

PRESS RELEASE

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TENTSMUIR FOREST TO HOST 100TH DAY OF SCOTTISH 6 DAYS ORIENTEERING FESTIVAL

Orienteers from all corners of the globe will soon begin gathering in Tayside as the countdown starts to “Tay 2009”, the Scottish 6 Days International Orienteering Festival. The week-long competition, a major fixture on the international orienteering calendar, starts on 2 August and will bring a significant boost to the local economy as well as providing locals with the opportunity to participate in a major international sporting event.

The Scottish 6 Days is a prestigious orienteering event, taking place every two years in a different part of Scotland. This year the event centre is at Perth Racecourse, but the competition will take place in a different part of Tayside, Fife or Angus on each of the six days of competition. Day 4 of the competition takes place at Tentsmuir Forest and this will be a particularly special day for the event, which has now been running since 1977. Day 3 of the 1979 event was held at Tentsmuir and now, 30 years’ later, the event returns to Tentsmuir for the 100th day of Scottish 6 Days Orienteering. This milestone will be celebrated with commemorative prizes for every 100th finisher.

Melanie Nicoll from Tayside Orienteers and a member of the Tay 2009 Organising Committee said:- “Many people have been working hard behind the scenes to make this event a success. We are also very grateful to all those people outside the orienteering world who have played a part. In particular, we are grateful to the landowners and tenants for their willing co-operation and thank, in particular, the Forestry Commission, David Findlay of Shanwell Farm and Scottish Natural Heritage.”

Entries for Tay 2009 officially closed a couple of weeks ago and there will be over 3000 competitors, competing in age-classes from the under 10s to the over 80s. This year the event has been given added prestige as Day 1 has been designated a World Ranking Event and will attract some of the top names in the sport. Coupled with the presence of Per Forsberg, a well-known professional orienteering commentator, the event is set to be a major highpoint on the orienteering calendar.

Many of the competitors will make a holiday of the week, which includes activities such as mountain bike and sprint orienteering on the mid-week “rest” day, as well as a lively and varied social programme designed to showcase Scottish culture, including ceilidhs, pipe bands, folk music, whisky tasting and a quiz night. The event will bring a major boost to the local economy, with competitors booking local accommodation and visiting tourist attractions. When the event was held in the Speyside area two years ago record visitor numbers were recorded at two local tourist attractions on the mid-week “rest” day, whilst the Deeside 2005 event brought in over £0.7 million to the local economy.

Although Tay 2009 is a big international competition there will be courses that are no more difficult than those at a small, local event and local people who want to have a

go at orienteering are encouraged to come along. It will be possible to enter the colour-coded (non-competitive) courses on the day – these courses are particularly suited to beginners and to families with young children – even the tinies are catered for with a “string” course where the children follow a string laid out on the ground with a simplified map and often pictures or models to identify the markers or “controls” they must find on their way round.

Tay 2009 is supported by Event Scotland, Perth & Kinross Council, the Forestry Commission and Perthshire Big Tree Country.

Full details of the event and further information are available at www.scottish6days.com/2009

CONTACTS:-

Melanie Nicoll, Tayside Orienteers

Press Officer Tay 2009 (voluntary)

Email: m.nicoll@virgin.net

Tel: 01350 727695

Gareth Bryan-Jones, Forth Valley Orienteers

Co-ordinator, Tay 2009

Email: janand.gareth@virgin.net

Tel: 01786 472758 or 0780 1057315

Scott Fraser, Professional Officer, Scottish Orienteering

Assistant Co-ordinator, Tay 2009

Email: scott.fraser@scottish-orienteering.org

Tel: 07809 722420

Notes to Editors

Scottish 6 Days

The Scottish Six Day Orienteering competition (“the 6-Days”) is a biennial event, first held in 1977, and taking place in a different area of Scotland each time. The competition is designed to provide the highest quality orienteering over the week, in a relaxed atmosphere, and aims to appeal all ages and skill levels, from elite athletes to newcomers. Age classes range from 10 years and under to 80 years and above. A strong international representation is always present at each 6-Day event, with a traditionally large Scandinavian contingent, and more recently the event has become increasingly popular with competitors from Eastern Europe.

The event is overseen by the Scottish 6-Day Company, and organised by all of Scotland’s orienteering clubs, who co-ordinate central organisation as well as individual race days.

Additional assistance is provided where required by other UK clubs and individuals. Tay 2009's central organising clubs are Forth Valley Orienteers and Tayside Orienteers. For details of past events, visit www.scottish6days.com.