

Board of Directors

Wednesday 3 February 2016, 11.00 – 17:00

Meeting held at the Tansley Village Hall



Board attendees: Martin Ward (MW); Philip Baxter (PB); Bob Dredge (BD); Mike Hamilton (MH); David Maliphant (DM); John Woodall (JW).

Apologies: John Flook (JF); Judith Holt (JH); Elizabeth Pariag (EP)

* **Decisions required in bold**

1. Meeting Administration

There were no notifications of items for Any Other Business.

No additional declarations of interest in addition to those held on the register were made in response to the Chair's query.

Actions from the December meetings

1. Insurance: MH to inform brokers of the decision regarding Cyber Liability
MH informed insurance brokers of the decision not to pursue Cyber Liability at this time.
2. Finance: 2016 Budget reforecast to be presented to the February Board meeting
This is an Agenda item.
3. Finance: Outcomes from the audit to be presented at the February meeting
An Agenda item.
4. Association matters: MW to communicate potential dates for a Board/Association meeting to take place.
Board/Association meeting is organised for Saturday, 13 February; most associations are represented.
5. Orienteering Foundation: MH to inform the Chair, Neil Cameron, of the Board discussion.
MH has discussed the matter with Neil Cameron and Neil is understanding of the Board's consideration regarding income generation. MH has informed the Board of the potential advantages of donations going to the Orienteering Foundation due to its charitable status.
6. *Independent Directors: Recruitment to commence to replace Rosie Williams.
MW reported that recruitment is to commence shortly. MH to prepare an advert for MW to consider.*

2. Finance

a) Year-end Accounts

The latest version of the Year-end Accounts had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

MH explained that the significant points to note are:

1. The actual British Orienteering position at year end is a profit of £348 although there is on-going discussion with the auditors over the impact of FRS102, the new Financial Regulations, which may mean an additional profit of £9,000 being shown. This relates to the manner in which holiday pay is shown in the accounts.
2. Major events returned just in excess of the £25,000 surplus to British Orienteering. This met budget expectation.
3. The WOC account has been closed. As far as British Orienteering is concerned the final position on WOC is a profit of £8,400 although this remains to be confirmed with the auditors.
4. Salaries were considerably below budget due to several factors; resignation of Peter Buckley the Commercial Manager, resignation of Cerianne Dengate administrator, and later than expect auto-enrolment into a pension scheme.
5. IT Depreciation overspend as a consequence of the decision to replace the server and some pcs. This was implemented in 2015 in order to complete the update in the most financially advantageous way to British Orienteering.
6. Finance & legal fees overspend due to the decision to seek support regarding auto-enrolment.

7. FRS102 has had a significant impact on the audit – it's the first one that Grant Thornton have completed. Dealing with holiday pay and some changes to the audit terminology are issues that may need to be explained to the members.

MH reminded the Board that in May/June he had advised the Board of his concern at the financial position. At worst British Orienteering could have been faced with around a £120,000 loss if several risks, including WOC, had gone against British Orienteering. Fortunately, and perhaps against expectations all of the factors resolved themselves positively which has led to a small profit being made in 2015. MH explained that it is worth noting that this has been very fortuitous and could have ended quite differently.

Looking forwards there is no doubt that in the current format British Orienteering is a going concern. The question mark over Sport England Funding from April 2017 continues to exist and will almost certainly impact on British Orienteering significantly.

BD explained that there remains one matter related to WOC to be resolved and then the accounts will be finalised. Once the final draft of the accounts and findings have been received they will be circulated to the Board for comment. There should be no surprises or fundamental changes. Provided the Board agree there are no significant changes to the draft they have seen and discussed, BD asked that the Board give him authority to meet with the auditors and sign off the accounts. Authority was agreed on this basis.

b) Key Findings arising from the audit

MH and BD updated the Board regarding the significant issues that had arisen from the audit. The 'Findings' document produced by the auditors had been circulated prior to the meeting.

FRS102 requires the auditors to declare the risk to the business as the auditors see them. For the majority of the findings the Board accepted the highlighting of the risks whilst recognising there is little that can be changed to improve the mitigation of the risks. One particularly risk appears every year and is related to the 'Segregation of Duties' and our reliance on our Accounts Manager, Jannette. As in previous years the Board recognised the risk but in a small business environment appreciated it is unrealistic to change this situation.

There were two significant matters raised in the findings:

- FRS102 and the changes required to meet the new regulations, particularly how assets and how holiday pay are dealt with. BD recognised that he will need to explain the changes in regulation to the membership.
- WOC 2015 and other '3rd party events' (such as JK/BOCs). The auditors were challenged by several aspects of the way in which we did business in relation to WOC 2015. There was considerable discussion at the Board meeting about these findings and the Board were comfortable that a £1m project had been successfully delivered and met the 'break-even' target. The Board did accept the auditors' findings that the joint venture approach with S6D Company did result in a lack of evidence that the auditors could test for purchases/incomes related to the WOC/S6D combined event. The Board also accepted the findings highlighting the lack of formal agreement in regard to the TV production etc which involved 3rd party agreements over which however we had little doubt. The final statement in this section of the findings probably summarised the situation: *'Whilst we (the auditors) have gained sufficient audit evidence to conclude that the WOC event has been accounted for appropriately, we draw the Board's attention to the fact that controls around expenditure for this have been seen to be weak. We believe the method of organising this event has resulted in the company being exposed to a large degree of risk, which it has been difficult for staff to manage.'* MH reinforced the auditors statement and explained to the Board the changes that would be required to increase the likelihood that the auditors would be more comfortable with when such an event is organised by British Orienteering again. The Board accepted this and did recognise that it is likely to be some time before such an event is staged again.
MH highlighted that some of these same issues will need to be dealt with in regard to the way in which the JK/BOCs are managed.

c) Budget 2016

The 2016 Budget had been agreed as a working budget in September 2015 and MH explained it has been reforecast. The reforecast predicts a £5,000 surplus.

Changes include:

Income

- a) Reforecast of Club Affiliations, Levy
- b) Athlete contributions (a BOF income) of £50,000 which will be off-set against the Talent programme (Sport England)
- c) Sport England underspend for 2015 has not been included in the reforecast as only has direct impact on the Sport England programmes
- d) The overall net increase in income is £35,202

Expenditure

- e) Membership, Focus/Mailings: increase from £22,000 to £25,000
 - f) Insurance: increase from £12,000 to £13,500
 - g) Web/Database: remains static which means no development to either during 2016
 - h) Governance meetings: reduced from £7,000 to £5,000 based on expenditure in 2015
 - i) Depreciation, IT: depreciation of the new server and pcs resulting in an increase cost in 2016 of £2,000 to £5,500
- MH explained that from a Board perspective there have been very few significant changes.

Athlete Contributions continue to be a source of confusion! Contributions are a British Orienteering income and are shown as such. Expenditure is through the Sport England Talent programme. The impact of this is that the British Orienteering outcome always shows as a £50,000 profit whilst the Sport England Talent programme shows as a £50,000 loss with the two cancelling each other out. This is necessary as Sport England requires British Orienteering to demonstrate the income so that British Orienteering is seen to make a contribution towards the talent programme.

MH tabled a detailed reforecast of the budget to draw the attention of the Board to the significant impact on, and dependence on, the current Sport England funding. This will become more evident later in the agenda when the future financing of British Orienteering is discussed.

3. AGM Preparation

a) Membership and levy proposal

This item was postponed until later in the agenda, once the strategic plan had been considered; the following minutes are a record following on from that discussion.

In the light of the discussion that have taken place during the meeting regarding finance, the future funding of British Orienteering and the Strategic Plan the Board agreed that it is imperative that British Orienteering can operate as a National Governing Body of sport and should be able to self-fund the delivery of the 'core' business of an NGB.

The Board agreed a longer term financial plan be agreed that would set out the way in which income can be gradually increased. MH/BD were asked to draft such a plan which should be communicated to the membership as soon as is feasible and before the AGM.¹

It was agreed that an early significant increase in income should be a part of the plan and to this end the Board agreed that:

- Membership be increased to £15 for a senior and £5.00 for a junior; it was felt that there was understanding amongst the members that the current fee of £5.00 is low and general acceptance amongst the members that this can be increased. There was much discussion about this increase leading to the agreement which should generate an additional £80,000 provided the membership remains at a similar level.
- Levy be increased by 10p to £1.35; this was also discussed in detail and should generate an additional income of £10,000 based on the participation and levy figures for 2014 and 2015.

The Board were understanding of the significance of these raises recognising the urgent need to be able to fund the 'core' operation of British Orienteering necessitates swift and decisive action. Currently the significant subsidising of British Orienteering by Sport England enables the organisation to function. Once this funding is removed British Orienteering needs to be able to continue to function as a governing body of sport. The changes proposed will enable a staff infrastructure to deliver these core NGB functions without the reliance on Sport England.

b) Additional AGM proposals

MH reported to the Board that no additional proposals had been received from members.

c) Director elections and appointments

BD and JW complete a term of office at the AGM 2016. BD is able and willing to stand again for election. JW was appointed in 2015 for a 1-year period in office and will be unable to stand again as he has now completed the 3 terms in office.

MH reported that a nomination has been received from a current member to stand for election; the nomination has been seconded by two other current members as is required by the Articles.

MW reported that a replacement is being recruited for Rosie Williams an appointed, independent director who resigned in 2015 and that John Flook will reach the end of his term in office in 2016. JF has recently confirmed to MW that he would be willing to be re-appointed in accordance with the Articles.

4. Annual Report

The draft text had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. Several directors had forwarded their comments to MH. It was agreed that MH circulate the final draft report to Board members for final comment and agreement.²

5. Reflections on the Overview of the Strategic Plan

a) Our Strategic Plan & Funding:

'more people, more places, more podiums'

MH explained that he and BD had attended a consultation workshop with Sport England. MH had also spent the day before the board meeting with Sport England and now felt that there was a growing clarity regarding the government and Sport England position.

The DCMS and Government position has become clear with the publication of 'Sporting Future - A New Strategy for an Active Nation' and the strategy is to be implemented by UK Sport, Sport England, Sport Northern Ireland and Sport Scotland, Sport Wales. There will almost certainly be differences of detail between the funding bodies but the overarching principles will be the same.

Sport England see their role as being to deliver the implementation of 'Sporting Futures – A New Strategy for an Active Nation' and all funding will be structured towards this.

The five principle aims of the DCMS Strategy are: Physical Health, Mental Wellbeing, Individual Development, Social/Community Development, Economic Development.

Sport England in turn will be measured by:

More people from every background regularly & meaningfully taking part in sport & physical activity:

1. Participation: Increase % taking part at least 2x per month
2. Participation: Decrease inn % of people physically inactive
3. Volunteering: Increase in number 2 x per year
4. Volunteering: To be more representative of society

A more productive & responsible sport sector:

5. Employment in grassroots sport
6. Increased non-public investment in sport
7. Facilities: % publicly owned with under-utilised capacity
8. Workforce: Headline results new Workforce Survey

UK Sport is being asked to consider funding successful sports other than Olympic and Paralympic sports. MH informed the Board that discussions have already commenced, British Orienteering and 6 other sports are being supported by SRA in approaching UK Sport about the feasibility of making submissions for funding and the first meeting has already taken place. This was warmly welcomed by the Board.

MH went on to explain that Sport England will be funding more organisations after 1 April 2017 and with effectively less money. Consequently, it is likely that NGBs funding will be reduced.

More significantly for the small NGBs such as orienteering, Sport England would like to see the funding for 'core' business being reduced with the aim of it being cut completely by 2021, half way through the Sport England funding programme. It is likely that 'core' funding will be reduced or cut completely as soon as possible. Funding is more likely to be provided for ring fenced programmes that help Sport England meet the targets to be agreed between themselves and DCMS.

MH explained that this will have a significant impact on British Orienteering. Core funding currently subsidises the work we do servicing members, clubs, etc to the value of approximately £140,000 per year against the British Orienteering generated funds of approximately £260,000.

MH tabled a strategic budget highlighting the challenges facing British Orienteering.

It was agreed that British Orienteering should plan to increase income in order to fund through the reliable income streams of membership, levy and major events an organisation that is capable of delivering the core services expected of a NGB of Sport. This will mean increasing income towards £350,000 and then planning for a gradual increase in following years. MH was asked to prepare a plan covering the period of the strategic plan to make British Orienteering self-sufficient in its core role as an NGB.

It was also agreed that plans to make the membership aware of these changes should be developed and commenced at the earliest opportunity.

6. Programme Reviews – Governance & Leadership

MH explained the government is making the governance requirements more stringent and that only NGBs and other organisations meeting these requirements will be considered for funding. As yet Sport England and UK Sport have not agreed with government what the new governance requirements will be but they are almost certain to include:

- a) Independent Chairs of Board/Trustees: this is already a requirement for NGBs receiving funding from UK Sport.
- b) Disability/inclusiveness quota for Boards

MH to circulate the requirements to the Board once they are confirmed.

7. Monitoring Reports

Monitoring reports had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

- a) Key Performance Indicators to 31 December 2015

Work area	KPI	Baseline	To date	Target
Participation	Number & frequency of people orienteering (participation)	392,548	399,837	455,424
	Club Event (participation)	174,755	188,184	169,038
	Club Activity (participation)	60,645	54,148	53,953
	Xplorer (participation)	18,103	48,015	21,970
	Activity non-club (participation)	10,346	109,490	184,000
	Club events (no of)	1,781	1,667	
	Club Activities (no of)	2,781	2,115	
	Xplorer activities (no of)	560	572	
	Activity non-club (no of)	141	120	
	Clubs (no of)	109	109	
	Schools registered (no of)	620	673	
	HE/FE Clubs (no of)	11	10	
	POCs (no of)		433	
	Partners delivering (no of)	50	72	
Performance	WOC Top 10 (no of)	2	4 (+2 Relay)	
	WOC Top 20 (no of)	3	11 (+3 Relay)	
	WMTBO Top 10 (no of)		3	
	WTrailO Top 10 (no of)		1	
	JWOC Top 10 (no of)	1	2 (+ 1 Relay)	
	JWOC Top 20 (no of; inc top 10)	4	4 (+ 3 Relay)	42,128
	Contact time (hrs)	870		
Membership	Members (no of)	10,328	10,939	11,000
	New members (no of)	1,874	2,233	2,000
	Lapsed members (no of)	1,568	1,389	
	Retained members (no of)	8,219	8,939	
	Junior members (no of)	2,794	3,405	
Governance	Operates within an effective governance framework	4	4	4
	Plans and delivers key objectives in accordance with our strategic plan	3	3	4
	Operates a sound system of financial management including planning, policies, controls & reporting	4	4	4
	Manages employees and key volunteers in accordance with employment legislation and best practice management principles	3	3	4
	Organisational policies have been documented, approved by the board & communicated to relevant employees, volunteers, members & stakeholders	4	4	4
	Manages key risk areas successfully	3	4	4

Increasing Participation	Number of Participant Runs to April 2016 – age 26 and older	178,580	-	231,380
	Number of Participant Runs to April 2016 – aged 14 to 25	79,228	-	195,297
	Number of Participant Runs – Disability	1,081	-	1,900
Talent	Number of top 20 results at the Junior World Orienteering Championships per year	7	4 (+ 3 relay)	4 – 5
	Number of athletes selected for the Talent Development Squad	36		36 – 46
	Number of athletes achieving the required standards to progress into the Elite Development Squad	1		
	Number of coaching/contact hours delivered per athlete	740		860-885

Governance – Self Assurance Actions Update

Progress in completing the outstanding actions:

1. Financial Regulations (2.5, 7.1): updated and ratified by the Board September 2015
2. Standing Orders (2.5): updated and ratified by the Board, September 2015
3. Chair and CEO Roles (2.11): Roles confirmed and published, September 2015
4. Strategic Plan (4.1, 4.2): Work developing a new plan progresses and the overview is ready for final consultation January 2016
5. Financial Manual/Handbook (7.1): updating continues and will be presented to the Board in Dec → JB ref MH/BD → delayed until February 2016
6. Budgets & Expenses 2013 - Staff Handbook complete update and rewrite; produced by Peninsula our HR out source
7. Director Appraisals (10.1): new process agreed and being implemented Nov/Dec 2015, report made to the Board December 2015
8. CEO Appraisal (10.2): Performance appraisal completed December 2014 → MW with MH
9. Equality Action Plan (11.3): requires updating and approving by the Board → MH put back to January 2016 for Feb Board meeting
10. Business Continuity Plan (12.4): updated post office relocation; approved by the Board Sept 2015

The Board noted that during summer 2016 these actions will need to be complete in time for the Board to sign-off the Self Assurance Statement at the end of September.

b) Risk Register

The Board were asked to note the following:

Scope: Regular quarterly update

Author: Mike Hamilton

Date: 31 January 2016

Summary:

There have been few changes since the December Board meeting. Note that WOC 2015 has ceased to be appear on the Risk Register as of 1 Jan 2016.

Significant strategic risks and changes to be noted:

1.5 Vision & Strategic Plan focus: Continues to be a challenging time with a transition from the old plan whilst the new plan is developed. Staff depend on a plan to maintain their priorities and create a backdrop to work plans.

2.4 Major Events generating income: The change from 'partnership events' to 'supa-levy' continues and will need time to settle down.

4.6 Business Continuity situation continues to improve with a new server installed and pc security being improved with a move to managed security and servicing.

4.8 Data security: Whilst data is safer than it has ever been in regard to data loss there is a growing concern over data theft and security this situation will be improved as managed security and servicing is rolled out.

c) Matters of Significance

MH reported the following matters of importance:

1. Complaints & Grievances

There have been no formal complaints during the period.

Details of a discussion that took place at the Board meeting regarding a disciplinary matter have been treated as confidential.

However it was agreed that a review of the disciplinary procedures during 2016 should take place to ensure the Board that our procedures are robust and in line with good practice.³

2. Safeguarding

There have been no safeguarding matters raised since the last meeting.

3. Insurance

The matter of event officials having attended an Event Safety Workshop and the timing of this being brought in (1 Jan 2016) had raised several issues. The insurance requirements are being promoted to clubs and the membership as a matter of urgency. MH also reported that as a consequence of this there may need to be a review of the ways in which important legal or insurance matters are dealt with and whether the Rules are the most appropriate place to deal with them.

8. Association Matters

The Board considered any Association matters raised since the last Board meeting. These included:

- a) O-Safe & Photography: MH had responded to this query and whilst all, including MH, are uncomfortable with how the photography guidance is implemented and policed there is now an understanding of the rationale behind the position.
- b) 50th Anniversary of British Orienteering: The Board are fully supportive of the anniversary and will work with a number of individuals to ensure the celebrations are successful.
- c) Association/Board Conference: The EAOA had made comment regarding the short notice of the meeting. The Board recognised that the Conference was called at relatively short notice and apologised for this. The Conference will consider the value of such a conference and if there is support for an annual conference then more notice can be given in the future.
- d) Data Protection had been raised as a potential issue and MH had responded to this.

9. Steering Group and Committee Matters

The Board considered the reports produced by the various committee/steering group chairs. The reports are included for information.

MH was asked to communicate with the Chairs regarding the outcomes to the board discussion on the reports. To be included:⁴

a) E&CC:

- The Board will consider the structure, role and responsibilities of E&CC during 2016 as requested
- The Board recognise the conflict between operation and strategic for the committee
- The Board also recognise the challenges of taking meeting minutes and do not have an easy answer
- Succession is important and this should be considered in the review of the structure

b) Coaching:

- The Board wished the group well in developing the new awards and having them accredited

c) Talent & Performance: BD was able to speak to the report

- The Board appreciated the update and wished the group well with its work in supporting the programme.

d) TrailO:

- The Board sympathised with the view expressed regarding the cost of competing at IOF level. A communication to be

'more people, more places, more podiums'

made to the IOF regarding the concerns raised by the committee.

- The Board also had sympathy regarding the entry costs and will look into this matter further to try to ensure there is equity between able athletes and athletes with disabilities-

It was suggested that the Board should consider whether or not MTBO feature in the strategic plan as there is considerable interest in mountain biking at the moment.

The Board agreed that a review of the committee/steering group structure should be considered once the strategic plan is published as there may well be a need to ensure the structure is aligned to the plan.

10. Welfare & Safeguarding

MH reported that the annual, external, review of our welfare and safeguarding work will take place in April.

No additional matters of significance to the Board were reported.

11. IOF matters

The Board were asked to note the information received from Brian Porteous and particularly the issue related to succession planning by British Orienteering to prepare a member to sit on the IOF Council.

The Board agreed that representations should be made to identify an appropriate person.

12. Any Other Business

To respond to any significant, pertinent business raised by Board members

13. Future meetings

Saturday 18 Jun, Saturday 17 Sep, Thursday 8 Dec

Meeting with Association representatives Saturday, 13 Feb

Oct Club & Association Conference

Further Conference calls to be organised as required.

Conference calls TBC.

Meeting closed at 16:00

 [Top of document](#)

Actions

1. Longer term financial plan: MH/BD were asked to draft a longer term financial plan, setting out the way in which income to British Orienteering can be gradually increased; the plan to be communicated to the membership as soon as is feasible and before the AGM.
2. Annual Report: MH to circulate the final draft report to Board members for final comment and agreement.
3. Disciplinary Procedures: The disciplinary procedures are to be reviewed during 2016 and the review should ensure that our procedures are robust and in line with good practice; action MH.
4. Steering Group/Committee Reports: MH to communicate with chairs of the groups any points made by the Board on their reports.

Steering Group & Committee Matters

a. E&CC Operational Update January 2016

It is time for the Board to review the operation of E&CC within its Committee & Steering Groups.

1. Perception of role and responsibilities of E&CC within the membership
 - Is the Board satisfied that E&CC are handling the delegated authorities appropriately?
 - Is there any need to spell these out to the membership again?
2. Is the structure of E&CC still fit for purpose?
 - E&CC is the last vestige of the previous type of structure. It was first to emerge as committees were re-vamped. All the other operational functions subsequently became Steering Groups.
 - Does E&CC still fit effectively in assisting the Board to realise its New Vision?
3. Succession Planning
 - It is now around 5 years since many of the original members of E&CC were appointed. Members have been asked to consider plans for their succession. However only Graham Gristwood has taken action.
 - I was appointed 2 years later and envisage staying in role until autumn 2017 if required.
3. Strategic and Operational Matters.

Initially E&CC focussed entirely upon Operational Matters. The current meetings have now trying to cover both Operational and Strategic Matters. However it proves very difficult to separate these out and to get members to think strategically. Personally I have found it necessary to approach a very small number of the membership outwith the Committee for support on Strategic thinking.

4. The role of Minute Secretary

When I assumed the Chair, Helen Errington as a member of staff, was taking the minutes of meetings. In trying to relieve the pressures on the limited central resources Gill James volunteered to take over the role of Minute Secretary. Between us we attempt to achieve our operational target of getting the minutes out and ratified within a few days. However this can prove rather onerous due to the multitude of detail that emerges on Operational matter.

5. Personal Aim

My aim as Chairman has been to demonstrate by example how good communications and effective delegation can bring positive results. I am working hard to change the perception that BOF is remote and in-effective.

Chris James

January 2016

b. Coaching:

Hilary Palmer report - my news re NSGC is what I sent out in the recent email and what you wrote in your recent e-news! Not sure I can add to that at this time except to say that our 1st4Sport liaison person, Joe Corah, seems to be very helpful and Pat and I are confident that we will be able to write the new quals with his help by July.

c. Talent & Performance:

1. The group's working arrangement is that it meets once a year following the completion of the annual International Events cycle. At this meeting it aims to:

-Review the delivery and achievements of the previous year's programmes

-Consider and advise on the framing of the programme for the forthcoming year

-Raise any issues pertinent to the overall structure and details of plans suggested by our staff and attempt to add constructively to these.

Amongst the issues that the group members suggested for discussion and possible action in the 2016 programme were:

- the initial thoughts on planning a warm weather training camp in South Africa,
- a review of the decision to not select under 16 athletes for the European Youth Orienteering Championships in 2015,
- the timing of 2016 selection races for the WOC team,
- the progress made in collaborating more closely with the Junior Inter-regional squads,
- Consideration of using more selection races for junior athletes,
- How the aims, objectives, approach, and achievements of the programme can be made more visible to the general membership-for example the Performance Manager has a planned schedule of visits to regional squad events to discuss this with coaches, athletes and parents.

The group also discussed in some detail how talent identification and development could be enhanced. The group fully recognises the point that it is advisory and works in very close and supportive collaboration with the staff. It also benefits greatly from the presence of 2 current squad athletes, who make excellent contributions.

2. Any issues that arise between these annual meetings are dealt with by routine correspondence. An example is the ability to comment on the recent IOF proposals for the structure of the non- forest WOC races that will be in place for 2020.

3. There is an extensive and inclusive programme of structured training and development activities that build to the point of selection for competition. These include the physiological and sports science support now contracted to Manchester Metropolitan University (and discussions to have a similar facility in place in Edinburgh), training camps (both weekend and longer) available to squad athletes that have a specific orienteering focus and access to open training weekends in arrangement with local coaches. Lastly, nearer to the timing of the major competitions, there are specific training camps targeting the particular aspects of those events.

4. These activities are intense and require considerable organisation. They are planned in detail with very specific general and individual athlete goals in mind. They are delivered by our paid staff, who are assisted by a number of highly motivated and committed volunteers. I have attended some of the camps and activities and can confirm the degree of effort and commitment by all who are there and to the long hours put in by all. The level of professionalism and commitment of the coaches and athletes is confirmed by recent social network comments, by athletes, who are describing recent events as amongst the highest quality training and camps they have had delivered by British Orienteering.

5. A summary of the 2016 programme is attached and I will be very happy to go into more detail if asked. The minutes of our meeting are available on the BOF website as are our Terms of Reference and membership

6. Following the annual meeting I did take soundings from a number of the group members and gained the general view that the group was adding value, was able to influence (but not direct) the efforts and focus of our professional staff, and were able to represent the legitimate concerns and interests of their constituencies. The group also considered if the current Terms of Reference and Membership were still relevant and the view is that they are, especially with the recent addition of formal JROS representation and the positive athlete contributions. The recently introduced clarity in role responsibility of our staff was also welcomed so that there is a clear lead for the junior and senior athlete programmes, aligned to the many technical skills they can call on.

Without being complacent, I do believe there is a genuine and positive "partnership" between the group and the programmes.

Robert Dredge, Chair

d. TrailO:

The Group was asked if *"any significant news, achievements or queries that you believe the board should be aware of or needs to respond to"*

It's some time since the TrailO Group last met, and we are due to meet in the next couple of months, if we can ever find a suitable Saturday when most of us are available, so I've asked around the group and this is a digest of some of what came up.

1) The IOF Athletes Licence

Firstly, you will be aware that I wrote to you last week asking for guidance on the IOF Athlete's licence, and also on the **possible drug testing for TrailO athletes.**

Clive Allen also says

"I suggested some time ago that IOF was not being fair in charging trail orienteers the same as other disciplines' athletes for a licence, bearing in mind that there's no official World Cup in TrailO and therefore one has to pay up for taking part in just the one event per year, WTOC. Furthermore, as has been said by others, it's difficult to imagine trail orienteers ever being tested, or what kind of prohibited substance could ever actually enhance performance. One could not expect a complete exemption, but in my opinion 50% of the cost for other disciplines would be a reasonable reduction to argue for.

If others agree with me, then you could write to the Board asking it to consider if BOF should put forward a proposal (or a complaint, depending on how you look at it) to IOF saying that the fee needs to be reduced. Trail orienteers are having to pay enough for their sport out of their own pockets, in my view, without having this quite significant fee added to the costs of taking part, just for one event per year."

There is support from the Group for querying the IOF licence cost for TrailO athletes.

2) The TrailO International Budget

It remains a source of frustration and indeed embarrassment that the budget no longer covers the cost of entry and accreditation fees for international events. (TrailO competitors have always lived with the fact that if they were selected for an international competition that, unlike the FootO team, they would have to self-finance their entire travel and accommodation costs, but the entry fees would be paid.) The international budget was cut a few years ago just as the number of events at international competitions rose. This is particularly true of the years when there is both a WTOC and an ETOC to pay for, even though the budget is adjusted to take account for years with and without an ETOC competition.

For WTOC, the team consists of a maximum of seven athletes, Three Open, 3 Para, and one extra person for the TempO competition, as well as a Team Manager.

For ETOC, which is designed to give federations the chance to "blood" up and coming competitors and give them international experience, the team size is potentially double that for WTOC, six open and (if we can ever find sufficient para competitors of international standard) six in the Para class.

As for FootO, the number of events in a TrailO international event has increased, so that in addition to the PreO (what used to be called just TrailO) we have TempO competitions and from this year, the TrailO relay, with an additional entry fee, replaces the old team competition.

All of this means increasing entry fees and adds an extra day to the competition, which increases accommodation expenses.

In previous years, the budget paid for entry and accreditation fees and a little towards accommodation and travel at the venue. Recently we find ourselves only able to pay the entry fees for WTOC competitors and just three of the six people selected in each class for ETOC. The other three have to self-fund their entire costs.

I really feel that if the Federation selects someone for an international team, it should at least be paying their entry fees.

I know Christine Vince and SWOA will say "put the levy up!" and I agree with them.

Domestic TrailO competitions

There are again TempO and PreO competitions at JK 2016 and pre-entries so far are very encouraging with around 50 already entered for each competition.

'more people, more places, more podiums'

However, although WMOA identified suitable terrain on Brown Clee Hill for BTOC 2016 to be held alongside BOC 2016, and the TrailO Group had found them a potential controller, they have been unable to find a suitable planner and organiser and have decided not to hold any TrailO at the event. This decision, taken by the Organisers with the agreement of Sally Pygott, was unfortunately not discussed with, or communicated to, the TrailO Group until I asked for a progress report.

We will have to look elsewhere for a Championships this year. SEOA have said they will look into offering TrailO during the Sprints/Middle weekend, but we have yet to hear of further progress.

The TrailO mini website

The mini site, maintained by Clive Allen, is proving very useful. However, the link to it from the main website, is not particularly obvious for those who are unaware of its existence: it's just a link from the TrailO page linked to the About Orienteering tab. Is it possible that this link could be made more obvious? Even putting it in bold text might help. Anne Hickling comments: -

"I think the TrailO front page needs some work as it looks quite out of date. There probably doesn't need to be much text here as it's all covered on Clive's pages. So just a brief explanation of TrailO (PreO and TempO), plus some more photos including some able-bodied competitors (ideally young and/or well known orienteers!) to get away from a still-common misconception that TrailO is only for the disabled. And of course the link to Clive's pages (I don't much like the term 'mini-site', perhaps refer to them as 'TrailO in the UK' or something similar) and the IOF pages. "

I agree with Anne on pretty well all of this. We will ask Clive to suggest what needs to be changed.

Development

Despite the numbers taking part in TempO and PreO at the JK, and at the PreO event of the Scottish 6 Days event, so that there is an increasing pool of BOF members with TrailO skills, we still have difficulty getting clubs to plan TrailO courses. Anne Hickling and Roger Scrutton are doing sterling work putting on Pre-O (IntrO) courses at SOL events and Alan Gartside is doing similar work at LVO events. But we have yet to solve the problem posed by Anne Hickling

"1. How to get more opportunities for more people to do TrailO more often, and,

2. How to get more people to plan/organise TrailO.

Of course success in 2 depends on the success of 1."

Dick Keighley

January 2016