

SOUTH WEST ORIENTEERING ASSOCIATION

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MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 20th May 2025

PRESENT:

Christine Vince KERNO (chairman); Helen Kelsey BOK (secretary); Steve Robertson QO (treasurer); Rob Mills WIM (fixtures); Arthur Vince KERNO (cttee); Neil Fraser NWO;(cttee); Kevin Pickering WIM (cttee); Roger Hargreaves KERNO; Ian Jones NGOC; Richard Hudson BOK; Adrian Taylor DEVON.

1. Apologies.
Pete Maliphant BOK (cttee and SWJOS); Julie Astin WSX (cttee); Liz Yeadon SARUM;
2. Chairman's update.
Congratulations to Flurry Grierson DEVON who was 3rd Senior man in the National Cross Country Championships.
3. Approval of minutes of last meeting.
Approved
4. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda.
Arthur's proposed amendment to the SWOLeague rules had been circulated to all clubs and no comments had been received, so the new rules will now stand.
5. Treasurer and Membership Secretary's report.
Very little change in financial status since last meeting, no requests for grants for juniors received yet and no request from EOC for Interland contribution yet. Levies still coming in. £1000 paid to SWJOS and first aid grant paid to coaches.
Membership numbers have been gradually decreasing over the last 3 years. This year about 7% down from last year. There has been a decline in seniors, families and juniors. The average age of membership has increased by 1 year from last year. The peak age group is 60-75 years. Analysing by club, apart from WIM and WSX all club membership has declined. The biggest decline over the last year is DEVON, which was the only club that increased last year. Adrian reported that DEVON's loss of juniors could be attributed to Steve Perelle's stepping back from bringing juniors into the club. There isn't the steady stream of juniors coming in. DEVON has also lost their contact with Exeter University. Despite the good work done by Pete with the SWJOS, it doesn't seem to swell the numbers of juniors. It was noted that other types of running events, e.g Park Runs, and others that charge a high fee, are very well attended. QO has been offering "Spunch" events which use an OS Map rather than an O map, which encourages a lot of runners, but they don't seem to progress to orienteering. It was noted that SYO club nights attract 60+ juniors. Kevin pointed out that whilst looking to attract younger members we should also congratulate those older members who still continue to compete.
It was generally felt that this decline in membership is something which we should all consider.
6. Fixtures report.

6.1 Report from BOK re 2026 British Sprint Championships

All major officials have now been appointed for both days and BOK is now scheduling in meetings with Bath University and UWE for after their terms end.

Other fixtures: SWOA was asked to help with the British Middle Distance championships in 2027, (originally allocated to East Anglia) and clubs have put a lot of work into finding suitable venues, but ultimately haven't managed to come up with anything. This has been reported back to BOF, and Mike is grateful for the work put into this and will now make a national appeal for this and CSC 2027.

SWOL 25-26: NGOC have had to move the date of their league event from 01/02/2026 due to FE permission constraints and have suggested moving it to 22/11/25 which is the Saturday before the BOK SWOL on Sunday 23/11/2025, which would give a double bill that weekend. Points against this are: the Southern Night Championships is at Crawley on Saturday 22nd, anyone who is away for that weekend would be disadvantaged in the league as they would miss two events. Views of the committee were sought on these issues. It was decided to go back to NGOC to ask what other dates they could offer, to identify whether these would also have issues.

In 2026 we are looking for hosts for SWLong and Middle distance championships and an Yvette Baker Qualifying round.

Another bulletin will be issued at the end of May.

7. SWJOS report.

Pete Maliphant sent a report in advance *See Appendix 1* and he wanted to highlight the issue of the BOKTrot on 1st June being both the SW Long distance Championships as well as the Yvette Baker Qualifier, meaning that some of the juniors are disadvantaged because they can only compete in one of the two competitions, because the Yvette Baker courses for the older juniors are not the same as their usual age class course, so they have had to choose which competition to enter. Rob pointed out that this had only happened because there were no other offers for the Yvette Baker Qualifier, so it was either this or no qualifying round in SW meaning clubs would not have the opportunity to compete, so although not an ideal solution seemed the only option.

The problem seems to arise because of the Yvette Baker course/ age allocation. Christine offered to look into the Yvette Baker competition rules and try to establish why these allocations are this way, and also investigate how many entrants there have been in other YB qualifying rounds around the country. **Action: Christine to investigate and report back.**

8. Recorder of Controller's Report nothing to report.

9. Proposal to add BLOG to SWOA website *See Appendix 2*

Helen has contacted Nath as SWOA webmaster and he says that is possible to do, but as it is outside his monthly hosting charge remit and will take a few hours to set up and get to format that Martin would like, it will cost an extra £100.

Most of the committee were very much in favour of this idea. Rob pointed out that we would have very little control over what was posted on the BLOG and there should be some declaration about views being expressed being those of the individual, not necessarily views of SWOA. It was also felt that there should be an administrator/moderator, who, in the

event of inappropriate posts, could remove posts. It was decided to ask Martin Yeo if he would take on this role. **Action: Helen to contact Martin and Nath to progress this idea.**

10. AOB. Christine pointed out that the EOC has its AGM on Tuesday 3rd June and that she would try to attend if back in time from trip away.
11. Club reps report to clubs.
 - SWOLeague rules will now be updated in line with Arthur's suggestion.
 - Ask for hosts for SW long and Middle championships and Yvette Baker Qualifier for 2026 (highlighting the issues of having YB round at the same event as one of the others)
12. Date of next meeting. Tuesday 5th August 2025

Appendix 1 SWJOS Report May 2025

SWJOS Report – May 2025

Training has concluded for the 24-25 season and recent activity has focused on preparation for the JK and British Long Champs, which are vital selection races for the summer training camps for about half of the squad.

4 of the 5 selection races that apply for most of the camps were held in Northern England and Scotland, and two of them were in May (unusually late) and in exam season. This has materially affected the prospects for several members of SWJOS. I have expressed my concern about this to selectors and the JROS Chair.

Selections for all the camps should be announced in the next few days and I expect we will win 8-10 places. This will leave 4 or 5 of our juniors very disappointed, but it's a life lesson and we'll be doing all we can to help them through that. I hope they'll come back stronger next season

As an aside, our junior squad have faced a remarkable number of setbacks this season, with several long-running injuries and a lot of breathing / asthma related issues.

Lyra Medlock (WSX) has been selected as a reserve for the Junior World Champs GB team and both Lyra and Marcus Perry (BOK) have been selected to run for GB at the European Youth Champs.

Lastly, we have unfortunately hit another unfixable fixtures issue, with the Yvette Baker Trophy and the SW Long Champs both booked to take place at the BOKTrot on June 1st. This requires MW16s and MW18s to run Green for the YBT, whilst simultaneously running Sh. Blue / Blue / Sh. Brown for the SW Long. Both competitions will be affected as a result.

As with Michinhampton in January, there is no way of fixing this. All we can do is make sure this doesn't happen again, please.

If you have anyone in your club who would like to find out more, please take a look at www.swjs.co.uk/about.html or contact any of the SWJOS families, Dave Hanstock (BOK) or me.

Peter Maliphant BOK & SWJOS Coach

Appendix 2

Request to set up a BLOG on SWOA website for SI timing users (Martin Yeo DEVON)

My name is Martin Yeo and I look after the timing aspects - laptops, controls, etcetera - of DEVON.

I've been discussing with my counterparts around the SWOA clubs and we are keen to create a blog where we can each share tips and stories from our own experiences. This would be helpful since our roles require us to be prepared for all sorts of unexpected situations, and while any one of us probably hasn't faced them all, between us we have decades of experience.

The SWOA website seems an appropriate place to host this, as an established known website, and one that is already funded from club membership. Do you think a new section could be added for this blog? Here is a random example of the sort of format we were thinking of: [link](#).

Many Thanks,

Martin Yeo

Devon Orienteering Club