

What YOU thought of the Scottish Middle Distance Championships

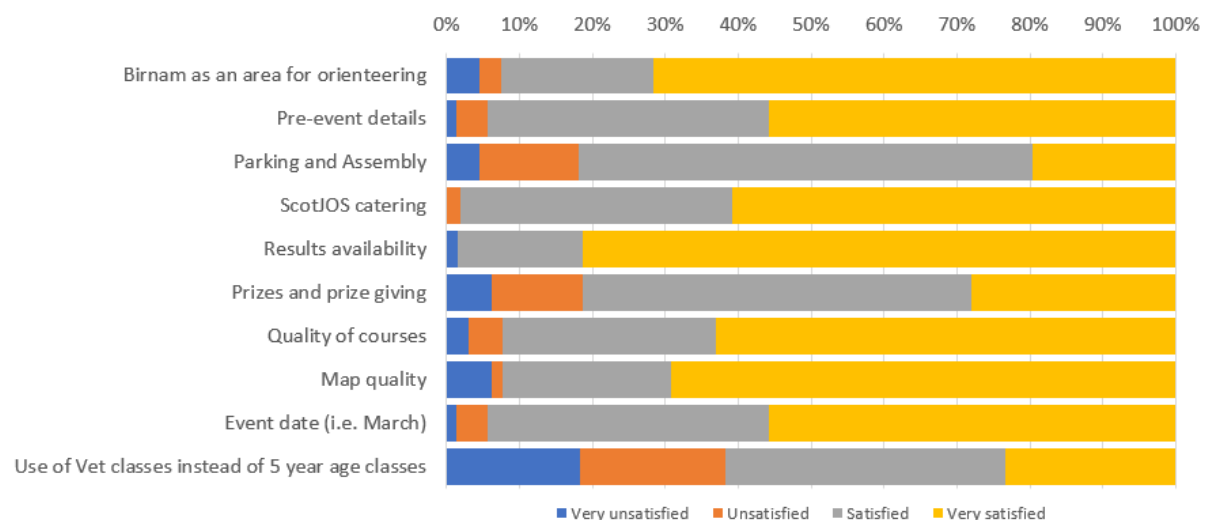
Many thanks to everyone who spared time to respond to the survey on the inaugural Scottish Middle Distance Championships. We had 74 responses, of which 66 were from individuals who participated at Birnam - a very impressive response rate of 29.7%.

Overall feedback is that it was a successful inaugural event. There were very positive comments about the area, the terrain, the courses, and it being a proper challenging middle distance event. The majority would like to see the event become a regular part of the SOA annual event calendar.

There were a few concerns, mainly about the use of composite veteran classes instead of five-year age classes, the distance to the start, and the car arrangements. The event was an experiment and your feedback will help immensely in planning future Middle Distance Championships. The feedback will be used as one input to an SOA Competitions Calendar review which will be done in the coming months.

A summary of your feedback is given below, and the appendices gives the full text responses - these are not identified against individuals.

Q1 - How satisfied were you with:



Q2 - What did you like about the Middle Distance Championships?

This word cloud shows the words that came up most frequently in the feedback. The full list of responses is included in appendix A.



Q3 - What could be improved in future?

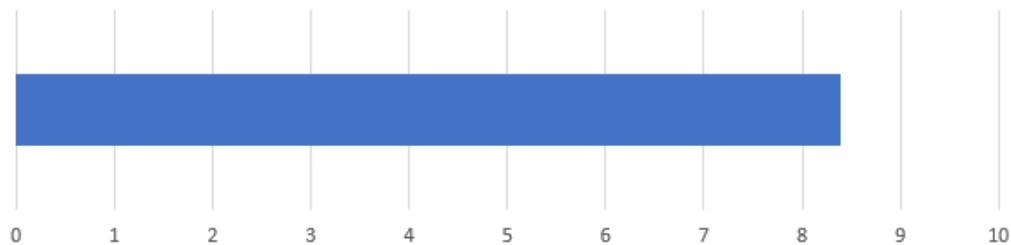
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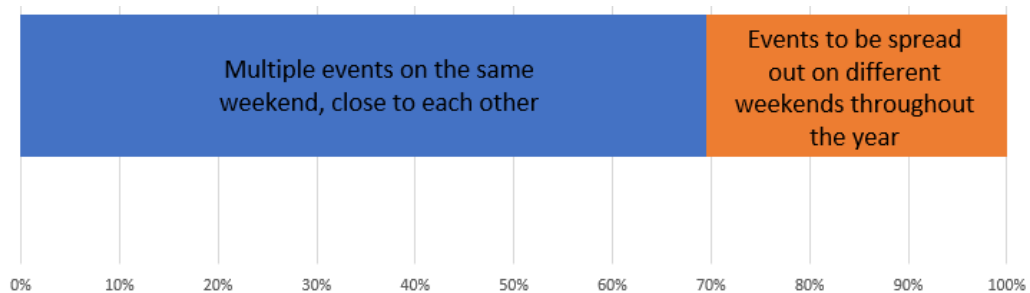
Q4 - Why did you choose not to participate?

One respondent was unable to compete due to injury. The reasons most frequently given for not participating were the long walk to the start and the need for car sharing.

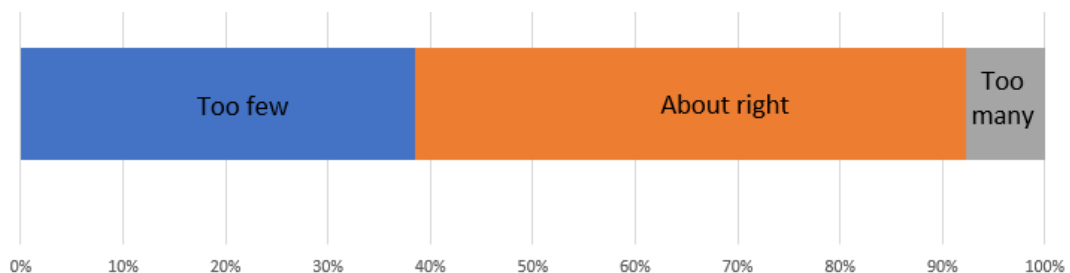
Q5 - On a scale of 0 to 10 how likely are you to participate in a future Scottish Middle Distance Championships?



Q6 - Which of the following do you prefer for high level events (e.g. national level)?



Q7 - How do you feel about the number of middle distance events offered in Scotland?



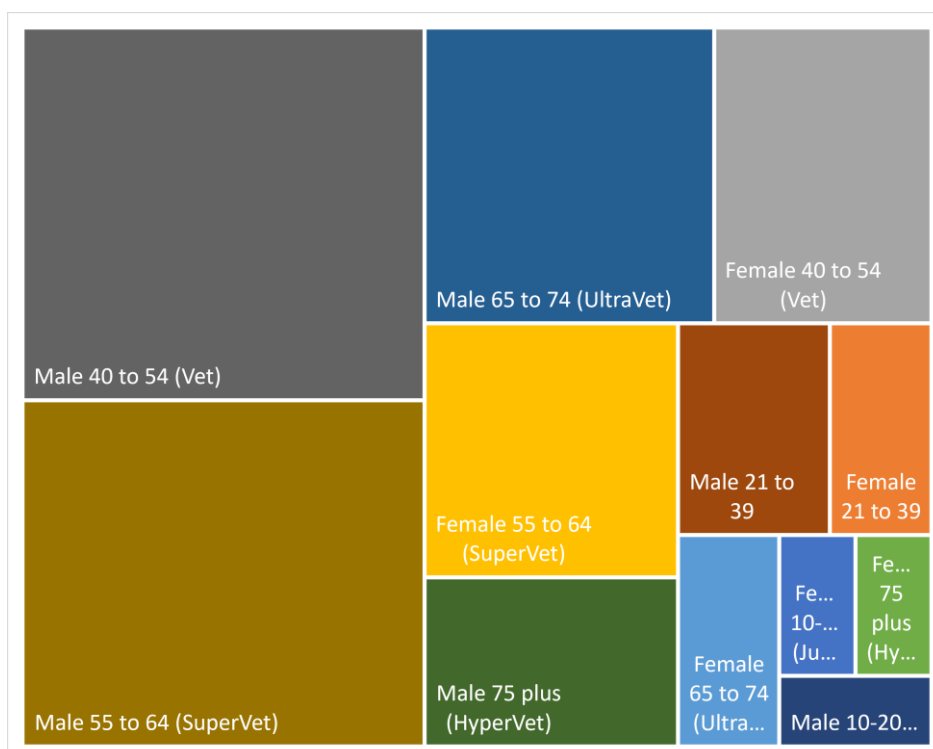
Q8 - Any other feedback?

This word cloud shows the words that came up most frequently in the feedback. The full list of responses is included in appendix C.



Q9 - Age Class

Area of each coloured rectangle is proportional to the number of respondents in that age class.



Appendix A: Full responses to Q2 - What did you like about the Middle Distance Championships?

1. Open runnable woodland
2. Loved the area and the course. Good organisation. Did well with the parking
3. High quality on an area that is difficult to use for large mainstream events due to parking, access etc.
4. Good event, namely good map, good course and good competition.
5. Good courses - but see below about timings/length. Enjoyable event. Well organised. Appreciate everyone's efforts.
6. That it was middle distance! With woc swapping to forest and sprint it's nice to have an early quality middle race to see how winter training went
7. The challenging diagonal legs on the hill side.
8. Intensive challenging racing with a shortened winning time. The most technical of areas should only be allowed to be used.
9. Good doing middle distance specific event. Fast and technical. Really enjoyed it.
10. Location beautiful. Eco-friendly suggestion to car share.
11. Good area
12. The first part of the course
13. Great areas. Results were through in double quick time.
14. FVO website
15. The area was good and the time of year works but the event had a good weather window and would have been exposed a week later.
16. Once I had recovered from the long climb to the Start and more climb to Control 1, Course 5 was great. However, I would rather climb and have a TD5 than, as on Sunday, have a near Start and a TD4 run.
17. I did not enter but I am happy to do Middle Distance races as part of an Orienteering weekend.
18. The area
19. Planning was how it should be for middle distance. Weather was a bonus.
20. Good terrain in beautiful scenery - well worth the trip.
21. Excellent area. The very end of the course was a little unsatisfactory as the forest didn't seem to be so well mapped.
22. Great area, great courses, great weather, very enjoyable all round!
23. Great area, great map and excellently planned course
24. great courses
25. The view from the top of Birnam Hill
26. Personally, at M70, I prefer a technical course, probably shorter, but not necessarily. Anyway, Birnam fitted the bill. I guess I find this more entertaining than a long slog across a moorland.
27. Terrain; planning; weather!
28. Good terrain, good course and of course the sunshine!
29. There were some great courses
30. Nice weather. Bit of a slog to the Start.
31. It makes very little difference in my age group - all my runs are about the same distance
32. A middle distance that was not just a control pick.
33. Well planned course in good terrain where I hadn't been for many years.
34. Liked the area, liked the planning...and liked the weather...and the idea. Many thanks. Great event
35. I enjoyed the course very much but a Middle for WHV should be a bit shorter perhaps. (EWT 35 minutes? Maybe for Carol McNeill)
36. I enjoy Middle Distance so was pleased to see the event in the fixture list.
37. Good terrain so continuous interest
38. Sunshine & views
39. The fact it happened at all. I like it as a double weekend but think it better with the sprint championships and perhaps a little later when it might be warmer to make sitting around more pleasant

40. 1:7500 map scale for ultra vets
41. Excellent map. Tough courses. Central venue. Appropriate time of year.
42. Good terrain
43. Terrain, map, planning. Weather
44. Not enough middle distances in the calendar!
45. The terrain!!!!
46. Excellent use of an area that has not been used for a long while. Good technical challenge.

Appendix B: Full responses to Q3 - What could be improved in future?

1. Nothing
2. Class prizes especially for the juniors.
3. Courses were a bit long - for a middle - given the competitor winning timings . Having W50s on same course as M18s seemed a bit strange. Also, why do M18s run less than M50s?
4. Better assembly
5. Get the map printing sorted - it was much better for the Dumyat race.
6. Shame as my OH was running a hill race at birnam on same day but pre info put me off too much so did not go and neither did he...
7. Parking, bigger assembly. Trophies.
8. Parking wasn't great, but that orienteering sometimes.
9. Excellent event and brilliantly organised within confines of the area. Perhaps enforcement of car share rules would have prevented breach of similar rule at future event.
10. Didn't feel like a typical middle distance in terms of course length and distance between controls.
11. Less hilly, shorter walks to start and a finish at assembly, better parking arrangements and 5 year age class prizes.
12. Wasn't aware what prize giving arrangements were and didn't hang around. Parking was awkward but maybe inevitable given the area.
13. My late Mum was from British Guyana and they have a phrase 'fault finders should be fault menders'. Until I have helped in the organisation I don't feel I should be critical. Many thanks
14. I would not travel 200 miles from Cumbria for a one day event the event next day swung it for us
15. Official Scottish Championship events should be age class based, so definitely make it that.
16. Different age classes
17. Winning times for Middle should be around 30 mins for Vets. MUV class was won in over 40 mins, plus a 2.5km/200m walk to start. Sorry, courses were designed too long in quite rough terrain. Was any course test run to check length was correct?
18. Assembly / Finish / Parking all together and accessible
19. Use age classes, please it looks good on the club website!
20. Certainly the venue and quality of planning are crucial for a Middle Distance race. These must be maintained (improving on last weekend would be difficult). Parking was not perfect last weekend and I know of club members who did not come because they couldn't meet the 3 people/car rule.
21. Nothing obvious.
22. Don't think there was a prizegiving was there? Put this link on SOA website if not already there.
23. Higher profile. I think a lot of people were saying = Scottish Middle Distance Champs - What's that.
24. Stand alone event (without students) will be much easier to organise. (or find a club able to organise)
25. Parking and assembly - maybe a minibus shuttle if the venue was as restricted for parking?
26. If you say something is compulsory in the final details you have to enforce it. It was very unfair on Sunday to drop the requirement to carry cagoules without guaranteeing by some means that everyone knew.

27. My course WHV felt more like a normal Short Green course than a Middle distance. I appreciate this might have been unavoidable due to the position of start and finish.
28. Would be better to have parking and assembly all in one place giving more of a big event feel.
29. Middle Distance Champs should be looked at in the whole round of SOA fixtures. It would be helpful if this and the Scottish Champs in May could also be scored somehow for SOLs to take a bit of pressure off the ambition to hold 7 SOLs a year. I still like the concept of Middle on a Sat and a normal SOL or something else on Sun.
30. Not to have it being held in conjunction with something like BUCS as that meant there was a low entry in the elite and top juniors.
31. Orange courses could possibly have started Low, as I think the High start was a bit tough for Under 12's (a) to get to and (b) to run from.
32. More consistent course standard (felt more like orange at the end)
33. It was a long walk to the start, but that's OK as it was advised well in advance. Actually, it wasn't as long as expected, but the weather helped.
34. Nothing!
35. Perhaps having a finish at assembly.

Appendix C: Full responses to Q8 - Any other feedback?

1. The Scottish middle champs should exist / be an annual event, but do not use the feedback on this or any other event in isolation to compare or prioritise.
2. Need for more middle distance events in Scotland. The vast majority are sprint and long.
3. I'd guess the organisers didn't co-ordinate with the mapper/printers and didn't get draft prints - always essential to check the quality of the maps the competitor will get
4. Middle distance events allow you to make best use of small technical areas and a Saturday event prior to a sol make big sense.
5. prefer normal lengths of courses and hate urban events
6. Thanks to the organisers and planners for an enjoyable event
7. My 'extremely likely' answer to Q.5 is dependant upon normal age class competition being offered. If the urban vet classes are used I am less likely to attend.
8. I thought the planning did not have a distinctive middle distance feel. The course felt very normal, just a bit shorter.
9. Good terrain & planning always makes for a good event. Good March weather was a huge extra! Please just make courses the correct length for all classes, based on test running, for a Championship-level event like this. Thanks.
10. A pity that the overprint on Sunday's event was not of the same quality as that used on Saturday. It caused several dsqs
11. Re question 7, it is important to be clear that many events offer middle distance courses! For some this is Green, others it is Short Green, etc - but it is not that there is a lack of TD5 middle distance courses, it is that generally people elect to enter a longer course.
12. As the inventor of the original Scottish Short Race series I know there is a good market. Would be a good idea to introduce a Scottish middle league
13. We have a Middle Distance day at the 6-Days. Scaling course lengths to age classes and at the same time maintaining the technical level is difficult. It require first class planning.
14. Not sure about age classes - good to have all our championship events working the same way. But, keep the number of courses limited to save planning effort and to ensure that courses are competitive even if some classes have few people.
15. Actually in response to 6, a mix of both is fine.
16. Once the process is known, STAG will be applying to host the SMD - if bids are being invited - as part of our Giant Weekend in 2021 or 2022.
17. As I say they are all about the same.
18. SOLs etc are generally now middle distance in planning style (hence answer to 7)
19. I was grateful to be allowed a punching start due to delays in car parking (and my car-share companion being late meeting me!).
20. All included above. Overall a great event.

21. Happy to have the Scottish Middle paired with a SOL event. Didn't think it was good to have BUCS at the same time, because some top runners could not compete in the Scottish Middle.
22. Birnam will be a hard act to follow
23. Pros and cons to spreading races out. Some clubs (ESOC) had few runners. The oldies won't have thought middle distance is good value for money. They don't mind sprint cause you stay clean and can find a nice cafe for after, but all that way for only 30 mins!