

PROMOTING ORIENTEERING

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1. A large portion of the promotion of orienteering to the general public requires an educational approach. Orienteering is a minor sport of which many people have some preconceptions about what orienteering entails. This can be both a positive and negative view of orienteering. As many misconceptions about the sport exist, a focus on education about the sport should form part of most promotional strategies.

What are we really promoting?

2. Orienteering should be portrayed as a sport in which a map is used to navigate a course over unfamiliar terrain. Competitively, orienteering is a sport in which high levels of physical fitness, map interpretation, concentration and route finding are tested. In many instances the elite competitive image is desirable and the international, world-class athlete message should be promoted. At other times, the sports ability to cater for the recreational athlete and to a range of abilities, through health and social avenues will be best. Orienteering may take place in areas as diverse as urban landscapes (e.g. school grounds, suburban areas and parks) to regional bush areas.

Promotional Strategy

3. The promotional strategy adopted depends largely on the outcomes desired and targeted group. Typically, the outcome is increased attendance at a particular event in for these instances thought should go into who is likely to be attracted to the type of event (e.g. general interests, time constraints etc) and what type of promotion they are likely to be receptive to. As well as this, the event(s) being promoted should be suitable (i.e. well presented, not intimidating to newcomers, appropriate level of official and coaching support, appropriate level of course and method of recording details and following up with information as required). The national media however are likely to be more receptive to the portrayal of orienteering as an elite sport. Schools orienteering may be receptive to both competitive and social aspects of the sport. As stated previously, the strategy depends on the outcome sought, and with background in the area, the promoter should consider how best to address their particular need bearing in mind objectives at a national level.

4. A number of potential interests that promotional activities could pursue include:
- Individuals seeking to keep healthy and social – mind, body and soul
 - Individuals who are prepared to travel to pursue their sporting interests
 - Individuals who are environmentally conscious and spend time outdoors
 - Individuals who are involved in competitive sport
 - Individuals who are social covering the full range of age-classes, the old and the young (typically from 8 to 80 years)

This list is not exhaustive and many other avenues/combinations are possible.

Promotional medium

5. Promotion is encouraged in all medium types including:
- Distribution of flyers
 - Advertising in printed material
 - Advertising in cyberspace
 - Advertising on radio/television
 - Advertising in cooperation with other groups/companies

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