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More People, More Places, More Podiums (MP3)

www.britishorienteering.org.uk/ozone
Following in the footsteps of athletes such as Heather Monro and Jamie Stevenson, twelve athletes, all of whom had competed previously for Great Britain, travelled to Dresden, Germany for the 2009 Junior European Cup (JEC). In 2004, the final stage of the World Cup Series was held in Dresden and so it was these ‘super stars’ that our twelve athletes turned to in order to understand how best to prepare for orienteering in the finest terrain Dresden had to offer.

Recommendations from Heather and Jamie included statements such as:

“It’s the kind of terrain that you need to be really physically up for and attack all the way; if you’re not, it will drain you and time will just slip away!”

“Always know how high / low on a slope you are and try and simplify it, so that you can just pick out the big rock features until you are inside the circle.”

Read the control description when you are planning your route (when you are approaching the circle it is too late!). The reason for this is that the crags and one of these will probably determine the best way to approach the control.”

Sprint Race

The sprint race was the first event of the JEC campaign and the area was situated in a steep stage on the outskirts of Bad Gottleuba and consisted of a park area as well as a neighbouring wooded area. The sprint race was set over 2 hours and Team GBR posted a mixed set of results. However, the honours of the day went to Peter Hodkinson who grabbed the bronze medal in his sprint race victory at JWOC, who took the honours, that visibility was good, although at times the runnability continued their good form from the day before by claiming their second gold medals of the championships winning M20 Long Race. As a result achieved her first ever international podium place as a junior. The gold in M18 was won by Vitaliy Sharov (RUS). In the M20 Long Race map Extract, Green Course: Hakon Westergard (NOR) Blue Course: Peter Hodkinson (GBR)

Relay

The final race of JEC 2009 was the relay and the men’s and women’s races started at the same time. Emma Klingenberg (DEN) secured her 3rd gold medal of JEC 2009. Denmark also won the men’s race. The two GBR teams fought a tough battle and finished 6th and 7th 25.1 minutes and 3.2 minutes down respectively.

In the overall standings Team GBR finished 6th behind Switzerland, Norway, Czech Republic, Denmark and Russia. Next year the team will be setting their targets higher.

Armed with this information, each athlete set themselves their goals for the competition which comprised of a sprint, long and relay race. As a result, expectations for some outstanding results were high and the athletes didn’t disappoint.

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JUNIOR INTERREGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Written from a Scottish perspective, by Team Manager Maureen Brown - Photos by Rob Lines

The Junior Inter-Regional Championships (JIRCs) is a competition between the 12 regions of Britain. It rotates around the regions, but has never been held in Northern Ireland before. The organising team from Lagan Valley, led by Greg McCann, put in a huge amount of work to make sure that all went smoothly.

Most teams travelled by air but the Scots travelled from Troon to Larne on the ferry. We took two minibuses and arrived at the accommodation near Newcastle, County Down, on Friday at midnight. The accommodation was in an army barracks and after thorough security checks it was after 1am before we were in bed. Breakfast was at 7am, but amazingly (most of) the juniors were up on time to eat in a huge mess hall along with the soldiers and cadets.

The weather on Saturday was fantastic, wall to wall blue skies and glorious warm sunshine. The individual assembly area was in the Mourne Mountains’ beauty spot of Silent Valley Reserve. The event was on Slievenagore, a rocky hillside with lots of tricky control points, and when the first finishers returned it was clear that this was going to be a great competition.

230 juniors took part, and although as expected, the large regions of North West, Yorkshire & Humberside and Scotland did well, so did the smaller Regions. Representing South West, Lucy Butt and Jack Benham were first in the W14/16 classes, and Naomi Lawson (East Midlands) was 1st in W14. However, with two to count in each class, this competition requires strength in depth and in recent years it has been the largest Regions of North West, Yorkshire & Humberside and Scotland which have been at the top.

For the North West, Chris Nash won M14 and Charlotte Watson (running up a class) was first in W18. For Yorkshire, Duncan Birtwhistle won M18, with Florence Harens and Aiden Smith (M14) runners-up in W14/16 respectively. Scotland had no winners, but Eilenn Mason was 2nd in W14 and there were several 3rd and 4th places. So when the results were announced at the evening’s prize giving (as usual in reverse order), it was USA who won both the boys’ and girls’ competitions, and the overall Individual Trophy. The trophy for the best individual performance (voted by the team managers) went to M18 champion Duncan Birtwhistle of HXOA.

Individual Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Scotland</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Yorkshire</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd North West</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scotland have won the Individual Trophy several times in the past, but have never won the Relay, and for the past 10 years have been runners up in the overall competition to either NWOA or HXOA.

The Relays were held in Belfast County Park, Belfast on Sunday morning in yet more warm, sunny weather. Up to 4 teams of 3 boys and girls, can compete for each Region with 2 teams to count. Teams consist of a 16, 14 and 10 who run in that order. The scoring is 72 points for a win, 69 for 2nd and so on, so the Relay competition is worth twice as many points as the individual.

The M16’s went off first and as usual at the changeover a number of runners came back in the leading pack, including teams from Scotland, HXOA, NWOA, Northern Ireland and Wales - the competition was as tight as the Individual. After the changeover four of the runners, including one Scot and one from the North West, were: 3rd by a mere 3 points. Every team managed a podium finish, with Scotland and England as expected were well clear, tied on 72 points, and Wales had just edged Ireland into 4th.

The English team were widely expected to win, having the strongest team and the best runners, but in the end it was the English who were disqualified for making the last decision that a control had been misplaced or removed (but it hadn’t). In the end the HXOA first team of Adam Smith, Zac Fiedt and Duncan Birtwhistle won the boys’ Relay, with Wales 2nd and the West Midlands 3rd place.

In the girls race, it was South Central’s W16 Tanasyn Mason who came back in the lead, closely followed by Scotland’s Reina Lindsay and Rhi Singh. Overall, the race was won by a team from the North West, thanks to a stunning run from Charlotte Watson, taking over 3rd leg from W14 Katrina Himeirenko and W16 Katrina Himeirenko. SCOA were 2nd and WYOA 3rd. However, as with the Individual Competition, and 2 teams counting for each Region, strength in depth is important and the overall Relay results were:

<table>
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<th>Region</th>
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<td>1st Scotland</td>
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<td>238</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Scotland</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Yorkshire</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So after 10 years of coming 2nd in this competition, Scotland took the overall JIRCs trophy for the first time since 1999!

After Greg presented the prizes in the warm sunshine, to much cheering and smiling, most of the teams left in buses to the airports to catch their flights home. The winning Scottish team had several hours until their ferry and went out for well deserved top trays.

Thanks very much to the NIOA organisers, in particular Greg McCann, for such an enjoyable weekend, great competitions and venues, excellent accommodation facilities (mal tents), organised transport, and of course the fantastic weather.

Full results at: www.niorienteering.org.uk/nvo

The North West celebrate victory in the women’s relay competition

So after 10 years of coming 2nd in this competition, Scotland took the overall JIRCs trophy for the first time since 1999!

In the women’s relays the English teams managed a similarly impressive feat taking 1st and 2nd places, three minutes ahead of Scotland. Instead managed to edge Wales in the women’s relay but it was not enough for them to break into the top 3. The final standings were England 1st, Scotland 2nd, Wales 3rd (and winners of the Judith Wingham Trophy), and Ireland 4th, less than 10 points behind. The weekend was excellent with close competition, great competitions and venues, excellent accommodation facilities (mal tents), organised transport, and of course the fantastic weather.

Full results at: www.niorienteering.org.uk/nv/w

Ward Junior Home Internationals - A Welsh perspective by Kris Jones

This year’s JHIs took place in Anglesey on Newborough Warren. As always it was the highlight of the year for the Welsh team who went there with the goal of beating Ireland to win the Judith Wingham Trophy and hopefully take some points off the bigger nations as well. This year’s competition promised to be a hard fought battle as Ireland had been getting closer and closer for a number of years, but after a successful tour to Norway we were confident that we could do well on home turf.

The weekend kicked off with the individual race on the north part of Newborough. It provided runners with the challenge of fast running and tough navigation and at the end of the day the points were close. Scotland and England as expected were well clear, tied on 72 points, and Wales had just edged Ireland into 3rd a mere 3 points. Every team managed a podium place which meant that all of the teams had something to cheer about in the prize giving that evening.

Outstanding runs of the day went to the English M14 boys who managed a clean sweep of the podium places and to Kristin Maxwell who took 3rd place on W18 after being called up to the Scottish squad as a reserve. Scotland certainly have one to watch for the future with Alexander Chopek taking 4th on the M14 despite only being an M12.

The next day saw the relay on the south end of Newborough and it was sure to be a tough fought contest with every place counting. First through the finishing line were the English M14 boys who managed a clean sweep of the podium places and to Kristin Maxwell who took 3rd place on W18 after being called up to the Scottish squad as a reserve. Scotland certainly have one to watch for the future with Alexander Chopek taking 4th on the M14 despite only being an M12.

The next day saw the relay on the south end of Newborough and it was sure to be a tough fought day went to Stephen Reynolds of Wales who managed to pull up seven places on second leg to hand Wales 1 the chance of a podium. Matt Holicky had a steady run in the lead but was losing a lot of time to Wales 1 who went through the spectator control just a minute down, and now had a chance of gold!

However on the very last control Matt gained a 10 metre lead and secured England the win. Wales 1 finished some seconds after and England 2 completed the podium, with Peter Hendon on last leg. This was a serious blow to Scotland’s hopes of taking the overall win.

Knee high heather added to the challenge on day 1

The victorious England Team

Lake and High Peak

The Boys Relay was a close competition, Photo Credit: Chris Brannford

Scots Overall winners of the JHIs for the first time

The standout features were both technically and physically challenging.
Despite all the rain during the previous couple of weeks, the sun shone for a lot of this year’s British Schools Championships, held at Druridge Bay in the North East. Although the event was very far north this year, they received nearly 800 entries from 97 different schools from all over the country, with strong teams also attending from Scotland.

The large assembly area accommodated the finish and registration areas, together with a large marquee that housed not only the prize giving but also other activities to keep the children entertained whilst waiting for all the competitors to finish. It included team challenges and face painting, with several large cats appearing on the podiums later in the day!

The individual winners of each course couldn’t have been closer, in most cases they were only separated out by a few seconds. Two of those who did win by a larger margin were Abigail Mason from Banchory Primary School and Zoe Harding from Lancaster Girls Grammar who won by over 3 and 4 minutes respectively.

The age class team winners saw some new schools on the podium but Ulverston Victoria High School dominated the boy’s age categories. However they were denied a clean sweep by the Year 13 team from Torquay Boys Grammar. The girl’s age class team honours were much more shared and Banchory Academy was rewarded for their attendance with a win in year 9.

The whole team prizes were again strongly contested, with King Henry VIII Prep School winning the Primary category, Barnardiston Hall Prep School winning the Middle Prep category, Newcastle School for Boys winning the Small Secondary category and with their strong showing in the team prizes, the Large Secondary school category was won by Ulverston Victoria High School.

Barrow Sixth Form College won the Tertiary category.

Our thoughts must also go to the teams from the Cockermouth areas that were so badly affected by the floods and unable to attend. Thanks to Nato Orienteering club with the help of CLOK and NV for making this event possible and to the event sponsors PE Office Supplies and Buff.

Charlie Control says, 
“So you can look back and see what training has and hasn’t worked and also see what you did in the lead up to a successful competition.”

Many thanks to all the juniors who took part in the online junior survey. There was lots of great feedback about how we can improve events for junior participants and the full results will be published in the New Year.

Congratulations to Benjamin Parkinson who was the lucky winner of the GB O top signed by World Champions Graham Gristwood, Jamie Stevenson and Jon Duncan.
Junior Profile:

Peter Hodkinson

Age: 18
Club: NOC

Age started orienteering? All my life, but the first time I ran a course on my own I was 5, the day before my 6th birthday!

Do your parents orienteer? They used to, but now they have other interests.

Why/where did you start orienteering? When my mum carried me around her courses as a baby. My two older brothers (Chris and David) got into it before I was born and dragged the family along.

What do you enjoy about orienteering? The rush you get when you run into a proper bit of forest and really leg it. But the best feeling is always when you have a really solid performance and get the result you deserve for it. However, orienteering would be nothing without all the amazing people I’ve met and places I’ve been with them.

Do you have a coach? Not at the moment, but I get advice about physical, technical and mental training from lots of different people who all effectively coach me.

Where is your favourite place to orienteer? The Italian Dolomites, Trondheim and Speyside are some of my favourite. I don’t really like open areas because I find them boring and don’t concentrate hard enough.

What do you enjoy doing outside of orienteering? Eating, being with friends and having a laugh. Preferably at the same time! I also love having a go at any sport: Athletics, X Country, Fell Racing, Cycling, Badminton... just not Swimming! Not a good idea since I sink pretty quick! Driving is great too. And listening to Scott Mills - he’s awesome!

What is your best result? 3rd in the sprint at the Junior European Cup in October. This was the best personal performance I have achieved in a race. The run was very clean technically and despite not feeling all that fast I won the bronze!

What advice would you give to people wanting to get into the GB Squad? Love what you do! If you don’t enjoy training, find someone to do it with. You will only win races if you navigate well, so you should always race as fast as you can orienteer, not as fast as you can run! If you train hard, then you can race easier.