



News -

For those of you that haven't been into Setmurphy for a while, you will get quite a shock when you see the changes caused by the recent (and ongoing forestry work). Mike B will be very busy undertaking the re-mapping of the area once the work has finished!



A Visit to the Archive—1990

Article written by Colin Webb—but what would be your best hour in the year?

**The best hour in the year -**

Of all the hours in a year - 8,760 to be exact - which one is the most precious? Maybe we all have our own answers to that one. My usual choice - that extra hour in a warm sleeping bag after the clocks have gone back on day 2 of the Karrimor - was, like myself, a non starter this year. The only real candidate for my vote put their feet in the door at the very last moment, although the winner was never really in doubt.

The Saturday before the Great Wood event was a magical day, almost supernaturally still, and bright as a polished mirror; the sort of day which disarms commonsense and tempts you to run when you know you shouldn't. It was 2.45pm. I'd ignored my cold and struggled on to Grassmoor from Cinderdale up the Lad Hows footpath. At the summit cairn, I sat breathless and looked seaward where it was so clear I imagined I could even see the curve of the horizon. Inland, Skiddaw and Helvellyn poked like volcanoes through the late afternoon mist which was gathering in the valleys and softening the outlines. Further off, the Pennines were little more than an inconsequential blue sudge. Although it was cold I could have stayed for hours and only left with reluctance.

Running along the edge of Dove Craggs I had my Bröcken spectre for company as mist welled up from below. I waved and the enormous haloed shadow waved mysteriously in return. In the relative darkness of Coledale Hause, the temperature plummeted and I had to put on my appallingly colourful Peruvian style woolly hat and gloves. There were more spectres on Hopegill Head, and as I descended Whiteside, passing several walkers who looked disparagingly at my footwear (FB's) and aghast at my hat, the sun finally disappeared behind Melbreak like an enormous red burrowing beetle.

I pattered contentedly down the reentrant behind Whin Ben, past the site of the 'B6 Bear Trail cache and along the roadside to the car. It was 3.45 and I was as high as a kite. Did my feet really touch the ground? I can hardly remember. Monday morning seemed light years away.

In the past when people have asked me why I run, I've usually shrugged my shoulders and grunted something non-committal, secretly thinking that anyone needing to ask the question would never understand the answer anyway. We all have reasons for our madneses and I think mine are obvious enough. Suffice it to say that it doesn't take many days like this one in a lifetime, let alone a year, to make all the tedious hundred runs, and even the downright unpleasant one, somehow seem worthwhile.

Colin Webb (M35)



Have you been orienteering in foreign parts? Ever thought about writing about your experiences? Well, if you have a tale to tell, now is the time to put the proverbial pen to paper and share your story.

It might give us inspiration for some post lockdown orienteering travels! Here is one from the archive.

**'APOC'ryphal Events - Canada & USA August 1990**

Canada: the land of the Grizzly. And his terrain - the coniferous forests clinging grimly to the craggy and bouldered slopes of the towering Rockies. To survive here pioneering man had to be strong, rugged, resilient and ... eat an enormous breakfast. Lots of wimps go to Canada now, but they still get given Grizzly sized meals. Four pancakes doesn't sound much, but they are 4" thick and come with 2 eggs and a hefty slice of ham. So it was at the start of an orienteering day on the Asia Pacific Orienteering Championships, August 1990.

Canada is a big place too - just scratching about in one corner and popping into the neighbouring USA put 2300 miles on the clock of a hire car. I was like doing the Scottish 6 day around Cambletown, Cheviot and Thurso - twice. Days 1 2 and 3: Kamloops, British Columbia; Days 4 and 5: Caroline, Alberta; Days 6 and 7: Cle Elum, Washington.

Kamloops sits in a bowl flanked by the Coast Range on the west, the Rockies on the east and the Cascades on the south. The 3 ranges shield the area from the prevailing west winds giving rise to a hundred mile strip of semi-desert. Six Mile Lake, the area chosen for the Canadian Championships was a dry dusty valley thinly covered in pine making for excellent runability. Contour detail was moderate - but more of a High Rigg than a Blakeley Raise. On the early part of the courses, navigation was aided by clearings which looked as though they were dried up lake beds. Some areas mapped as water turned out to be completely dry; competitors approaching the finish were therefore surprised to find that the two large lakes in the valley were overfull and marshes had to be waded. On day 2 I took a small detour to cool my feet - 5 minutes later I was waste high in water, and I wasn't the only person running up the finish lane soaking wet. The baking sun soon dried us up though - the temperatures were in the nineties and the organisers had done very well to supply water at regular intervals along all the courses.



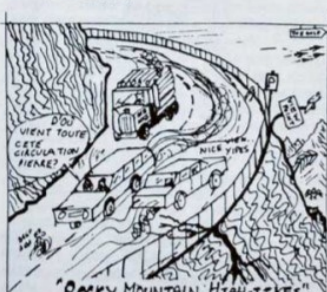
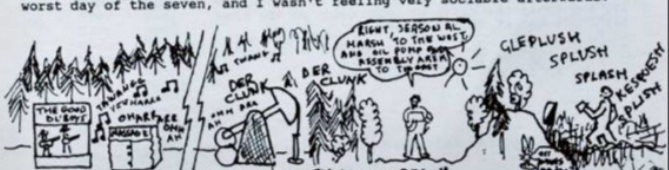
That night it was off on the first part of the Journey east across the magnificent Rockies to Alberta. There were brief stops at some of the superb natural and historic sites along the road, and everywhere teeming with orienteers taking similar well earned breaks from the journey. Westbound Canadians, who can normally overtake logging trucks on blind bends in comparative safety, must have been wondering where all the oncoming traffic had come from. Many people headed for Inisfaill and the event centre, but we had booked in at a working ranch near Caroline. Imagine my delight when I found an 'O' sign saying 'Car Park 2k' at the ranch entrance. Orienteers had the little house bulging at its seams - but the hospitality was first rate and the international company excellent.



The model event was very informative - 'Paths and compass, use them very much', Eric, a Swede staying with us, advised afterwards 'But I hope the map is better!' he went on. The map was better, but had 2.5m contours, and thousands of them. The area was on a type of glacial moraine that the locals call 'sausages'. It consisted of blocked forest (around 300-600 metre blocks) and hundreds of small but intricate hills and ridges. Then there the muskegs themselves, to us they were marshes: some years bone dry, some years not; this year they were definitely not. We got a hint of this as we watched the World Cup runners at the spectator control, as some competitors took a 20 metre detour over dry land, others lost up to 30 seconds (a long time at that level) and often made a spectacle of themselves as they struggled, splashed and stumbled through what looked to be a pretty innocent marsh.



Out on the area it was constant switch - from fast running to careful navigating, with the odd wade thrown in for good measure. On day 4, I totally messed up 'in the circles' on numbers 1 to 4, then staged a fine recovery to record my best score of the whole 7 days. So, on day 5 all I had to do was keep going, I had the hang of the terrain now, it would be easier. Wrong! The day 2 planner had managed a totally different angle on the area. My first error had me up to the waist in a muskeg, but I was still going reasonably well. The second error, a terrible retribution for over confidence, had me heading south to relocate and then suddenly looking out across a lake - not on the map. That was my worst day of the seven, and I wasn't feeling very sociable afterwards.



Day 3 was the Asia Pacific Champs proper. A slightly more fertile pocket of land with rolling hills of rust grass and valleys of rough and troublesome forest with convoluted valleys and vegetation which was often thicker than the map suggested. There were a lot of retirees on day 3, including yours truly. The problems were threefold: the baking sun on the open land, the vicious forest, and the length of the courses. Technically the area was one of the most unforgiving I've experienced, and most people I spoke to had made major errors. I learned that I should have kept going though as the M21A winning time was only 10 minutes short of 2 hours.

although the bit that I had missed posed as many problems as the bit that I did, so I could have ended taking up well over 3 hours.

The local orienteering community in Alberta went to town on the razmataz with a band, local radio, massage parlour (well tent), and horse rides all adding to a nice festival atmosphere, but some people thought it was a bit OTT. The organisation didn't suffer though.

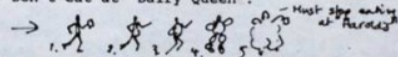
Crossing the border into the US we left behind 3 things: expensive petrol, (relatively) well planned forestry operations and well organised orienteering events; so it was a mixed blessing. Cle Elum offered us two contrasting events: the first (Day 6), tough orienteering, but well planned and adequately controlled and mapped; and for the last day, runnable forest, unimaginative planning, dodgy controlling and a map that belies comment. That was a general opinion, not just mine! The organisation on both days left a lot to be desired. For the world cup race on day six the assembly area was too small and on a steep slope. Brits eagerly crowded round the scoreboard, (which was constantly on the verge of falling over) to keep updated with Yvette Hague's superb run. She ended up 3rd, with many top Scandinavians etc. succumbing to the terrain. Our hosts from the B&B turned up to see what it was about and were very enthused by it all. They hope to give it a go next year.



Well its 4 more years of saving our hard earned pennies so we can go to New Zealand for the 1994 APOC - I'll let you know how that goes.

**TIPS FOR THE TRAVELLER IN NORTH AMERICA**

- 1) Fill up with petrol well before crossing into Canada
- 2) Don't eat at "Jack in the Box" (unless you take your own sandwiches).
- 3) Don't go to downtown Spokane, Washington.
- 4) If you go to Kamloops, take insect repellent.
- 5) Spend a week driving through the Rockies, not a day.
- 6) Don't eat at "Wendy's".
- 7) Don't go to Bonner's Ferry, Idaho.
- 8) Stay at B&B wherever you can (phone the Chamber of Commerce).
- 9) Remember, Americans drive on the wrong side of the road.
- 10) And Canadians drive on both sides of the road.
- 11) Don't eat at "Dairy Queen".



by Paul & Mags Watson  
15 Lower Lane  
Chinley  
Derbyshire  
SK12 4PG

Bookings for JK91 now been taken - Reasonable rates??

This article was written by Paul and Mags Watson in 1990.

Interestingly, the Yvette Hague mentioned in the article is probably better known to you all as Yvette Baker (of the junior competition fame).

Yvette is Britain's most successful orienteer, winning the short distance event at the 1999 WOC in Inverness.

At the age of 15, in 1983, she won the Elite class at the JK and in the same year she competed for the British relay team at WOC.

Impressively, between 1983 and 2001, she competed in all 11 WOCs and as well as the win in 1999, she had several podium finishes; the first in 1993, which was Britain's first ever WOC medal.

In domestic competition she won both the British Championships and the JK multiple times.