

Using Zoom sessions with SWJOS during Lockdown

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Since March, SWJOS has run over 50 Zoom sessions lasting 1-2 hours each. At its peak over 20 SWJOS athletes and coaches were taking part and we ran additional sessions for the younger and older squad members. We've realised that in our huge region, these sessions add something in between our regular training that should carry on even when things return to normal. Here's a few notes about what seems to work, that might be of interest.....

Overview

Sessions need to be:

- regular and quite frequent, so they become a habit
- allow everyone to contribute something and speak
- contain some useful orienteering content, but not too much
- be thought-provoking and interesting
- be fun

Content

Regular Zoom sessions Hoover up your coach's toolkit at great speed! This spurred us to find new types of activity. Each session includes:

- News from coaches and from squad members who've done something new or good.
- Long Leg Route Choice, with everyone drawing their routes on a shared screen.
- Kahoot! Quiz on sometimes tenuous orienteering themes. The competitive and timed element is important as is the neat use of technology. Left or Right route choices, Map Symbols etc. are good; guessing German/Swedish/Welsh control descriptions is fun.

Other content we use regularly:

- Short presentations on training, nutrition, stretching, core exercises, periodisation, confidence, speed training, psychology, race preparation Avoid Death by Powerpoint by posing lots of questions
- Technical skills exercises e.g. taking it in turns to describe each leg from a 21E course.
- Indoor map memory and symbols relays (in teams of one)
- Imagine-O using online videos and maps of Zermatt Swiss O Week etc.
- Interviews and guest speakers, with thanks to old squad members and members of the GB team
- What happened next? (A chance to relive your orienteering nightmares!)
- Build a map (using whatever resources in your room)
- More quizzes about anything, on Kahoot! or not. From Nursery Rhymes to Star Wars...

Impact

There's no substitute for getting everyone together in person, but Zoom sessions can top up the team feeling in the weeks between training day.

Smaller Zooms of 6-10 allows a more personal session with more chances for each person to speak.

In the current circumstances, these sessions have become an important, reliable part of their week's structure, especially for younger squad members.