quarantine closed. Hanging the kites and checking visibility took longer than the designated 30 minutes. This, in addition to the 'tape' issue mentioned below, was another reason for the delayed start. Here **Peter Dobra**, a member of the GBR2 team, reports on the day's activities.

The fourth and final day of competition at ETOC 2026 was the relay. It was poised to be the fastest and most exciting day with mass starts and a spectator viewing area right behind the competitors. Only one of these two descriptors would turn out to be true.

This year's relay was at Binowo Park Golf Club on the south side of the Bukowa Forest. The terrain included everything you might expect from a golf course: wide open spaces, many copses, individual trees and a smattering of contour detail where it hadn't been completely bulldozed. The nature of the venue meant there were also excellent facilities for competitors and spectators alike. Spectators had access to the driving range, clubhouse terrace and eatery, while the quarantine was in a large marquee complete with plentiful tables and chairs.

The delays began when there was difficulty setting up a tape in the terrain used to separate two sets of kites visible from the same viewing point. An insufficient number of stakes was initially used so the tape promptly snapped. The competitors in quarantine were none the wiser about this and had to put up with an unexplained delay to the start.



Peter Dobra
during the Relay

The PreO section of the relay produced much of the intrigue so I will write a few words about the TempO



The competition in progress as seen from the club house viewing balcony. There were two designated areas for competitors to use. The map extract is taken from the Open/ map showing that they were to use the rear section (with all the sign boards). Junior and P class competitors used the forward section.

section first even though the competitors completed the course the other way around. There was a little trepidation heading into the first TempO station because the competitors had found out in quarantine that some of the task maps wouldn't have the viewing point on them due to an error in the diameter of map printed. In reality, both TempO stations proved satisfying to solve and not especially challenging. With the exception of one of the heats at the second station, most of the tasks involved looking up at an open slope covered in a selection of bushes. With very little hidden from view, it was straightforward to match the map to the terrain with a little care and a little counting. The aforementioned exception to this involved deciphering some intricate contour detail in a scraggly bit of woodland. Overall, the TempO was not a significant differentiator between teams.

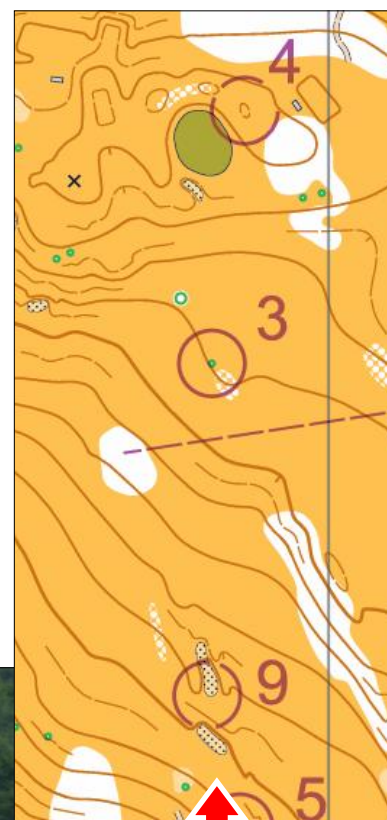
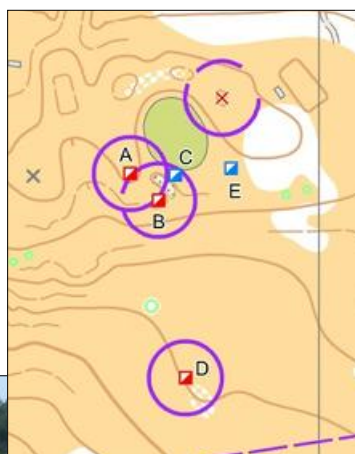
Now, back to the more interesting bit: the PreO. It was expected that this section might be rather easy because there tends to be very little hidden from view on a wide-open golf course. This did not turn out to be the case. The combination of long-distance controls and awkwardly placed trees hiding features proved challenging.

In fact, control 4 was so challenging a protest was filed against it on the grounds that many felt it was unsolvable. The planner evidently felt that it was an extra special problem worth giving to all competitors – it was included in all heats in all classes. It was an A-Z control with the kite sat up on top of the hill 400 metres away and the correct position an extra 20 or so metres behind also on top of the hill. The challenge was telling how far back the kite was with very little possibility of viewing it from different positions and without many nearby clues. Only 29 per cent gave the correct answer. The jury was convened. All the spectators received a lesson on the protest process as one of the Senior Event Advisors explained to the jury members how to solve the task before they interrogated these claims by solving the task themselves – all in full view of the terrace. The keys to solving the task lay in identifying the position of the kite relative to gaps in the wooded area to the right and identifying the vegetation changes around the golf green to the left. Using these, competitors could see that the kite was too far forward relative to the wooded area and too far to the right relative to the golf green. A difficult task!

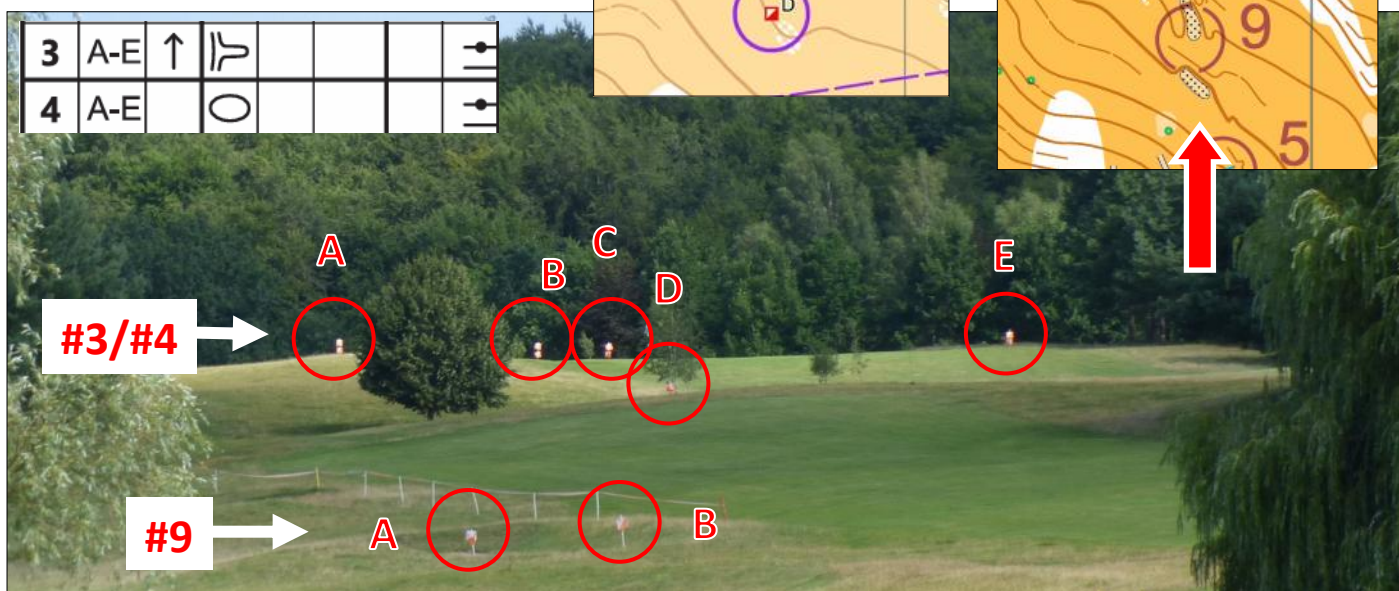
The other control that caused some consternation was number 5 on heats A and B (*map shown on the next page*). There were two kites placed along a water channel, the top of which was obscured behind a copse. The tasks required identification of how far along the water channel the kites were. This could be done by comparing height to the nearby lake, trees and bunkers and a couple of line ups. When the

The #4 problem.

The tape mentioned by Peter in his report can be seen in this image. It separated the kites to be considered for #3/4 from those for #9. The map was that for variant B. All 3 variants had different control circles for #3 but all had the same control circle for #4. The photo is from the elevated spectator viewing area.



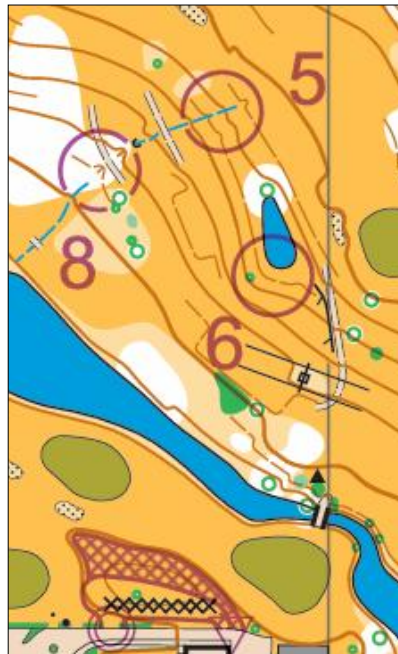
3	A-E	↑	⌂					
4	A-E		○					



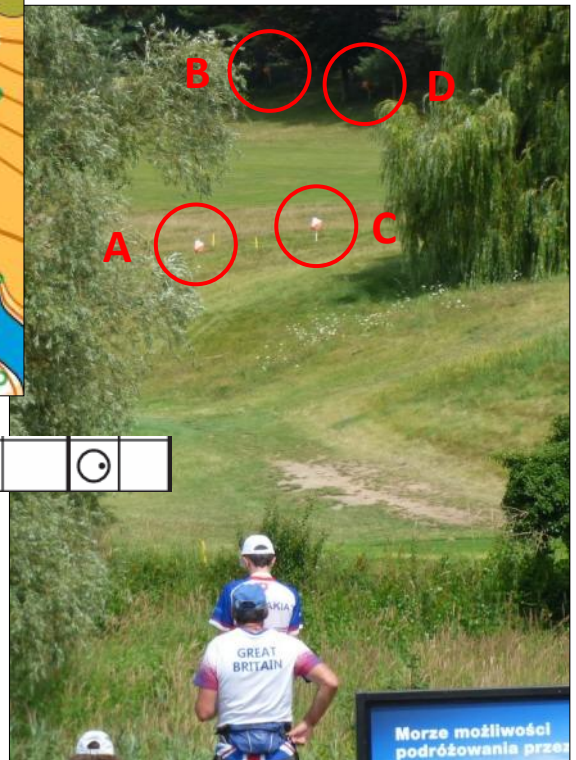
solution map was released, it was apparent that the kites might not have been in the printed position which would change the correct answers. A complaint was made to the organiser. The Senior Event Advisors traipsed off into the terrain armed with a tape measure. They came to the conclusion that the kites were not in the correct position and the station was voided. This did not affect the results because just about everyone had given the same answers.

So how did Great Britain do? Overall, very well.

The junior team comprised of **James Curtis, Jack Knight** and **Tom Knight** had a respectable mid-table finish in 7th place. All had solid middling runs with a smattering of mistakes on what was a challenging course. The best performance was Tom with two errors on PreO and on TempO. Because of some delays in the results system, for a while it looked like they would come 6th and get to stand on the podium before the Ukrainian team's result appeared and knocked them down a place.



The #5 problem for those on the A and B variants. Note that the options available were kites **A** and **C**. The **B** and **D** kites were for # 5 on the C variant. The photo is from the elevated spectator viewing area.



The second open class team included myself, **River Edis-Smith** and **Iain Phillips**. I rather sabotaged my team by taking twelve minutes too long on the PreO section. Iain did say beforehand that he didn't care if we left him with only 20 minutes as long as we got all the answers right, but I don't think he particularly appreciated being left with only 26 minutes for his run. We came second to last. I am happy with having made only two errors across both parts. But too slow!

And last, but definitely not least, is the first team made up of **Tom Dobra, Charles Bromley Gardner** and **Ben Kyd** who almost won – coming 2nd by six seconds. The only errors any of them made were on the protested PreO control 4 and Ben on control 1. If the protest had been accepted by the jury, Great Britain would have overtaken Finland and won.

Finally, after all the delays caused by the snapping tape, the faulty results system and the protest and complaints, it was time to celebrate at the prizegiving. Up there, majestically standing on the podium, Tom, Charles and Ben duly accepted their certificates and oversized can of beer.



The GBR Junior team: **James Curtis, Tom Knight** and **James Knight**



The GBR1 Open team: **Charles Bromley Gardner, Beny Kyd** and **Tom Dobra**

A Team Manager's Perspective



*Having considered the various elements of ETOC, it is worth remembering that the participation of a British team at an international Championship requires much co-ordination. Ultimately there needs to be 'team management'. Here **Charles Bromley Gardner** describes how he took on this role, shared with **Iain Phillips** and **Ben Kyd**.*

After many years of dedication to the role at their own expense, **Liz Urquhart**, accompanied by Graham, was obviously becoming more reluctant about acting as Team Manager and organising the team. Three current competitors stepped forward to take over Liz's role as Team Manager, so it was decided to set up a triumvirate: **Iain Phillips**, **Ben Kyd** and myself. Thankfully there was no 'King of the Castle' struggle, and I believe that we worked together in harmony, using our own WhatsApp Group and a common email address. Whilst I may have appeared to be the figurehead, almost every decision was made collaboratively. Sharing responsibility definitely eased the leadership burden, particularly on knotty decisions such as accommodation, outline travel plans, and polo shirt design.

What none of us had appreciated were the demands of complying with BOF policy, partially on the essential Safeguarding measures, but also on overall overseas trip management. Representing British Orienteering in everything that we did, this is understandable, learning from past incidents. BOF staff were inherently helpful throughout and provided reassuring support: whilst we were away, they would have had our back had anything dreadful occurred. The inaugural Risk Assessment, based on their template, was a knotty hurdle to surmount; but it will be so much easier second time around.

It was by no means the easiest Championship to have doubled up managerial and competitor roles. Competition days were far longer than anyone expected, and there was a furious amount of organisational concurrent sub-surface thrashing around, some of which impacted on all team managers and therefore on the teams, who could not be briefed on the following day's activities in mid-evening. Perhaps it was more than a little coincidental that, even though past bedtime without supper, I was very relaxed after Iain and I attended a coherent Team Officials' briefing prior to the Relay: the detail had to wait until the morning, when we would have plenty of time in Quarantine. (That didn't stop me, amongst others, ignoring where the finish was placed though!

[Editor: video available on request])

More than anything, it was the camaraderie of the whole team, respecting each other and working together, that made it a thoroughly enjoyable 9 days. There is invariably a difficult selection decision to be made for the Relay; when that is made easier through preparation and by acceptance, then the low-point of the trip is really not so depressive. The one regret that I had was a lack of time to be spent in the Welfare role, to be more supportive of team members when their day had not gone so well. That probably is the area that needs a bit more work, although shorter competition days would enable that essential 'down-time'.



Charles Bromley Gardner
competing in the Day 1 PreO

A team member's response -

When I heard that there had been offers to replace Liz Urquhart as the GBR Team Manager, I was relieved that someone was willing to take on the role. When I subsequently heard that three had agreed to act jointly, I had some concerns that there could be confusion and difficulties through differences of opinion. However, I needn't have worried.

Although it sometimes appeared that Charles was taking the leading role, he has explained that there was much going on in the background involving all 3 of them in decision-making. He has probably minimised the work that was involved! With the inclusion of Junior Championships, and hence 3 juniors to the team, new considerations were needed. He commented that the ETOC meetings for team officials were often late. Particularly as all 3 were important members of the team, this added effort was probably stressful - it never had that appearance.

So my thanks (and perhaps those of all the team) to them all for their work and support before, during and after ETOC.

David Jukes

*The British team included 3 selected to represent the UK as juniors in the new Junior Championships. Here **Jack Knight** gives some general comments on the experience of being a part of the British team at ETOC*

This year's European Trail Orienteering Championships was the first year where juniors could compete in a separate junior class, with a total of forty six junior athletes from fifteen different nations taking part. This was my first time competing for Team GB in TrailO and I can safely say it has been one of my favourite orienteering experiences so far. The other members of Team GB were very friendly and supportive, it created a great atmosphere to be in and really helped me feel relaxed going into the competitions.

I was initially uncertain about what the quality of the junior class would be like. We recognised some of the big names that can usually contest for a podium place in the open class, so we knew it would certainly be challenging to make the top six in the TempO or PreO. On the other hand, we hoped we might have a strong chance of making the podium in the junior relay: we narrowly missed out, coming 7th.

One of my favourite things about the championships was the discussions about the problems and the decisions we made to solve the different tasks. This not only gave me a chance to somewhat check my answers, it also provided me the chance for some extra training. It was very interesting to hear the different competitors' reasons and evidence for making the decisions as well as their individual tactics and strategies when approaching a task. This was also a great opportunity to meet lots of people from different countries and teams.

The atmosphere amongst the other competitors was really fun and friendly. During quarantine, there were many activities to do, ranging from card games to a variety of sports including football and volleyball, or reading a book if you preferred something quieter and more relaxing before the competition started.

One of my personal highlights from the event was the golf after the relay day. The golf club where the relay competition was based kindly let us try out their driving ground. It was really nice to be able to relax and have our minds taken off the results whilst we waited for them to upload. I have never played golf prior to ETOC and it was really nice to try a new sport.

All in all I had a very fun time at the championships, I would highly recommend giving TrailO a go if you ever get the chance.

The Relay Championships made use of a golf course. As Jack describes, the golf club had allowed the use of their driving range by competitors. Here Jack can be seen giving it a go. Let's hope that TrailO remains a more interesting sport for him!



The 3 GBR Juniors: **Jack Knight** (above left), **James Curtis** (above rt) and **Tom Knight** (below)



Colin Duckworth was our only GBR P (physically challenged) class competitor this year. Here he comments on the background to the P class and his participation in the new TempO P Class Championship

The process for gaining eligibility for P class competitors has been changed. There is still a form to be completed by the competitor, his or her doctor and the national federation, but there is also an assessment by an IOF TrailO classifier. There are now three categories of impairment: mobility, neurological and cardio pulmonary. This new process is being phased in as competitors existing certificates expire and will be completed by October 2027. Although there had been an opportunity for P class assessment at WTOC 2025, ETOC 2026 was the first to use the new process.

ETOC 2026 was also the first championships to have separate TempO competitions for P class and juniors.

The TempO competition has a qualification event followed by a final in which the top 1/3 compete. In the P class TempO there were 36 competitors, so the target was 12th or better.

The terrain was an old military training area, mainly open with scattered trees and thickets and numerous earthbanks, gullies and pits. Prominent boundary stones served as useful anchors for several of the stations.

The first station was different. It had the land form features but it was in woodland viewed across open ground. I made a complete hash of this station only getting one of the five tasks correct. I then had clean results at stations 2, 3 and 4 before a silly mistake at the last task at station 5 and two more errors at station 6, finishing with a clean station 7. All in all too many errors and I ended up 23rd. If I had got stations 1 and 5 correct, then I would have been 10th and into the final. I'll just have to practice more.

For more details regarding P class eligibility, see the IOF page:
[Eligibility for P Class in TrailO](#)



A Latvian P class competitor at TempO Qualification Station 1



Colin Duckworth waiting at a TempO station

Photos: A large number of photos were taken during the Championship events (TempO, PreO Days 1 and 2, and the Relay) by two official photographers - **Tomasz Krysiak** and **Dusan Furucz**. I am very grateful that they were provided on the event website and hence available for use in illustrating this Newsletter. I took some additional photos (*when permitted to have possession of my phone*) and a few of these have also been used here.

David Jukes