

South African Orienteering Federation

Annual Report

2012

Development, Growth, Excellence

President's Report

As our 2012 reporting period draws to a close it is time to reflect on what has been a busy and exciting year. For the past five years we have operated under the vision of *Development Growth Excellence*. Actually this can more accurately be called a mission statement. The vision we have for orienteering is to be an accessible sport for all South Africans. The way in which we are going about achieving this vision and mission is by building capacity through developing education pathways and providing education opportunities. *Capacity Building* and *Education* are the themes that will guide our efforts into the future.

Whilst there is still a long way to go, there have been notable successes. It is not the intention of the current management committee to take credit for these activities, but rather to celebrate them as examples of initiatives that will take our sport forward.

The YOC programme continues to be a superb example of how we can reach out and provide an exciting offering to young children and their families. The Big Five O event was a tonic that noticeably inspired many local orienteers, be they old-hands or newcomers. We will continue to support this as a flagship event of the highest standard that attracts large competitive fields across the age categories and show-cases what local orienteering can strive for. Our Expansion programme has yielded some wonderful examples of the benefits of reaching out. Our interactions in Polokwane, Durban, Gauteng and Cape Town reinforce the principle that the more people we engage with the more we will find people who want more. Whilst this will stretch us, we must respond to the challenge. There can be no doubt that this is a win-win situation for all.

There are a number of exciting developments within the sporting landscape of South Africa. These positive initiatives are being driven by SASCOC (South African Confederation and Olympic Committee) and SRSA (Sport and Recreation South Africa) in an effort to improve sport at all levels. Following on from the Long-Term Participant Development (LTPD) project SASCOC is now driving the South African Coaching Framework project. It has been a relatively easy task to align our strategy with these initiatives as they are founded on the concept that a compelling sporting experience is centred around the participant and that through coaching and training great enjoyment will be had. On a more mundane, though no less important topic, we need to strive to improve the governance of the SAOF. This is another area of compliance that SASCOC and SRSA are seeking to enhance amongst all sporting organisations.

Orienteering has responded well to the challenges and is seen in a positive light by these controlling bodies of sport in South Africa. Although our sporting masters are looking for clubs and structures in all provinces, we realise that this is not an easy task. It is only through increasing participation numbers that we will be able to develop capacity for expansion given the challenges to establish Orienteering in any new area. New clubs have been established previously in new areas, but we need to find ways to provide the support necessary to ensure sustainability.

Finally, the aim of the SAOF is to provide the opportunities and the environment that will enable the orienteering community to undertake activities that will improve accessibility to the sport and enhance the quality of the participant's experience. The SAOF looks forward to working together with the South African orienteering community to build on the successes of 2012 and make 2013 an even more successful year.

To appropriate a quote from John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what Orienteering can do for you, but what you can do for Orienteering".



Garry Morrison
President SAOF
September 2012

This annual report was compiled from inputs from the members of the management committee (Richard Lund, Ake Fagereng, Jeremy Green and Nico van Hoepen), the high performance manager (Nicholas Mulder) and the YOC coordinator (Tania Wimberley). Full reports for the various portfolios are available on the SAOF website.

Membership & Participation

Clubs

This past year has been extremely positive from the perspective of the growth in the number of clubs affiliated to the SAOF. During the course of the year, two applications for Membership were received. The Durban Orienteering Club submitted its constitution, made a map of the required standard and hosted a number of events, thus fulfilling the conditions of full membership. The Tuks Orienteering Club submitted its constitution and a request for associate membership was granted. Whilst this is an encouraging sign, these clubs have been borne of the efforts of experienced orienteers. This serves to highlight the challenges involved in stimulating the formation of new clubs by people with no orienteering experience.

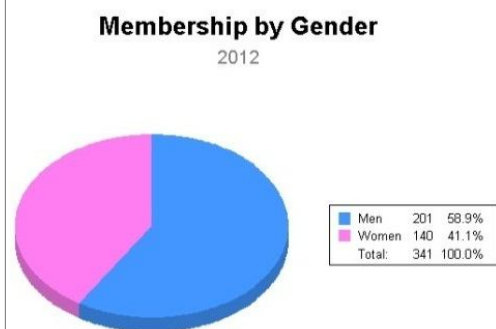
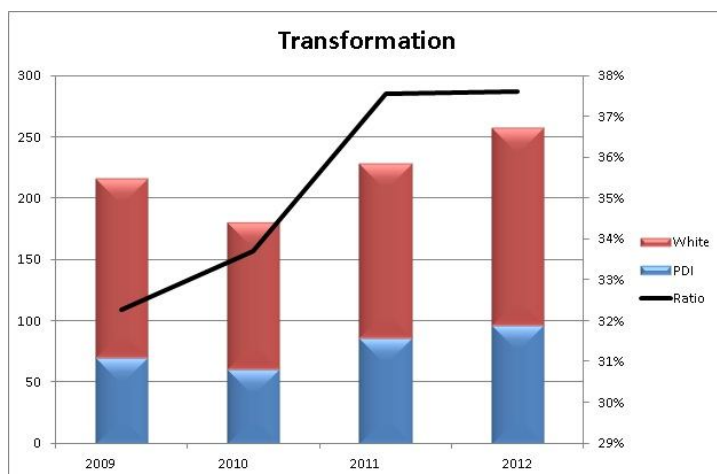
Membership

In contrast to the growth in the number of clubs, the membership numbers showed a disappointing decline in 2012, as illustrated in the table below. This is an extract of the membership statistics that we submit annually to SRSA as part of the grant application process. We need to determine what the reasons for this decline in membership are, and seek ways to grow the membership base.

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2011/2012 PDI's
SENIOR MEN	154	149	157	3
SENIOR WOMEN	114	114	96	1
JUNIOR MEN (Age < 21 years)	56	58	44	5
JUNIOR WOMEN (Age < 21 years)	50	51	44	2
TOTAL	374	372	341	11
EXISTING CLUBS	6	6	8	0

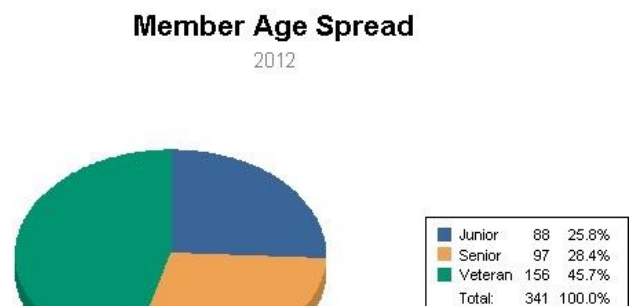
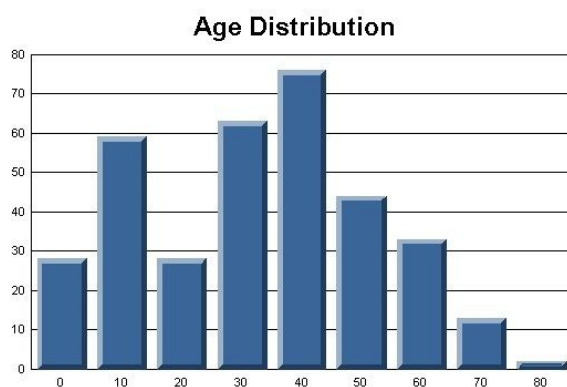
In these numbers the size of our PDI membership is reflected. Although this membership number is low we continue to undertake a number of activities that seek to improve access to our wonderful sport for all South Africans. In addition to the projects discussed under the Development section of this report, the Schools leagues, which were run in Gauteng, the Western Cape and Durban in 2012, provide the greatest access to PDI participants. The challenges of converting school participation into club membership are well known, irrespective of demographics. The clubs are encouraged to find innovative ways to increase their membership through this avenue.

The growth in the number of learners participating in schools league events is evident from the graph below as is the improvement of the ratio of PDI participation.



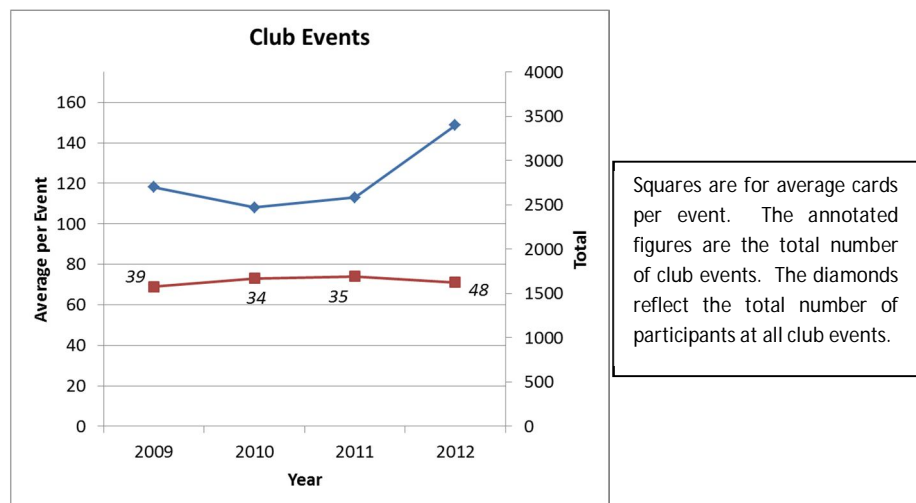
The gender profile of our club membership is illustrated in the pie chart above. This healthy balance in terms of both membership and participation continues to place Orienteering in a positive light in the South African sporting context as it serves as clear evidence of equal access for both genders.

Another positive aspect of Orienteering is reflected in the age distribution of club members and active participants. The graphs plotted below demonstrate that Orienteering truly is a *Sport for Life*. In common with Orienteering internationally there is a dip in the membership age profile for people in the 20-30 year-old group.



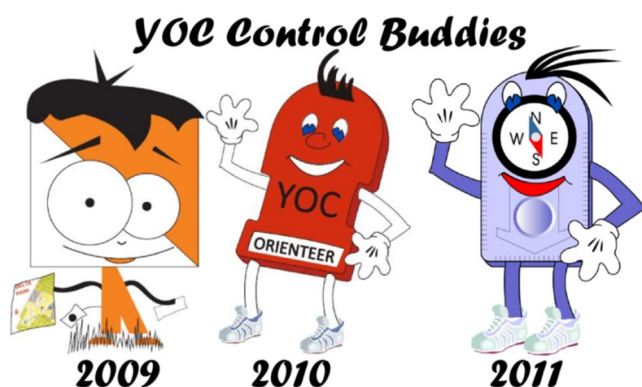
Participation

The trend in participation levels at official club events is illustrated in the figure below. Whilst the average number of participants per event has remained static, the two standout changes in 2012 are the increase in the total number of participants and the total number of events hosted. The large increase in participation levels is mainly due to the Big Five O event held in January. This event alone accounted for 772 participants. Whilst this also contributed to the increased number of events, the formation of the Durban Orienteering Club - which hosted three events in 2012 - also contributed. Taken with the participation levels at Schools league events, which are not included in these figures, the level of activity is remarkable for such a small orienteering community and is testament to the passion and dedication of our members.



Young Orienteers Challenge (YOC)

YOC is a participation incentive scheme for pre-teenager children. The aim of the programme is to assist in growing orienteering in South Africa by providing age appropriate incentives for children to complete events. In addition YOC tries to incentivise children (and their families) to return and complete at least 3 events, and thus build some traction (i.e. return from



one year to the next) compared to one-time event participants. Importantly it plays on the family aspect of the sport, being children and parents together. The scheme has been running successfully in Gauteng for the past four years. The scheme runs slightly differently for short-course (SC) and colour-coded (CC) events.

The traction continued to improve and in the 2012 short-course season 58% of our badge winners were retuning for another season (compared to 44% in 2011). The table below summarises the statistics of the short-course events over the past 6 years. One card is issued per group, so the

figures to the right of the blue column showing “feet” take account of the number of people in a group. Many of these people will be YOC families, as parents and children tend to go out together.

Whilst there has been a slight decrease in the numbers at official SC events in 2012, the positive impact of YOC remains evident. 2009 saw a 35% increase in the number of feet at events. YOC was the main driver in both this initial increase and the sustained increase in the past four years. At least 23% of the feet at events over the past four years have been YOC children (excluding their parents).

Although YOC has not resulted in a dramatic increase in feet since the initial jump in 2009 it undoubtedly keeps attracting new people to the sport and has ensured that since its introduction in 2009 Gauteng short-course events have had on average 98 cards and 125 feet.

Year	Total Cards	# of events	Average cards per event	Total feet over season	average feet per event	YOC kids as % total feet
2006	439	6	69	444	74	
2007	699	9	71	707	79	
2008	500	6	85	508	93	
2009	788	8	99	1 003	125	24%
2010	828	8	104	1 117	140	24%
2011	781	8	98	1 019	127	23%
2012	792	8	99	1 020	128	26%

Note: These figures capture numbers at the official SC events. They exclude the “Come and try it events” run by Gauteng clubs over the past two years.

The success of YOC depends on the following:

- Clubs agreeing to run YOC at their events and supplying manpower for the admin side
- Marketing of orienteering events to pre-teens and their families
- Clubs having events at venues that can draw crowds within the target age group

YOC will continue to be a tool to assist clubs to

- Attract newcomers within the target age group, and
- Incentivise them to return to more events.

Activities & Achievements

LTPD and the SA Coach Framework



The Long Term Participant Development (LTPD) model remains central to the development of the orienteering in South Africa. In September 2012 the SAOF officially launched its own LTPD model, which will continue to guide the strategy of the SAOF into the future. All sports in South Africa have been given the opportunity to develop LTPD models in a project driven by SASCOC. This forms part of the greater South African Sport for Life project.

Following on from the LTPD project, SASCOC has been mandated by SRSA to manage the implementation of the South African Coach Framework project. A cornerstone of this initiative is the formulation of a Long-Term Coach Development model. The SAOF was one of 29 out of 70 sporting federations that completed a 'Willing Ready and Able' assessment at the end of 2011. This useful assessment provides a benchmark against which we can monitor our progress towards the development of a coaching system. Our own assessment showed that whilst we are willing, we are neither ready nor able. This simply reflects the size of our sport and the lack of a formalised coaching system as well as a lack of coaching and administrative capacity.

Whilst we have made considerable progress in our efforts to develop content and education courses to support the training of entry-level instructors, (e.g. teachers), tackling the full coaching pathway is far more challenging. To accelerate this process, we have reached an agreement with the British Orienteering Federation that we can borrow and adapt their coach education system to suit our needs.

The first step of this initiative involves two experienced British tutors visiting South Africa to present a UK Level 2 Coaching Course in Orienteering. Eight experienced South African orienteers will attend this course over two weekends in October 2012. Once qualified, it is hoped that a number of these coaches will go on to become accredited Instructors / tutors, who would then be able to deliver the coaching courses to the next generation of South African orienteering coaches.

In parallel with this we will need the assistance of our dormant coaching commission to look at adapting the British coaching system to South African conditions. Ultimately the coaching levels and courses would be registered with the South African Qualifications Authority. In brief, this is the plan for developing a coaching pathway for orienteering coaches in South Africa.

Strategic Maps

The concept of a strategic map is one that can serve a number of the SAOF's purposes. Initially such maps may be used to hold a National or Provincial championship and can subsequently be used as a high performance training location for our national orienteering squads. In addition these maps should be used for expansion and development opportunities. The SAOF aims to develop a portfolio of strategic maps. Adding to and maintaining our portfolio strategic maps will provide a core resource for the SAOF.

During the course of the past year, the SAOF has funded the following strategic maps:

- Lydenburg (extension to 2011 funded map)
- Haenertsburg

The funding of such maps was made possible by National Lottery Trust Fund (NLDTF) and SRSA grants. Money from our 2011 NLDTF grant is still available to fund one such strategic map. Funds for two further maps have been applied for as part of our 2012 SRSA application. Areas that meet the above criteria and also ensure long-term access to the terrain will be prioritised.

EMIT System

In early 2012, the SAOF added another 120 e-cards to its EMIT system. These cards were funded mainly out of a SRSA grant. They were purchased to be used in the long-established Gauteng Schools league, which remains the largest single orienteering event in South Africa, with up to 175 competitors at a single event. Increasing the inventory of e-cards is also important to support such events as the Big Five O event, which promises to attract increasingly large fields.

Whilst we have managed to find a local solution to replacing batteries in failing EMIT bricks, replacing of batteries in failing e-cards is more challenging. In the latter part of this season an increasing number of e-cards have failed in the Western Cape, causing PenOC to abandon the use of electronic timing. The SAOF will need to utilise money from the EMIT replacement fund to supply PenOC with replacement e-cards for hire and sale. Whilst money for this has been included in the 2012 application for funding to SRSA, as yet we have had no feedback regarding this application.

Finance & Funding

The SAOF's audited financial statement forms part of this Annual Report and is attached as an Annexure.

It is a strange situation that we find ourselves in. For the past number of years the majority of our funds have been obtained via grants from SRSA and the NLDTF. One challenging aspect of this is that the grant applications are typically due at times of the year that are different from the SAOF's AGM. Thus it is left to the elected management committee to devise the plans that form the basis of these funding applications. As a consequence the AGM is left with little to no input into this process.

In the past, applications for funding grants have been made on the basis of wishful thinking rather than concrete plans. This has placed the SAOF in a risky position since it has lacked the capacity to deliver on the promises made in the grant applications. It is only through the significant effort of a

handful of dedicated members that the SAOF has managed to sufficiently fulfil the commitments promised in historical grant applications.

It is clear that there are significant funding resources available to the SAOF. It is also clear that the SAOF needs to continue to improve both the specification of the projects for which funds are applied as well as its capacity to deliver on those projects. Certainly 2012 has been a vast improvement in this regard and we must continue to build on this. The progress made with our Expansion plan is evidence of this improvement.

The status of our current grants and pending applications are recorded below

NLDTF

We currently have two grants that are being utilised. The first dates from an application made in 2008. The second from an application made in 2009. Whilst this latter application was initially unsuccessful, we were informed in November 2011 that it had been successful. We aim to spend the remainder of our 2009 grant (Project No. 32302) by the end of 2012. The period of the 2011 grant (Project No. 46720) expires at the end of April 2013. Much of the focus of these grants is on Capacity Building, Transformation and Development and High Performance.

During 2012 we have improved our reporting to the NLDTF on the status of the projects for which funding was applied. We have submitted two reports on the 2009 grant and one report on the 2011 grant.

Grant applications for 2013 are open. The NLDTF will give preference to applications from organisations that advance rural, under-privileged and poor communities that support transformation & development; universal access to facilities; and reasonable accommodation to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities.

SRSA

During 2012 SRSA has changed its funding framework. The need for this was summarised in SRSA's funding framework document as follows, "It has been the experience of SRSA over the past years that the resources made available to sport were in most cases not used for their intended purposes". The aim of the new funding framework is to ensure a better alignment between SRSA's strategic plan and the activities that are funded. To this end a National Sports and Recreation Plan was finalised in August 2012. This is being complemented by the implementation of a consistent reporting system that includes a clearer set of performance indicators. The evaluation system is outlined in the Transformation Score Card as captured in the Transformation Charter for South African sport. These documents are available on the SRSA website and all members are encouraged to read them. Whilst there remain some teething problems we feel that this is a step in the right direction.

Associated with this source of funding, a number of challenges still remain. The first major challenge is that the application and approval timelines overrun significantly into the grant period. Thus sports federations are often left with only 2-3 months to spend significant amounts of money. This relates to the second major challenge in that it is extremely difficult

to implement plans and implement projects under these conditions. Either we have to act as a bank and fund the projects ourselves, in the hope that the grant will actually be paid, or we are left with little to no time to find people to run the projects. It would be highly beneficial if a longer funding cycle of 3-4 years could be introduced. This would enable sporting federations to plan with more certainty and build more sustainable projects.

- 2011/12 Grant

As well as funding our administration costs, the 2011/12 grant enabled us to carry out our Expansion Plan. Results of these efforts are recorded in the Development section of this report. In addition two Strategic maps were funded and the schools EMIT system was supplemented.

- 2012/13 Grant Application

A grant application was submitted in July 2012. The application was for a guaranteed tier of R100 000 for administration and a conditional tier of R600 000 for projects and programs that align with SRSA's strategic directions. Whilst we have received an Agreement to sign covering the guaranteed tier, we have not yet heard about the conditional tier.

Own Funds

From our Financial Statement it can be seen that the SAOF generates between R35 000 and R 55 000 per year of its own income. Of this R10 000 to R15 000 per year is ring-fenced for EMIT replacement. In 2012 our income was at the top end of this scale due mainly to the success of the Big Five O event. It is obvious that without additional sources of income the SAOF's Growth and Development activities will be severely impacted. In fact without these sources of income Orienteering in South Africa would operate in survival mode. Whilst we have been successful in recent times of attracting healthy grants from both SRSA and the NLDTF, it is dangerous to become too dependent on these grants.

We need to explore ways to grow our financial resources that is less reliant on the unpredictable nature of our current major funding partners.

Development

Development is the cornerstone of our efforts to reach our mission of growing the sport of orienteering and making it accessible to all South Africans. During the formulation of our LTPD model the short-term objectives (3 to 5 year timescale) identified the following priorities:

- Active Orienteering clubs in 5 provinces (currently we are active in three provinces)
- Improve Participation Levels across all demographics

Activities over the past year were driven by our 2011-2012 Development Plan, which set forth a coherent approach to achieve these objectives. The ability to carry out many of the activities in the plan is due mainly to the availability of grants from both SRSA and the NLDTF that enabled us to recruit two project managers in Lisa de Speville and Peter Hemer. What follows is not an exhaustive list of activities, but will hopefully illustrate the tremendous effort that has been made.



DURBAN ORIENTEERING

Peter's focus was on Kwazulu-Natal, where his efforts have shown yielded success with the establishment of the Durban Orienteering Club (DOC), the hosting of teachers' training courses, "come and try it events", the generation of 3 larger and 3 smaller school maps and the hosting of a schools league. In total the schools league attracted 36 competitors from 8 schools. The long-term aspiration is to establish a self-sustaining schools league, and regular club orienteering.

The effort was challenging and frustrating. Perseverance is the key and follow-up work is required to build sustainability. It has only been through making numerous contacts, following up with them regularly and paying personal visits that Peter has been able to unearth a few people who will hopefully become more involved. The SAOF needs to find ways to provide continued support to these efforts to ensure that Orienteering takes root in Kwazulu-Natal



Lisa's impact as the Expansion Plan Project Manager has been tremendous. The benefit of having someone available to spend a substantial amount of time dedicated to solving expansion and development challenges has been invaluable. The approach to engaging with people new to orienteering has been adapted a number of times during the course of the year. Almost each new engagement leads to new insights and new ideas.

In an effort to reduce the "barriers to entry" and provide novice teachers with a simple and practical resource for providing basic orienteering activities to learners the "O in a Box" – Level 1 was developed. Plans for more advanced exercises in a Level 2 "O in a Box" are well underway.

Thus far Level 1 "O in a Box" kits have been delivered to schools in Gauteng, Rustenburg (North West), Durban (KZN), Cape Town and Mphachue (Limpopo). Interested teachers are presented with the complete box and given a one hour instruction session. The aim is to train club members up to be able to provide this service to more schools.

Lisa also contributed greatly to the 2012 Gauteng schools league. She developed a generic Orienteering Schools League logo that has also been used in Durban. A Facebook page was created and was very useful in gauging the levels of excitement about the Gauteng Schools league. The Facebook page now includes more general information about Expansion activities and offers a fun way to engage with the wider orienteering community.



A number of other resources have been created, all of which are available for clubs to use themselves. These include:

- SAOF Making Maps booklet (for black and white)
- Revised Level 1 Teachers Training Course in Orienteering presentation
 - Instruction manual for Teachers
 - Exercise Manual for Teachers

- Lively Orienteering posters
- Hosting an Event booklet

An undoubted highlight of the year has been our engagement with Mphachue Secondary School near Polokwane, Limpopo. The details are worth recounting as the story provides us with motivation to search for and unearth those orienteering gems where-ever they lie. In August 2011 a Level 1 Teachers' Training Course in Orienteering was held in Polokwane. The following day three of the participants returned to a "Come and Try It" event. Mary Makhobotlwane, an educator from Mphachue Secondary School, brought three students with her and one of these was Ephraim Chuene. We were excited to hear from Mary that she had run a number of orienteering sessions with learners from her school. We were amazed sometime later when we received a copy of Ephraim's hand-drawn colour map of his school. What made this map, a fair representation of the school property, even more remarkable was that Ephraim had previously only ever seen one orienteering map.



In order to encourage this keen group they were invited to participate in the annual Gauteng Schools Training camp. The SAOF funded this venture. Not only did Mary, Ephraim and two other Mphachue learners enjoy the coaching opportunity, but they got to experience their first-ever colour coded event during the camp.

Subsequently Ephraim, who is now studying at a college in Polokwane, produced an updated version of his map. In early September the SAOF travelled to Mphachue to present Ephraim with an award for his initiative and excellence in mapping.

Mary was also presented with SAOF's 'O in a Box' Level 1 school orienteering resource, in honour of her efforts to introduce orienteering to her school.

A great deal has been learnt over the past year in implementing our Expansion plan project activities. These include: communication challenges in more rural areas (i.e. lack of access to the internet and email); resistance in urban schools to admit another sport; participants wanting everything done for them; lack of financial resources at schools to print maps and buy equipment; finding the people that pull.

A very important lesson is that we will only make substantial progress in a new area with sustained and regular involvement. In order to build something that lasts in a particular area, we need to focus on that area rather than dilute our efforts across multiple centres. It is important to find those people who "pull" for more. And when we find these people we need to be able support them with training, materials and regular contact.

Whilst it is difficult to assess the true impact of these efforts in such a short time, we believe that this project has only just begun and it will need to continue for the foreseeable future to ensure sustained impact.

Major Events

Big Five O

The first-ever five-day event was organised jointly by the Gauteng clubs in January 2012. It was a great success with much positive feedback from both local and international participants. Importantly, several SA athletes achieved a world ranking in these events, and there should therefore be enough ranked orienteers at the SA Championships for points to be awarded there as well.

The Big Five was also important for a number of other reasons. It demonstrated that a high-quality international event can be organised locally in South Africa. It gave many local orienteers the opportunity to compete against some top-notch overseas orienteers. The SAOF will continue to support and encourage this event for a number of reasons, not least of which is that it has the potential to raise the profile of orienteering in South Africa.

SA Champs

The small size of orienteering in South Africa and the distance between the two main centres of orienteering activity make it challenging to host national championships in all four foot disciplines that are well-attended by orienteers from both centres. This is especially true when the two respective regional championships are also trying to attract runners from the other areas.

This was compounded by the introduction of the SA Sprint Orienteering Championships 2010. Sprint Orienteering is an important discipline for our sport. Our results at WOC this year, and experience of a number of other nations illustrates that this form of the sport offers an easier opportunity for South Africa to achieve improved performances on the international stage. As evidenced by the YOC experience in Gauteng, this form of orienteering is also an important growth avenue for our sport.

It is crucial to maintain the national championships in all disciplines as the premier competitive event across all the age classes. It is clear, however, that the current format and schedule places a burden on both the competitors and PenOC, in particular. It is time to consider various alternative scheduling options. This will be a challenging exercise, but what is also certain is that any solution must be guided by the principles of our LTPD model.

WRE's

Since the first World Ranking Event (WRE) in South Africa in 2009 there has been a good trend with South African clubs hosting their maximum allocation of three WRE's in 2012.

- 2009 – 2 (SA Champs: Middle & Long)
- 2011 – 2 (SA Champs: Middle & Long)
- 2012 – 3 (Big Five O: Day 3 – Long and Day 5 – Sprint; SA Champs: Middle)

The elite categories of the Big Five O event were well attended by good international orienteers and we were thus successful in ensuring that there were sufficient 'ranked' athletes present for the two WREs to be counted as points scoring events. Various South African athletes scored World Ranking points for the first time, with some of our athletes now considered 'Ranked'. The next WRE in South Africa will be the Middle Distance at the SA Champs in September 2012. In the case of the men, this

should hopefully ensure continuity of world ranking points for SA athletes and prevent them from lapsing.

The South African clubs are encouraged to continue to strive to host as many WRE's as possible. As well as ensuring continuity of ranking for our elite athletes, the aim is to continually strive to improve the quality of our flagship events.

One of the requirements to host an IOF sanctioned WRE is that an IOF event adviser is appointed to ensure that the event meets IOF quality standards. At present this burden falls on the two qualified IOF event advisers in South Africa, both of whom reside in Gauteng. In order to relieve this burden and also to facilitate the hosting of WRE's in the Cape, an IOF event adviser's clinic will be held in Cape Town in November 2012.

High Performance

The High Performance portfolio has continued to develop in 2012 after its founding in 2011. The aim of the portfolio has been to continue developing High Performance Orienteering in South Africa, improving the athletes, squad system, the support systems behind them as well as the policy framework and plans towards this goal. The HP portfolio needs to continue evolving, streamlining and developing the processes to best equip our future and current elite orienteers so that they can excel at the pinnacle of international orienteering.

A Long Term Participant Development (LTPD) approach remains central to the development of the High Performance (HP) arena. In 2012 the SAOF officially launched its own LTPD model and various structures within the HP portfolio have started falling in line with its guidelines and objectives. In 2012 the following LTPD initiatives have been followed:

- The 2012 national and provincial calendars were brought further in line with the ideals and objectives of LTPD. The two main provincial championships as well as the national Sprint champs were staged so as to allow our elite athletes to use it effectively within their performance peaking cycles.
- The Youth Squad has been further developed and institutionalised, allowing for a more continuous and fluent line of development for young athletes;
- Further communication of an awareness of LTPD within the national squads.

LTPD remains the guiding philosophy for HP for the foreseeable future. However, there are still notable gaps in HP implementation, most significantly in the lack of proper coaching structures within this arena. Policy and administrative documents within HP continued to be developed through the combined input of the HP Manager, the VP Technical and the National Selection Committee.

The selection committee once again followed a policy that was more exclusive and limiting for Senior teams selection, so as to obtain a higher standard of participation at WOC. Youth and Junior team selection policy remained inclusive, with selectors erring on the side of inclusion and presenting these athletes with an opportunity for experience building.



The 2012 international season was thus undoubtedly a success for SA Orienteering and has produced some important results that can be seen as stepping stones towards better and more consistent results in international competition. This year's results have fitted well into the targets set out in the SAOF's High Performance Strategic Plan 2010-2013. A brief summary of performance highlights include:

- **Youth Tour**
The Youth Squad has shown significant development since its inception in 2011 and has now become a significant part of the national squad system. The Youth Tour is an invaluable opportunity for Youth Squad members to gain experience and exposure to top-level events on excellent maps in diverse terrain with the pressure of a major championship. The Youth Tour covered both the World Masters Champs in Germany and the spectator races associated with JWOC in Slovakia. The Tour was a great success. In general, the athletes performed well in the first week in Germany, but struggled in the second week in Slovakia with the more complex terrain navigation and with physical fatigue setting in. Notable success was achieved by Christie Courtnage who placed on the podium in her age category in both the German and Slovakian multi-day events.
- **JWOC**
A team of four women and two men were sent to the Junior World Championships in Slovakia. Undoubted highlights were the new South African best performances in all three of the men's events set by Bradley Lund. There were mixed but promising results from the rest of the team, with lots of positive signs during the course of the championships.
- **WOC**
A team of men was sent to the World Championships in Switzerland. Arguably South Africa's best ever international performance was achieved when Michael Crone successfully qualified for the Final in the Sprint Distance. He became the first African ever to achieve this feat by placing 11th in his heat from which the top 15 qualified.

The policy documents surrounding HP were further evolved in 2012 through the combined input of the HP Manager, VP Technical and the Selection Committee. The majority of these changes were to add clarity to the policies and to streamline and clarify roles and responsibilities of the various role players. Further updates will be enacted in late 2012, including reviews of season-to-season documents. There is also a need for more binding documentation for athletes that highlights the roles and responsibilities of athletes, coaches, selectors and administrators for the 2013 season. Input from the athletes is encouraged so as to address their own concerns and views within High Performance.

WOC in Future

A concern is the future of WOC and potential changes to the program. The SAOF has submitted a view on this to the IOF's call for comments, where the need for accessibility to WOC for small

federations was emphasised by the SAOF. At the IOF General Assembly a vote was held on the three proposals that were submitted. The vote was very close indicating that the debate will continue into the future. The change entails the removal of most qualification events and the introduction of new types of finals. Such changes will probably only be implemented from 2016 onwards. The SAOF needs to observe this closely, particularly with regard to how qualification slots will be determined for these finals. There is a significant risk that the new programme will decrease rather than increase the diversity of nations represented at WOC.

Another issue regarding international orienteering that is problematic is the qualification method for start slots at some World Cup races, which exclude the possibility of competition for athletes who have not scored well at all preceding races. Given that World Cup races are normally held in Europe, it is very difficult for non-European athletes to score well.

Conclusion

In Summary, 2012 has been a successful year on many fronts. The potential to meet our longer term goals has strengthened with the development of training material, delivery capacity and the establishment of 2 new clubs. Orienteering events were held in 6 of our 9 provinces, but the aspiration is to have sustainable clubs in 5 of those provinces. It is through the enthusiasm and assistance of the club members that this has been a good year, and the SAOF will encourage Orienteering to continue along the path to prosperity with improved demographics and more clubs established around South Africa.