

# Sicily 5 + 5 2-11 October 2012



The Finish control on the sea - Alastair Mackenzie CLOK getting his feet wet.

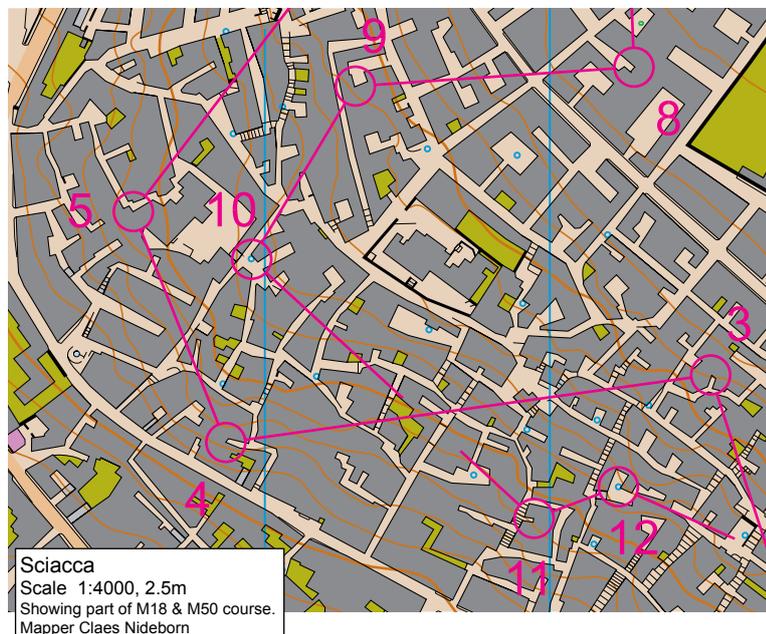
I first sampled the delights of Park World Tour (PWT) Italy in Puglia in June 2008 (see *CompassSport* Vol 29, Issue 4), and I thought I'd try Sicily 5+5 as I fancied another European orienteering holiday, but with an emphasis on 'holiday'.

The format of Sicily 5+5 was 5 events in 5 days in the west of Sicily, followed by a day off, and then 5 events in 4 days (one in central Sicily, and 4 in the east of the island). Prizes of local produce were awarded each day, and also at the end of each set of 5 events.

About 170 participated in the first 5 events, and 100 in the second 5, with around 60 doing all 10 events. There were 14 competitors from the UK and the most notable performance was achieved by Anne Edwards (TVOC), who not only won the second week's W21 competition, but also won each of her 5 events. Guy Goodair (EPOC) won M75 in week 1, Jenny Collyer (SOS) was

2<sup>nd</sup> in W65 in Week 2, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places were achieved by Miriam Rosen (SROC, W60, Week 1), Alastair Mackenzie (CLOK, M50, Week 2) and Caroline Mackenzie (CLOK, W40, Week 2).

Of the 10 events, four were urban, four in runnable woodland, and two in open areas. There was only one event in which course lengths approached a Classic distance, and in other cases senior course winning times were often as low as 20 - 30 minutes. For me this did



not detract from a positive orienteering experience, and meant that I had more energy for other aspects of the holiday.

That orienteering experience in week 1 (Sicily West) comprised the following:

Urban sprint event in Sciacca (1:4,000): the courses largely focused on the old area of the town with its intricate network of ginnels; wonderful area, brilliantly planned to provide challenging route choice and detailed navigation

Classic distance event in the coastal heathland in and around the Selinunte Archaeological Park (1:10,000): it was a privilege to navigate through the ruins of Greek temples.

Middle distance event at Gibellina Vecchia (1:5,000): Gibellina was the site of an earthquake in 1968, and some 20 years later a memorial was constructed over the site in the form of a concrete labyrinth, some 1.6m in height, with each way through the labyrinth representing one of the streets or pathways that was destroyed; all courses visited the labyrinth and the olive groves nearby.

Middle distance event at Santissima Trinita di Delia near Castelveltrano (1:7,500): lovely runnable woodland and parkland around a Byzantine style church from the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

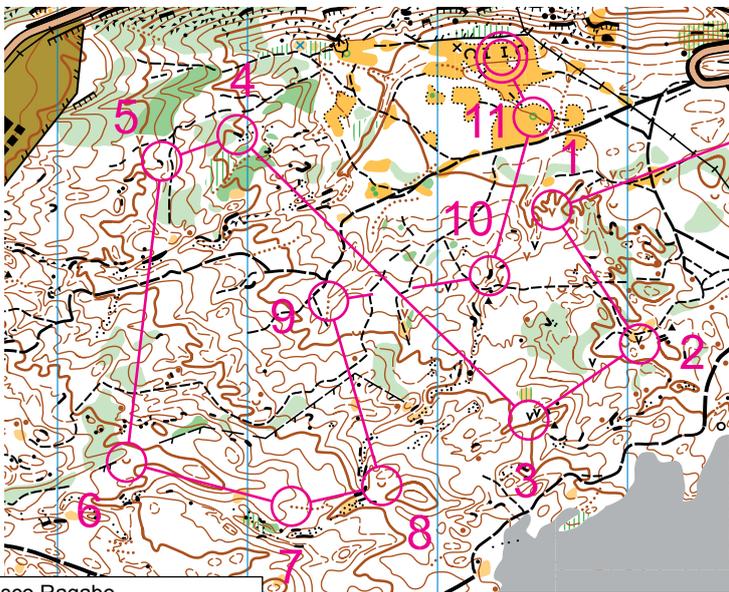
Middle distance event at Bosco do Calatubo (1:5,000): mixed pine forest on the north coast of Sicily; to punch the last control, competitors had to put one foot in the Mediterranean, and then most people had a dip in the warm sea, many still in their O-kit – a joy!

Week 2 (Sicily East) comprised the following:

Urban sprint event in Petralia Soprana (1:4,000): at 1150 metres, the highest town in the Madonie National Park, offering commanding views over the surrounding countryside; many courses featured a telling 400m route choice leg through the narrow streets and ginnels, across or around the spur on which the old town stands.

Urban middle distance event in Linguaglossa (1:5,000): some interesting route choices and detailed navigation in the town squares.

Two middle distance events in Bosco Ragabo, on the slopes of Mount Etna (1:10,000): the morning and afternoon events featured the same Assembly (at 1425m, 43% of the height of Etna) and finish, but different starts; well planned runnable courses in glorious natural pine forest, with detailed contour and rock features – orienteering at its best! The M60 and W50 courses even had a control on a knoll on a new lava flow, which was not on the previous map of the area as it didn't exist!



Bosco Ragabo  
Scale 1:10000, 5m  
Showing part of W21 & M40 course.  
Mappers János Sötér & Roberto Pradel



The labyrinth memorial at Gibellina - Week 1, Event 3.

## U r b a n "supersprint" at Castelmola,

above Taormina (1:1,500): senior courses ranged in length from 0.8 to 1.2km and featured detailed navigation and quite a bit of climb; though a delightful way to end the competition, it was all over too quickly – I would have loved the opportunity to run for longer in that terrain.

Aside from the orienteering, for those who hired a car, it was possible to visit

some of the stunning sights that Sicily has to offer. For the others, the organising team provided coach transport to/from the events, with the additional attractions of a barbecue, a wine tasting, a visit to an olive farm, and some traditional singing and dancing.

So, if you want to take a holiday in Europe which combines a tremendous variety of excellent orienteering with a bit of tourism, an introduction to local folklore, good accommodation and local food, while

enjoying the company of like minded people and making new friends, then you don't have to look further than PWT Italia. Thanks to Gabriele Viale, Jorgen Mårtensson and their hard-working 'crew' for a great holiday and some memorable orienteering.

Next year the 5+5 format is moving to Sardinia, and I'm looking forward to it!

See [www.orienteering.it](http://www.orienteering.it) for more and the advert in this issue.

## THE X WORLD MOUNTAIN BIKE ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 20 - 25<sup>th</sup> August 2012

The small historic town of Veszprém lay host to this prestigious event and was tied in with the III World Masters MTBOC and the V Junior World MTBOC. Great Britain had 21 athletes present and there were quite a few medals. Most impressive was Emily Benham SARUM finally making it on the Medal Podium in the Sprint, after years of dedication and sacrifice. She is still young and hope it is the first of many WOC MTBO medals. She tells us about her race...

"My preparation for the 2012 World MTBO Championships was almost unique. I spent August 2011 through to mid-May 2012 dithering around, training when I felt like it, and going running more than biking. I did a few adventure races, winning the first two, including a 2-day event on Exmoor in the middle of the wettest April on record. I passed the Army Officer Selection Board and was accepted into Sandhurst.

Hans Jørgen then suggested going to Hungary for MTBO WOC. WOC had always been on the cards despite taking a year away from serious sport. I needed to refresh mentally as my Orienteering skills were becoming increasing stale, but WOC would potentially be my last chance to see friends before Sandhurst. I thought about it for a few days, and then emailed



Charlotte Somers-Cocks in action.

the selectors saying I wished to go a mere day before the selection announcement! My 6 week countdown consisted of many things I have never tried before. No sweets, chocolate, sugar, alcohol, cake, ice cream. Only coke and nutella were permitted but with 2 weeks to go even they were cut out. At first I was sceptical. But once my energy levels evened out, I realised I felt great. No snacking between meals and binge eating, meant I had more energy for training. The 6 week training/

taper plan was drastically different too.

I went on tour for two weeks coaching at Lagganlia and Kinraig with the M/W 14s & 15s, which, despite a bad ankle injury, did me more good than harm. I was waking up at 0630 5 days a week and going out for early morning intervals/recovery rides of 90mins or doing some strength for an hour. I would then make it to breakfast late before hastily getting changed for coaching in the woods. I had to go careful to keep within my taper week training hours, but the ankle injury meant I couldn't do a huge amount of running and actually worked out well. Having done two massive training months, I was fit enough to cope with the demands of bike training and coaching/shadowing.

I flew out to Hungary a week before the races for an organised training camp, which consisted of one training map per day. This meant for the first time in 2 months I could train in the mornings at a reasonable hour and then rest for the remainder of the day. At first I was fidgety and had to force myself to stay sat down out of the sun, rather than trying to do more training or sightseeing. Two months of early morning training sessions and I was naturally waking at 0745 CET. Again, I had to go careful not to overdo it. Eating the right foods and only drinking bottled water.