

SECRETARY'S REPORT

It has been very satisfying to read of the large number of events and activities of the 11 clubs which form the South West Orienteering Association – over 400 this year. Within that, there were 145 Level D events and each one represents a great deal of hard work from a dedicated band of club orienteers. Each event has to be registered, arranged by officials, planned and guided. Level D events at a local venue are the best way to introduce new comers to the sport and to help improve general orienteering skills. They are also the training ground for those event officials who may consider taking on events at a higher level.

In the last 12 months we have had 9 successful and well organised regional championships and big events which were Level B. Could we have more Level Bs in the future? How much more work is a Level B event than a Level C? Is the main issue the need for timed starts or is it the land access costs eg Forestry Commission or is it entry costs or is it finding a suitable controller. Perhaps we should look at this in the future.

All our orienteers have done well, from the smallest to the biggest and from the youngest to the oldest. I would like to say well done to you all who brave the cold and heat, the wet and sometimes dry, the hills and bog. Both our juniors and seniors have enjoyed national and international success and grants made to members for tours and training camps have exceeded £2000. These costs will continue to rise and we need to make sure that we maintain good budgeting to allow for growing expense in the future.

Looking again to the future, I believe that we need to continue to make every effort to encourage and support all our volunteers, from the car parker to the controller and from the cake maker to the international event advisor. This support stems from the club with advice, training, comradeship, social networking and grants. SWOA will continue to support clubs and their volunteers. Being a volunteer is not always easy but it should always be rewarding and rewarded. The reward can be as simple as a 'thank you'. SWOA volunteers were immensely important to the success of the JK 2014 in South Wales and could be found in all the major and minor roles - over 100 SWOA volunteers were needed for the JK Day 4 Relays.

So I will say 'thank you' to all the volunteers who have stepped forward over the last 12 months and 'thank you' to all those who are poised for the next 12 months. Also I will say a big 'thank you' to the officials of the SWOA committee who have worked so hard and also supported me in my first 12 months of office, when we have had no Chairman. Thank you.

Katy Dyer

SWOA Secretary