

## Handy Hints #1: Press Releases

### Generating PR

In addition to promotional literature the press and media is a key element in promoting and selling the sport of orienteering. It is hard to guarantee coverage in the national media so websites and the local media (newspapers, radio, TV) are vital sources for increasing awareness of our sport as well as social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

### Key Messages

Below are a few key messages about orienteering to help you promote the sport.

The aim is to navigate in sequence between control points marked on a unique orienteering map and decide the best route to complete the course in the quickest time.

### Orienteering...

- provides outdoor fun for all the family
- is a challenging outdoor adventure sport
- exercises both the mind and the body
- combines running with decision making and adventure
- combines outdoor adventure and fun
- is a safe, fun sport for children and adults
- combines running or walking with map reading and decision-making skills
- is intelligent running!
- provides a healthy mix of physical activity and mental decision making
- offers an interesting twist on running.

### The Benefits of Orienteering:

#### For Adults:

- Combines physical speed and endurance with mental sharpness and decision making
- Builds general fitness and stamina, without putting too much strain on the body
- Provides an opportunity for 'plodders with brains' to beat the fast runners
- The courses change all the time so it keeps you interested
- Replaces stress with adventure
- It helps develop decision making and team working skills
- You get to visit lots of new places and spend time in the Great Outdoors!
- An ideal introduction to adventure racing

## **For Children:**

- Provides a safe, fun environment in which to have an adventure
- Provides physical and intellectual development
- Helps develop spatial awareness
- Children are allowed the freedom to roam out of sight in a controlled environment
- It's ok for kids to get muddy and dirty
- Teaches children about the countryside
- Children learn to read maps and navigate
- It's educational and fun!

## **Promoting in Local Newspapers**

Local newspapers are a fantastic way to reach the local community and engage with your target audience. The local press responds to local people – so make sure you develop a relationship with them. The local newspapers are important as they can:

- raise public awareness and interest in orienteering, local events and the weekly club night
- inform the public of where they can try orienteering and what the sport is about
- show the public what the sport is really about
- attract new members to the sport and the local clubs
- keep the public informed of club members (local people's) achievements
- show the public what orienteering events (particular major events) bring to the local area

## **Types of Press Coverage**

- News: About an actual event or something that has happened
- Feature: A longer article generally about orienteering and can involve interviews
- Photo Story: An exciting/interesting picture with a report
- Listing: A diary of events
- Review: A reporter's opinion of orienteering

## **Information to find out about your local publications:**

- The correct contact (journalist) for orienteering within the publication (this may depend on the story e.g. Sport, lifestyle)
- Deadline and publication dates
- Whether there is an editorial schedule for future editions that orienteering could feature in.
- What preferred way is to send press releases (usually with text pasted into an email, rather than attached)

## **Writing your press release**

The story is more likely to be published if there is something unusual about the event. E.g. It is free, for charity, a school event, held on an area of interest, a major athlete is attending, it is a National event etc

- Start with the heading 'Press Release'
- Date the press release
- Have your logo/event name prominently in the top right corner so it is easy to identify
- Create an interesting headline
- In the first paragraph try to include who, what, where, when - keep it short and to the point.
- The second paragraph should go into more detail about the event and orienteering
- Include quotes to give the story a personal perspective and to emphasis points
- Grab the journalists' attention in the first two paragraphs, they cut from the bottom up
- Any other information which is relevant and of interest should be included in paragraphs 3 and 4
- Try to keep the press release to a single side
- Font type should be Arial at 11 or 12pt size
- Allow margins for editors to make comments
- Use short paragraphs to make it easy to read
- Limit the information to facts
- Close the press release by putting ENDS.
- Include "Notes for the Editor". Notes for the Editor should include some further generic information about the club and orienteering. You should also include your contact details (include a daytime/evening number and email address) and a web address for further information.

### **Sending a Press Release**

Send your Press Release to the contact you have already established or to the email address given on the publications website if no contact is identified. You should then follow this up with a phone call to check they have received it. You could also take this opportunity to invite the journalist to your event/club night to have a go themselves or interview members of the club.

After your event send a good quality high res photograph and a brief write up, telling the journalist how many people attended and some quotes from people who came along and had a positive experience.

**Further information, help and guidance with press releases can be found via Club Matters [here](#).**