

World Masters Games and orienteering

- a mutually beneficial relationship

PHOTO COURTESY: IWGA



The IOF President Sue Harvey is a member of the IMGA board of Governors and a member of the IWGA (International World Games Association) Executive Committee. At a meeting held in Lausanne earlier this year, the IWGA ExCo members were pictured together with the IOC President Jacques Rogge and IOC Sports Director Gilbert Felli.

BY BARBRO RÖNNBERG

Every four years, thousands of people are drawn to one of the world's biggest multi-sports festivals, the World Masters Games. In 2002, these Games will be organised in Melbourne, Australia, and for the first time ever, the World Masters Orienteering Championships (WMOC) will be part of the Games programme.

The World Masters Games is owned and governed by the International Masters Games Association (IMGA), which is recognised by the International Olympic Committee and a member of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF). The IMGA is made up of 15 international federations who represent the core sports included in the Games.

Orienteering is one of these core sports and the IOF President Sue Harvey is a member of the IMGA Board of Governors.

Inclusion of orienteering beneficial for both parties

“We can benefit in many ways from bringing the WMOC into the World Masters Games every fourth year”, says Sue Harvey.

In this issue: World Masters Games and orienteering - an interview with Sue Harvey; WMOC 2002 reminders; Enjoy the Unique Outback and the Edge of the World; Luder and Ikonen Lead in World Cup; IOF Foot Orienteering Events in 2004.

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BARBRO RÖNNBERG
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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“It is a means of getting orienteering recognised as a mainstream sport with the intention, ultimately, of getting into the Olympic programme. It also provides our athletes with the opportunity to experience being part of an event of this size and scope, and it shows the public and other sportspeople the strength and breadth of orienteering as a sport for life. And last but not least, it is a way of raising the profile of the sport so that we can get sponsorship, funding and recruits. All of these are essential for the future of the sport world-wide. Put another way: with no money, and no recruits, there may not be orienteering in 20 years’ time”, Sue Harvey continues.

“There are so many sports and leisure activities now, that it is vain to believe that recruits will just come to orienteering even if no-one has heard of the sport. Any activity must be known and seen to have a sporting chance of its intrinsic magic working to bring in recruits. One way of achieving this is to bring the WMOC into the World Masters Games. Equally, if we do not amalgamate the two, they will compete against each other. That would achieve the aims of neither.”

Nature of the sport creates a challenge

“I believe the biggest challenges for us when we integrate orienteering with a multi-sport Games arise from two things, i.e. the nature of our sport (and our sportspeople), and the fact that orienteering is a non-stadium sport. Both the World Games and the World Masters Games are based on the use of existing facilities. In an arena sport, the stadium is a given factor. You may like, or not like, the 20 year old swimming pool on offer, but you must accept it. Officials and athletes have to adapt. Orienteers, on the other hand, have grown accustomed to doing things their way. We are not used to accommodating the ways of others. Meanwhile, sports event organisers are not

used to having to create an arena in a forest. Patience and a willingness to learn will be needed from both sides.”

“The nature of our sport also means that we are perfectionists and corner-cutters. That is what the ‘thought sport’ is all about. Orienteers like to work out the best way of doing things and we like things ‘right’. The nature of our sport is to take the shortest route. We are intolerant of inefficiency.”

“These qualities are one reason we have a high standard of event organisation. They also make it harder for us to integrate with others who do things differently or who are unable to understand the importance we may place on certain things. The majority of our federations have said the Olympics Games is a primary goal for the IOF. We must remember that we cannot expect to get into the Olympic programme if we cannot cope with fitting our event into a World Games or World Masters Games - where requirements are more adaptable, and competition for slots is less intense. We cannot expect to receive the rewards of Olympic participation if we are not prepared to make the sacrifices necessary to fit our sport in.

We have to give to get

“We should remember the “we for them” approach and ask ourselves what a Games gets from including orienteering. If it is nothing, why would they want to put orienteering in? Certainly not for the gate money. For the World Masters Games, in particular, I think we have much to offer: a well attended masters event, with high standards of competition and fit competitors that can bring prestige to the Games and provide 5-10% of the total participants. The masters section of many sports is in its infancy. Our sport is one of the best developed at masters level. Our objective must be to show this to the sporting world”, Sue Harvey concludes.



PHOTO: ERIC MORRIS

In a nutshell: WMOC 2002 REMINDERS

- * Closing dates for entries is 5 July
- * Some accommodation in Bendigo is still available, but orienteers may not be able to obtain their first choice unless they book soon
- * Free transport will provided to the World Masters Games Opening Ceremony at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on October 6
- * The all-age Victorian Championships will be held on the day following the WMOC finals using the same terrain. A 2-day event for competitors under 35 will be available on the qualifying race areas.
- * The WMOC Dinner will be on Wed October 9 – the night of the second qualification race. A booking form for the WMOC Dinner and Victorian Championships is available at the Victorian Orienteering Association website at www.vicorienteering.asn.au
- * Full details of the Victorian Championships, WMOC Dinner and other social events are available in Bulletin 2 on the orienteering section of official Games website at www.2002worldmasters.org.

Carnival Down Under:

Enjoy the Unique Outback and the Edge of the World

BY PETER SEARLE

In the week prior to the 2002 World Masters Orienteering Championships (WMOC), the Carnival Down Under begins with a week-long program of events in South Australia. The carnival opens on September 29 with the South Australian Championships, to be held about 50 km from the state capital, Adelaide, and on the southern side of one of Australia's premier wine districts, the Barossa Valley. The South Australian Championships will be a classic-style event in spur-gully terrain with pine forest, some native forest, and areas of rock detail.

The Championships will be followed by a unique outback experience, as the carnival moves north to the Flinders Ranges, where all events will be in the shadow of Wilpena Pound, a stunning example of Australian rugged outback mountain ranges. The razorback quartzite ridges form a spectacular backdrop to the competition area. The Flinders Ranges are arid with an average annual rainfall of 250-300 mm, and daytime temperatures during October of 20-25°C. Sunny days prevail, making the conditions ideal for orienteering.

The programme of the Champs Carnival is as follows:

Sat 28 Sep: Warm-up for the S.A. Champs. at Wirra Wirra

Sun 29 Sep: S.A. Champs at Pewsey Vale

alongside Kaiser Stuhl in the Barossa Valley
Tue 1 Oct: The Outback Challenge at Rawnsley Park, near Wilpena, Flinders Ranges

Thu 3 Oct: The Australian Relay Champs, near Rawnsley Park. In the afternoon the model area for the Australian Champs will be open.

Fri 4 Oct: The model event area will be open again in the afternoon

Sat 5 Oct: The Australian Classic Orienteering Championships 2002

Enquiries may be made to the Carnival Secretary (pdavill@senet.com.au), or the Carnival Coordinator (aruppill@chariot.net.au). For accommodation information try jjlyon@senet.com.au or visit www.oasa.asn.au.

Deadline for entries for the Australian Championships Carnival is 31 July for overseas entrants and 12 August for Australian based participants. Entry forms are available at www.oasa.asn.au

Contrasting terrain

The Outback Challenge, Australian Relay Championships and Australian Individual Championships will all be held in testing but fast running terrain, with subtle spur-gully topography, cover of Australian native pine with some open areas. The individual championships will be classic distance and the men's and women's elite

class is an IOF ranking event. The contrasting terrain in this week of events will provide an excellent preamble to WMOC in the following week.

In the week following the WMOC, you can complete your Australian visit with "an island experience on the edge of the world" at the Tasmanian Orienteering Carnival 15 – 20 October 2002. The Tasmanian Carnival offers orienteers the opportunity to enjoy a relaxed island experience and good orienteering in the excellent terrain first used for the Veteran World Cup (now WMOC) in 1992.

"If I was obliged to emigrate I should prefer this place ..."

Those were the words of Charles Darwin on visiting Tasmania on board the Beagle in 1836. Today, Tasmania is a unique island with large areas of world heritage wilderness and coastal and mountain national parks. It has a wild and beautiful landscape, clean air, pleasant temperate climate, wonderful food and wines. It is a very safe destination for travelers and has been voted "friendliest island in the world" (*Condé Nast Traveler, 2001*).

Visit the Tasmanian Orienteering Carnival website (www.tasorienteeing.asn.au) for the latest event information with links to Tasmanian tourist information and travel details.



PHOTO: ALICE PRUDHOE



Luder and Ikonen Lead in World Cup

BY CLIVE ALLEN

World Champions Simone Luder (Switzerland) and Pasi Ikonen (Finland) head the 2002 World Cup points tables after the first round of events held in Belgium and Switzerland.

Simone Luder strengthened her position as the best female orienteer in the world with three convincing victories from the four individual events in the round. After a 5th placing in the first event (won by compatriot Vroni König-Salmi), she swept to victory by more than 3½ minutes in the long distance race in Belgium – an impressive margin in a World Cup race. This was followed by clear-cut wins in the sprint and long distance races on home terrain. Luder moves to top place in the World Rankings as a result of her success.

Four Different Winners

The four men's races had four different winners: Marian Davidik (Slovakia), Pasi Ikonen, Yuri Omeltchenko (Ukraine) and Bjørnar Valstad (Norway). Ikonen had the best overall results whilst Valentin Novikov (Russia) with two second places holds second position in the World Cup points table.

Nine nations in all were represented in the top three placings in the four races. Davidik, a runner who has established himself amongst the best over the past two years, is the first-ever winner of a World Cup race from Slovakia.

Mass Start Excitement

The final event in the round, a mass start long distance race, met the IOF's call for more excitement for spectators to the full. With three loops on the course and a long climb through the race arena, there was plenty for the many watchers to cheer.

Winners in the relay event were Sweden (women) and Russia (men), with Switzerland second in both races.

Norway and Sweden Next

Norway and Sweden host the second round of the 2002 World Cup starting on 30th June. How will the more technical Scandinavian terrain affect individual performance? We will know in 3 weeks' time!

Log in to the **World Cup Web Portal** on the IOF website www.orienteering.org for full results, stories, World Cup points lists and more - and the **latest World Rankings**.

World Cup 2002 - Standings as of 9 June

Men

1. Pasi Ikonen FIN 163, 2. Valentin Novikov RUS 156, 3. Jani Lakanen FIN 138, 4. Bjørnar Valstad NOR 135, 5. Yuri Omeltchenko UKR 121, 6. Mats Haldin FIN 110, 7. Mikhail Mamleev RUS and Marian Davidik SVK 106, 9. Carsten Jørgensen DEN and Janus Porzycz POL 103.

Women

1. Simone Luder SUI 186, 2. Hanne Staff NOR 158, 3. Vroni Koenig-Salmi SUI 156, 4. Katarina Allberg SWE 149, 5. Anette Granstedt SWE 136, 6. Karin Hellman SWE 130, 7. Emma Engstrand SWE 125, 8. Heather Monro GBR 124, 9. Brigitte Wolf SUI 121, 10. Karin Schmalfeld GER 119.

IOF Foot Orienteering Events in 2004

World Cup

Round 1: July 10-17, DEN (also European Championships)

Round 2: September 11 - 19, SWE (World Orienteering Championships)

Round 3: October 19 - 24, GER (final round)

Junior World Orienteering Championships

5-10 July, RUS

World Masters Orienteering Championships

3-10 July, ITA