



## Scottish Orienteering 6-Days International Event

### Business Plan

2010 – 2018

### Introduction

Orienteering is a challenging outdoor adventure sport that exercises both the mind and the body. The aim is to navigate in sequence between control points marked on a unique orienteering map and decide the best route to complete the course in the quickest time.

Orienteering is an adventure sport for all age groups. As well as navigational skills, children develop problem solving and decision making skills; they are encouraged to be active, to become more confident and orienteering helps to raise their self-esteem.

Older competitors do not become spectators, they continue to compete. The combination of a physical challenge with the intellectual problem of navigation in unfamiliar terrain, creating a sport in which skill plays as much a part as fitness, has enabled orienteers to maintain high levels of performance to ages beyond those possible in many sports.

The most challenging orienteering takes place in areas where there is demanding terrain with few paths – this terrain is found in many areas of Scotland. The Scottish Orienteering 6-Days International Event has been held biennially since 1977 and is a high quality orienteering event in terms of terrain, maps and organisation. The event has a budget of around £220k and is organised mainly by a major volunteer effort involving all Scotland's orienteering clubs. The event enhances the depth and range of orienteering available to Scottish orienteers through the location of the 'Event Centre' in a different area of the country each time. It has also led the introduction of technical advances in the sport in Scotland, particularly with regard to computing and electronic developments. The event is now one of the major multi-day events within the world orienteering circuit with around one third of competitors coming from overseas.

## **Aims for the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event 2010 to 2018**

The overall aim of the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event is to maintain our position as one of the major multi-day events on the world circuit.

### 1. Competitor numbers

An important challenge to the sport and for the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event is to continue to attract a wide and diverse range of competitors.

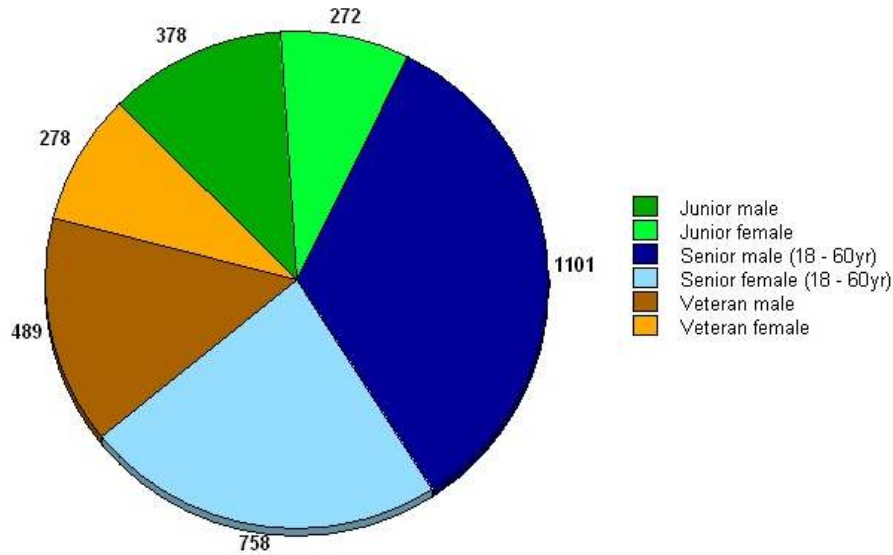
On page 3, the graphs illustrate the diversity of competitors attending the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event:

- Figure 1: Tay 2009: participant numbers by age group
- Figure 2: UK competitor numbers, 1995 to 2009
- Figure 3: Overseas competitor numbers, 1995 to 2009.

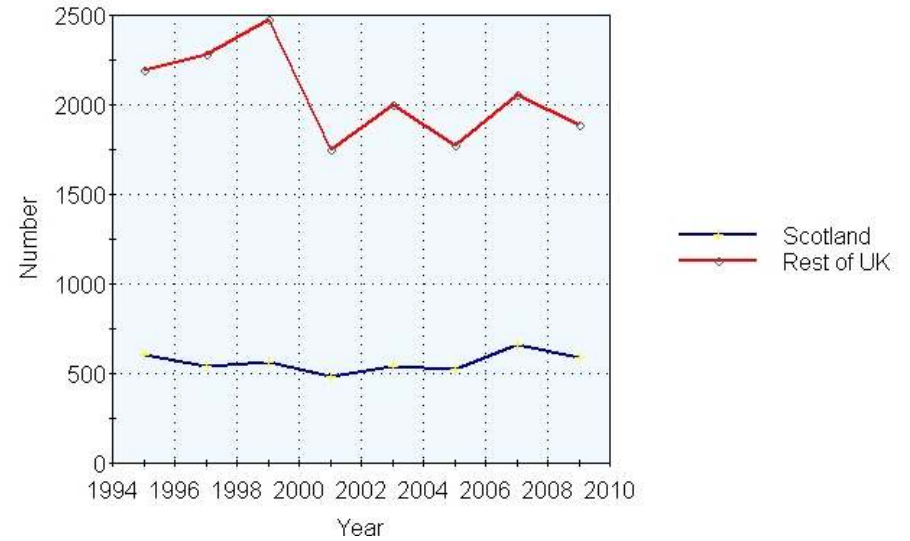
These figures are based on the entries received before the event (pre-entries); the estimated attendance is approximately 20% higher through people entering on the day of the event.

In both 2005 and 2007 there was a significant growth in the number of overseas competitors, resulting from increased marketing overseas funded by Scottish Enterprise and Event Scotland. The event will continue to seek growth in competitor numbers from both the UK and overseas. Challenges to achieving growth will come from environmental constraints, limits on the capacity of competition venues and an increasingly competitive market for multi-day events in Europe.

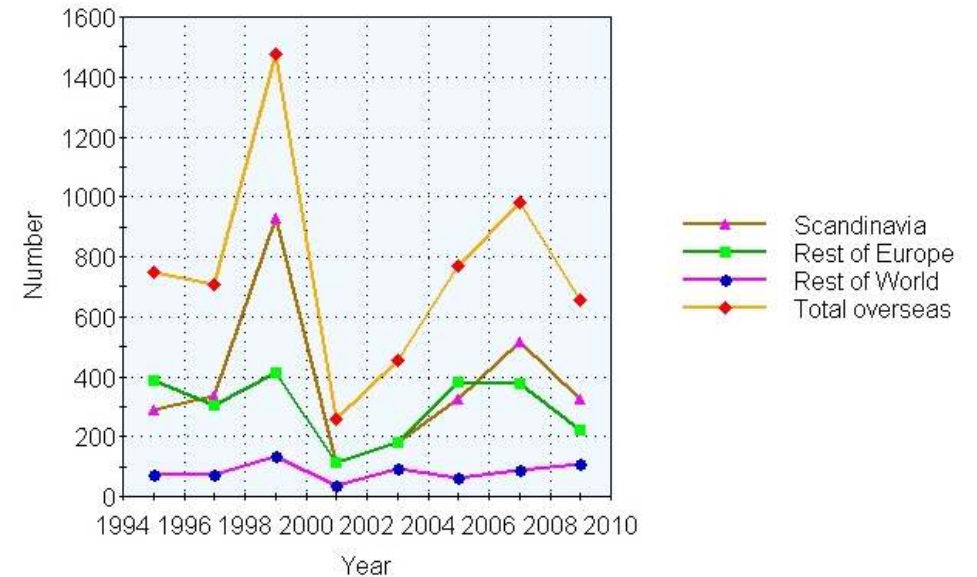
**Figure 1: Tay 2009: participant numbers by age groups**



**Figure 2: UK competitors, 1995 to 2009**



**Figure 3: Overseas competitors, 1995 to 2009**



The following points should be noted with regard to Figures 2 and 3:

- 1999: the event was held in conjunction with the World Orienteering Championships; competitors supporting their national team entered the 6-Day event.
- 2001: there was a dip in competitor numbers which coincided with uncertainties about the staging of the event in the aftermath of the Foot and Mouth epidemic.

## 2. Map quality and terrain variety

The event, and the continuing legacy for Scottish orienteering, is enhanced through the production of high quality maps of a range of available terrain.

Feedback from competitor surveys has indicated that a main attraction of the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event is the range of terrain the competitor experiences within the six days.

## 3. Technological advances

The continued development of the use of technology in the sport of orienteering through up-to-date computing and electronic hardware and software enhances the experience for the competitor. The Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event will ensure it is at the forefront of the implementation of such developments to meet the competitor expectations.

## 4. Competitor experience

For the competitor, the event is also a holiday in Scotland as well as a sporting experience. Each event has an event centre, competition arenas, prizes and a varied social programme (reflecting Scottish culture) which all contribute to the reputation of the event. These will continue to evolve and surpass the rival multi-day events.

## 5. Support materials and key volunteers

Through the creation and continued revision of the support materials for the Central Organising Team and the Day Officials, the event will maintain its position as one of the current leaders in world orienteering. The materials will further support the improved training of officials who are involved in other large orienteering events held in Scotland.

## 6. International events

The status of the event on the International stage can be raised by association with a world championship event staged in Scotland (this greatly enhanced the event in 1999 by holding of the World Orienteering Championships at the same time). The Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company, in conjunction with British Orienteering and the Scottish Orienteering Association, will support these bids either directly or indirectly.

## 7. Professional support

The event participants have an increased expectation of the quality of the event. Through the use of paid professionals, both directly in the employment of the Scottish Orienteering Association and bought in from outside agencies (through the use of the surplus raised by the event and application for grants), the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company will seek to ensure that the major responsibility of holding this large multi-day event does not fall solely on the volunteer workforce.

The funding of a Professional Officer(s) for the Scottish Orienteering Association has significantly contributed to raising the quality and the development of the sport generally in Scotland and to other large orienteering events held in Scotland. The

event will continue to substantially contribute towards the Professional Officer post(s).

#### 8. Lasting legacy

The provision of a concentration of high quality maps in an area provides a 'lasting legacy' for local club(s); this will be used to promote a higher level of participation in the sport, so contributing to the Government initiatives on healthy lifestyles. The Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company will support the local club(s) initiative in the development of a lasting legacy.

#### 9. Environmental issues

Orienteering impacts on the environment in many ways – through travel to the events, waste generated and potential damage within the competition area. It is the responsibility of the competitors as well as the organisers to avoid environmental damage. The 6-Day event will seek to minimise the environmental impact of the event as well as increasing the understanding of all involved of the medium to long term effect of orienteering on the terrain:

- by working closely with landowners and environmental agencies, ensuring that course planning is sensitive to areas of special significance and improving the understanding of all of the longer term environmental effect on the terrain.
- by ensuring that any damage to walls, fences etc. is made good after the event
- within the constraints of the available terrain, by minimising the road miles travelled to reach the week's events. Car sharing will be encouraged and an affordable bus service provided and promoted
- by providing appropriate recycling facilities at events, the event centre and campsite for use of competitors and traders
- by ensuring that all litter is removed from event areas
- by reminding competitors of their environmental obligations.

### **FUTURE PLANS:**

#### **Implementation of the Aims for the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event 2010 to 2018**

#### **Publicity and marketing: UK and International**

Marketing of the event will have three aims:

- (a) Attracting competitors to enter the event (both new and returning competitors)
- (b) Raising awareness of the event amongst local people and businesses
- (c) Raising awareness of the event and orienteering more generally Scotland-wide.

#### (a) Attracting participants (Aim 1)

There is an ongoing need to encourage previous participants to return and attract new competitors. It is recognised that whilst there may be a high level of loyalty amongst UK competitors this is less likely amongst overseas entrants. Marketing tools include:

- High profile event launch at a major UK event with a strong overseas entry
- Magazine advertising and articles – UK national/regional/club; overseas national (in the language of the country)
- Event website links with other multiday events, overseas clubs/federations etc.
- Direct mailing of the event flyer electronically to clubs (UK and overseas) as well as previous participants
- Event leaflets available at multiday events worldwide during the previous summer.

(b) Local marketing (Aims 2 and 4)

The involvement of local businesses in the event will enhance the quality for competitors as well as helping the local community to benefit from the tourism generated by the event. Recognising that many in the local business community may be unfamiliar with orienteering, a separate promotional leaflet and section of the website will be needed to explain how local business can be involved in the event (sponsorship, donation of prizes, special deals, etc) and how they will benefit. Local media will be involved from an early stage.

Local marketing will also be aimed at raising interest in taking part in orienteering and in the event amongst local people. This work needs to begin in the months leading up to the event and should target schools, youth groups, running clubs etc. as well as the general population.

Community organisations will also be involved in the local marketing initiatives. If successful this should result in a lasting legacy of future orienteering related tourism for the area as well as increased orienteering activity in the area for the local population.

(c) Wider marketing (Aims 6 and 7)

There is an ongoing need to raise the profile of the sport of orienteering in Scotland at large, as well as publicising the 6-Day event as a major sporting week which has a large tourism benefit for the local area. As the event develops in quality there will be an increasing need to buy in professional services to support the event and consequently a need to attract greater levels of funding. A higher profile through the national media will increase the event's chances of securing funding from national and local agencies and businesses. Media work will be linked to similar work carried out by the Scottish Orienteering Association Marketing Officer.

**Event Quality** and **Enhancement** (Aims 1, 2, 4, 6 and 9)

There will be the provision of new, extended and revised maps of high quality for each event. This will be a major investment and additional grant funding will be sought to support this expenditure.

The event will continue to investigate and implement as appropriate new technology and equipment to enhance the event experience for the competitors and the event officials. This will include the use of professional commentary with supporting technology for each day of the event.

The event will continue to work towards lowering its environmental impact both in the forest and in the wider aspects of the event. The organisers will continue to seek new ways of reducing the event's footprint and competitors will be encouraged to make their own contribution by recycling waste and reducing car use. Orienteering's deserved reputation as a litter-free sport will be maintained.

Each event centre and competition arena will be carefully planned to ensure maximum participant satisfaction.

The sporting programme will be supplemented with a Social programme which builds the Scottish experience. For example, the social programme has included ceilidhs and whisky tasting; a pipe band has been part of the evening social events.

The scoring system used at each event will be scrutinised to ensure it is easily understood and is considered fair by the participants.

If possible there will be enhanced prizes to assist with the 'feel-good' factor of the event. Main prizes should be sourced locally if possible.

The biennial 6-Day event develops expertise with respect to all aspects of large events in the orienteering community in Scotland. Through this expertise, the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company will support, as appropriate, bids from British Orienteering and the Scottish Orienteering Association for World Championship status events for events to be hosted in Scotland. The Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company needs to ensure that there is a secure business plan and funding plan in place before involvement.

Examples of potential world championship status events are outlined below:

- Junior World Championships
- World Students Orienteering Championships
- World Masters Orienteering Championships

### **Event officials and Professional support (Aims 3, 5 and 7)**

The Directors of the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company will continue to ensure that the development and updating of the event manuals aid the volunteers in their event roles and so provide a more uniform, higher quality across all aspects of the event. These manuals will be available for use by the wider orienteering community across Scotland.

If a surplus is generated by the event the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event Company will invest this in the grassroots of the sport by disbursing funds to the participating clubs in recognition of their substantial voluntary efforts in mounting each event.

In conjunction with British Orienteering and the Scottish Orienteering Association, the Professional Officer aids the preparation of the bids for World Championship Status events. Where there is an impact of these events with the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event, increased professional support will be sought.

## **Lasting legacy** (Aim 8)

Through the Scottish Orienteering 6-Day Event, the standard of orienteering in Scotland is continually improving:

- quality maps of challenging areas
- event officials are highly trained and experienced
- experienced competitors are attracted to events in Scotland and therefore the standard of competition is high.

A programme to ensure the development of orienteering in the locality of a 6-Day Event area will be encouraged. The SOA Development Officer and the local club(s) could use the following strategies towards maximising the interest in orienteering:

- further development of schemes that local club(s) have undertaken within the community (schools, community organisations, etc)
- encourage participation in the sport in the build-up to the event and afterwards by organising small local events for beginners on a regular basis
- set up a network of permanent orienteering courses in the area