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ISSUE 3



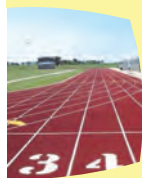
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2012



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# NI Orienteering: COACHING *focus*

PROVIDING OUR COACHES AND ATHLETES WITH NEWS,  
TIPS, REVIEWS AND MUCH MORE...

## February & March NEWS




It's hard to believe 2 months have past since the last Newsletter- as they say *time flies when you are having fun*. There has certainly been plenty of orienteering to keep us all busy.

LVO have continued with their Spring Cup events holding one in Parkanaur and another Craigavon Lakes. Following the Parkanaur event lots of competitors waited until night fall to take part in the NI Night Champs. The Short course was won by NWOC's Bobby Smyth and the Long was won by LVO'S Jonathan McCloy and Olivia Baxter.

The NI Colour Series kicked off in style on a newly up-dated map of Drum Manor. There were a few family doubles on the day with Luke and Rachel Collins


winning the white and orange courses and father and son Andrew and Alan Elwood winning the yellow and blue courses.

The NI Schools Orienteering Association launched it's new schools' league in Parkanaur at the end of February and followed it up with the second event the week after in Cookstown. The league will have seven events ending with a Championship race in June. The Royal School Dungannon are the school to beat at the moment.

Several NI orienteers made the trip to York to take part in the British Sprint & Middle Champs. Former Fermo athlete Rosalind Hussey won the B final in the Sprint and was a strong 16th in the Middle distance. 

## Coaching and Talent Development Officer's Report

The orienteering season has well and truly started in Northern Ireland. Most weekends you can find an event somewhere in NI to run, and on occasions you have to choose between two events (something that would have been unheard of in the past). Gone are the days where Northern Irish orienteers can use the excuse that they don't have enough race experience to successfully compete in the JK or British Champs. I would encourage all orienteers in Northern Ireland to take advantage of the numerous events and training opportunities that are being arranged.

A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of helping out at a schools' event organised by Gortatole OEC. This event is worth mentioning it is easily the biggest orienteering event organised annually in Northern Ireland. Over 300 secondary school pupils from 14 different schools competed against each other in Drum Manor as a part of their GCSE P.E. assessment. Turning up at the event I thought that it might be hundreds of excited teenagers running around and that it would be more about crowd control than orienteering. However, I was in for a surprise! Thanks to the careful planning of Raymond and Teresa Finlay the event roaring success that was thoroughly enjoyed by all the pupils, teachers and all of the volunteers who came along to help out. 





# Teresa & Raymond Finlay INTERVIEW

**When and how did you first get introduced to orienteering? and how long was it before you started orienteering regularly?**

**T-** I did my first event in Tollymore around 1978 and started orienteering regularly from around 1980.

**R-** In 1966 I took part in the first official orienteering event in NI organised by the Army Youth Team. It was in Drumkeeragh Forest and Slieve Croob. It was a score event and my mate and I came last with a negative score of -1200 points! I still have the certificate somewhere!

**Over the years you have helped introduce many people to orienteering. What challenges have you encountered in turning first timers into regular orienteers? and how have you overcome these challenges?**

It is a challenge to get people to attend regularly – it sometimes needs lifting and laying, especially with Juniors. We have had success in the past by putting on a bus, by phoning people up to remind them (and gently persuading!) and in general by forming a friendly relationship with new members.

**You have worked closely with junior orienteers both in Fermanagh and with junior squads. Can you recall any particular juniors that you have coached that went on to 'greater' things? What makes youngsters stick with the sport?**

Juniors who came through the club have run in the British, European, World Championships, JHI and SHI, JIRC, World University Champs and Park World Tour Notable 'Juniors' include Ciara Largey (current Irish W21E Champion) Roz Hussey and O'Reilly boys (JP development officer for EUOC) The Champion Coaching Scheme which we ran for several years undoubtedly helped to keep Juniors involved for long enough for them to become 'hooked' to the sport.

**This winter you held several coaching sessions in Fermanagh, what keeps you motivated to continue putting so much into the sport after so many years?**

**T-** I have enjoyed this sport for many years – it's a continuing mental challenge and a great fitness motivator. It feels so adventurous to be alone in tough, technical terrain in unknown country. I appreciate all the work put into planning, organising etc to provide events for me to enjoy and I think it's only fair that I do my share in return.

**R-** It keeps me from having to work in the garden!

**You still compete regularly yourself all over the UK. What is your best ever orienteering memory (or result)?**

**T-** My best result was coming 3rd in W45L in British Champs at Newborough in Wales. One of my most memorable was taking a chairlift up a hill in Ruka, Finland to compete in a midnight event in the midnight sun. The star event for both of us would be the Swiss 6day 2006 based



around Zermat and with the Matterhorn as a backdrop.


**R-** My memory is orienteering in Finland at the Fin5 being all alone looking for a control near the edge of the map and trackless forest rolling on in all directions. It felt wonderfully adventurous!

**And finally, what are your orienteering plans for the future?**

**T-** This year we won't get to too many overseas events as our two sons are getting married!

However our aim would be to continue to travel to interesting places to orienteer.

**R-** I plan to outlast my competitors as the only chance of becoming M90 World Champion!

**On behalf of all the people you have introduced to orienteering and have coached over the years NI Orienteering would like to thank you both for everything you have done and continue to do.** 

## SCHOOLS ORIENTEERING



On Wednesday (29th Feb) The Royal School Dungannon took part in the first event of the NI Schools' Orienteering

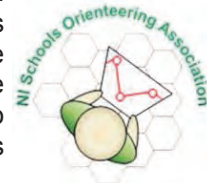
League along with 3 other schools. The event was held in Parkanaur Forest near Dungannon on what turned out to be a glorious spring day.

Some of the pupils taking part had never orienteered outside their own school grounds before so to be unleashed into a forest was a real challenge and a great adventure. Allan Bogle (Northern Ireland Orienteering's Coaching Development Officer) said after the event "I have been very impressed with the orienteering

talent on display today! Many of the pupils struggled with the first few control points however once they got used to the scale and became more confident they were able to fly around the remainder of the course".

The Royal School Dungannon has only started orienteering this year after one of their teachers, Gordon Black, took up the sport himself last summer. They have already got a permanent course set up around the school grounds, which has been used not only by the newly formed orienteering club but also by the PE and Geography departments. A group of Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils meet after school on a regular basis to try and improve their basic orienteering skills.

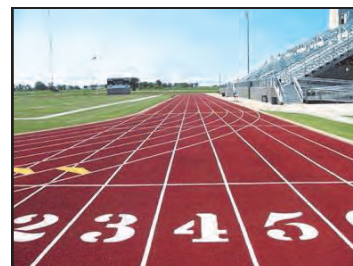
"The Schools' Orienteering league has caused great excitement amongst the regular members of the club, as it is giving them the opportunity to apply what they have learnt in different locations" said Gordon Black the teacher in charge. "It has also helped to boost the numbers attending the club, since those who were at the first event in Parkanaur have returned to school and told others how much fun it was. There has been competition to get places on the bus for the next event in Cookstown and healthy rivalry has grown up in the different age groups about who will be faster this time." 





# COACHING CORNER

## PHYSICAL TRAINING FOR PERFORMANCE ATHLETES



A question that I am often asked is, how fast do orienteers have to be? We all know that there is a fine line in orienteering between running fast and losing control of the map. This can sometimes explain why orienteers may not see the benefits of increased physical training straight away as it takes time for technical ability to 'catch-up' with running speed. Young orienteers can sometimes find this frustrating, they may feel like they are training better and running faster but their results don't show this. This could maybe help explain why there is a relatively high drop out rate amongst young orienteers. It is important for coaches to remind teenagers to be patient and not to expect to win the JK because they have joined a running club during the winter. If they stick with it the results will eventually come.

While living in Norway one of the World's best orienteers Bernt Bjørnsgaard (World Champion in 1999) told me that it took him until he was in his late 20s before he started orienteering at a level that reflected the effort he had been putting into training since he was a junior.



To become a top orienteer it is important to get the balance between physical training and technical training right. Here in Northern Ireland we often make the excuse that we can't train on the same quality/ variety of terrain that orienteers on the mainland can. I often made that excuse myself as a young up and coming orienteer. However I soon recognised that when it comes to physical training we are all on a level playing field. I capitalised on that and I joined an athletics club and started to train everyday from the age of 16. At first my results did not improve and I missed out in some important selections for international competitions. It took me until my mid 20s before my orienteering ability caught up with my running speed. 10 years of hard training eventually started to pay off and I was selected to run in the British European Championship team and in the 4th placed team in the World Students relay.


So to answer the question— **How fast does an orienteer have to be?**— I would say that to reach the top orienteers do not have to be able to break records on the track. European Cross Country Champion Carsten Jørgensen is a good example of this. Carsten represented Denmark in both orienteering and running and he could run a half marathon in 1:01 and 10,000m in under 28mins. However there were many 'slower' orienteers that would regularly beat him. From looking at recent track times that the Norwegian and Swiss Orienteering Squads have published it would appear that at the moment the World's top orienteers can run 5000m on the track in under 15minutes for males and under 18minutes for females.



My fastest time for 5000m is 15:06 when I was both running and orienteering at my best. Below is a sample training schedule based on my old training diaries and from advice I have gathered from coaches over the years.

| DAY       | SESSION              | M/W 16                                                       | M/W 18                                                       | M/W 20                                                       | M/W 21                                                       |
|-----------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| MONDAY    | EASY RUN & STRENGTH  | Rest or short run 20min Strength*                            | 25-30min Strength*                                           | 30-40min Strength*                                           | 45min Strength*                                              |
| TUESDAY   | INTERVALS            | 6x 1min (1min rec)                                           | 7x 1min (1min rec)                                           | 8x 1min (1min rec)                                           | 10x 1min (1min rec)                                          |
| WEDNESDAY | EASY RUN             | 30min                                                        | 30min                                                        | 30min                                                        | 45-60min                                                     |
| THURSDAY  | TEMPO RUN            | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>15min                          | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>20min                          | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>25-30min                       | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>30-35min                       |
| FRIDAY    | EASY RUN or REST     | REST                                                         | 30min or REST                                                | 30min                                                        | 45-60min                                                     |
| SATURDAY  | RACE/ LONG INTERVALS | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>6x 2mins (1.30min rec) or RACE | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>8x 2mins (1.30min rec) or RACE | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>6x 3mins (1.30min rec) or RACE | 10min (warm-up/ warm down)<br>8x 3mins (1.30min rec) or RACE |
| SUNDAY    | LONG RUN             | 60min                                                        | 75min                                                        | 90min                                                        | 90-120min                                                    |



*Please note this schedule is not based on any 'hard' scientific proof. Feel free to contact me if you would like any advice on creating a personal schedule for yourself or an athlete you are involved with.* 


## RDO UP-DATE:

### HELEN BAXTER



In addition to the regular Wed evening training sessions LVO ran 3 Organiser Training evenings over the last few months. These focused on various aspects of the organiser's role and all agreed were useful for organisers of any stand-

ard as there have been many changes with the advent of electronic punching. The main aspects covered were the responsibilities of an Organiser leading up

and during an event, how to run the SI aspects of an event and event safety. Organiser responsibility and Event Safety are BOF recognised training modules and those who attended will have this recorded in their personal qualifications. The SI training was run by Stephen Gilmore as a series of mini sprint races - his talent in sprint planning in a small area knows no bounds and added to the fun of the evening. Yes SI can be fun! A big thank you to Colin Henderson for running one of the modules and coordinating all three. 



## ARDO UP-DATE:

### MARK HUDSON




February and March have been very busy months coaching in the local primary and secondary schools. I have taken sessions in the following schools- Cookstown High School, Milburn Primary School, Coleraine and Ar-

valee School Omagh are just a few of the schools who took up NI Orienteering offer of some coaching.

February also saw the first competition in the NISOA at Parkanaur Forest and the University of Ulster Coleraine hosted the annual Coleraine and District Boys Brigade Championships which was won by 2nd Coleraine.

In March North West Orienteering Club, in association with University of Ulster Sports Services, ran an exciting new introduction to orienteering, suitable for all ages, fitness levels and abilities (beginners and those who want to improve skills) at the university campus. Three of the top adventure racers from Limavady attended the course as they prepare for another season on the adventure racing circuit. They went through a series of exercises which tested their orienteering skills.

During Easter there will be coaching events in North West for primary school children and the schools' coaching programme will continue through to the end of the school year. 

## ONE FOR YOUR DIARY...

### APRIL

|              |                 |       |                                      |
|--------------|-----------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Sat 14th APR | Parkland Sprint | LVO   | Castlewella                          |
| TUESDAYS     | TES             | FERMO | See <b>FERMO</b> website for details |
| Sat 21st APR | Coaching Day    | NWOC  | Portglenone                          |
| Sat 28th APR | Colour Series 2 | LVO   | Slievenagore                         |

### MAY

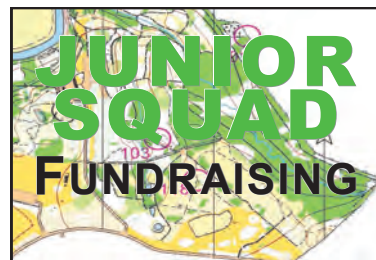
|              |                        |       |                                      |
|--------------|------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| TUESDAYS     | TES                    | FERMO | See <b>FERMO</b> website for details |
| WEDNESDAYS   | WEE                    | LVO   | See <b>LVO</b> website for details   |
| THURSDAYS    | TEE                    | NWOC  | See <b>NWOC</b> website for details  |
| Sun 13th MAY | Colour Series 3        | FERMO | Navar North                          |
| Sat 26th MAY | Colour Series 4        | NWOC  | Magilligan                           |
| Sun 27th MAY | Coastal Warrior Sprint | NWOC  | Portrush                             |



NI Orienteering

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On Sunday the 26th of February over 50 orienteers turned up at Belvoir Park in Belfast to support the NI Junior Squad by entering what will hopefully become an annual score event. This very successful event was organised and planned by the Junior Squad coaches, Sharon Shaw and Simon Reeves, with the aim of raising some money and to hopefully find some 'new blood' for the squad.

After the 45min score competitors could replenish their energy with soup and buns which were on sale. The NI Junior Squad would like to extend a massive thanks to everyone that ran and to everyone that donated goods for the bun sale.

Photos from the event are available on:

[www.alisonhillphotography.com](http://www.alisonhillphotography.com)

## O-DAY 3 GRANSHA

The third O-Day took place on the 18th of April in Gransha Estate. As the final O-Day before the British Champs and the JK the athletes were in for a tough day of orienteering and running.

The day started with a 3km time trial where newcomer Declan Doherty posted the fastest time in 10min33. To 'warm down' from their time-trial the athletes ran O-intervals followed by the usual 1000m-O.

The day ended with a Sprint race that was won by my M14 Peter Meehan in 14min42; a very impressive run by the young orienteer. 