

The November Classic

Rosie Shaw

This year, for the first time in over 50 years, (unless I am wrong) this year's November Classic weekend was held in October.

There were quite a lot of benefits to this, including: warmer weather (it was ideal for running) longer hours of light, as we were still in British Summer Time, which meant not having to travel home in the dark, and so we were able to enjoy the delights of the coast and New Forest and Chichester.

John and I enjoy going away to places we have never been to before when there is an urban race that is actually in a town centre and not some housing estate. For, if your spouse or partner is not taking part, then they have the opportunity to explore interesting and historical areas and coffee shops. John had decided to just compete in the Classic New Forest race on Sunday, so while I was racing around the alleys of Chichester he was able to enjoy strolling around the Bishop's Palace Garden and the cathedral. My course (course 5) had a number of good route choices through alleys, small car parks and pedestrian shopping thoroughfares. I was quite astounded to win the Women's Hypervet class. Looking at my split times, I could see that though I am not a runner, my accurate navigation paid off, and I was the fastest runner on my course between only 1 set of controls. Maybe this just goes to prove that the faster the running, the more likely to make errors.

You can view all the Chichester courses on the [Southdown Orienteers website](#). On Routegadget you will see that I have [drawn my route](#) round the course.

Sunday's location for the classic race was Burley. A lovely big parking field with a team of Tamworth pigs meandering between the cars. It was a long walk to the start, 1.8km, with the finish 300m before it. The area is fairly flat and consists of forest which is mostly runnable and open land. (although my course, 8, didn't go there). But subsequently described by Lawrence as "spiky" due to the many gorse bushes. Course 8 was the equivalent of a very short green standard so John opted to compete with me. With his new compass he was able to accurately navigate and not be much slower than me. He won the very short green course and was fastest to every control. On the downside, there was only one other competitor who took 112 minutes.

All results and Routegadget (yes I've drawn my route) can be found on [Southampton Orienteering Club's website](#).

Other SMOCies who competed were Dorien and Ros, Ian, Ann, Siobhan and Lawrence and Mike Jones who now lives near to the area.

No doubt we will be back next year, and hoping it is in October.