

Developing your club



- Make your club a club, not an organization that puts on events!
- Why develop?
- Attract new members, make members more active, improve skills of volunteers, provide better quality events, improve club performances.

Understanding your club



- Where do you start?
- What as a club do you want to achieve?
- What do the members want? How can you improve their club experience?
- What challenges are the club currently facing?
- What can you do to address this?
- You can't do it on your own.

Learn from others



- What have other clubs done?
- O Clubs all over the country are doing fantastic development work – great inspiration for new ideas.
- Look at SYO's experience.
- Every club faces different challenges but hopefully there's some useful ideas.
- Ask questions, make comments!

SYO's development journey



- Why we did it
- How we identified the need for the club
- What were the key areas we needed to concentrate on?

The starting point



SYO in 2011

- The club had around 180 members
- Held around 10 'normal' Sunday events
- Some evening events in the winter and summer
- Sporadic coaching sessions
- Odd occasional social
- Club Night had not managed to attract sufficient numbers to make it sustainable. Many experienced orienteers weren't interested and we didn't have enough new people.
- We seemed to be a club that just put on events and occasionally ran in relays. Why would you be a member?

Increasing Participation - Attempt 1



2011

- Put on a number of local events on Saturday morning – 30 minute score.
 - Some new people, a few club members but not really that much take up
- Why didn't it work?
 - Timing?
 - Visibility in the locations?
 - Communication / Marketing?
 - Just used training kit so result production wasn't easy

Increasing Participation - Attempt 2

2012/13

Series of events every 2 – 3 weeks

- Consistent format using same organiser & planner
- Saturday afternoon (Starts 1 – 3pm)
- White, Yellow, Orange and 'something' for more experienced orienteers.
- Based outside cafes in parks around Sheffield – high visibility.
- All close to each other - around a 3 mile radius
- Familiar smiley people to greet them at each event
- Proper results

Increasing Participation - Attempt 2



Marketing & communication

- Banner with the date & time of the event outside the park 2 weeks beforehand
- Simple flyer with all the dates in the series printed
- Online questionnaire at the end of the series to get feedback and shape the following year

Increasing Participation - Attempt 2



- Successes

- First event in Endcliffe Park had 90 people, 40 on white.
- Some people attended most of the events

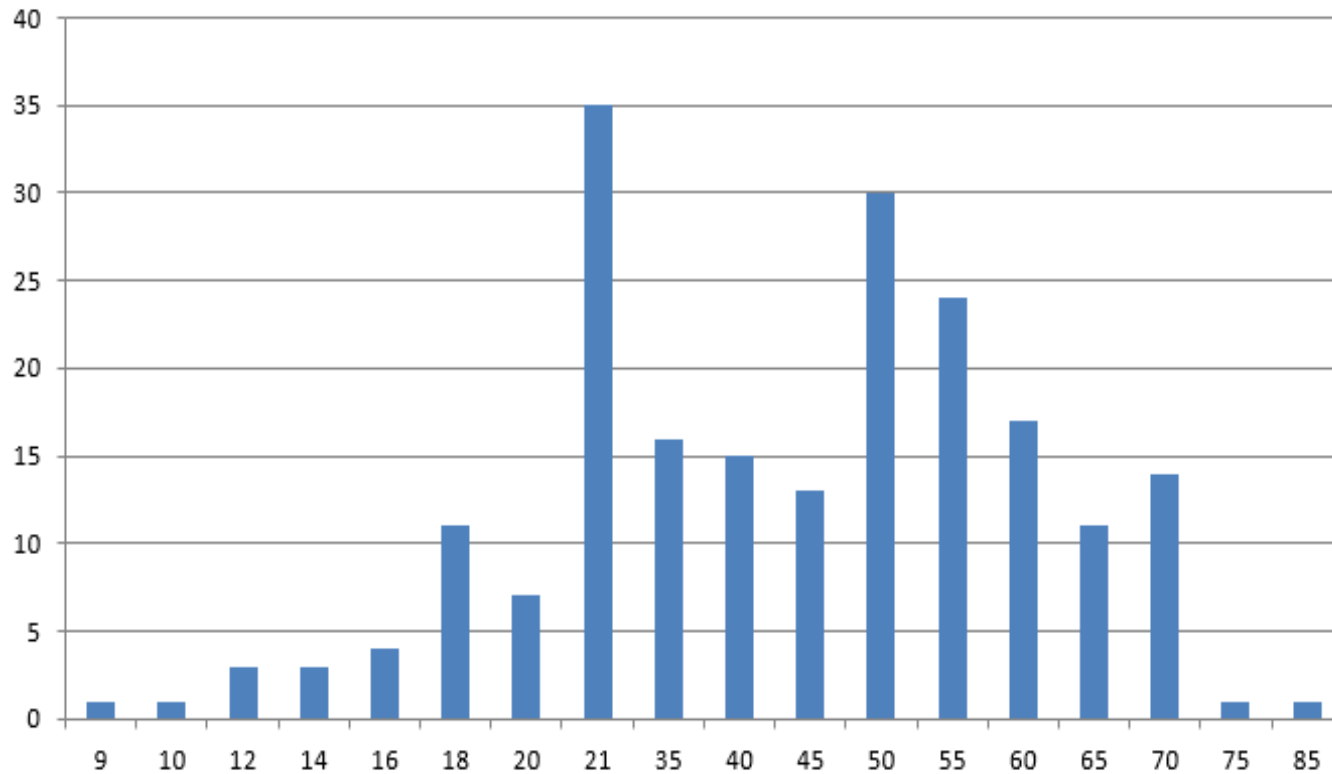
- Areas for development!

- Very few joined the club or came to a bigger event
- Events even slightly further away had low attendance.
- We weren't doing any more coaching or social events than we had before
- 2 event schools league pilot run in the morning before main event attracted very few children.

Membership 2013



165 members.



Increasing Participation - attempt 3



Schools League

- Launched in September 2013
- 9 events in local parks and woods throughout the academic year
- Registration system to record details once and then enter at other events with a number
- Advertised coaching at the event

ORIENTEERING
THE GREAT AND GREAT ESCAPE

South Yorkshire
& Districts

SATURDAY SERIES SCHOOLS LEAGUE 2018 - 19

2018 -19 Saturday Series
Incorporating the SFSS Schools' League

This is the original orienteering series where the original 12 events were held between control points marked on an orienteering map and decide the best route to the park. It is now a fast-paced race.

It is held on the first Sunday of the month, at 10.00am, at the park. It is a fast-paced race.

These events are occasional events to introduce people to orienteering in the region and also to support the schools' league. However all our events have courses suitable for all ages and abilities.

Standard fee £12.00 per person.

Sat 8 Sep	Endcliffe Park
Sat 13 Oct	Meersbrook Park
Sat 24 Nov	Ecclesall Woods
Sat 12 Jan	Whinlowbrook Hall
Sat 2 Feb	Botanical Gardens
Sat 7 Mar	Norfolk Park
Sat 27 Apr	Shirebrook
Sat 8 June	Parkwood Springs
Sat 29 Jun	Graves Park

Prize giving event 13th July - Millhouses Park

SOUTH YORKSHIRE ORIENTEERS.ORG.UK **SOUTH YORKSHIRE ORIENTEERS.ORG.UK**

League Format
Nine events will over the academic year for people from 181 up followed by a final event in July. Points will be awarded for each of the 10 events. The top 10 scorers will be crowned the winners. The winners will receive a trophy and a certificate. The winners will also receive a certificate. The winners will also receive a certificate.

Registration & Start Procedure
Course registration is open from 12.00 - 15.00 - you are based near to the park. Once you are registered you will receive a map. You will receive a map with the course marked on it. You will receive a map with the course marked on it. You will receive a map with the course marked on it.

Costs
Club fee £12.00 (plus yellow fee a member of the SFSS) and the South Yorkshire Orienteering Club fee £10.00.

Course	Year
White	10-11
Yellow	11-12
Orange	13-14
Green/Orange	15-16
Green/Urban	Adults

About 3YO
South Yorkshire Orienteering Club is one of the most successful clubs in the country at both Junior and General level. We organise regular orienteering events and training throughout the year. We are also training to produce members for Running Clubs, Rowing, Soccer, Golfing, Youth Games etc.

Increasing Participation – attempt 3

Even more focus on marketing

- 5000 A5 flyers printed - handed out to every finisher at schools XC races
- Banners at the venue in advance (as before)
- Advertised in what's on in local magazines and newspapers.
- Collected email addresses and sent out emails about the next event
- School teachers & parents promoting our events
- Promotion of orienteering at outdoors events through use of maze
- Don't underestimate the importance of word of mouth
- Facebook



Funding



- All development initiatives start slowly - find out what works and then build on it
- Once you have a clear idea for a project – then you could apply for funding.
- We were fortunate to receive funding for the league from 2013/14 from the SFSS on the condition that the Sheffield kids first run was free.
- Later you will see how we received a grant to fund a specific new project.

Attempt 3 Outcome



Success!

- 100+ runs at most events

But...

- No real take up for the coaching at the event
- Only a small proportion are joining the club
- And SYO are still really just a group of people that put on orienteering events....
- And it is the same people putting on the events (and some of us are starting to get a bit tired...)

Developing the club offer



Why join a club?

- Meet and socialise with others that have a shared interest
- Learn new 'things' and improve
- Compete as part of a team

So if SYO were mainly a club that put on events and only ran as a team 3-4 times per year then it was fairly obvious why we were not getting new members

Club development 2015-17



Developed a Coaching Programme

- Regular sessions once per month (1-3pm Sat pm)
- Easily accessible locations
- 3 groups of juniors of different ages
- Separate adults' group
- Free to members, £3 to non-members
- Personal invites to newcomer event participants / newly joined club members.
- Publicised coaching at events

Club development 2015-17



Established programme of regular socials

- Regular evening / night event once a month with a social at a pub afterwards. Events are staggered with the Saturday events and larger events to provide orienteering around every 10 days
- Summer BBQ
- Club champs, annual awards & lunch

Club Development 2015-17



Developed the Club Identity

- Revamped the website
- New club kit & hoodies
- New logo



**South
Yorkshire
Orienteers**

Started up a development group in the club to meet and discuss on-going projects and plans for the future. Really important to evaluate what is going well and what hasn't worked.

Club development 2015-17



Improved Communication

- Regular emails & newsletters to club members about what the club is doing and what events are on
- Personal invites to come to coaching, socials & run for the club
- Use of Facebook to promote events and celebrate club success
- New website 2015
- Website constantly updated with news and pictures

Club Development – 2015-17



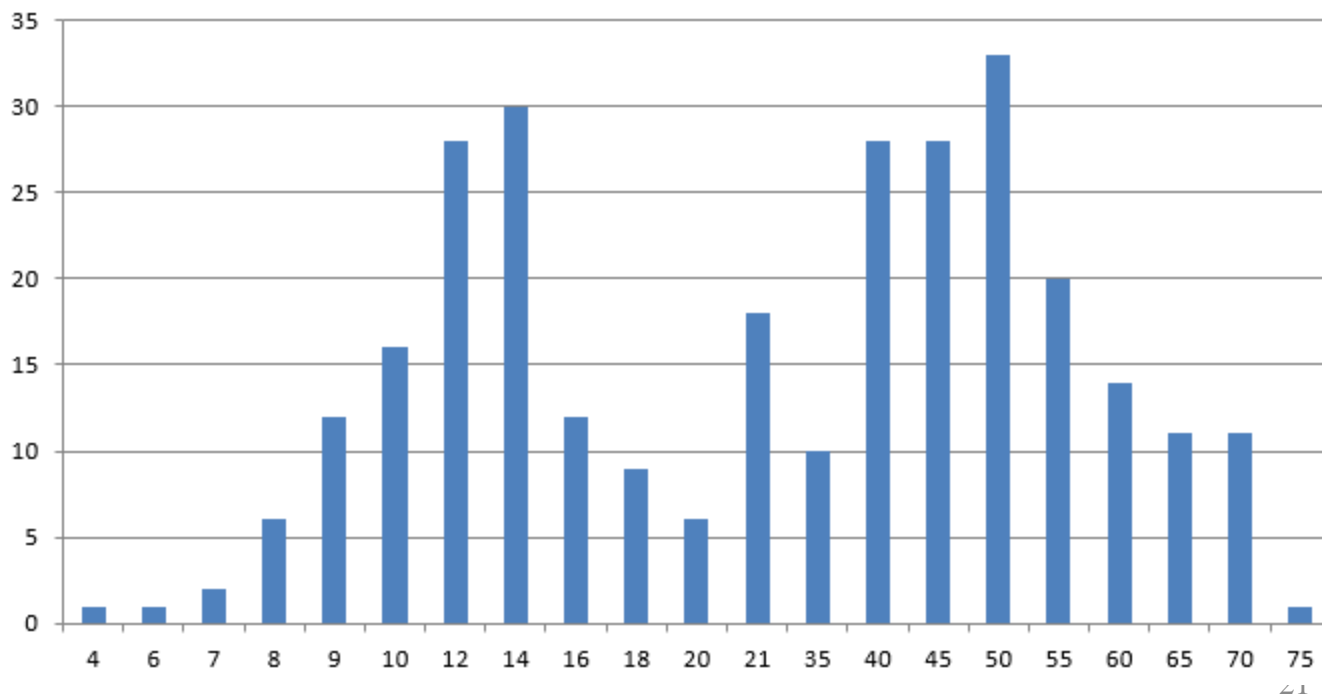
- Club Development Officer & Coach
 - Funded for the first two years with unspent funds from the Club & Coach initiative (£9000)
 - Now paid for out of revenue generated by increased participation and membership
 - Handles communication to the membership
 - Organises the coaching program and delivers as the lead coach
 - Doing 1000s of other things that would not be done otherwise

Impact of development initiatives



290 members (Dec 2017)

huge increase in membership – particularly juniors but also in the 40 – 50 bracket as parents are joining too



Club Development – 2017-2020



Identified that we need to further develop our members by providing more regular orienteering training & opportunities for socialising

- Planning for Club Night started
- Applied for Sport England Small Grant funding.
- £9k bid successful

Club Development – 2017-2020



Club Night

- 50+ participants each week. Groups split - 8-11s and 12 +
- 45 minutes physical / 45 minutes technical
- Once per month it is an event instead
- Pay per session or half term block at a discount
- Based at a school during winter, roving locations in summer
- Now self-funded



Club Development – 2017-2020

Schools league participation continued to increase

- Hit 200 on a White course
- Widened locations of events
- Renamed as the Saturday Series to be more attractive to adults
- Longer & harder courses for progressing adults – often an urban outside the confines of the park
- New adults league

Club Development – 2017-2020



Increasing participation at our other events

- Communication – emails, Facebook, word of mouth
- T'shirt participation & volunteering scheme



Club Development – 2017-2020



Developing Volunteers

- Put on planning, event safety, condes and SI workshops.
- Mentor scheme
- Free run vouchers & lottery scratch cards for key officials
- Encourage juniors to do DofE volunteering through SYO
- Free runs for helpers at local events and 50% discount at regionals and above.
- Use Wed evening and Saturday events as good starting point for new planners & organisers.
- Large proportion of local events planned / organised by juniors or parents that started through the schools league

Club development – 2017-2020

Junior Success

- British & JK Individuals & relays
- England representation – 8 juniors who started orienteering through the schools league have represented England!
- YBT & Peter Palmers
- YH Junior Squad
- GB talent squads



Club development 2017-2020



- Membership growth fairly static in this period – 298 2018, 297 2019
- Focus was on developing club members to get them running for the club, volunteering and competing at major events
- Team and club success in major competitions



Covid!



- What has happened since 23rd March 2020?
- Focus on still trying to be a club
 - Online coaching
 - Online circuits
 - Weekly emails
 - Temporary O Courses
 - Club night in groups of 6
 - Small events as soon as we could
 - Online awards
 - Online quizzes
- Membership actually grew – 326 end of 2020

The position today



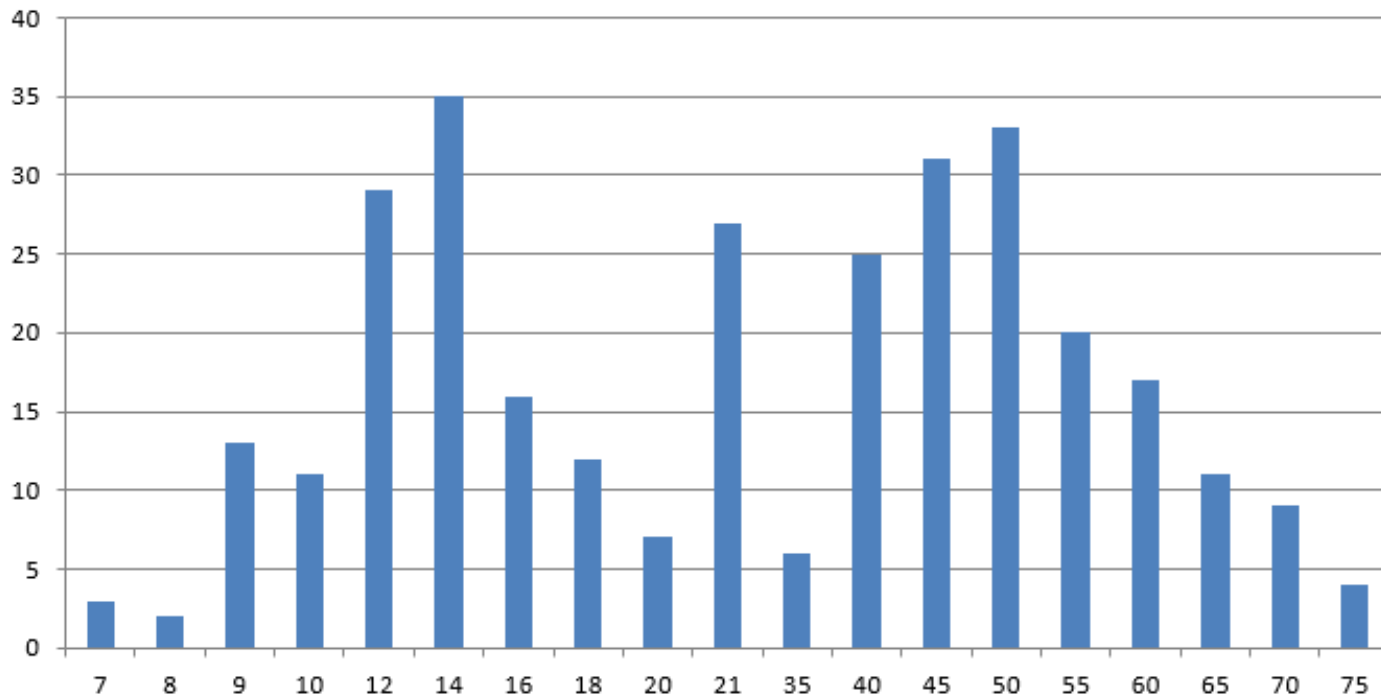
- Club is in a good position
- Re-structure of club night. 70+ participants every week. 25 regular adults & 50 secondary aged juniors. Lots of newcomer parents.
- Buzz of 50th year – new kit, lots of events, socials
- Junior success – 8 SYO juniors ran at JHIs
- Club success – relays, CSC, champs titles
- Development of 21-40 group going well. 2019 – 19 M/W21s, 2021 – 27 M/W21s.
- Wed evening events – 100 + participants even at night!
- Socials very well attended.

SYO membership Dec 2021



312 - Healthy numbers of younger teens, increased number of 21s, large numbers of parents.

SYO Age Distribution



The position today



- Participation numbers down at our Saturday Series particularly secondary age juniors
- Quite a lot of lapsed members – start 2022
- Initiatives to attract older people not so successful!
- Saturday coaching sessions fallen by wayside
- Permissions difficult
- Development committee lapsed - need to re-establish

Key points



- 10 years ago the club was declining
- Club has been revitalized – increase in membership, increase in active club members, increase in volunteers, improved club performance
- Key recommendations – increase participation first, then develop the club offering
- Keep reviewing & improving the process
- Don't give up – things won't work, it takes a long time. Plenty of ups & downs.

What questions do you have?



- Any questions / comments on what SYO has done?
- Challenges you've faced within or outside of the club and need advice
- How you overcame challenges
- Success stories to share
- Do you have ideas but don't know where to start?