

Development officer report to IOA AGM 2022

As Development officer, I have continued to focus on the Southeast of the country whilst keeping a watching brief on other developments around the country. The main aim is to provide a range of training and competitive events for schools which builds on the demand generated via the RTGO programme. This involves a close co-operation with schools and local sports partnerships.

During Covid 2021, the main focus was on maintaining POC's (Permanent orienteering courses) and developing a range of MapRun courses in suitable locations. This built on the work carried out around the country in 2020.

1. I liaised with 5 local sports partnerships (Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary, Waterford and Carlow) in the SE to
 - a. Review POCs and identify missing plaques (replacements ordered from Signiatec)
 - b. Review existing MapRun courses
 - c. Identify locations/schools next on the list for mapping and training
 - d. Open up discussion on a greater involvement of uniformed groups and youth groups
 - e. Liaise with Pat Healy (mapper) on areas he is working in
2. I surveyed recently active schools in the SE using Google forms to
 - a. Update mailing list
 - b. Check level of interest for proposed events in Spring 2022

I then revisited planned venues, remapped where necessary and strengthened links with the stakeholders e.g. Coillte, OPW, local authorities

Schools update

Leinster schools were up and running in November with 2 score events in Santry. They continued in Spring 2022 with score events in Marlay park and Cabinteely Park (3). Mary Healy plans to complete the season with a Leinster schools event on 11th May.

SE training events took place in March at Kilbarry (Waterford), Clonmel (Co. Tipperary), Woodstock (Co. Kilkenny), Kennedy park (Co. Wexford) whilst Cork schools training events were held over 2 days at Tramore valley Park (Cork). It was agreed that no Munster schools would be held this year as schools were unlikely to travel. The Irish schools has also been deferred for another year due to Covid and delayed works at the mount Congreve venue.

I worked with 2 trainees in organising the SE events: Brid Casey (SEVO) and Georgina Gaul (Shielbaggan OEC) which was a great support. I feel strongly that a better network of those available and involved in schools development needs to be set up. This group around the country could meet monthly using Zoom to share experiences and co ordinate programmes.

A number of factors arose: schools often were hampered by Covid (particularly teachers being out and pupils staying at home on the day of the event) and the general standard of orienteering was very variable after 2/3 years with no events. Numbers were large but often teachers were less selective about who they brought.

In addition, two cub/scout specific events were run for the Waterford region in November and April. I know that other uniformed groups have participated at club events. Feedback welcome.

In conclusion, school events are up and running again but a new improved structure would be helpful for the future development of relationships between the IOA, clubs, sports partnerships, and support personnel.

Andrew Cox