

# Interland 2015

*By Matthew Clarke*

I really enjoyed my experience of Interland earlier this year in the Surrey Hills. It was paired with the two day Southern Champs with the first day being a forest sprint in The Nower and the second in Sheepleas and Netley Heath. I had qualified for this five-cornered international event in the three qualifiers the year before; my



teammates in my age class were David Bunn and George Van Dam with Thomas Howell as the reserve. The four teams we competed against were a French team, a Dutch team, and two Belgium teams, one French speaking and one Flemish.

The first day in the Nower was on a very steep hillside with mostly runnable woodland. I started slow due to overshooting my first few controls from getting confused by the large 1:5,000 scale, I had never done a forest sprint before so it was a learning curve for me. Overall it was a very interesting course.

Then I met up with the rest of the English team from all the different age classes and I pulled the short straw and was elected to go and set up tents for the event the next day.

After we had put up the large numbers of tents, we drove to the Sayers Croft centre where the dormitories for the countries were. Each country had their own set of dormitories. There we met up with the rest of the squad.

After dinner we had a talk from the team leader John Rye and everyone introduced themselves we spent the rest of the night talking and playing cards which was really fun.

The next day we got up early for breakfast and then travelled to the event area. It was a really good area with great hills and valleys that made route choice really important, also there were some interesting features including small bridges on path crossroads and some ruined cars! The area was a mix of woodland ranging from run to impenetrable and in the northern part of the map some open areas.



I had a very strong run and came second. The England team won our age class and the overall competition.

I had a really good time and made friends with my fellow teammates who previously had only been names on final results.

*Matthew on the podium, collecting his prize for second place.*



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