

Orienteering in the South West in 2050

Have you considered what Orienteering might be like in 2050?

Will we have been priced out of events by landowners like the Forestry Commission? Will our events be confined to the depths of winter by unspecified and unproven environmental issues? Possibly the cost of getting to events might restrict us to coaches and bicycles, or perhaps a horse.

Why 2050? I have been orienteering for just over 40 years. In that time I have seen the maps we use change from black and white photocopies of OS maps with the streams inked in because blue did not photocopy very well. We had ink punches and many of the controls were hand-made from hardboard painted red and white.

In 1982 I wrote an item for Alan Simpson who was newly appointed to oversee the Micro Electronics in Schools Project in Devon. In it I speculated how the newly invented Personal Computers might influence the sport. At that time I was involved with exploring the use of smart cards to act as a timer for competitors at the finish of the race. I speculated that maps might be printed to order when you entered. OCAD had not yet been invented – that had to wait until the early 1990's.

What changes might there be in the next 40 years? What changes do we want?

Unfortunately I will probably not be around to be involved, neither will most of our present Club Committee members. The people involved will be those now in their 20's and 30's. What do they want our Sport to be like in 2050?

I am organising a workshop on Saturday 26th February 2011, 1000-1600 in Taunton Holiday Inn, and would like to ask anyone under 30 to take part. We will pay you expenses and give you lunch but ask you to share transport if possible.

The aim is to produce some ideas to move the sport into the next 40 years.

Please send me an email: erik.peckett@talktalk.net, with 2050 as the subject.

Erik Peckett
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