

Next Issue  
May 14<sup>th</sup>

# A Load of Old Quoc



DRONGO - THE ORIENTEERING CLUB FOR CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI

Year 2008-f+i, No. n+i

Stockholm, Wednesday 13 February 2008

www.drongo.org.uk

## Editor's Column

Welcome to a new page in DrongO's history book. I am delighted to announce that I have taken over the newsletter from Loz, who has spent many years keeping the DrongO spirit alive. Thank you Loz for all your efforts!

With new times come new ideas. I have a few, but for the most part, I will heavily rely on your participation. Without your contributions, all the stories will have a distinctly Scandinavian flavour. You have been warned.

There are voices within our community who say that it would be a good idea to set a time limit on this position. And I must say, "I concur." I shall pass on the baton after three years.

Until then, you should expect to receive nine issues of this grand publication (one issue per term), but only if you keep your address on the DrongO mailing list up-to-date!

If you received the private edition of this newsletter, then you should find a members-only section at the end. It contains somewhat sensitive personal information that will not be included in the newsletter that I will send to CUOC or that you can download from the DrongO web site.

See you at the JK!

*Eric Roller*

## Varsity Match 2008

*Exceptionally fine Swedish forests await this year's competitors.*

Once again, the Varsity Match will be held in Sweden. It was Nick Barrable who started the trend in 2002, when he invited us to compete in some of southern Stockholm's nicest forests. In 2005, Eric Roller set exciting courses in northern Stockholm. Following the "once every three years" schedule, it is again time to visit Sweden.

This time it is Uppsala, about 45 miles north of Stockholm, where Rob Hart and a friend are hosting the festivities. Within Sweden, at least, the town is renowned for its fine University which was founded in 1477. And unlike Västerås, it is also a city whose name you can pronounce.

You can see the details on the [VM web site](#). New this year is that the VM is on Friday, relay on Saturday and [Måsenstaffetten](#) on Sunday.

What about the forests then? Is it worth the trip? Definitely!

The main race will be held in Lunsen, a vast expanse of "white" forest south of the city. It is technically one of the most challenging forests in the region. It is not as hilly as Stockholm's forests — the contour interval is 2.5 m. However, don't let that fool you: you will be going up and down, constantly!

There are plenty of marshes, small hills and boulders, but very few paths. And be warned, the

paths (if you can find them) are small and hardly any faster than the forest next to it, but (if you can find them) they can be very helpful for relocation.

Speaking of which, relocation is what you do not want to do in Lunsen — everything just looks the same. Indeed, one can expect that the Varsity Match will be decided by who makes the least mistakes. And to reduce the risk that people will just follow each other, there will be loop-style "gaffling" to split people up.

But for us DrongOs, that won't matter much, right? These days, we are all a lot slower and (since we have magnifying glasses on our compasses) we find it much easier to keep track with the map. In fact, we can teach quite a few greenhorns a lesson!

See you in Sweden!

### IN THIS ISSUE

Page 1	Editor's Column Varsity Match 2008
Page 2	<a href="#">Sweden for Brits</a>
Page 3	<a href="#">Abroad: USA</a>
Page 4	<a href="#">Icenian</a>
Page 5	<a href="#">Nigella &amp; Others</a>
Page 6	<a href="#">DLog &amp; Fun</a>
Page 7	<a href="#">Calendar &amp; Sudoku</a>

# Sweden: A Guide for British Visitors

*Be prepared for your visit to the realm of the Vikings*

## QUICK GUIDE

IKEA, Volvo, Nobel Prize, Absolut Vodka, Smörgåsbord, Björn Borg, Greta Garbo, ABBA, The Cardigans, Roxette, Allemansrätt, and Orienteering.

## HOW TO GET HERE

**BA:** Heathrow (LHR) to Stockholm (ARN), prices from £55 + £62 taxes.

**SAS:** LHR to ARN, prices from £30 + £42 taxes.

**Ryanair:** Stansted (STN) to Nyköping (NYO), prices from 2p + £41 taxes.

NB. ARN is better for Uppsala, but NYO is better for Mäsenstafetten.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

Currency: Krona, kr (SEK), Öre (100 öre/kr)

Rate: 12.5 kr / £1

VAT: 25 percent

Electricity: 220V, EU plug

Punching: SportIdent

North lines: black

## WHAT TO BRING

Warm clothes.

The selected few of us who drink alcohol, should import it. **Customs limits** are (age 20+):

- 10 litres spirits
- 20 litres fortified wine
- 90 litres wine
- 110 litres beer

## DRONGOS / JOK I SVERIGE

Eric & Ann Roller, Ian Cumpstey (JOK), Rob Hart (JOK).

## USEFUL PHRASES

ja	yes
nej	no
jo	yes (when answering a negated question)
japp	yes, of course
javisst	yes, absolutely
“aw”	yes, I am listening
“phhh”	yes (sharp intake of breath)
hej	hello
hej hej	Hi!
hejdå	Bye!
tack	thank you
tack	please

## SWEDISH CUSTOMS

In Sweden ... you eat lunch at 11 a.m. ... you have pancakes and pea soup on Thursdays ... you use a special wooden knife for butter ... you greet each other with “good moron” ... you refer to weeks by their numbers ... you use ticket machines to queue ... your mobile phone is a fashion statement ... you think women are more equal than men ... you line up the barcodes at the supermarket checkout ... there is a word for “not too much and not too little”: lagom ... you eat ice cream in winter ... you can differentiate between types of snow ... you love talking about ski wax ... you think 80°C in a sauna is cold and 20°C outside is hot ... you don't drink alcohol during the week, except light beer ... you get pissed on religious holidays ... you don't wear shoes indoors, even for parties ... you bring your own bottle to parties ... when offered a bottle of beer, the first thing you do is to check the alcohol content.

## FALSE MODERN MYTHS

- High suicide rates;
- No sun in winter;
- Astronomic taxes;
- It is not true that all Swedes are tall, blond, and blue-eyed. Some have green eyes.

## ORIENTEERING FACTS

You always get wet feet (don't bother trying to keep your shoes dry). Paths are overrated. Only the large boulders are mapped. Equidistance can be 3 m, or 4 m, Lunsen has 2.5 m.

## HOW DO I SUBSCRIBE?

Simple, keep your email address up-to-date on the [DrongO members' list](#):

[www.drongo.org.uk](http://www.drongo.org.uk)

(click on mailing list “information page”).

## IDENTIFY THIS DRONGO:

Hint: A prize-winning DrongO smiles for the crowd.



## CANTABS ABROAD: UNITED STATES

*Ann Marie Cody reports on student orienteering in sunny California*

After being introduced to orienteering whilst at Cambridge, Ann Marie Cody continues to follow the right track (hint: get a Scandinavian boyfriend).

“But by some strange stroke of luck, the school that I next went to in the U.S. for my PhD, the California Institute of Technology, actually has an orienteering club! Surprise, surprise, it was even founded by an ex-Cambridge student.

The fact that we have a club may not seem so strange to the British, but if you've been in America, then you know that almost *no one* orienteers. You try to tell people about it, and they say, "Huh, you do *what* with a map? And you have to run through bushes? Ridiculous!" But fortunately there are a few enlightened people around, and also a few clubs in California that put on events, which are mostly attended by scouts or families who want to take a stroll with their children. So I am able to go orienteering about once a month with a few other students from Caltech.

I am not sure how much I have improved, but at least I am not getting horribly lost anymore! And since we are too low-budget to have our own team kit I proudly wear my Drongo shirt. No one has any clue what that is :-)

So anyway, the latest news is that [this year's national student championships] will be held near the west coast for the first time, and I will be taking a team from Caltech... a few weeks from now! Now, you might be wondering if this is a competitive event like the VM. Some members of the team are hoping it is not, because they are very inexperienced ("Training? What's that?"). However, you might be surprised to learn that I already know that we are going to win. I am not kidding! You seeing, being students who are not that great at orienteering but nevertheless somewhat clever, we have managed to sign ourselves up for an event in which there are no other university teams!! Apparently because this championship is being held in the western part of the U.S., none of the usual east-coast teams can be bothered to travel out for it. So while there are a few individuals signed up to compete, there are no other teams listed on the registration. Hence you can congratulate us in advance for winning! Hahahha!! Everyone will have to stay tuned for the official results.”

Ann Marie will not be able to come to the VM, but she challenges you to “check our interesting orienteering venues [in the LA area] and find out exactly what it means to have an encounter with a yucca plant!”



*Desert orienteering event in California*

## ICENIAN REVISITED — UNABRIDGED

*Mark Collis provides a look behind the scenes...*

“I’m sure you will all remember at least one Icenian, whether you were organising, planning or just standing at the start and blowing a whistle every minute. I thought that I had done my fair share (organiser three times, planner twice), but last autumn I was offered the chance to complete the set by controlling this year’s event - and didn’t have a good excuse to hand so ended up saying yes...

Given my limited controlling experience (precisely one event) it was fortunate that the event was being held on Bromehill, using a map that had changed little since I had surveyed it myself in 2000/1. This at least meant that I could make a reasonable assessment of the proposed courses without making an effort to visit the forest. Ben’s courses made good use of the strip of depression-riddled terrain along the west edge of the area, with the longer courses passing through twice. At the moment these blocks of plantation are just about the right age, tall enough to be runnable but not tall enough to let the brambles grow beneath. When I did check the sites on the ground, in early January, the only significant problems were caused by those two common scourges of Thetford - the chain-saws that had recently felled a nice block of runnable forest, and a quad-bike marking out yet more trails through the trees for the next enduro event.

As the weekend of the event approached, all preparations seemed to be going smoothly (apart from trying to find a minibus driver), though it’s probably a good thing that I chose not to stay in Cambridge overnight as I discovered later that setting up the SI kit went on late into the evening!

On the day itself I set off just before 5am and had a nice easy journey round an empty-looking M25 to arrive, as planned, just before dawn - hoping to find the

car bringing Ben and his assistant control hanger already there.

This proved slightly optimistic, as the only other car seen in the next half hour belonged to a dog walker (this particularly lazy dog walker was driving along with the dog trotting alongside!). Eventually the right car appeared, complete with the planner’s assistant (who shall remain nameless) who had overslept...

At least I could now start to check the controls, and I set off towards the northern part of the map where Ben had already started to put out his first group. Unfortunately, I didn’t know in which order, so at the first three sites I visited there was not yet a control to check! Given that these sites were on major paths it seemed unlikely that they had been put out in the wrong place, so I decided to ditch my efficient route and went right to the far end of the map, where I was at last greeted by a reassuring flag and functioning SI box. The rest of this first group of controls were all present and correct when I visited, and I made the mistake of starting to relax and think I was back on track... until I moved on to the next group Ben was putting out and found no controls there either!

After waiting for 10 minutes hoping to see the controls coming to meet me, I eventually decided to head off to the far south of the area, where the other control hanger had started. This did at least enable me to make progress, at the expense of adding a couple of km to my route, and by the time I returned to those I missed out earlier they had magically appeared. Fortunately all of the controls were working, and only one had to be moved to the right place, as there was not much time left to take out replacements.

The delayed control checking at least had one benefit - I didn’t have to stand around wondering when the minibus carrying the organiser and other helpers had

got to. Their excuse for being late was a bit more novel than oversleeping - the driver (who shall again remain nameless) couldn’t work out how to engage reverse gear, and they had only got round the problem by putting it in neutral and pushing it backwards! Registration just about opened on time, though initially before the tent had been put up around it, and soon the first competitors were on their way.

After all the effort beforehand, being the controller of an event is actually pretty boring once it is under way (as long as nothing goes wrong, of course). After watching the early starters leave without any obvious difficulties, I spent the rest of the event hanging around near the finish and download, just in case. Given the lovely weather and lack of complaints I was almost wishing that I could go and have a non-competitive run myself! There were plenty of compliments for the planner, as well as a bizarre tirade from an old bloke with a beard, who found his course “depressing” and “pitiful” - don’t worry if you don’t get this immediately, one of the organising team took about 10 minutes to work out what he was on about.

Finally, I noticed that there were not many DrongOs running this year (precisely none, in fact) which I think is a bit of a shame given the opportunity that it provides to show some support for the current incarnation of CUOC. Next year’s is intended to be something a bit special, a city race in Cambridge rather than depression hunting in Thetford, and I hope that there will be a much bigger turnout (on Saturday 7 February, to mark your diaries). If there are enough people coming, I was also thinking that it might be nice to have some sort of dinner on the Saturday evening, so that we see each other more than just once a year at the Varsity Match...”

## BITS AND PIECES FROM OTHER DRONGOS

**Loz Collyer** leads the pack by good example. He knows how you make newsletter editors happy - you can do it too!

Lozza writes that he has been "tirelessly doing the Drongo newsletter and nothing else for years. Apart from that, still working at **Tower Wood** [Outdoor Education Centre] in the Lakes, really into ski touring, snowboarding, sea kayaking, pot-holing, sailing yachts, winter climbing and anything else that needs yet another special set of footwear that's very expensive and you can't make do with something you've already got. Now deputy head of centre, and trying to stay outside instead of flying the desk.

Planning to go to South Africa this summer to do some mountains and travelling, but also set up orienteering in some local schools and map some school grounds out there. More to follow on this if it works out."

He also claims to have an alibi for the topless dancing pictures that were taken at last year's VM dinner.

**Andrew Hodgson** (in the rowing community known as "sheep"), reports that he is "not doing toooooo much Orienteering these days. But intending to do more. Will be doing JK and maybe CompassSport Cup final whenever that is...

And I can recommend doing 'Tough Guy' - that was last week, awesome fun and I think that orienteers should do fairly well as they aren't afraid of a bit of mud... Maybe a DrongO team for 2009?"

**Edmund Ward** is "currently spending a year in Japan (Fukuoka), learning Japanese, eating raw fish, and planning to run the Mount Fuji Mountain Race (21km, 3000m) in July. Most likely to be found: bathing naked in an outdoor pool. Least likely to say: すみませんが、あるオレンジと白の旗を見たことある？ [Excuse me, but have you seen an orange and white flag?]"

-----  
 Claudia Mahr was born 29 Jan at 2p.m.. At 54cm and 2.95kg she's long and thin, just like her proud daddy **Matthias Mahr**. We hear that both mum (**Abi**) and the baby are doing great. Congratulations! (not sending a single sign of life to the DrongO community is herewith excused).

-----  
**Ann** and **Eric Roller** are still in Sweden. Rumour has it they are building a house...

-----  
**Petr Luksan** is still in a flat in London, but he doesn't appear to have made it into a forest recently. Join SLOW, Petr?

## NIGEL WHITEOAK IS BACK

**Nigel Whiteoak** reports that he is still in Richmond. He switched jobs from eBay (leaving **Matt Mahr** and **Doug Monro** there) to a small German start-up, **TeleBid**. In-between jobs, he hiked in Switzerland and kayaked off the shores of Maine and Croatia. He writes:

"I've actually been doing some [orienteering]! Hard to believe, I know, but for around a year or so now I've been going back to events, mostly in the SE area, and including the good old SLOW trail challenge series with the Richmond Half Marathon right on my doorstep. There was a memorable SLOW streetO event towards the end of last year in Battersea/Chelsea where we had something of a mini CUOC reunion: running that evening were myself, **Chris Marsh**, **Matt Mahr** (plus **Abi**), **Andy Hodgson** and **Mark Collis**.

Myself and Chris also ran the Capricorn last summer and the OMM in October (where we bumped into **Dave Bowman**). More mountain marathons to come this year, I'd expect."



*Chris & Nigel in the Nish.*

## MOST DRONGOS ARE PATENT ATTORNEYS

**Jenny Costigan** reports that **Claire Warner**, **Mark Bown** and herself have chosen to become Patent Attorneys. Together with **Alistair Hindle**, that raises the count to four. Jenny writes:

"Unfortunately we have all chosen a career which requires trainees to take yet more exams, so I am currently immersed in my law books. When I'm not spending my free time studying, I sometimes run for SLOW."

DLOG<sup>1</sup>: RANTS FROM A GRUMPY OLD FELLOW

Ah, finally a forum where I can air my worldly concerns! Let us start with a topic that we all keep close to our ... bottoms: port-a-loos.

What is wrong with these fine plastic institutions? Apart from the increased costs, there is one major problem: queues.

Wherever there are port-a-loos, there are people queuing for them. And of course, you always end up joining the wrong queue, don't you? Indeed, queuing for these dumpsters has become such a common phenomenon that we have included it in our pre-race time planning:

- get changed: 10 min,
- go to the loo: 15 min (!),
- go to the start: x min.

And then there is the danger that you get stuck in one of these boxes without toilet paper. Been there. Dumped that.

But these queues. Why are they so long? Simple: once you are inside, you feel private and safe ... and you take your time, and then a bit more, don't you? You think: no-one can see me, so no-one will notice; another loo will become vacant soon; no rush.

Some of you may be too young to remember, but there was a time when we had no port-a-loos at orienteering events and we were still able to fulfil our personal needs. Here's a tip: if you go abroad, then you can still see examples of such simple toilet systems.

They do not always look the same, but they strictly come in pairs: one for the lads and one for the lasses. It may be in a barn, in a dense part of forest or out in

the open behind a plastic screen. You may sit on a wooden board or on a bucket fitted with a toilet seat.

Whatever it may look like, it has one common denominator: you all sit next to each other and you all can see one another (and it is really funny how everybody tries to stare into empty space to avoid that), but what is more significant is that the people who are waiting for a seat can also see you and you can see them. No fussing around. You just do your business and you go. It might not smell like a bed of flowers, but that is another good reason to get on with it and get out. Out of paper? No problem, just ask your neighbour.

And the queues? They can be found on occasion, but rarely are they longer than 5 people and never do you have to wait long.

You may say port-a-loos are more hygienic. For that to be true, you have to restrict their usage to a maximum of six people per hour. Surely you also saw that sign? Let's face it, we have all read all those signs and any other small print that we can find in the port-a-loos, haven't we?

We must ask ourselves: what is more important to us: wasting our time by standing in line for 10 minutes or excessive privacy for something that is perfectly natural.

## YOU KNOW YOU ARE AN ORIENTEER WHEN...

- you bear scratches in your face with pride;
- all your socks are either stained or torn;
- all your o-kit is torn;
- you can eat your weight in spaghetti;
- you stretch while waiting for the bus or queuing for lunch;
- you dream about orienteering and wake up in pain;
- you can strip and change in a car seat in less than 2 min;
- you have a unique technique to tie your shoe laces;
- you carry a few sheets of toilet paper in your o-bottoms;
- your bowels are trained for flushing at 10 a.m.;
- you have a repertoire of tales about race toilets;
- you have your own punching technique;
- you have a special pen to mark your route on the map;
- your watch is more complicated than your car;
- the journey to the event is longer than the race itself;
- you know all the hiding places for car keys;
- you have to make a real effort to remember to talk to your family and friends about something other than orienteering;
- you have a separate laundry basket for orienteering clothes;
- every T-shirt you own is from an orienteering event;
- you have maps in your loo;
- you have a control at home.

<sup>1</sup> Dlog. noun. A log of an old Drongo member. Origin: a shortening of Drongo Log. Derivatives: Dlogger.

EVENT CALENDAR

In case you were looking for some exceptional orienteering events, especially in the company of other DrongOs, then you should consider one of the races below.

Let us know if you were also planning to attend or if your favourite race is missing from the list.

**JAN KJELLSTRÖM** **21-24 MARCH**  
**GUILDFORD, SOUTH-EAST**

*You should already know all about it.*

Attending Drongos: Crook, Hodgson, Roller, Mahr (planner day2)

**VARSITY MATCH** **28-30 MARCH**  
**UPPSALA (OK LINNÉ), SWEDEN**

*Not to be missed. Excellent forests. Great party. The preliminary schedule is:*

- *Wed-Thu, 26-27th, training, training..*
- *Fri, 28th, Individual VM (Lunsen) + Dinner*
- *Sat, 28th, Relay VM (Nåsten)*
- *Sun, 30th, Måsenstafetten<sup>2</sup> (Nyköping).*

Att: Collis, Roller, "you"

**BRITISH CHAMPS** **18-19 APRIL**  
**FORRES, SCOTLAND**

*Also elite champs, i.e. luscious sand-dune terrain! Enter now (!) or regret it later.*

**HARVESTER RELAY** **17-18 MAY**  
**HENLEY-ON-THAMES (TVOC)**

*Over-night relay. Not to be mistaken with Jukola.*

**JUKOLA** **14-15 JUNE**  
**TAMPERE, FINLAND**

*The world's greatest relay. Last year: 13,178 runners. 7 men over night (only about 3 hours of darkness). There is also a day-time women's relay (4 in a team). JOK has been there several times. One day DrongO will go there...*

<sup>2</sup> **OK Måsen** is based outside Nyköping, approx. 70 miles south of Stockholm, i.e. close to Ryanair's airfield from where you fly home.

<sup>3</sup> In case you cared, I once raced head-to-head against **Janne Salmi** (WOC 1997 champion) there... Ed.

**WORLD MASTERS** **28 JUNE - 5 JULY**  
**PORTUGAL**

*World-class sand-dune orienteering for those of you who are 35 and older and still fit into their O-gear. Need new clothes? Buy the new DrongO gear!*

**O-RINGEN** **21-25 JULY**  
**SÄLEN, DALARNA, SWEDEN**

*The last time "5-dagars" was in Dalarna, they set the record with 23,000 attendants. This time it is in the Swedish fells (think: Lake District) with cosy lodging in skiing cottages. 11,600 have already entered. A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity...*

Att: Roller

**CROESO** **3-9 AUGUST**  
**SOUTH WALES**

*Mostly mouthwatering, complex open limestone or open moorland, e.g. from BOC'07.*

**XXIX MOVENEZIA** **MID NOVEMBER**  
**VENICE, ITALY**

*Technically a park-O, but in reality the best street-O on the planet. Imagine: a maze of alleys, little bridges and no cars. One of those once-in-a-lifetime-type of events and a personal favourite<sup>3</sup>. Also great food.*

**WORLD MASTERS 2009** **10-17 OCT 2009**  
**SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA**

*Mark it in your calendar now.*

OL SUDOKU #1

		∩						
v		∕	▲				•	
		▲	∩	v		○		
				•	▲			
○								
•			=			T	∩	
			∕		=		T	
x	v				T	∕		
					=	○		