

# O-zine

Electronic Newsletter for the International Orienteering Federation

March 2001

EEP proposal:

## WOC and World Cup every year

By *Barbro Rönnerberg*

A World Orienteering Championship (WOC) every year and, in addition to that, an annual World Cup. Those are two of

the innovations proposed by the Elite Events Programme (EEP) group, which presented its first interim report in December.

- We wanted to communicate these and our

other thoughts about the future event programme now in order to create discussion and to get some feedback before we present our preliminary report in March, says the EEP chairman Björn Persson.

## Welcome to the O-zine!

O-zine is a new online magazine published by the IOF and meant to be used for communication with all members of the international orienteering family.

O-zine will be published 4-6 times a year, and you'll be able to pick up your own copy by downloading it from the IOF Internet home page at [www.orienteering.org](http://www.orienteering.org).

Would you perhaps like us to let you know when a new issue is being released? Just enter your e-mail address into our subscribers database and we'll notify you by e-mail!

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I sincerely hope that this new online magazine will prove to be an even better means of communication than its predecessor IOF Headlines. Enjoy reading the O-zine!

*Barbro Rönnerberg, Editor-in-Chief*

- In the EEP group we have discussed the issue in depth and concluded that there are several reasons to change the international event calendar to include a World Championship held every year.

- Such a change would assist us in generating more media coverage for orienteering, and it would also create more opportunities for the world elite orienteers to meet and compete for the title, says Björn Persson.

- One further advantage of having an annual WOC is that changes to the WOC programme could be implemented much more quickly than at present. With today's system it normally takes about four years to make changes to the programme.

### Only finals at the WOC

The EEP group would like the WOC week to consist solely of the final races for the different distances, and no qualification races. There are two reasons for this according to Björn Persson.

- First and foremost, the qualification races are not attractive from a media point of view, and we should try to create as intensive a programme as possible for the media representatives. They shouldn't be forced to 'hang around' for seven days or even more to cover, say, three events.

- Also, by excluding the qualifications, we can make it possible for the best athletes to fight for the World Champion titles in all the events. That would clearly be impossible if they were forced to run two or three qualification races in addition to the finals, concludes Persson.

### World Cup gateway to the WOC

- We do need to have more top level events each year than just the World Championships for the world elite runners. In the EEP group we believe that it's possible to develop the World Cup to serve as a gateway to the WOC and to provide the elite runners with an opportunity to compete at the highest level several times a year.

For those nations which have not secured their WOC participation through the World Cup races, special qualification events could be offered in conjunction with, i.e. just prior to, the WOC week.

The EEP group has proposed that the annual World Cup should consist of three rounds and that the WOC would consti-

tute the middle round. The first World Cup round is proposed to be held in the first half, and the final round in the latter half of the year.

- For the World Cup, all the events would count, and the winner of the overall competition would be the best orienteer of the year. The WOC winners would be the World Champions of their respective distances. The final round of the World Cup would qualify for next year's WOC, with the first round as the second qualifier, states Persson.

### Important to define the format

- The EEP group has also been asked to come up with a proposal for a future layered event programme. The IOF member federations have decided that Olympic inclusion should be one of our main goals. We need to keep this goal in mind when creating a well-defined range of "products" and when taking the final decision on the future competition programme.

- I don't think it is possible to get our current classic distance included in the programme of the Olympic Games. First of all, there are not many Olympic candidate cities that have suitable terrain for such an event.

- In addition, because of the crowded programme, the entire event must be concluded in no more than two hours. The EEP group has been discussing an Olympic Games format not too different from today's short distance race, with very technical orienteering and a winning time of 30-35 minutes. I believe that this type of event would be suitable for multi-sport games, such as the World Games and the Olympics.

- Today, there is no major difference between the distance. The winning time for sprint distance events is sometimes close to 20 minutes, whilst the short distance is often below 25 minutes.

- For people not involved in orienteering, it is extremely difficult to understand the difference between our various forms of races. We need to define the formats so that they are easily distinguishable, and not only by the length of the race, comments Björn Persson.

### Main principles, not details

- These are only some of the ideas we have been discussing in the EEP group. Our pre-

liminary report will soon be circulated to all the national federations for comments. At this stage I would like the discussion to centre around the vision and the main principles. Once we have a common view on the main route to take, it will be time for the fine-tuning.

When we have received the comments from the federations, we will make any changes necessary before final presentation to the IOF Council. I look forward to receiving as extensive feedback as possible so that the IOF can present a really good proposal for deliberation at the Presidents' Conference in Tampere, concludes Björn Persson.



## Commemorative WOC 2001 stamp

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, the Finnish Post Office, Finland Post Ltd, will release a commemorative WOC 2001 stamp with the face value of FIM 3.60. The stamp has been designed by Mr. Ken Nikander and features a compass. Philatelists and anyone else interested in ordering the stamp are recommended to visit the on-line shop at <http://www.posti.fi/english/index.html>

# Let the Games begin!

Five months left until the WOC 2001 begins

By *Tommi Roimela*

The organisers of the 2001 World Orienteering Championships are now in the final, hectic run-in to the event. Only five months are now left until D-Day, when Tampere will be invaded by the world's best elite orienteers and their supporters. The opening ceremony will be held on Saturday 28 July, and by the time the Championships are concluded on Saturday 4 August, six individual World Champions and eight relay World Champions will have been crowned.

Despite the hectic time ahead of him, Secretary General Tuomo Haanpää does not appear to be feeling the strain. He is determined to make the Championships a great success.

– We have promised that this WOC would be the best ever, and I have no reason to believe otherwise. We have prepared for the championships very carefully and now it just remains for us to put in the final effort before we are ready to let the Games begin, says Haanpää.

### A high overall standard is the goal

The organisers' goal is to make everybody feel welcome and catered for. Besides organising top quality races for the world's best orienteers, the organisers are aiming to provide an equally high level of quality in all their efforts. The Tampere Hall congress and concert centre is the main event

centre, the Police Academy will offer appropriate accommodation for the teams, the victory ceremonies are to be held in downtown Tampere, and a big video screen in the event centre will guarantee that the spectators can follow the excitement of the race action in the forest. The organisers have also invested a considerable amount of work in order to make the 2001 WOC an environmentally friendly event.

- The Finnish Broadcasting Company, YLE, will be playing a major role in making these events good PR for orienteering. The TV coverage will be both extensive and of high-quality, comments Tuomo Haanpää.

### Four public events

The organisers are expecting a lot of spectators. However, just watching is not enough for most orienteers, and that's why the organising clubs, Tampereen Pyrintö and KooVee, have chosen to arrange the traditional Tampere Games in conjunction with the WOC-week.

– The spectators will have the opportunity to experience the WOC terrain themselves. The first public race will be organised on Sunday, 29 July, prior to the first ever WOC sprint event, with the fourth and final public event is scheduled for Friday 3 August, explains Haanpää.

There will also be an extensive programme for those who prefer the role of spectator rather than running themselves. The sprint event on Sunday will be followed by the classic distance qualification race on Monday 30 July, with the classic distance final on Tuesday 31 July. The relays are scheduled for Thursday 2 August, the short distance qualification for Friday 3 August, and the whole week will be rounded off by the short distance finals on Saturday 4 August.

In addition to the WOC and the spectator races, there is a lot more on offer in Tampere in late July and first week of August. The first two events of the 2001 Mountain-Bike Orienteering World Cup series will be organised on 30 July and 1 August, and the 2001 World Cup in Trail Orienteering will be staged on 29 and 30 July.



The Finnish Broadcasting company will be present in the World Championships in Tampere, also interviewing the runners.

And as if all of that is no enough, the City of Tampere will be beautifully decorated at the time of the WOC, thanks to the 18<sup>th</sup> Tampere Floral Festival.

- We look forward to welcoming the world's orienteers to Tampere, and we'll do our utmost to make their stay enjoyable, concludes Tuomo Haanpää.



# Speed and spectator-friendliness

- characteristics of the WOC Sprint

By Tommi Roimela

For many reasons, the first ever World Championship sprint event will be the focus of attention at the forthcoming WOC in Tampere, Finland. The fact that at the time the decision to introduce this new WOC distance was taken nobody actually knew what kind of a competition it would be, is adding to the great interest shown by everybody involved. The 2001 WOC sprint will be a pilot event, and may possibly provide a model for the future, but the final

format of future WOC sprint events will only be decided at a later date.

## High tempo event

When the IOF asked the organisers whether they would be willing to organise this innovative WOC event, in addition to the programme already agreed, they considered it a great challenge and decided to take up the gauntlet. They feel confident that the sprint is going to be a success. The event will be run in the Kauppi area, close to the heart of the City of Tampere. In brief,

the event could best be described by the words speed, extremely demanding and spectator-friendly.

The tempo of the sprint event will be high. Both the men's and the women's race will have a maximum of 60 pre-qualified runners. No qualification races will be run - the World Champions will be crowned on the basis of one single event with a winning time of 12-13 minutes.

The decision to introduce a WOC sprint created a lively discussion about the format of this new event. Should the sprint be organised in a park, in the forest or in some other terrain? With the choice of the Kauppi area as the race terrain, the WOC organisers offer a little bit of this and a little bit of that. There are plenty of paths and roads in the terrain, and quite a few buildings and open areas, but part of the event will also be run in forested terrain.

## Fairness aspects taken into account

One of the innovations to be introduced in the sprint event is that the competitors will be allowed to acquaint themselves with the terrain beforehand. This has been done in order to ensure as high a degree of fairness as possible. This 'model event' is scheduled for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July. After that, the area will be closed and the control markers and the punching devices will be put into place.

Traditionally in park events, there has not normally been any restrictions in relation to spectators in the competition area. To ensure fairness, the spectators will not be allowed to move about unrestricted in the World Championship sprint race terrain. The public-friendliness of the event will be catered for by offering a specially marked area in the terrain for the spectators so that they can see the athletes in action along the route. This area will also be marked on the competitors' map which will be at a scale of 1:5,000 and a contour interval of just 2 metres.

Athletes as well as media representatives and spectators can indeed look forward to experiencing a spectacular and extremely thrilling sprint event on the 29 July!



The sprint race will be introduced for the first time on the World Champion level in Tampere and the organisers promise that it will be a very spectator-friendly competition.

Still going strong:

# Allan Mogensen ready to conquer Tampere

By Nina Vanhatalo

The 1993 World Classic Race Champion - Allan Mogensen of Denmark - is looking forward with enthusiasm to the autumn and the World Championships in Tampere.

Mogensen, who currently heads the world ranking list, has re-found his motivation and inspiration for elite orienteering and is one of the potential medallists in Tampere.

One of the critical points in Mogensen's orienteering career was just after the WOC in Scotland in 1999. Since becoming World Champion in 1993, he had experienced a few less successful seasons for a variety of reasons. Injury problems had spoiled several seasons and he also took some time off in order to finish his university studies. He left the 1999 World Championships in Scotland feeling that all his motivation had gone.

The winter of 1999/2000 came and went on and Mogensen started to think about his future.

- In December 1999 I still wasn't sure what to do but I forced myself to run. I thought that if I don't start to train now, it definitely means quitting. Then, by February last year I noticed that I was actually in quite good form and I also started to enjoy orienteering once again, explains Mogensen.

The result was that he started last season, the World Cup season, with excellent results in Japan and remained at the top for almost the whole season. He still had a chance of the overall World Cup title in the last World Cup competitions in Portugal, but ended up in third spot.

But, after that, there was no more question of not participating in this year's World Championships in Tampere.

## 100 percent concentration

This season Mogensen also decided to make more effort. He has given up his job in Oslo, Norway and as of the first of February has moved to Stockholm, Sweden.

- As I need mostly technique training now, there was too much snow in Oslo for me to

train properly. I decided to move to Sweden because it was easy to arrange through my team-mate Chris Terkelsen who has also moved to Stockholm, and also because there is the same type of terrain in the Stockholm area as we will probably encounter in Tampere, comments Mogensen and says that his technique training amounts to about 8 hours a week.

Mogensen is now very enthusiastic and motivated. He believes that the good training opportunities, his new-found enthusiasm for elite racing and the his 100 percent concentration on orienteering will give him great opportunities of succeeding in what may be his last major championships.

- Last year I regained the fun in orienteering. I took part in races without any specific desire to succeed. I just had fun and enjoyed the new experience and the success just followed.

Full concentration on orienteering is nothing to Allan Mogensen. He has done this twice before. He had taken a year off prior to his World Championship victory in 1993, and also before the 1999 World Championships in Scotland. Mogensen believes that 100 percent concentration on orienteering makes a difference.

- Surprisingly, there are still many top elite runners who work while still training for top level competition. I believe their success will then depend on the performance and amount of mistakes made by others. But when you know that you are in a good form and you've given 100 percent in preparing yourself, then you don't have to worry about the others.

## Mentally-challenging competitions

So Allan Mogensen is confident about this year's competition. Increased financial contribution from Danish government agencies has made it possible for him to focus solely on the WOC.

In his opinion six competitions in seven days is a lot, but not impossible for the ones who are in top form.

- I believe that some athletes may be physically prepared for all the races, but mentally this will present a tough challenge.

It is easy to believe that Mogensen will be one of those who will also be mentally prepared as he has actually represented Denmark in over 100 top-flight races.

- It is much easier to gain international experience running for Denmark than it is for example in the other Nordic countries. In Denmark it is easier to gain a place on the team at the age of 20, while other established orienteering countries don't often select new team members before they are 24 or 25 years old.

- My main focus will of course be the classic race. But if I feel that I am in a very good form, I might even consider all the races, including the sprint, comments Mogensen and adds that he has included the larger-scale maps into his training.

Above all, Mogensen is expecting excellent orienteering races in Tampere.

- I've re-found the fun aspect of orienteering and the most fun in orienteering is to run a perfect race on a perfect course and a perfect map, and that is what I am expecting to experience in Tampere, concludes Mogensen.



World Champion in 1993, Allan Mogensen, expects to find perfect competitions in Tampere.





# Orienteering on the stage:

Tampere Hall is the main event centre

*By Tommi Roimela*

Tampere Hall, the main event centre of the 2001 World Orienteering Championships, will provide orienteering with a completely new type of venue.

This congress and concert centre, the pride and joy of the City of Tampere, will no doubt be the most fashionable event centre so far in the history of orienteering. There is good reason to say that the exciting sport of orienteering which is normally associated with forests and wilderness terrain, will now be making its stage début.

Right from the very beginning, Jyrki Laiho, the City of Tampere representative on the WOC organising committee, has considered Tampere Hall to be the natural choice of event centre.

- I have been involved in this project ever since 1996 when Finland applied to host the WOC, and already at that early stage Tampere Hall was viewed as the perfect event centre, recalls Laiho.

The City of Tampere is indeed providing a very warm welcome to the World

Orienteering Championships, and their willingness to, literally speaking, 'let the orienteers into' Tampere Hall is just one, but perhaps the best indicator of their extremely positive attitude towards the event.

- This is in accordance with our established policy. We have chosen to participate in, and to support, world elite sports events organised in Tampere, and we also want the City to be visible during the event.

- We do not, however, just throw money into the events without expecting to gain some benefit in return. That is why we always try to bring in something new which the city and the citizens can benefit from after the event as well, explains Laiho.

With good reason the organisers express their great appreciation of the support provided by the City of Tampere.

- The organising clubs owe the city authorities a big thank you. The co-operation has really run smoothly and efficiently and we would not have been able to offer such a spectacular setting without their support, states WOC 2001 Secretary General Tuomo Haanpää.

## **WOC 2001 - a good movie?**

What then can Tampere Hall offer? In addition to functioning as the main event centre, it will also be the main media centre. Tampere Hall will also be the information centre for the Trail Orienteering World Cup and the Mountain Bike Orienteering World Cup events. In addition, the congress centre facilities offer excellent exhibition space for the WOC 2001 sponsors and other partners.

As the media centre, Tampere Hall really offers something new. It will, at least in theory, be possible for the journalists to do their job without even visiting the competition centres, as they will be able to watch the events from a big screen in the media centre! Let's hope that it will be a good movie...

- I would also recommend spectators to take the opportunity of visiting Tampere Hall, says Tuomo Haanpää.

- If not earlier in the week, then please join us for the prize-giving ceremony on Saturday, 4 August, when the short distance World Champions will be crowned at Tampere Hall.

