

SAOF Technical Portfolio Report 2011/2012

SAOF AGM 2012

High-Performance

Nicholas Mulder was re-appointed as high performance manager, and the National Squad Selection Documents were revised before the selection of the 2012 squads. These documents must be reviewed again in light of the 2012 season, and because there were some lack of clarity in the final version of the 2012 documents. It must also be made clear that the selection committee must keep their discussions transparent to the community and to the executive committee, and the SAOF executive must be able to answer to SASCOC about the selection criteria. The selection committee must be monitored by the SAOF VP Technical, so that it is made sure the selection committee adheres to the selection documents, particularly as this has come into question during the 2012 season.

The highlight of the 2012 season was Michael Crone qualifying, for the first time for a South African, for a WOC final. Michael qualified for the sprint final at WOC in Switzerland. As Michael still has many years ahead of him at the top level (we hope) it is particularly important that the SAOF is supportive to Michael and gives him, and any other orienteer performing at top international level, the support needed to keep up the high performance. This includes support for international travel and attempts to provide the best training possible within South Africa (hosting international level events such as the Big-5 is paramount here).

Plans for future participation at WOC and JWOC should be kept in line with LTPD, and the selection documents need to reflect the priorities of the SAOF and SASCOC. 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 emphasized by the SAOF.

Other results at WOC and JWOC were similar to what has been seen in previous years, although with some improvement in JWOC by some athletes. [I am still waiting for Nicholas Mulder's report].

Some members of the new Youth Squad went to Slovakia for the public events during JWOC – as last year, Colin Dutkiewicz reported back as team coach and pointed out how useful it is for the youth squad members to get exposure to top level events, excellent maps, European terrain, and international level courses, without the pressure

of participating in a major championships event. This seems an ideal way of preparing young South African orienteers for future JWOC and WOC participation.

International Events

The National Championships for 2011 were commissioned to the AR Club, and IOF have approved World Ranking Event (WRE) status for the middle distance event. A 5-day international event, the Big-5, was organised jointly by the Gauteng clubs in January, and 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-5 was also important in that it showed that a high quality international event can be organised locally in South Africa.

A hurdle to organising more WRE events is a lack of IOF event advisers in South Africa. An IOF event advisers clinic will be organised in Cape Town in November 2012 to attempt to remedy this problem.

Maps

A call was made for applications for funds for strategic maps. Based on applications received, Nicholas Mulder has been awarded funds to map further areas around Lydenburg for Gauteng Orienteering Championships 2012 and National squad training camps, and a new area near Polokwane for the South African Orienteering Championships 2012.

There is still a drive for developing school maps, and new maps have been made in both Gauteng and the Western Cape.

There is still a need for a mapping framework, I have begun putting this together but unfortunately run out of time, something to be continued in 2013.

Coaching Framework

Work is still being done on a Coaching Framework. During 2012, a 'Willing Ready and Able' assessment was filled in which can give the SAOF a benchmark to quantify the progress of coaching and the development of coaches. A plan for the development of a Coaching Framework has been written up, and the next step is creating documentation for levels beyond the Teacher's Course. This will happen as a Level 2 course is held by members of the British Orienteering Federation in South Africa in October 2012, and South African coaches are trained to level 2. Based on this course, the British Level 1 (and possibly 2) courses can be adapted to South African conditions.

Future of the SAOC

Future South African Orienteering Championships should be organized in a variety of venues around the country, and will need to reflect the distribution of clubs but also try to spread orienteering to new provinces. A schedule has been drawn up which outlines the future organizers of the SAOC. In the next few years, every third SAOC will be organized by the Western Cape clubs, whereas the next two will be organized by Gauteng clubs. Over time, clubs in other provinces will be expected to take over some of the organizing of the champs.

Another issue is then the placement of the sprint championships. At the international level, this is part of a yearly WOC. However, it may fit better into the South African schedule as part of a provincial championships. There is disagreement of where it best fits in, but it was seen in 2012 that participation was very low at the sprint champs when it was part of Gauteng champs when SAOC is also organized by the Gauteng clubs. A committee should come up with a number of proposals, which can be voted for at the 2013 SAOF AGM. Until a permanent solution is found, the sprint championships should be awarded on a year by year basis.

Development of Materials

The development of various materials such as start-up packages for new clubs and provinces and how-to documents for event organization has fallen by the wayside, but should remain on the to-do list for 2013.