

6-DAY DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

I have been asked by the 6-Day Company to obtain the views of clubs on a suggested change to the organisation of the 6-Day event. I would therefore be most grateful if you could discuss these proposals at your next committee meeting and then forward your views to myself or Donald Petrie. I will also be writing an article for Score so that all SOA members can have a chance of expressing their views. Only then would we consider introducing these changes.

Over the years the 6-Day event has changed considerably, as those who have been involved over the last 20 years will acknowledge. For those with long memories, clubs were heavily involved, both on their day and the day before, with the major tasks being control card checking, and setting up the assembly area the day before, especially constructing the toilets (for those with long memories) and the results boards. At that time, certainly in ESOC, adult members were not allowed to run on their club's day and were very busy on the preceding day.

Over the years there have been considerable changes with certain aspects of the event being contracted out, starting with the toilets and then with the introduction of electronic punching at Highland 99. From that time, the demands on clubs and their members were somewhat reduced, and this led to a feeling by many, if not most, clubs that their members should have the opportunity to run in all 6 days. Then with the Equipment Team in place for the last few events, this has again reduced the demands on clubs both on the day and the day before.

The proposal which I would like you to consider is that a club, or group of clubs, would be given responsibility for one aspect of the event organisation throughout the entire 6 days rather than all aspects of the organisation for 1 of the 6 days. I would ask you to seriously consider the pros and cons before coming to a decision. Perhaps an example of how this would work would be helpful. Currently the day organisers need a team of approximately 65-80 to run the car parking, starts, finish, results, string course etc. Assuming a club, or group of clubs, has 60 available club members, then they can manage with perhaps a little help from some of the English clubs who are willing to provide some support. In the new model this club would be allocated to car parking which on average requires 10 individuals each day. As you can see this means that on average an individual member of your club would be involved on 1 day only.

As far as small clubs are concerned, it is likely that they would be paired with one of the larger clubs, although there is also a possibility of being involved with a small area of the organisation. Below is a list of components of the organisation, along with an approximate number of people required to carry out this task over the 6 days.

1. Car Parking	60
2. Starts	20
3. Finish/download	60
4. Water	24
5. Entry on the day	24
6. Results	16
7. Equipment team support	30
8. String	4

There are a number of advantages to this system;

1. There is much more flexibility in allocation of the work e.g. in a day with 1 start there is obviously much less requirement for manpower than on a day like ESOC this year when we had 4 starts, two of which were distant from the assembly. There would also be the opportunity, if the club in question so desired, for people to work shorter 'shifts', but on more than 1 day.
2. There should be much more consistency in the way the task is carried out.
3. It gives a club or group of clubs the chance to stamp their style on the allocated task.
4. Club members may be more willing to take on the role of club coordinator for one area, rather than having responsibility for all aspects of the organisation for 1 day.

Obviously, there are some disadvantages;

1. Clubs are used to the present system, and it is a law of human nature that most people are suspicious of change.
2. The club may not like the aspect of the event allocated to them.
3. In any club there are people who like doing certain jobs, but not others.
4. If introduced there would be inevitable teething problems.
5. One problem raised by the Directors relates to the planners, who along with the day organisers have come from the clubs allocated to that day. Personally, I think this could even be seen as an advantage as I imagine we could either invite offers to take on this role, or even headhunt individuals who had demonstrated good planning ability in events such as the SOL series. In addition it would enable us to pair a team who had experience of working together, or a blend of an experienced planner with someone with no previous 6-Day experience.

I would therefore ask you as a club committee to give these matters some thought and if possible pass on your comments either to myself or Donald, or preferably both. The position I would ask you to consider is what is the best use of the 500+ Scottish club orienteers who will attend the next 6-Day event, to ensure the quality of the event and hopefully to improve it further? I also think that you must accept that almost all club members will expect to run on all 6 days. Do you see sufficient advantages in the proposed new model to support trying it in 2007? Are there other advantages or disadvantages which have not been considered?

Before you start deliberating on this issue, it may be helpful if I outline how I see the system working. I may also say that I think that the idea of the club being involved in all 6 days will immediately result in opposition to the proposals, but I would urge you not to fall into that trap. If e.g. we use the model that your club has been allocated car parking, possibly with support from one of the smaller clubs, then the system would work as follows;

1. The club would identify a Team Leader, who would be the link person with Central Organisation, and particularly myself as Day Coordinator.
2. The club would also appoint probably an assistant, so that the model is very similar to the current system. I would expect that they would then perhaps distribute the work, so that the Leader takes responsibility for days 1, 2 and 3,

while the assistant does days 4, 5, and 6. However the TL would be the contact for all matters from the centre.

3. The TL would then allocate teams of club members for each day with probably one Day Leader for each day. In practice this is very similar to the current model where the day organiser identifies team leaders for car parking, starts, finish, results etc.
4. This should have the advantage of flexibility, to allow appropriate resources to be allocated as required and should result in more consistency throughout the event.
5. For the average club member this should result in being involved in only 1 or at most 2 days and if the latter would be for a shorter time each day, so that they can organise their run, under less pressure than is sometimes the case.

Many thanks for your input.

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