

IOF Conference Report

**Trondheim, Norway
12 August 2010
Eugene Botha, SAOF President**

The SAOF made a good impression on the IOF council, and the following assistance has been offered:

1. BOF has agreed to make reasonably required O material available to us. A system of exchange will now be discussed and agreed and the SAOF can look forward to shortly having the material it needs to train officials.
2. IOF's Mr. Brian Porteous has agreed to propose an "Advanced" mapping conference for our mappers in RSA, potentially at the IOF's costs next year. Other African federations will be invited and Kaapschehoop as venue comes to mind, due to its proximity to Mozambique. SAOF needs to build this into multilateral proposals to fly up and accommodate other provinces', and even countries' mappers.
3. The IOF has advised that South Africa can safely invest in the preparation of its athletes for the next World Games in Columbia. The event will include orienteering as a discipline and although not finalised, it is believed that each region will be entitled to send representatives. Our athletes need to prepare for this event.
4. Germany and France offered us any assistance we may need. As smaller nations on the Orienteering agenda, they understand many of our issues and need to build diplomatic relations to raise awareness at IOF on issues affecting smaller nations.

IOF's priority: Orienteering as a Summer Olympic Sport.

The IOF's goal is simple. Olympics. They are closer to getting into the winter Olympics due to easier entry requirements, but their dream is summer Olympics. The IOC has told them that they cannot have associate members, so the statutes changed to state that all members are either full members or provisional members. Provisional members have a maximum of eight years to organise themselves sufficiently to host a national championships. That is the main requirement.

IOF has to get more teams participating in World Orienteering Championships. WOC is now changing to make it more interesting, entertaining and accessible. They have similar issues to South Africa where development of the sport creates tension between purist followers and more recreational participants.

By 2013 there will be a mass start event at WOC. There will be a full proposal in 2011 to make orienteering more open, friendly and accessible.

As any bureaucratic meeting, there were some circular debates, and this meeting lasted 8 hours. In summary the SAOF President concludes that we are not alone in our struggles; that we are developing in a similar trajectory as other countries and facing the same dilemmas as the IOF at large.

The SAOF President made good contacts, forged links with some countries and obtained enough assistance and ideas to continue to build the sport in South Africa. He stresses that a good committee and enough manpower is crucial to achieve the SAOF, and by extension, the IOF's goals.