

East Anglian Orienteering Association AGM 9th July 2017

Chairman's Report by Paul Beckett

While chairing the meetings of the East Anglian Committee I have become aware of the wide range of East Anglian orienteers contributing to the sport in different ways. Volunteering is essential to our sport and needs to be enjoyable and appreciated for it to be sustainable. We try to do that in East Anglia and to strike the right balance between contributing to the wider sport and operating within our volunteer resources and the limitations of our terrain. We also combine as a region to stage training sessions for orienteering volunteers to update their skills for coaching, planning and controlling.

A key volunteering opportunity in the coming year is Saturday 30th September 2017 when the East Anglian region will be staging the British Sprints Championships at Campbell Park Milton Keynes. Work is already well advanced on the event planning and organising and I would like to thank the volunteer officials for work done so far. This complex and high profile event is a major undertaking for a relatively small region and we will need many volunteers from all clubs in the region to ensure its success. Preferential parking and entry benefits have been arranged to encourage volunteer helpers and there are plenty of different jobs to choose from. Please put the date 30th September 2017 in your diaries now and do your bit for your sport and region.

Our juniors have been doing well under the coaching guidance of Clive Wilkinson and Steven Partridge. 13 juniors attended the JIRCs in distant Scotland in Sept 2016 and the East Anglia squad finished 5th overall, their highest place for many years. Nearly 50 juniors took part in the East Anglian Schools Championships at Hornchurch Country Park in May 2017 which was won by Brentwood School. Ella Gilbert was selected to attend a training camp last summer in Sweden. Chloe Cracknell and Tim Harrison represented England at the Interland contest in Belgium in April 2017. Daisy Partridge competed for England at the World Schools Championships in Italy in April 2017. We continue to use EAOA funds to support our juniors at camps, training, inter-regional events and when selected for international contests.

Orienteering competitions across the region have continued to be popular during 2016/17 with good attendances at the East Anglian League events (6 events in 2016 attracting 300 different entrants and 6 events scheduled for 2017) and at SMOC's East Anglian Championships at Rushmere in March 2017 (236 entrants). Traditional forest orienteering events remain popular but Clubs have also offered a range of sprint, urban and relay formats that make good use of East Anglia's limited terrain, e.g. Norwich and Cambridge urban events. The low key summer events I have attended this year have also reminded me that with ingenuity we can set interesting orienteering challenges in our East Anglian terrain.

Finally, I would like to thank all the East Anglian committee members for their work and support this year, and all those volunteers who have contributed in various ways to some enjoyable orienteering in our East Anglian region during 2016-17. Particular thanks to Andrew Elliot who is this year's recipient of the Bill Stevens Trophy for services to orienteering in the region.