



SAOF Development Plan 2021-2025

Development Growth Excellence



Introduction

The SAOF's vision is to make Orienteering a national sport accessible to all South Africans. To achieve this we have adopted as our mission *Development Growth Excellence*. This reflects the belief that in order to grow the sport, development and roll-out of education pathways is required in order to reduce the *Barriers to Entry* inherent in the sport. This mission statement also recognises that excellence, which includes being internationally competitive at the highest level, will not be possible without the foundation of development and growth of the sport.

It is the SAOF's belief that in order to grow orienteering in South Africa we need to continue to provide education pathways to enable more people to become competent in the making of maps, in the coaching of participants and the in organising of events. Coupled to these problems is the challenge of volunteerism. Any initiatives to achieve the SAOF's vision are constrained by the fact that their implementation relies on the efforts of a small number of volunteers.

This document describes our Development Plan and associated plans. These are not blueprint plans, rather they are guidelines. There is an acknowledgement that particular conditions may require local adaptation.



Overview of Projects

In this section we present an overview of the various Development projects. More details on each project are provided in subsequent sections.

Expansion Plan

This is the SAOF's flagship Development project aimed at exporting orienteering to cities, regions and provinces other than those in which the sport is already well-established. In addition the project seeks to facilitate growth in our traditional centres. The Expansion Plan continues to evolve on the back of much learning over the past five years

There are a number of supporting projects that support the delivery of the Expansion plan. These allow us to develop and refine concepts in established areas, which are then incorporated in the Expansion Plan to make its implementation more effective. These support projects are described briefly below:

SA Schools Mapping Project

This is a new project that was started in 2015. The ambitious aim is to provide every school in South Africa with an orienteering map of their school. The map can be used as a resource for teaching map-work in geography and decision-making in Life Orientation. The initial phase of this project has been used as a targeting device to identify keen people. It has also provided an effective way to enable us to identify clusters of schools that could be targeted with a view to establishing a Schools League via the Expansion Plan.

We aim to develop and modify this project as we learn more about using it as a successful mechanism to make orienteering more visible

World Orienteering Day

In 2015, the IOF introduced World Orienteering Day as a high-profile, global way to raise the profile of Orienteering. The SAOF took part in this event, with a total of 15 locations offering an orienteering activity on the day. The SAOF aims to piggy back on this IOF initiative and explore ways to use it market orienteering in South Africa

Orienteering Schools League Development

The Gauteng Schools League has now been running since 2001. The way this flagship league is run does not lend itself to growth as it relies heavily on the manpower provided by interested clubs. Its maturity, however, allows us to use this league as a vehicle to explore various concepts aimed at developing other schools league formats that are less reliant on club manpower, that improve the inter-school competitive component (i.e. relay format) and that are successful in exposing the children to the wider world of Orienteering (i.e. school camps).

A second component of schools league development in Gauteng will attempt to capitalise on the relatively strong club base in Gauteng. We will encourage and support the introduction of other schools leagues in other parts of the province (e.g. Centurion, Pretoria, etc.). The introduction of new



leagues in Gauteng will allow us to experiment with the format that we intend to roll-out within the Expansion Plan.

We will continue to support efforts in the Western Cape and Durban to run sustainable schools leagues.

Expansion Plan

The Expansion Plan is a multi-year plan that charts the development of Orienteering in a new city and province from the initial introductory level event all the way until an established club in the new province is capable of hosting a Provincial championship event. The plan consists of four separate phases charting this progression. A schematic of the plan is depicted below. The timescale over which this transition is possible will vary depending on a multitude of factors that are represented in the left-hand column of the schematic.

Four Phase Progression

The four phases can be summarised as follows:

Phase I – Introductory level events targeting development of an inter-schools league.

Phase II – Intermediate level events targeting regular Short Course events for the wider community.

Phase III – Advanced level events for the wider community in technical terrain.

Phase IV – Advanced level championship events targeting the wider orienteering community.

Education

Underpinning the Expansion Plan is a two tier education strategy. The first tier consists of an introductory training course which is the main vehicle to market orienteering to new areas. The course covers all the basic elements of orienteering at a level suitable for newcomers. The intention is to equip attendees of the course with sufficient understanding of the sport as well as a resource pack that will assist them to start-up basic orienteering events in their community.

The second tier covers the education pathway of the three technical areas of orienteering such that interested participants can follow a progression of qualifications from beginner to advanced. The three technical areas in which participants can progress are: Coaching, Mapping and Event Organising.

Coaching

As the Expansion Plan moves into Phase II and subsequent phases there will be a need to provide participants with access to improved coaching. This will enable participants to improve and refine their understanding and application of the various technical orienteering skills and physical training methods that will allow them to improve their orienteering performance.

Mapping

As the sport takes hold in a new area there will be less need for the SAOF to support the sport to the extent required during Phase I and the early part of Phase II. As a developing region moves into Phase II, the local participants will be encouraged to attend SAOF level 1 Mapping courses with the aim of identifying participants who are interested in this challenging core function of orienteering.



Appropriately qualified locals will this be in a position to make maps of new areas required to maintain a fresh challenge to orienteers in their region.

Event Organising

As the sport takes root in a developing region and progresses to more technical versions of the sport, there will be a need to train participants up to be able to organise more advanced events that cater for both the most skilled as well as the novice orienteer. Also the increased complexity of the events and increasing number of orienteers is more demanding on organisers to ensure fair competition and a rewarding experience for all participants. This will be supported by an appropriate education system developed by the SAOF.

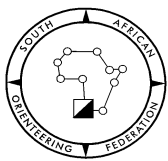
Phase I

The initial focus of the Expansion Plan is to roll-out the first phase as frequently as possible. Hence we now discuss this phase in greater detail.

Step 1

The first step in this phase of the expansion plan is the core component of our Development Plan. The idea is to present an introduction to orienteering workshop. The concept is presented schematically below. There are two components to the workshop. The first is the presentation of the *Introduction to Orienteering* training course that has been developed over the past few years. It is our intention to align this course with the pre-Coach level of the South African Coach Framework. This course consists of a number of information presentations together with associated practical exercises. The second involves a demonstration event that can be presented together with the participants. This may or may not be opened to the wider community around the venue at which the workshop is held.

The intention is to leave the participants with enough understanding of orienteering such that they are confident to be able to instruct newcomers in the sport and run entry-level events. The teachers will be provided with a resource pack to assist them in this task.



| | Aims | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Primary | Secondary |
| What | Weekend-long training workshop with demonstration event | Demonstration event open to wider community |
| Who | Primarily to Life Orientation teachers in the local district / city | Potential wider local audience, i.e. other teachers, parents, etc. |
| How | Low ratio of instructors to participants: - Presentations - Practical Exercises | Rotate roles of presenters and assistants at subsequent workshops |
| Why | Educate LO Teachers Identify schools to target for local schools league | Train more trainers - Build capacity to provide a greater pool of resources to present and assist. |
| When | Weekends suitable to teachers and course presenters & assistants | Might need second round workshops targeting parents to help move to Phase II of the plan. |
| Experience | Level 1 Teachers Training Course in O in Jo'burg demonstrated very good uptake & demand for more. | Build on knowledge base by incorporating learnings from subsequent courses |
| Resource | Provide participants with usable practical resource than can be used to instruct children & assist them to put on simple fun events | Improve and add to resource pack to provide teachers with more material. |

Step 2

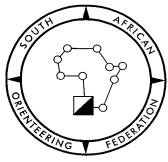
If the first step focussed on educating the teachers to become orienteering instructors, then the next step is for the teachers to educate children at their schools about the sport of orienteering. The aim is for the teachers to explain the sport sufficiently to the children that the school can host inter-house events at the school. In addition to educating the children about the sport, the intention is to identify better performing children who will be selected to represent the school in an inter-school orienteering competition. For this reason we aim to identify clusters of nearby schools as targets, so that they can compete against each other.

Step 3

In this step the focus is on getting a number of schools to compete against one another in an inter-school competition. An important component of any sport is coaching. Without coaching in orienteering, the children will not learn from their mistakes, they will be frustrated that they are not improving and will not enjoy the sport. By having inter-school competitions it is envisaged that interested teachers and interested children will be inspired to learn about improving orienteering performance.

Step 4

The final step in this phase of the plan is to progress towards weekend training camps. At these camps enthusiastic and better performing children should be given the opportunity to experience the next level of orienteering in a fun and inspiring manner. These camps should also be run so that interested



teachers and parents are involved. This will assist with the identification of motivated teachers and parents that can help drive future development of orienteering in each region.

Schools camps held in Gauteng in the recent past as well as a camp held in Hilton in 2014 serve as templates for similar camps in new regions.

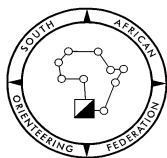
Timescale

From the provision of the Education weekend (i.e. Step 1) to the establishment of a small inter-school league (i.e. Step 3) is envisaged to take anywhere from two months to one year. The factors affecting this timescale are:

- Commitment from at least three schools to participate.
- Making of maps of the participating schools.
- Identification of and commitment of personnel at each school who are willing to act as local champions.
- Inter-house event at each school to “educate” children to understand the sport.
- Identification of a suitable 4-5 week period within the year when the inter-school league can be held, e.g. 5 weeks in term 1.
- Availability of suitably experienced resources to offer supervision.

Support

The most difficult year will always be the first year when the sport is new to everyone. This will be the most demanding in terms of the need for support from experienced orienteers. In the second year experienced children will be able to assist the teacher / instructor with newcomers.



| | | Phase I | | | | Phase II | | Phase III | | Phase IV | | |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| | | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 | Intermediate Events | | Advanced Events | | Advanced Events | | |
| | Type | Level 1 Training & Exhibition | Inter-house School Event | Inter-schools League | Schools Training Camp | Short Course Events | Short Course League | Colour-Coded Events | Colour-Coded League | Regional Championships | | |
| | Timescale | 1 - Weekend | 2 - 6 Months | 3 Months - 1 Year | 1 - 3 Years | 6 Months - 2 Years | | 1 - 5 Years | | 2 - 6 Years | | |
| | Map Requirements | 1 Map of venue | School Map | 3-5 School Maps | 1 Map | 3 Maps | 0 - 2 More maps, increasing by 1 - 2 annually | 1 - 3 Maps of Technical Areas | 2 More maps, increasing by 1 - 2 annually | Strategic Map of good quality technical area | | |
| | Terrain | Simple school with tennis / netball courts | Simple School | Simple School | Varied terrain: buildings, vegetation, point features | complex schools or local parks | complex schools or local parks | Bushveld, Forest with varied contours | Bushveld, Forest with varied contours | Bushveld, Forest with varied contours | | |
| | Education | Technical Standard | Introductory | Basic | Basic | Intermediate | Basic - Intermediate | | Basic - Advanced | | Advanced | |
| | Coaching | Qualified Experts | Instructors L1 | Instructors L1 | Coach L1 - L3 | Instructors L1 | Coach L1-2 | Coach L1 - L3 | | Coach L1 - L3 | | |
| | Planning | Experienced | Basic | Basic | Basic | Basic - Intermediate | | Intermediate - Advanced | | Advanced | | |
| | Organisation | High | Minimal | Minimal | High | Minimal - Intermediate | | Intermediate - Advanced | | Advanced | | |
| | Support | Level | High | | | First year High, reducing in subsequent years | | First year High, reducing in subsequent years | | First year High, reducing in subsequent years | | High to Low |
| | | Resources | SAOF | Punches | Punch / EMIT | Training | Punch / EMIT | | Punch / EMIT | | EMIT | |
| | | Primary Personnel | SAOF | Teachers | Teachers / Children / Parents | SAOF | Parents / Children / Teachers | | Local Club / Parents / Children | | Local Club | |
| | | Support | Clubs | SAOF | SAOF / Clubs | SAOF / Clubs | SAOF / Clubs | | SAOF / Clubs | | SAOF | |
| | | Talent ID | Identify local champions | Identify school's teams | Identify better performers for schools camp | Identify children to help coaching at school | Identify better performers for invite to regional camps / invite to events at established provinces | | Identify better performers for invite to regional camps / invite to events at established provinces | | Identify better performers to receive assistance to other regional champs & inclusion in SAOF squads | |

Schematic of the Expansion Plan. The resource and support requirements are noted for each Step in the various project phases. The timescale estimates range from a best case to worst case scenario for each stage.



Project Implementation for Phase I

A schematic of the implementation plan is illustrated below. Our ability to successfully implement this plan will depend on our employing a project manager.

Project Manager

In order to manage the process we will need to employ a project manager to militate against the above risks. In addition employing such a person will enable a more rapid roll-out of the plan into more areas. Project progress will be reviewed with the SAOF Management Committee on a regular basis. This process will also be used to review and adapt the plan.

Other Resources

In order to roll-out this plan there is a high resource requirement. In addition to the abovementioned project manager a large number of assistants is required to ensure the low educator to participant ratio which is necessary to successfully introduce the sport to new people and to groups with participants of varying abilities. This requirement is greatest in the first year that the sport is introduced, but should reduce subsequently once more participants understand the sport and groups can be streamed according to their level of understanding.

Whilst the project manager will be employed by the SAOF, the implementation of the plan will require a number of volunteers to provide critical support. In order to spread the workload the intention is to mix experienced presenters and assistants with inexperienced volunteers and to encourage these inexperienced helpers to progress to become presenters. In this manner each Step 1 Education weekend will be used as an opportunity to train more presenters and assistants thus growing our capacity to deliver more courses across the country.

Finances

Our intention is to charge the attendees of the various courses and workshops a nominal event fee (R50-R200). Experience has taught us that free events are abused with confirmed delegates who don't show-up and others who do not properly engage with the course. The income generated in this manner will be used to fund further Development projects or other SAOF activities.

The true costs of the various workshops and courses will be carefully tracked to ensure the unsubsidised cost per delegate is known for future use.

It is our intention to encourage volunteers from the established orienteering community by remunerating them for their time and effort.



Orienteering Schools League Development

The Orienteering Schools League (OSL) in Gauteng has increased the number of participating schools from nine to 12 in the past two years. Schools from around Gauteng compete against each other at events organised by various volunteers from the Gauteng orienteering clubs. This format does not lend itself to growth as it relies heavily on the manpower provided by interested clubs.

The SAOF will encourage new leagues to adopt a simpler format:

- League to become more self-sufficient, i.e. predominantly run by teachers and learners with little club support.
- Simplified relay-based format to be hosted at the various schools on their grounds.
- Inter-house events to reduce numbers participating at inter-school meetings.
- Gauteng schools league final is a competition of the best schools from a number of independent schools leagues throughout Gauteng.

The maturity of the Gauteng OSL means that there is resistance to migrate to the proposed format. Recent activity in the Western Cape, Durban has also relied on the organisation and support of experienced club members. Developments in Polokwane, by contrast have relied on newcomers to the sport who have been supported by training, mentoring and experiential opportunities.

An annual Schools Orienteering camp was held in Gauteng from 2011 to 2015. This type of camp can be beneficial as it satisfies a number of important conditions that will promote the growth of orienteering. These conditions are: exposes school children to the wider world of orienteering in a fun and educational manner; provides coaching experience for a number of interested club members; serves to bridge the gap between schools orienteering and club orienteering.

In 2015, a simpler, score event type schools leagues, called the Checkpoint Challenge was trialled in eastern Johannesburg. Whilst it did enjoy some success, loss of the project coordinator meant that this league did not continue. Unfortunately this meant that the concept was not refined and matured. However, it is proof that alternative formats are possible.

Craig Ogilvie
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