

Chair's Report 2018/19

'Only six meetings a year'

After agreeing to take over as chair from Graham Watson I think he mentioned it only takes 'six meetings a year'. Well I've already managed to increase that by at least one in 2019 - not a habit I intend to continue.

It was great to see Deborah Goodwin and Helen Rennie join the committee for the first time and for Mike Billingham to make a return. Thanks to departing members David Spencer, Mike Harrison, Catherine Wetherfield and Graham Watson for their time on the committee.

The year began with the committee agreeing to host the Peter Palmer Relays in 2020. It wasn't that long ago that we hosted it, but BOF appeared to be getting desperate. At the time we were three times consecutive winners (now 4) and I think the general consensus is that after our juniors have got so much from the competition (including winning entry to the Junior Tio Mila), we were willing to give something back. We also seem to have become opinionated about what a good one looks like.

Then at one particular meeting, at the very end, whilst going through 'any other business' Roger Jackson let us know that he wished to retire from all his roles on the committee after 40 years! As one member once said to me about Roger - if you cut him in half it would say orienteering all the way through. It's hard to know how to thank someone who has made such an incredible commitment to the club - his legacy will continue to echo through the club for many years.

It is a reflection of Roger's role within the club that so far 15 members have now agreed to take on the jobs that Roger was previously undertaking! It is also a reflection of the strength of the club that all these people have stepped forward to keep the club up and running. As previously mentioned Roger's legacy is enormous - one of those volunteers (now an M50) was taught to orienteering at school by Roger.

Thanks must also be given to Lynne Thomas for her role as lead coach for the club. She appears to have been headhunted to be to the lead coach for the North West Junior Squad and has rightly decided to hand over her lead coach role. Again it is a testament to the strength of the club that a replacement has been found.

The strength of our junior section continues to be remarkable with accomplishments too many to list. The club continues to have amazing success with GB, England and North West selections. It would seem they are equally proud of their fourth successive Peter Palmer Relays win. To quote Phil Conway - BOF development officer, 'Many congrats to the WCOC team for their participation and performance...The Juniors are an inspiration to others and play their part well.'

As I write this, preparations are underway to take a take significant team to the Compass Sport Cup final. I understand the last time we attended a final we were placed 4th - the highest ever. Can we top this? Here's hoping...

Steve Breeze
WCOC Chair
October 2019