

Chairman's Report AGM 2026

Thanks to all the organisers, planners, committee members and other volunteer helpers who keep everything running smoothly.

Thanks particularly to Marc Balston and Liz Yeadon whose efforts have been exceptional.

Joan Hambleton is keeping up with the Galoppen series results, in spite of the tragic loss of her husband, Peter, last year. We very much appreciate her continued efforts.

We are grateful to Astri Ablitt, who has taken over the task of clothing officer and is actively promoting our SARUM sportswear.

At last year's AGM, Kerry Corkery was appointed as our club captain. Kerry has done a great job in rallying the troops for the Compass Sport events, for promoting relay teams and particularly for getting a strong team together for the Yvette Baker Competition. SARUM juniors won their heat. Unfortunately there were not enough SARUM juniors who were able to attend the final.

During the last year we have, not one, but two Junior Representatives. Lizzie Balston and Isla Ablitt have not only been good points of contact for our juniors but have been very active participants in orienteering competitions and are excellent role models for our juniors.

Jo and Jan Belza had a major role in developing and supporting our club over many years. Sadly, Jo passed away on 7th March 2026. We will miss her happy face and send our condolences to her husband, Jan.

Bohdan Rainczuk (M65) unfortunately passed away on 5th December 2025 while on a training run. Prior to orienteering, he was a keen triathlete but then caught the orienteering bug.

Bohdan was a very regular competitor especially at night O events. During the 2024-2025 year he competed in all 25 events of the Wessex Night League. Always willing to quietly help in the background, this very pleasant man will be missed by all that knew him.

This year, our club dinner takes place immediately after the AGM. We are hoping that this approach will encourage more of our members to attend the AGM.

The Pam Errington award, the Martin Cochran trophy, the 2025-2026 Galoppen shield and other awards take place during the following club dinner. The winners will be listed in the report for the club dinner.

The Sarum Saunter was held at Fonthill Abbey Woods in March this year, with the kind permission of Mr Morant of the Fonthill Estate. There were 277 entrants competing in 12 courses from White to Black. We are very pleased to see that this event was well attended by SARUM juniors. Well done to Liz Yeadon for a well organised event.

The map needed substantially updating. My attempts marking up a paper copy of the map was falling far short. Marc Balston introduced a far more technical approach. With his mobile and the latest OCAD, GPS and a spherical camera, Marc was able to update the map as he went, or later in the comfort of home. Additionally, he used a drone flying just above tree tops, to photograph an area around the lake. Using a composite photo linked to the map, he was able to accurately map thickets, paths, etc. This must be the way forward. SARUM presented the owner, Mr Morant with a large photo of the most picturesque part of the estate. Mr Morant also took a copy of the O map, blew it up and printed it onto a table. Well done Marc for moving our technology forward.

Our club championships were held on 19th July in Larkhill. Part urban and part woodland, a number of excellent courses were planned by Des Dickinson and Kerrie Corkery, with some unusual control sites at rocket launchers, tanks, etc. A great social followed with a BBQ and buffet.

Congratulations to our new Open Champions, Ed Halsey and Jilly Tovey, to our Supervets Champions, Ian Peirce and Charlotte Thornton and to our Junior Champions Christian Corkery and Elara Jacobs.

Many thanks go to our juniors, Christian Corkery and Rhodes Dickinson, for helping to make the individual keepsake trophies with an artillery theme.

The Compass Sport Cup heat was held on 22nd February 2026 in Clouds Hill, Dorchester. 27 SARUM entrants turned out and achieved a 4th place for SARUM, 10 points behind the winners Wimbourne. This just qualified SARUM for the final.

The final is on 18th October at Pippingford Park. This is relatively local for a final, so let's see a large turnout, which would give us a good chance of a win.

Clubs such as ours are often driven by new members who can instil new thoughts and methods into the operation of the club. So, bring along a friend to give it a go. You never know, they might become an addict.

Ian Peirce

Chairman
SARUM Orienteering Club 22nd September 2026