

SMOC – a look back at 2024

I should have been out running round Brandon Wood today but Storm Darragh said “No!” Another weekend of cancelled and postponed events. Have there been so many before? Just recently we have had Abingdon, Stowe and most of this weekend’s events - all gone or rescheduled. And seeing as I am already halfway through building my Lego xmas gift (yes, for xmas 2024, the one that’s still 17 days away), I needed to find something else to do. So how about a review of the SMOC year?

Firstly, Dave Nevell’s annual club rankings, as published in CompassSport Magazine. It’s always a matter of great pride to Dorien that SMOC are consistently ranked at the bottom of all UK clubs. Sorry Dorien. This year, SMOC are 74th out of 81 ranked clubs, up 7 places from last year! Does this mean that we’re flirting with the lower realms of mediocrity? No longer dismal? Time will tell.

Onto the UK Orienteering League. In 2023, SMOC were 70th, this year we’re 65th, and with slightly more teams counting this year. Another improvement! We even had some SMOCies in the top 20 in their age groups:

- W70: Rosie 10th and Ann 11th
- M21: Lawrence 15th

Those are excellent results in the major national orienteering league.

Next, the UK Urban League. SMOC have a high proportion of urbanistas travelling the country to urban events, so we would expect a fairly good showing here. I think we had better than just a good showing, with two SMOCies actually winning their leagues and two other top 10 finishes!

- MYJ: Gabriel 1st
- WJ: Sofia 1st
- WV: Joanna 9th
- WSV: Sandra 7th

South East Orienteering Urban League top tenners, with one race still to come:

- MYJ: Gabriel 3rd
- WJ: Sofia 2nd
- WSV: Sandra 9th
- WUV: Rachel 5th

Interesting how we seem to have done better in the national league vs one which was more “local”. I do need to mention that some SMOCies like to run up in urbans and so mixed-and-matched between courses 3 and 4 or 4 and 5 which did impact on their overall standings in UKUL and SEOUL.

The East Anglian League still has two events to run so I won't give any results there. Plus, I won't score in any EAL events, so I don't care about it! The East Anglian Urban League has ended though, and has a few top five finishes from SMOC:

- WJ: Sofia 2nd
- VW: Freya 5th
- WSV: Helen 3rd, Sandra 5th
- WUV: Rachel 3rd
- MYJ: Gabriel 1st

Looking at the City Race Euro Tour standings, there were some excellent results from SMOC orientourists:

- WSV: Sandra 6th, Helen 10th
- MUV: Ian 11th
- WUV: Ann 7th, Rosie 11th
- MHV: John 15th

And yes, league points can be won by just turning up, but to place high in these very competitive leagues do mean having enough decent or good runs to score enough points.

Looking at the BOF rankings to see if anyone made it on the first 2 pages of their age group, I did find SMOC featured:

- W50: Freya 37th
- W70: Ann 27th
- W70: Rosie 36th

I think that the inescapable conclusions that can be drawn from this scholarly, in-depth analysis is that SMOC are perhaps not as cr*p as we think we are, and that the SMOC women are a lot better than the SMOC men. Ha!

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