

The 2006 World Orienteering Championships:

Denmark is well prepared

BY CLIVE ALLEN

Denmark is the host for the 2006 World Championships (WOC), to be held in Jutland from 29th July to 5th August. Denmark last staged a World Championships back in 1974, when the World Champions in the only individual format were home runner Mona Nørgaard and the Swede Bernt Frilén, and both relays were won by Sweden. Silkeborg, the venue in 1974, is again the focal point for the forest-based races, whilst the main ceremonies and the sprint races will be held in Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark, situated on Jutland's east coast. 41 of IOF's 48 full-member nations have entered – a record total equal to that competing in Switzerland in 2003.

Denmark was awarded WOC 2006 at the IOF Congress in 2002, and preparations have been under way ever since. Seven clubs have joined together to provide all the organisation and expertise needed to stage a WOC, with Flemming Nørgaard taking the lead organising role of Event Director. Ambition has been high from the start, and in quite a number of ways it looks as though the development of WOC in competition quality, facilities for runners, the media and spectators, and perhaps



especially presentation to the world at large, will take another step forward with this year's WOC.

Arena production a high priority

Top quality arena production has been high on the priority list for the organisers. TV contracts have been signed with the national TV company DR, which will transmit a 45-minute programme during the evening after each of the individual Finals and the relay, and the Swedish company Filmhouse which has expertise from WOC 2004, Tio Mila and elsewhere. Up to 10 cameras will be in use in the arena and out in the terrain. Their edited output will be shown on the big display screen in each arena, backed up by lively commentary and plenty of opportunity to see the runners in action directly.

For only the second time at a WOC,

electronic tracking of competitors will be used. The Danish system TracTrac has proved its reliability at a number of orienteering events already and will be used to some degree in all the finals and the relay. Runners will carry a harness with a GPS transmitter linked via satellite with decoding software back at base, which will enable the runner's exact position to be tracked and shown on the orienteering map. Route choices and direction in the forest, mistakes and hesitations, all can be picked up as the runners progress round their courses. Extracts from the tracking data will be shown on screen and in a special summary presentation each evening in the Event Centre.

Sprint day showpiece

The big showpiece is the Opening Ceremony and sprint Finals on Tuesday August 1st, which will be graced by the presence of WOC 2006's Patron, Crown Prince Frederik. The arena for these events will be sited in open parkland in Mindeparken immediately opposite the royal residence in Aarhus, Marselisborg Slot. The organisers are hoping for a big turn-out of Aarhus residents to cheer on the Danish team and provide a great atmosphere for the occasion.

In this issue: The 2006 World Orienteering Championships: Denmark is well prepared; Minna Kauppi – in a hurry!; Emil Wingstedt gets most fun from Championships; Olle Kärner: "I'm not always in a hurry any more"; No training in Denmark for Martins Sirmais; Marianne Andersen – Norway's best, she trains the most.

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Good reading!

BARBRO RÖNNBERG
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The long distance final the following day is in a majestic area new to orienteering consisting of two large forest estates; all the team supporters attending WOC will have the chance to run there the following day, in one of the stages of the 6-day WOC Tour. New terrain is hard to find in Denmark, but two of the most challenging areas in Jutland, neither used for some time, have been chosen for the middle distance final and the relay.

IOF Congress also in Aarhus

As well as all the action out in the terrain, there will be plenty of mental activity in the Event Centre in Aarhus: the biennial IOF Congress takes place during WOC week and there will be meetings of the IOF Council and the IOF Commissions, specialist seminars on arena production and computerised mapping, and a number of other meetings. The Congress agenda includes items on the IOF's strategic directions for the period 2006 – 2012 and a new procedure for the appointment of World Championship organisers.

WOC – a festival for everyone

The WOC aim of creating a festival for everyone is well under way to fulfilment. By the end of July, the population of east Jutland will be well informed about WOC by means of a free paper to be delivered to every household. More than 2,000 visitors from other countries will be coming to support their teams and compete in the 6-day open event, and there will be a full programme of activities every evening in the WOC Tour Event Centre in Aarhus. For young orienteers there is a Youth camp immediately prior to WOC. A huge number of volunteer helpers has been recruited to make the massive organisation machine that is a modern-day WOC roll smoothly and to everyone's enjoyment and satisfaction.

There will be live commentary and action from the individual finals and the relay together with all the results on the WOC website www.woc2006.dk, and the IOF Web Portal on www.orienteering.org will as usual carry news, leading results, interviews and pictures.

Minna Kauppi – in a hurry!

BY ERIK BORG

Minna Kauppi has made an extraordinary start among the seniors. In the World Cup and European Championships in Estonia earlier this year, the 23-year-old Finn was the only athlete with medals from every distance.

What's the reason for your rapid success among the seniors?

– I've participated in sport for such a long time – ever since I started walking. Besides that I've always been impatient. I want to have everything now and not later. I'm always looking for ways to improve, because I'm a bit of a perfectionist. And I've also always loved competing and all the time I have been quite strong physically, says Minna.

The Finn won two gold and two bronze medals in Estonia. She won her one individual gold at Middle Distance. In the relay she was the first to finish the last leg, after a tight finish.

What does this big success in Estonia mean for you?

– It means that I'm ready to rock in the WOC!

Priority – Middle Distance

Will you run in everything at WOC in Denmark?

– We'll have to see. I will make that decision later in the summer, but one thing's for sure: I won't miss the Middle, says Minna.

Her gold in the Middle Distance in Estonia was won wearing a shoe that was a bit abnormal. Just before the Final, the Finnish trainer Janne Salmi used his knife on Minna Kauppi's right shoe and made a big hole, so that she could run with less pain. The last two-three weeks before the races in Estonia hadn't been that easy training-wise for Minna because her right foot was inflamed. During May it was fully healed



PHOTO: ERIK BORG

Minna Kauppi out in the forest on the Middle Distance course.

and Minna could again run with normal shoes.

Studying language

Minna is studying alongside all her sport: she is a fourth-year student of languages at Jyväskylän University.

– My major subject is Swedish but I am doing some French studies as well and I'm about to start English too. I study almost like all the others, but in springtime I concentrate mainly on orienteering.

Will not leave her compass

For five-and-a-half years now she has been living together with Pasi Ikonen (25). He won the Middle Distance at WOC in Finland in 2001. That gold was won without a compass in his hand: he simply never uses one.

– Pasi would like me to say that he's the reason for my success. He's my trainer and of course it's been helpful to see how such a good orienteer thinks. On the other hand I would never leave my compass behind completely, says Minna.

Olle Kärner:

"I'm not always in a hurry any more"

BY ERIK BORG

For a long time now, Olle Kärner has been among the best orienteers in the world. On home ground in Estonia this year, he won his first international medal.

What has life been like since you won the medal?

– It's been great! It seems that I have more time now. I've got something that I've wanted for a long time, and now I'm not always in a hurry any more. The medal has helped me in many ways, also economically. But that will not last forever. I have to go on, says the Estonian.

A long time since the previous Estonian medal

Olle's medal was the first medal at senior level for Estonia since Sixten Sild's medal at long distance in the 1991 World Championships – 15 years ago.

How come you are the first to get a medal since Sixten's success?

– There are runners who have tried. Maybe we have to be more patient. But Estonia right now certainly has young and talented runners who can go all the way up. But it takes time and dedication, he says.

How have you come to be so good in orienteering?

– I do like the sport very very much! But I don't think I'm 'so good' yet. I can be better. I'm probably the world's worst sprint orienteer, and I definitely have room for progress in middle as well. Long is not perfect either. There is still a lot of work left to be done, he says.

Athletic training

He's a full time orienteer and lives in www.orienteering.org

Olle Kärner has been among the best in world for some years. On home ground in Estonia he won his first international medal.



PHOTO: ERIK BORG

Tartu, the city where the World Cup and European Championship sprint was held. He mostly trains alone.

– I have some friends amongst distance runners whom I train with sometimes. They have run the marathon in 2:18. They are better than me on the roads and I gain a lot from those work-outs. I especially like running with them in the winter.

Looking a long way forward

Olle runs for the Swedish club Leksand, and from time to time he has spent some weeks at training camps in Sweden. He likes the terrain in Scandinavia and he wants to run one more World Championship in Nordic terrain.

— I haven't set a date to finish my career. Basically, I'll continue as long as it's fun. But there's one more thing: I'd like to run WOC in Nordic terrain again. I ran in Finland 2001 and Sweden in 2004, and enjoyed those terrains. I'm not into continental terrain that much, he says.

Olle's next chance for Scandinavian terrain is not before 2010 at least. Trondheim in the middle of Norway is one of the candidates for the Championships that year, but it will be 2011 if the 2010 WOC is awarded to France.

Sister in Denmark

He's preparing mostly in Estonia for the big event in Denmark, but there is a training camp in Silkeborg with the national team at the end of June. He is also getting good help from his sister Kersti, who lives in Copenhagen.

– She has helped me a lot, for example with maps, accommodation and the like. The Danish national team coach Jakob Ødum also deserves big thanks for helping me with maps.

And what's the goal in Denmark now?

– Always the same – run as well as I can!

If Olle can do that perfectly it could be really nice to be an Estonian in Denmark.

Emil Wingstedt gets most fun from Championships

BY ERIK BORG

Emil Wingstedt is father of a small child, king of sprint and thinks that orienteering is more fun than ever, because the international championships give something extra.

– I have never kept going just to achieve results goals. Orienteering and training are things I enjoy extremely much. At the same time it is actually orienteering which has become most fun, since I can run in these championships, says Emil.

The Swede is the big male star in the shortest format in championship orienteering. He won the sprint yet again at the European Championships in Estonia – as he did in WOC last year, the European Championships in 2002 and 2004 and the Nordic Championships in 2003.

On 18th January last year, baby Liam joined the family of Emil and his partner Anja Mattick. This has altered the amount of commitment Emil puts in.

– It goes without saying that my com-

mitments will not affect my family, and until now I have been able to avoid that happening. I have not travelled so much this year as in the past, he says.

Short visit

He wasn't in Estonia for long either. In the selection races a couple of weeks prior to the event, Emil did not run particularly well. He had no special motivation to travel to Estonia.

– I was uncertain about my form, and I wanted to get in a good period of training in May. By running just the sprint and middle distance and going relatively late to Estonia, I could do both, he says. In the middle distance he finished sixth and immediately afterwards he drove home again. He had no wish to be in Estonia longer; it was better to be at home for more training.

WOC most important

What did your results in Estonia mean for your training and motivation?

– Nothing, he says. The World Championships is the big goal. Last year, Emil ran the long distance and relay as well as the sprint. The long distance was the biggest goal, but he had not really got over winning the sprint, and his run did not go well. What he runs this year will be decided after the Swedish selection races.

How are you preparing for Denmark and the terrain there?

– I have been to one training camp and will attend another in July, both with the national team. I will have run about 15 training exercises in WOC-relevant terrain this year.”

Plenty of room for improvement

Emil thinks he can be better at everything, and that is also a benchmark for his training at home in Halden. He has lived in the Norwegian town close to the border with Sweden since 2002. Before that he lived in Trondheim in the middle of Norway, where he was educated as a civil engineer. He came to Trondheim in 1995.

Apart from his time with his family and sport, he works 70% of full time at the Institutt for Energiteknikk (IFE).

– IFE is a research institute which has as its aim, amongst other things, improving the efficiency of power stations. My work is directed towards development and maintenance of a program for the calculation of heat exchange connected with turbine revolutions in power stations, says Emil.

If you take a peep forward to consider how long Emil will continue with orienteering, it could be a fair time yet, because Emil has the following goal for his efforts:

– I will keep going until I get fed up with it or my performance is too poor!, he says.

Emil Wingstedt ran the sixth leg for his club Halden SK in the recent Jukola relay in Salo, Finland.

PHOTO: PIRJO VALJANEN



No training in Denmark for Martins Sirmais

BY ERIK BORG

Martins Sirmais is one of the best orienteers in the world and a candidate for good results at the World Championships (WOC) in Denmark, but any medals he wins will not be the result of good preparations in Danish terrain.

– There have been no Latvian training camps in Denmark – there isn't enough money for that. Maybe I have achieved my best with second place at Middle Distance in the European Orienteering Championships? Anyway I will train as hard as I can and see what happens in Denmark, says Martins. The Latvian was only seven seconds behind Thierry Gueorgiou in the Middle Distance in the European Championships in Estonia; the 'Middle Distance phantom' from France was almost beaten.

– I was of course close to Thierry, and that's orienteering. Nobody knows the results before the start. But on the Final start list I can read 51 runner's names and ask myself, which of them is worse than me? The answer is nobody. Every one is strong and good enough to be in the top 3! he says.

The silver in Estonia was the first international medal for a Latvian in orienteering. At WOC in Japan last year Martins was sixth in the sprint. He is focusing on sprint and middle distance in Denmark.

Very popular

The great result in Estonia has been very popular at home.

– I have been very happy after winning my silver medal. There have been a lot of interviews in the most popular magazines such as "Ieva" and "Sports". In these interviews I have promoted orienteering because it is not just running, it needs brain work too. Every orienteer in Latvia has a dream of getting into the top 3 in the world – and the open European Championships is like WOC because the competitors are the same. Every older orienteer asks me: Have

you understood, what you did, Martin? My answer is that I have done my job well, but I am not really sure what happened, says Martins.

His medal is a great inspiration for young orienteers. They can see that anything is possible. There could soon be more stars from Latvia. — We have many new young and talented runners; let's see what happens in a few years' time, Martin says.

Ten years work

Why have you become so good at orienteering?

– There is no single answer. It took me 10 years to get to this level, the last three of them in the elite group. But the first and main thing is experience. I have done enough training to be at this level, but like I said earlier, it is harder to maintain it!

Martins has achieved his dream of being

amongst the very best. It's not so often that happens for a Latvian. Economic constraints are maybe the biggest reason for more Latvians not coming to the fore.

– First you have to earn some money; then you can do other things like orienteering. I want to say a big thank-you to my club in Finland —Turun Metsänkävijät! Without this club I would have started to do other things, for example become a sports teacher in a school, he says.

Martins, born in 1982, is a full-time orienteer right now, but he does also have plans to get a part-time job. He wants to go as far as he can with orienteering, of course.

– I haven't lived outside Latvia for a long time, just attended some camps in Sweden and Finland, but my plan is to move to Finland and stay there, he says.

We can expect to see more top results from Martins Sirmais.



Martins Sirmais (left) together with the French winner Thierry Gueorgiou and Valentin Novikov from Russia who came third.

PHOTO: ERIK BORG

Marianne Andersen – Norway's best, she trains the most

BY ERIK BORG

Marianne Andersen is the new star in Norwegian orienteering. She trains more than anyone, man or woman, in the Norwegian team, and she was the only Norwegian to win a European Championships medal.

Marianne spent 930 hours in training last year – and this year it doesn't look like being any less.

– Firstly, I really like being out in the countryside and to work myself hard. Secondly, I believe it is necessary if I am to realise my potential as an orienteer – something I really wish to do, says Marianne.

– My task often is to restrain her. She has been on the verge of becoming exhausted, says Jarle Ausland, the Norwegian national coach.

– After suffering a period of exhaustion last winter, which no doubt also had some connection with the final work for my masters' dissertation which I was writing, I decided that my exercise after hard training should be at a lower level. That helped. Additionally I put in some days with just light training in and amongst, to ensure reasonable recovery at regular intervals, says Marianne.

Strengths

Alongside her training, Marianne works as a civil engineer half-time with the National Survey. She lives in Oslo, but comes from Drammen, a small town a short distance from the capital city. The 27-year-old was fourth in the Long Distance in last year's World Championships, and created the basis for Norway's silver medal in the relay.

Two years ago she won the King's Cup, the highest one can achieve in Norwegian orienteering, but she didn't do so well in the World Championships. After her disappointments at the World Championships in Västerås things have simply got better. The girl who is so keen on training has reached new heights: at the European Championships she won two individual silver medals, and she is third overall in the World Cup behind

Simone Niggli and Minna Kauppi.

What is it that you are doing better than before?

– I have developed my general stamina somewhat, but I believe I have still some work to do in relation to reaching my potential in pure running speed. There were periods last winter with little running because of injury, and one becomes good at what one trains for. Also I feel that I have become a bit stronger mentally. Last season I became more self-confident, and I am more secure in what I should do when I am standing on the start line – and that helps me do the right things more often.

Motivation

Is it always fun to train?

– Long runs in the forest or on the fells are almost always fun. But I find I have to stop this sort of training before I want to, because I must think of what is best in relation to my overall training programme. Other types of training are on a level relating to the goals I have set myself as an orienteer. I can't say that long intervals on the treadmill or 2 hours' work on the ergo metric cycle are enjoyable, and I most likely won't get round to doing these hard training sessions when I have finished competing at high level. But because I believe the exercises are necessary to reach the goals I have set myself, I seldom have problems with motivation.

How much of your training is technique training?

– Last winter I had planned to do 1-2 o-technique exercises per week, but because of injury and the amount of snow, that plan went to ground. After I got under way with technique training in the spring, it's been mostly 3-6 exercises per week, but 3-4 when I haven't been with a group.

Do you train much with others?

– Only occasionally. I have always trained mainly alone and I'm happy with that. On long runs I can then decide on the tempo,



PHOTO: ERIK BORG

Marianne Andersen is a hot prospect for the World Orienteering Championships.

the route and the length entirely on my own. When it comes to hard exercises, I have my own special ideas on which exercises I should do and when, so it isn't so easy to get it to blend with club training. I also have greater control over ensuring that my training programme goes as planned, when I train alone.

Preparations

How are you preparing yourself for Denmark?

– I have already spent some time looking at old maps, and I will do more of that. I draw legs on the map and make myself familiar with the overall shape of the terrain. I have also already been on a couple of training camps in Denmark, and will go to two more. Apart from that, I can experience continental terrain around Hønefoss in Norway, and I am doing some training there. With physical training, I 'think WOC' when I plan the ground cover and amount of hilly terrain I will train on, especially with regard to hard training, says the new Norwegian star.