

## Junior Development Meeting

### Introduction

Liz Yeadon introduced the meeting, thanked representatives for their attendance and for their pre work responding to the questions posed. The group was asked to highlight any specific things they were hoping to get from the day, this led to a number of points being raised a

Debbie Watson	WCOC	Here to get ideas from other people, and to make face to face contact with the folk who've written the reports
Kyla da Cunha	WYEVENT	Orienteering has a lot of older folk who could provide input to junior development; there is a lack of a box of activities that can be used
Pauline Tryner	SYO	Would like to see a more joined-up approach
Mark Howell	SN	Would like to get local clubs to work together more
Caroline Louth	EAOA	WRT POCs, would like to get a more formal agreement with the owners of the sites where the POCs are situated
Anne-Marie Duckworth	DVO	In DVO, POCs need a complete renovation and the club lacks resources in both time and money to do this; there is no money available locally and the work takes at least 3 years to achieve
Judith Holt	BOF	The voices of those working in development need to be louder; they tend to be drowned out by those who work in competition standards
Colin Best	SYO	A better talent pathway is needed as there are only two championships for juniors to aim for
Jean Fitzgerald	SAX	Junior-specific events are now referred to as "festivals" as being competitive can put juniors off
Karin Kirk	OD	They have started a new competition for schools because juniors want to be competitive
Liz Yeadon	SARUM	A way of getting juniors and parents into mainstream clubs
Ken Stimson	NWO	A way of getting more teachers into orienteering, who would then bring the juniors with them
Steven Partridge	EAOA	Parents are almost invisible as the juniors come to events by minibus; when dealing with local authorities, it would be helpful if BOF as NGB was involved directly
Liz McAllister	GO	Need to have parent involvement because of safeguarding issues
Kyla da Cunha	WYEVENT	Teachers and parents are often terrified of being shown up by the children; there needs to be a simplified path into orienteering

### Setting the Scene

Craig Anthony provided an overview of the new Department for Culture Media and Sport strategy, Sporting Future, highlighting the 5 key outcomes the government is looking for from the Sport Sector.

Craig then addressed Sport England's current position to this new strategy highlighting that the organisation is still in a consultation phase and we are unlikely to see a formal strategy until end of

April. Sport England's focus on the behaviour change model and the investment challenge they face when considering the impact against the 5 outcomes was presented.

Craig provided an overview of British Orienteering's position in relation to this national picture including the new vision, developing strategic plan.

## Discussion

The conference then split into smaller groups to discuss current practice, what they have done that works or what they think would work. The groups were encouraged to stay positive and not list things that haven't/don't work. Feedback from the groups:

- Badge system works well to reward developing juniors and give them confidence
- Regular coaching offers that are open to all but free to members has helped increase membership
- Working with school partnerships to offer in school activity linked to club coaching
- Orienteering itself is simple; it doesn't need any further simplification but the explanation (of what it is / does) could be simpler, and this is something that should be sorted out at National Office level.
- People are doing good work at grass-roots level but this often does not feed back to the Board and into the Board aims and objectives.
- Examples of good practice often do not reach Board level; noted that there was a lack of names put forward for the Club and Volunteer Awards this year.

## Lunch

Provided some useful space to follow up further on earlier discussions and touch base with others on thoughts they had shared throughout the morning

## How to Encourage Teachers – a local perspective

Ken Stimson (NWO) presented on how he works with school teachers to encourage them to take ownership of orienteering in their schools and

## The Way Forward

The afternoon session was a full room discussion across to key points to help shape the direction of junior club development moving forward.

### 1. What Could We Focus On to Advance Junior Development?

- The changed demographics in the sport has affected the structure of junior sport.
- Getting volunteers – one association is now smaller than one of its neighbouring clubs.
- Clubs cover huge geographical areas, but development groups need to be focussed on a 5-mile radius to be effective; this presents difficulties when trying to move juniors onto club-based activities.
- Development groups are dependent upon their volunteers; if those volunteers regularly have to travel some distance to reach their activities then they wear out more quickly than if those activities are kept local.
- The colour-coded badge scheme (which rewards juniors and others for achieving a certain standard on each colour-coded course) is only supported in some associations; could BOF revive it and supply the badges?
- For newcomers, the pathway into and through the club needs to be defined and communicated properly.

## 2 What Structures Within the Sport Could Help?

Craig said that the present Development Steering Group has representatives from SOA, WOA and NIOA but not from England. How could we ensure an appropriate representation nationally from England?

Comments from the floor:

- It would be a good idea if discussion groups (like this one with many people present) could feed back into the Development Steering Group.
- Currently the loudest voices are coming from those involved with competition, not development.
- It is good that we have representatives from SOA, WOA and NIOA in the Development Steering Group; however, NIOA for example has three clubs – England alone has very many more and one person would have great difficulty in representing all English clubs.

Other comments on the second objective:

- Much information is available on the basics of orienteering; likewise, on how juniors can advance to their Regional Squad and progress up the talent pathway. However, there is a gap in the middle (between basic and advanced) into which the less committed can fall and are then lost to the sport.

## Close

Craig summarised key themes coming from the two discussions that he agreed to take away and consider how they can be integrated into the strategic plan:

- Reward and recognition for juniors (Badge system was highlighted) potentially both for improvement and achievement
- Simplifying the pathways into and through the sport
- Local opportunity and local development
- Representation of a team a motivating factor for a number of juniors
- Competition/racing a key aspect for a number of juniors

**ACTION:** Craig to investigate potential to create a development forum for interested parties on the British Orienteering website.

**ACTION:** Craig to look at feasibility of British Orienteering hosting a Development Conference annually

Craig thanked Liz and Christine for the work that they had put into getting the meeting together.

## Finally

All attendees were encouraged to take away one thing from today's meeting, work with it and see in a year's time whether it has been successful or not.