

PERTH AND KINROSS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SUMMARY OF ORIENTEERING DEVELOPMENT

Overview

In 2003 a Sports Development initiative funded by the Scottish Executive was commenced with its main objectives to

- produce orienteering maps for all primary schools in Perth and Kinross
- introduce orienteering tuition at each school and make schools aware of the benefits
- provide schools with the means to continue orienteering tuition
- map other areas to enable progression to full orienteering capability

The achievements of the initiative and follow-up activities to date are

- digital (OCAD) orienteering maps drawn for all primary and secondary schools, with both colour and black and white versions
- in addition, local parks / playing fields / woodlands mapped where feasible, with over 30 produced so far
- all 77 primary schools have been visited at least once and tuition sessions given to over 3,000 children
- activity days have been provided for schools as well as holiday orienteering events for schoolchildren
- in conjunction with Tayside Orienteers, 'intermediate' standard maps have been produced (North and South Inches, Perth Riverside, Crieff parks, Belmont Centre, Strathallan School, Dalguise, Glenalmond College) and used for schools and local orienteering events
- 'full' standard maps produced of Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park (+ Murrayshall Hill); Pitmedden Forest and Scone Palace
- from 2004 to 2009, primary schools orienteering champs (now 5 area champs + a final) were staged and over 6,000 children have competed
- from 2005 there have been good performances at the Scottish schools championships
- since 2008, electronic punching (the Sport Ident system) has been used at events, benefiting both competitors and organisers

In addition, a number of A3 colour display maps have been provided to schools, more are to be sent out once maps have been updated.

Permanent orienteering courses have been established (through Tayside Orienteers working with P&K Council) on Saint Magdalene Hill and Kinnoull Hill, with The Hermitage and the Knock of Crieff in progress. Some sponsorship has been obtained for the schools championships.

Tayside Orienteers is the local club with around 100 members, including some with coaching qualifications. It organises local through to regional events (which range from 20 to in excess of 500 competitors) with the main focus being a spring / early summer and autumn programme catering for all abilities. It provides some specific training sessions. In Perth and Kinross, it has an inventory of 24 mapped areas suitable for full orienteering events with another 12 mapped park-type areas that are suitable for training / small events (this includes the maps mentioned above). There are a similar number of 'other club' maps in what is one of the UK's best orienteering areas.

In August 2009, the Scottish 6-Days Orienteering Festival was held very successfully in Tayside, based at Perth Racecourse, with 4000 competitors from around the world. Tayside Orienteers along with Forth Valley Orienteers were the lead clubs. An EKOS Economic Survey Report conducted during / after the event estimated the event generated net additional expenditure of £2m at the Perth & Kinross/Fife/Angus area level, plus it supported employment with a GVA (gross value added) of £0.8m. The figures are more than 25% higher when looking at the overall Scottish impact.

EXTRA FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS ORIENTEERING

Orienteering in Perth and Kinross is benefiting to the tune of £7,500 thanks to a unique event coming to Perth in September as part of Perth800. It is the Park World Tour which will see some of the world's best orienteers competing in sprint orienteering at Scone Palace and around the streets and vennels of central Perth. It will bring a sport that is often out of sight in forests and hills very much into the public eye. And quite justifiably, as Perthshire has some of the best orienteering terrain in the UK.

The Park World Tour is being promoted by Scottish Orienteering, supported by Tayside Orienteers and P&K Sports Development staff. It is being generously sponsored by Event Scotland, Perth800 and I&H Brown. On the back of this, the PWT committee have obtained £5,000 Sportsmatch funding and Tayside Orienteers have been successful in applying for £2,500 from a British Orienteering Development fund.

Perth and Kinross have led the way in Scotland when it comes to primary schools orienteering. In 2003 a Sports Development initiative funded by the Scottish Executive was commenced and resulted in digital orienteering maps being produced of all primary schools and most local parks. The secondary schools have now also been mapped. This resulted in a total of 113 orienteering maps specifically for schools use. All primary schools received coaching sessions. The project was a combined initiative between P&K Sports Development (originally part of P&K Leisure) and members of Tayside Orienteers.

Over the past six years further records have been set with an average of 1,000 primary school pupils competing each year in area finals, with a final at Scone Palace. It makes it the best-attended sporting fixture run by PKC. Great support has been received from the venues used - the outdoor centres at Belmont, Dalguise and Lendrick Muir, also Glenalmond College and Strathallan School.

The funding is very timely as the portfolio of maps is showing its age, with many needing updating and new schools needing mapped. So more than half of the money will be spent on checking maps, updating them and producing new maps. All schools will have colour and black and white maps. And it is hoped it will be possible to put the maps onto the interactive whiteboards used in all classrooms. If so, it will be another Scottish first.

Orienteering can very effectively contribute to achieving schools targets in ACE (A Curriculum for Excellence). It can contribute towards learning outcomes such as teamwork, problem solving, map reading, healthy lifestyle and adventure in a controlled environment. The maps are a great resource for teachers as they can be used in many ways, not just for orienteering.

The development to date has depended on the commitment of a small number of individuals, with Ross McMillan of P&K Sports Development and Dave Prentice of Tayside Orienteers leading the way, with much needed support from staff, club members and schools. There is the need to broaden this base, so another significant chunk of the funding will go towards the provision of two or three 'Teach Orienteering' courses for teaching staff, active schools coordinators. And sports support staff.

The final part of the funding will provide in-school coaching for 10 schools that were the first to apply. These are Oakbank Primary, Kinross High, Crieff High, Auchterarder, Dunkeld, Pitlochry High, Pitlochry Primary, Cragie, Errol, Balhousie, Moncrieffe. But, coaching as in previous years, is available on request for all schools.

The primary school area championships are being held from the 16th to 30th March, so if you have not got your entry in, do so asap. Within reason there is flexibility regarding venue, but all are really excellent, another of Perthshire's great assets! For senior schools there will be a Perthshire schools championships on May 11th at Scone Palace.

Contact Ross McMillan and the sports development team on 01738 451967 for further info. Any budding orienteer of any age can compete (or participate) in the PWT events, See www.scottish-orienteering.org/pwt2010. Also look at www.taysideorienteers.org.uk.