

O-zine

International Orienteering Federation

On-line Newsletter

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PHOTO: PIRJO VALJANEN

Ski orienteering season 2009

World elite heading for Japan

Helene Söderlund, Sweden, is one of the promising young ski orienteers who can be expected to be among the best in the World Championships in Rusutsu, Hokkaido, Japan.

The Japanese winter sports resort Rusutsu, some 50 km south of Sapporo, is the venue for this season's World Ski Orienteering Championships which will take place between 3 and

8 March. The upcoming World Championships are the first to be organised in East Asia and are therefore a significant milestone in the history of the sport.

The first event, the sprint, will be held on 4 March. The programme also comprises long and middle distance individual events and on 8 March, the final day, a relay competition.

In this issue: Ski orienteering season 2009: World elite heading for Japan; IOF Commissions 2009 – 2010; Ski orienteering is fun; Dana Brozkova – looking for more success; Marjo Liikanen – looking ahead after injury; World Ranking – ten years on; Anne Straube likes mental challenges – and also mud!; IOF World Events in 2009; News in brief.

O-zine is an on-line newsletter published by the IOF. You can receive an e-mail notification whenever a new issue of O-zine is released. To register, just fill in the form at http://6prog.org/IOF/oz_reg.asp and press the 'Subscribe' button.

Season's Greetings and Good Wishes for the New Year 2008!

BARBRO RÖNNBERG
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

According to the organiser, the competition area is partly flat, partly hilly, with big altitude differences and it consists of different types of forests and open areas. The open areas are mainly golf courses.

New event series

The current season also offers the ski orienteers a completely new event series – the Ski-O Tour comprising six high level competitions in eight days in the period 10 – 17 January. The idea with the Ski-O Tour is to offer big events in Central Europe for ski orienteers at all levels – from the world's best to those who just enjoy the sport. The tour is meant to be organised in World Championship years when there is no World Cup.

The tour kicks off with a middle distance race and a long distance competition in Abtenau, Austria. The competitors then travel to Valle di Sole, Italy for the second stage comprising a sprint and a long dis-

tance event. The third and final stage of the Ski-O Tour includes a sprint and a middle distance with chasing start and it will be held in Stalden, Switzerland.

In addition to the World Championships in Japan and the Ski-O Tour in Central Europe, the international ski orienteering calendar for the season 2008/2009 also includes World Championships for juniors and masters and some 30 World Ranking Events.

This year's Junior World Ski Orienteering Championships will be held at Orsa Grönklitt, Sweden in the period 25 January to 1 February. The four competitions – sprint, middle, long distance and relay – are organised from an existing cross-country ski centre and will be held in low alpine terrain.

The World Masters Ski Orienteering Championships will be organised in Abtenau, Austria in conjunction with the first stage of the Ski-O Tour.



For Eivind Tonna, the new Ski-O Tour will be the most important event after the World Orienteering Championships in Japan.

IOF Commissions 2009–2010

The IOF Council has recently decided on the composition of the IOF Commissions for the years 2009–2010. Fifty-six persons from 24 member countries are now engaged in the IOF Commission work.

Discipline Commissions

Foot Orienteering Commission: Chair: Konrad Becker (SUI). Members: Göran Andersson (SWE), Mike Dowling (AUS), Ove Gasbjerg (DEN), David May (GBR), Hideo Onoe (JPN), Mikko Salonen (FIN), Unni Strand Karlsen (NOR), Dusan Vys-tavel (CZE).

MTB Orienteering Commission: Acting Chair: Edmond Szechenyi (FRA). Members: Antje Bornhak (GER), Jan Cegiela (POL), Maria Cutova (SVK), Tibor Erdélyi (HUN), Blake Gordon (AUS), Ursula Häusermann (SUI), Tiago Lopes (POR), Arbo Rae (EST),

Thomas Wieser (AUT).

Ski Orienteering Commission: Chair: Markku Vauhkonen (FIN). Members: Juraj Nemeč (SVK), Erik Svensson (SWE), Daniel Saegesser (SUI).

Trail Orienteering Commission: Chair: Sari Salomaa-Niemi (FIN). Members: Owe Fredholm (SWE), Taro Koyama (JPN), Frank Kuhn (USA).

Support Commissions

Environment Commission: Chair: Brian Parker (GBR). Members: David Hogg (AUS), Erkka Laitinen (FIN).

IT Commission: Chair: Björn Heinemann (GER). Members: Finn Arildsen (DEN), Kazushige Hatori (JPN), Dmytro Miller (UKR), Christer Norman (SWE), Mike Schuh (USA), Henning Spjelkavik (NOR).

Map Commission: Chair: Håvard Tveite (NOR). Members: Thomas Gloor (SUI), Sergio Grifoni (ITA), Ales Hejna (CZE), Flemming Hjort Jensen (DEN), Greg Lennon (USA), Jukka Liikari (FIN), Erik Peckett (GBR).

Medical Commission: Chair: Olli Heino (FIN). Members: Roger Aerts (BEL), Wendy Dodds (GBR), Marja Ramm-Schmidt (FIN).

Rules Commission: Chair: David Rosen (GBR). Members: Barry McCrae (AUS). In addition, each of the four discipline commissions will appoint one Rules Commission member.

Regional Development Delegates

Africa: Ian Bratt (RSA), Asia: Shin Murakoshi (JPN), North America: Charlotte MacNaughton (CAN), Oceania: John Brammall (AUS), South America: José Fernando Gomez Rueda (COL).



PHOTO: ERIK BORG

Ski orienteering is fun

Antoine Vullioud from Switzerland is one of the up-and-coming men in ski orienteering.

BY ERIK BORG

Antoine Vullioud (22) was a positive surprise last winter, but the 22-year-old Swiss ski orienteer has no big ambitions for the upcoming season.

– I'm ski orienteering because I like it and I think it is fun. I don't care so much about the results. Of course it's always nice to get good results, but it's not the most important thing for me, says Antoine. Last winter Antoine was 13th, 15th and 23rd in the individual races and 9th in the relay in the open European Championships on home ground in S-chanf.

Just now he isn't sure he can take a big step forward in his performance. During the summer and autumn there has been too little time for training, and he has also had a lot of small injuries. But there is still time

before the big events this winter.

– There are some months left until the World Championships in Japan, so I am not worrying at all. If my training goes well in the next weeks and months, I think I can come into good shape for both the open Nordic Championships and the World Championships, he says.

Ski-O Tour will test condition

Early in the coming year he will have some big competitions close to home, with the new challenge, the Ski-O Tour, from 9th to 18th January in Austria, Italy and Switzerland.

– I'm looking forward to the Ski-O Tour. It will be nice to compete and travel around the Alps. Good competitions in beautiful landscapes: it can't be better! I like the

concept of the Tour – to travel from site to site. It's a good opportunity to discover the Alps, and I also think there will be a great atmosphere amongst the competitors, says Antoine.

There is big interest in the new events, so there will be some really tough competition for Antoine at the beginning of the coming year.

Fast progress

Antoine is studying geography and ethnology at university, but this college year is a bit different: he has taken a year off from the studies. – I have just done four months national service in Davos. I am travelling a lot and enjoying life. I'm having a have good time, he says.

It's only five-six years ago that Antoine started ski orienteering, so he has made really fast progress, but already at the very beginning he showed talent.

– Lukas Stoffel and Yvonne Wicki were selecting a junior ski orienteering team in 2003. They asked me if I wanted to join it. I had done a lot of orienteering before, and a little bit of cross-country skiing, and at that time had problems with my Achilles tendon, so I thought why not? I participated in the Junior World Orienteering Championships in St. Petersburg the same winter and had a great time there. It motivated me to continue, and until now I have always had a lot of fun, he says.

In Switzerland there is some beautiful terrain for ski orienteering, and Antoine also enjoys the very good atmosphere amongst the athletes. – We are just like a big family, he says.

Dana Brozkova – looking for more success

BY ERIK BORG

Dana Brozkova achieved her goal at the World Championships on her home ground. Now the Czech star is heading for a new World Championships, and she is training more.

– My training for the next year will be similar to what it has been, but I will increase the volume. It will include some longer runs and more muscle exercises, says Dana.

The 27-year-old Czech athlete won the bronze medal on the long distance at the World Championships in Denmark in 2006. She realised that she was capable of winning gold, and in 2008 she settled on one big goal.

– When I want something really much, and then I have got it, I am used to saying: “Well, it wasn’t as difficult as I expected.” It was the same with the World Championship title, but the victory has a big meaning for me. After the World Championships in 2006 everyone expected that the Championships in the Czech Republic would be a great chance for me to become the world champion. I really felt the pressure from both the public and myself. I am proud that I was able to put together a really good race on the right day, says Dana.

World Championships the big goal again

For the coming year the World Championships is again the big goal. – I want to confirm my victory. It will be great to win again, but also to win a medal or to be among the six best will be a confirmation for me, she says.

Dana is combining her sports career with postgraduate studies. She has finished the first year and her subject is changing from genetics to neurology.

– I don’t have enough time for a full-time job, when I also want to train well and travel for the competitions and training camps, but my studies help me to stay in contact with medicine, she says.



Dana Brozkova was happy to have achieved her goal.

PHOTOS: ERIK BORG

More interest from the media

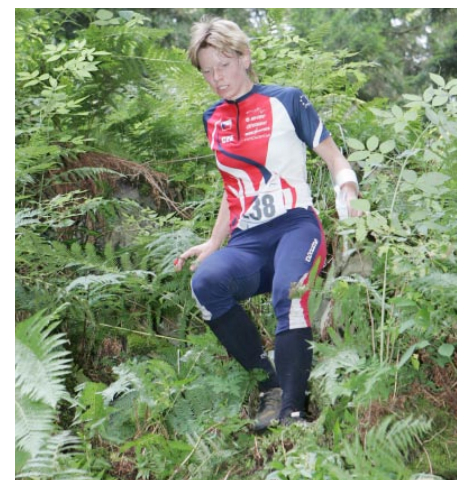
After the gold in Olomouc there was more interest from the media. Dana also got a sponsor – but she was also feeling tired.

– I was feeling like one does after a big exam. I had spent years chasing a goal and trying hard to achieve a vision. Suddenly I had done it. I had reached my goal, my dreams had come true, but I needed some time to readjust and find a new goal for myself.

Dana’s younger sister Radka also did very well at the World Championships; she got bronze on the middle distance. They are celebrating Christmas with their parents.

– My parents, my sister and I will go to the church for a Christmas concert. This church is surrounded by sandstone boul-

ders. After the concert, my sister and I will run home. It’s an 80-minute run through nice countryside with a special atmosphere, says the world champion.



This year, Dana Brozkova was on top form when she wanted to be. Now the Czech girl is looking for more success.

Marjo Liikanen – looking ahead after injury

BY ERIK BORG

Marjo Liikanen fell down a three-four metre high cliff and got badly injured in the middle of July, and hasn't done any orienteering since then, but the Finnish talent is looking forward to running her best races ever.

– I'm not at all afraid to continue orienteering. I haven't tried orienteering again after the accident, but I'm sure I won't be afraid when I start again, because I don't remember anything about the accident, says Marjo.

The 19-year-old Finn only remembers half of the Middle Distance Final at the Junior World Championships in Gothenburg. Half-way round the course she fell down a cliff. Her first memory after this is from the hospital. – I don't know what happened, perhaps I stumbled or slipped, she says.

In one way she was lucky: she could have been injured more badly. One of her knees was operated on in Finland. There was a piece of patella that was broken, and they clasped that with a screw. Marjo got given an orthosis, a kind of plaster.

Enjoyable training sessions

Marjo started re-training with strength exercises and walking. After a while she was able to cycle and do water-running. – The first time I tried water running was one of the most enjoyable training sessions ever. Now I was able to train properly again, she says. After four months she could begin to run again.

Marjo hasn't thought about giving up orienteering.

– With great help and support from my family and friends, and due to the fact that I'll be able to orienteer and compete again, I've survived the bad times. I can't change the past but I can influence my future, she says.

The talented Finn thinks she might be

much more careful when she does her first orienteering training, and might also be a little bit afraid of cliffs.

– But I'm sure these thoughts will disappear when I do more and more orienteering. I have orienteered for many years without any accidents, so why can't I do that again, she says.

Big ambitions

Marjo's goals for the coming year are the Nordic Open Championships in Finland

and the Junior World Orienteering Championships in Italy. In Italy she is hoping to run her best races ever.

– If it's good enough for medals, I will be pleased.

And what are your ambitions for the future?

– I want to see how far my determination, urge and passion for orienteering takes me. I want to reach the top and enjoy the way there.



Marjo Liikanen was injured in the Middle Final at the Junior World Orienteering Championships. Three days later she was back as a spectator. Her positive outlook was very obvious.

PHOTO: ERIK BORG

World Rankings – ten years on

BY DAVID MAY

Back in the 20th century existed events known as IOF Elite events. Federations put these on and hoped that the elite would turn up, but few really knew what the events were for. The IOF Council therefore asked the Foot Orienteering Committee (as it was then called) to institute an international rankings scheme instead.

The task was tricky. How could results from a race in New Zealand be compared with one in Finland where the runners were not the same? How could the results from a Sprint race in park terrain be compared with those of a Long race in technical terrain?

It became obvious that a method based on normalisation of results would work well and an algorithm was proposed which has since then stood the test of time. Indeed many national rankings schemes are now based on exactly the same algorithm, taking the lead from the IOF.

N3Sport was appointed to run the scheme and 1998 was used as a trial year, needed to build up and stabilise a comprehensive runner database. The database now includes some 7300 men and 4140 women each one of whom has a unique national identifier.

Since 2001 the rankings website has been

written and maintained by Ray Barnes (GBR) who has often gone well beyond the call of duty in interpreting the various results formats, names spellings, etc submitted after each event. His job would be a lot easier if all WRE organisers would submit results in the required format and, in particular, supply runner IDs.

As well as building up the database, work was going on in other directions too. A handbook for World Ranking Events (WRE) needed to be produced and a worldwide programme of events had to be developed so that geographically remote runners could have a chance to be ranked too.

These days, some 100 events round the world contribute to the World Rankings scheme each year, a testament to the continued success of the scheme. A few challenges still remain to be overcome, though.

The profile of the scheme will still need to be raised and, at the same time, its benefits need to be promoted.

In addition, runners outside Europe have far fewer WREs “on their doorstep” than those in Europe and feel somewhat disenfranchised by the scheme. However, from the beginning of 2008, the allocation of WREs per Federation was relaxed to enable, for example, up to 9 WREs to be staged in Australia and New Zealand (to-

gether) each year. A similar arrangement exists for other non-European regions.

The World Ranking scheme is not just for the runners, it benefits event quality too. Each WRE must have an independent licensed IOF Event Adviser who works closely with the WRE officials to ensure that appropriate standards are met.

So far so good. Let’s build on this in the next ten years.

World rankings, (as of 8 November)

Men

1) Daniel Hubmann (SUI) 5645 points, 2) Thierry Gueorgiou (FRA) 5541, 3) Andrey Khramov (RUS) 5513, 4) Emil Wingstedt (SWE) 5487, 5) Matthias Merz (SUI) 5485, 6) Anders Nordberg (NOR) 5472, 7) Peter Öberg (SWE) 5416, 8) Valentin Novikov (RUS) 5409, 9) Martin Johansson (SWE) 5397, 10) Pasi Ikonen (FIN) and Dmitry Tsvetkov (RUS) 5390.

Women

1) Heli Jukkola (FIN) 5698 points, 2) Minna Kauppi (FIN) 5678, 3) Anne Margrethe Hausken (NOR) 5671, 4) Helena Jansson (SWE) 5533, 5) Merja Rantanen (FIN) 5416, 6) Annika Billstam (SWE) 5415, 7) Emma Engstrand (SWE) 5414, 8) Tatyana Riabkina (RUS) 5407, 9) Marianne Andersen (NOR) and Signe Søres (DEN) 5406.

Federation league table

Men

1) SUI 95753 points, 2) NOR 95391, 3) SWE 92056, 4) FIN 91057, 5) GBR 80830, 6) DEN 78937, 7) ITA 75935, 8) AUS 72772, 9) NZL 67748, 10) RUS 67338.

Women

1) SWE 89369 points, 2) FIN 87630, 3) NOR 84141, 4) SUI 83058, 5) GBR 65759, 6) AUS 63669, 7) GER 51521, 8) LAT 50614, 9) CZE 49936, 10) NZL 47292.

PHOTOS: PAULA LEHTOMÄKI



Dmitry Tsvetkov ran the first leg when the Russian team took silver in the relay in the 2008 World Orienteering Championships. In the 2008 World Ranking list Dmitry holds tenth place together with Pasi Ikonen from Finland.

Anne Straube likes mental challenges – and also mud!

PHOTOS: PIRJO VALJANEN



Anne Straube, Germany, says that good navigation skills are not enough in trail orienteering. To work out the right answer, it's also necessary to love solving puzzles and to be patient and positive.

BY ERIK BORG

24 years ago, Anne Straube started orienteering at the age of nine. She liked running around the forest, getting muddy and having a mental challenge. In Olomouc she won the gold medal in the World Trail Orienteering Championships.

– More than 20 years' orienteering experience definitely helps for doing well in Trail Orienteering. In my case, my navigation improved massively when I got lame during adolescence and just didn't have the power to run round like a headless chicken any more. I suddenly had the time to carefully identify all the objects on the way, and enjoyed outwitting faster-running competitors by using a more direct line and not wasting time searching randomly in the circle, Anne says.

The World Champion in the open class says that good navigation skills are not enough in Trail Orienteering. It's also necessary to love solving puzzles and to be patient and positive,

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to work out the right answer. – You need to be able to make a decision even when not everything indicates one answer only. You have to get an understanding of different maps, and the suitability of different strategies to solve certain problems but be misleading for others. The best approach to learning this is mapping and planning Trail Orienteering courses oneself – something I did last spring for the first time. Trail Orienteering is also a perfect discipline in which to teach map-reading skills to children and beginners, she says.

Prefers the forest to water

The 33-year-old German is a biologist and has her own laboratory close to London. She is originally from Halle in the eastern part of Germany. The former orienteering star Karin Schmalfeld is from the same place, and Karin and Anne have been orienteering together. – We were a group of young people in Halle who often went away for a weekend of orienteering, slept in gym halls, and enjoyed our company together and the freedom from

parental supervision, says Anne.

Her older sister started orienteering before her and Anne got interested. – I was not elegant enough to continue with diving. I also liked the prospect of a sport where I had no need to be gracious and bend myself as though I was made of rubber. I very much preferred to cruise round the forest, get muddy and have a mental challenge, she says.

Anne's career in Trail Orienteering started six years ago. She heard about it when she got a lift with the father of a disabled child on the way home from an orienteering event. – Trail Orienteering sounded really interesting. A few months later, the European Trail Orienteering Championships were held in Germany and I decided to give it a go. I came second and I enjoyed it. I moved to the UK in 2004, which gave me the chance to do Trail Orienteering at the JK Easter event there. I came second again. When I heard that the World Championships would be held in Sweden later that year, I felt I should go and see if I could come second yet again and snatch one of those big IOF silver medals. I didn't, I was seventh, but I knew I could do better. So I had to stick with it to show that, says Anne.

No big change

Her gold medal hasn't changed her life. She says with a big sense of humour that she still has to get up in the morning, and nobody washes her socks either. – There has been some excitement here in Great Britain about what happened in the Czech Republic. My British club (SLOW) is very proud of their World Champion, and Trail Orienteering is regularly featured in the national orienteering magazine *CompassSport*. Also the cancer charity I am working for had a big article about me and Trail Orienteering in their monthly magazine, she says.

Anne is still orienteering and runs in the elite class, but isn't among the best. – As running speed doesn't matter for Trail Orienteering, my ambitions are to be at the top of the results. Nobody has won the World Trail Orienteering Championships twice yet, so this is definitely a goal. I might not be able to compete next summer in Hungary, but I will be back in 2010 in Norway, she says.

IOF World Events in 2009

World Masters Ski Orienteering Championships

10–11 January
Abtenau, AUT

Junior World Ski Orienteering Championships

25 January – 1 February
Dalarna, SWE

World Ski Orienteering Championships

3–8 March Rusutsu, Hokkaido, JPN

Orienteering World Cup

Event 1–2 (Open Nordic Championships)
9–10 June Salo, FIN

Junior World Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships

22–28 June Farum, DEN

Orienteering World Cup

Event 3–4 (Norsk O-Festival)
26–27 June Fossum, NOR

Junior World Orienteering Championships

5–12 July Trentino, ITA



**WORLD CUP
NOC 2009
SALO FINLAND**

World Games

16–26 July Kaohsiung, TPE

World Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships

9–16 August Ben Shemen, ISR

World Trail Orienteering Championships

18–23 August Miskolc, HUN

World Orienteering Championships

18–23 August Miskolc, HUN

Orienteering World Cup

Event 5–7 (WOC)
18–23 August Miskolc, HUN

Orienteering World Cup

Event 8–9 (Post Finance Sprint)
26–27 September Zurich, SUI

World Masters Orienteering Championships

10–18 October Sydney, AUS



News in brief

Collaboration Convention with FISU established

The IOF has recently signed a Collaboration Convention with the International University Sports Federation (FISU).

The convention seeks to foster the development of real collaboration between the two federations in the interests of both parties. Among other things, FISU and the IOF will encourage the practice of orienteering as a university sport for both men and women, encourage educational initiatives aimed at protecting the sport against the dangers of doping and violence, and liaise regarding the training of Event Advisers.

IOF represented at the 12th World Sport for All Congress

The IOF was represented at the 12th World Sport For All Congress 2008 held in Malaysia. The Congress was organised by the Olympic Council of Malaysia under the patronage of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and its Sport for All Commission, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF). The Congress was attended by 505 delegates from 96 countries.

The theme of the Congress was "Sport for All – for Life"; a theme very relevant to the sport of orienteering. Orienteering is mentally and physically challenging. Orienteering advocates and supports a healthy lifestyle, an active mind and body

as one of its fundamental values.

The next World Sport for All Congress will be held in Jyväskylä, Finland, June 2010.

Successful O-Ringen Academy

The 2008 O-Ringen Academy held in Sälen, Sweden, in late July, attracted a total of 35 participants from 11 countries on 5 continents. The programme of the Academy was similar to 2007 and the mix of people with differing levels of orienteering knowledge again proved successful this year.

The O-Ringen Academy is an annual development seminar held in conjunction with the Swedish O-Ringen 5-Days orienteering week. The next Academy will be held in Eksjö, Småland, Sweden, in the period 15–25 July 2009.