

The year so far and looking ahead for developing orienteering

2025 has so far brought some fun orienteering opportunities with Edinburgh University Orienteering Club's Big Weekend providing an exciting mix of elite sprint and the first Scottish Orienteering Urban League event of the 2025 which allowed us all to follow in the footsteps of last year's World Orienteering Sprint Championships' athletes. Even Storm Eowyn did not knock the weekend off course but instead meant that the challenge of navigating around Kings Building campus became a warm up for a blustery Arthur's Seat classic on the Sunday.

The dark winter nights have provided plenty of opportunity for those who enjoy night orienteering to test their skills. East Lothian Orienteers hosted the Scottish Night Orienteering Championships which acted as an excellent warm up for the Tough - er challenge of the British Night Championships hosted this year by Forth Valley Orienteers.

But as the daylight starts to lengthen, we are coming to the end of the Night Orienteering Season, and it will soon be time to pack away our head torches. There is plenty to look forward to in 2025! Take a look through [the fixtures summary](#) on our website to find out what is on offer in 2025 and be sure to note the events which provide [selection opportunities](#) for all age groups from juniors and seniors through to veterans. All the more exciting as Scotland is host to the Junior European Cup (for 18s and 20s) as well as the Veteran Home International at (for M/W 40s through to 70s).

This year will also see the 2025 Scottish 6 Days Event on Royal Deeside with all of our clubs contributing towards what looks to be another great event. There are some outstanding forests to be raced through and some great social opportunities with a ceilidh, quiz and whisky tasting planned already. The event team are working hard to ensure there are sufficient traders at the event to satisfy even the most ardent coffee habit. You may have missed the very early bird entries but the early bird entries are still available before 30th April so make sure you get that entry before the next price rise. [Entry details can be found here.](#)

The Scottish 6 Days event is a world class event which showcases the delights of orienteering in Scotland but also plays an essential role in funding our sport. It support the 6 Days event coordinator role, funds work on the operational aspects of the sport such as providing support for access and organising fixtures, provides

the medals for Scottish Championships and also helps fund the governance of the sport in Scotland. Furthermore each club which provides officials to make the event happen, such as planners, controllers, day organisers and central organising team members benefits with payment for their clubs' contribution from any event surplus.

For each 6 Days event the Scottish Orienteering Association also works to promote orienteering within the host area, supporting the local clubs in promoting the sport and working to raise awareness. This work links into delivery for our wider [four year strategy for 2025-2029](#), supported by our SportScotland funding. The new strategy developed and launched for 2025-2029 sees our focus continue in ensuring that we try to expand the sport beyond its existing audience.

The SOA development team will be ensuring that clubs are supported in their development work and opportunities for development of existing orienteers are available. We run an annual range of training opportunities for planners, organisers, coaches and controllers. We also support both junior training through the regional squads or senior opportunities through [Scottish Elite and Development Squad](#). This year the Senior Elite and Development Squad will be expanded to offer opportunities for TD 3 and 4 (orange level course and up). Introducing teachers and other youth leaders to the sport and using them as a means of spreading knowledge of the sport is key to getting more people participating in our sport and joining our clubs.

Finally, our SportScotland grant also enables us to make some funding available for clubs to promote the sport. A new call is now open for clubs to come forward with proposals which would support development around several specific themes: a) support the expansion of the sport within the 20 to 40 age group b) continued development of orienteering participation following WOC 2024, and c) within clubs who saw a dramatic decline in membership as a result of Covid. More details can be found [here](#) and proposals are being sought by mid March at the latest.