

# Junior Affairs Officer Report

Orienteering Ireland Annual Report 2022

I took over the role of Junior Affairs officer in Nov 2021 and have spent the last few months getting up to speed with the role, while trying to get Junior teams organised to send to EYOC and JWOC later this year. I've had lots of help and advice from lots of people over this time, and I'm very grateful for this – the role encompasses a lot of different jobs each year.

## Handover

Huge thanks to everyone who helped with the handover of the role to me

- Aine and Sarah for tolerating my never-ending stream of organisation/financial questions
- Ruth, Steph, Mike and Colleen for all the advice and background to the role
- Gavin and Stuart for helping to get the website/email stuff going
- The rest of the OI committee for their support
- All the parents and other volunteers who have given their time and experience

## Training events:

A group of M/W16s attended the Hawkshead Training/Development weekend in late Nov, in the UK Lake District. Many thanks to Steph Pruzina for organising and accompanying the group.

We ran a training day in late Jan in two locations – Bull Island in Dublin and Inchydoney Sand Dunes in Cork. Both were well attended where the focus was on reading contours and staying in contact with the map.

The Junior Squad time Trial took place on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb in the Phoenix Park, with 37 juniors running. There was also training exercises in the afternoon, organised by Josh O'Sullivan-Hourihan. Ruth Lynam presided over the Time Trial – thanks to both, and all their helpers.

A small group of JWOC hopefuls were taken to a training weekend in Portugal in March, led and mentored by Jens Waecheter. They found it very beneficial, and Jens has subsequently volunteered to accompany the same group to the actual JWOC event in July, as their main technical/physical coach.

10 Junior Squad relay teams were formed to take part in the JK relays over the Easter weekend, in various categories.

A group of M/W16 and 18s is due (at time of writing) to attend the official EYOC 2nd training camp in Hungary at the end of April. The terrain in use is adjacent to the maps being used for EYOC itself, so the experience gained here should be very relevant. It's a combination of a three-day world ranking event, followed by 3 days of specific training events. The group will be accompanied by Brian Rowe and Anne-Marie Masterson. Ruairi Short has agreed to support this groups training with a zoom call in the week before they leave, to go over training approach and techniques to get the most out of the camp.

### **Fundraising:**

The juniors collected funds throughout March to support the squad, through sponsored running. The fundraising page and payment system was facilitated by my employer, Payzone. They have also agreed to further sponsor the squad directly, with a contribution of €1500 towards the cost of gear and/or training. In total, this initiative raised €2750 for the squad.

### **EYOC/JWOC 2022:**

We aim to send teams to both these events. EYOC 2022 is in Hungary and JWOC 2022 is in Portugal.

Official accommodation has been provisionally booked for JWOC, and Debbie Whelan, Caroline Murray, Terrance Hoare and Jens Waechter have volunteered to accompany the team to Portugal in July. We'll make provisional team entries once selections have been made, post IOC.

Provisional entries have been made for EYOC, based on my estimate of the numbers of eligible/suitable athletes we might consider sending. I will be accompanying the EYOC team to Hungary in July, along with two other parents. I have yet to finalise which parents will attend, though a few have expressed interest.

### **Courses:**

I've completed several training courses over the last few months, to hopefully benefit the squad:

- Safeguarding Level 2
- Coaching Teenage Girls in Sports
- REC Level 3 First Aid

I've also stocked a full large first aid kit for squad use – to ensure we have adequate cover at events. I would encourage Orienteering Ireland to consider running some fresh REC3 courses during the next year, to bolster the number of trained first aiders we have at events from week to week.

### **Squad Gear:**

I am hopeful that I can get a fresh set of O-Tops for this year's JHI team. The idea is that these would not be given to athletes – rather loaned out for the event, and returned afterwards, like a team kit. This will prevent the scenario we had last year where we had difficulty sourcing enough tops for the team that travelling to England – huge thanks to Martin Buckley who stepped in at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour and provided a set of matching technical t-shirts as a substitute. If funds permit, I'd also like to get additional squad jackets, like the existing "Franck" ones, as we could also do with some smaller women's sizes in the current Sign livery.

### **Other Items:**

Met with Ciaran (Children's Officer) over Zoom to discuss his role, and the constitutional requirement for the Junior Squad to have its own Children's Officer (Safeguarding 2) and Designated Liaison Person (Safeguarding 3). Anne-Marie Masterson is suitably qualified to fill the DLP role and has agreed to do

so. I have yet to find a person to fill the Children’s Officer post. Hopefully I will be able to find willing parents over the next few weeks, at the JK and IOC.

**Budget:**

Here’s my current rough budget projections – based on costs so far, and projected costs for upcoming events. This is slightly over the allocation from Sarah at start of year, but some of the projected costs may end up being less, and the gear expense is dependant on budget post EYOC/JWOC.

<b>Basic Annual Recurring Expenses to Budget For</b>	
JK Relay Team entries	400
JWOC Costs (Entries, Accomodation, Food)	8000
EYOC Costs (Entries, Accomodation, Food)	4000
JHI Costs (Entries, Accomodation, Food)	3000
Training Expenses	4000
<b>Other Expenses (as Required)</b>	
Team Gear	3000
<b>Fund Raising</b>	
Annual aim	-1500
Sponsorship	-1500
<b>Total</b>	<b>19400</b>

All in all, the squad spending is in-line with where it should be and will hopefully come in on-budget. Next year, I would aspire to ask for a larger training budget – the €4000 above is a significant (unexpected?) increase on recent years, but vital (in my opinion) to the development of the squad.

**Future**

I aim to remain in this role for several years to come, and hopefully further develop the squad and the general state of junior orienteering/training in Ireland. Jens has expessed interest in similar goals, and we will likely work together on this over the next few years. Rome wasn’t built in a day.