

TempO gives new impetus to trail orienteering

BY ERIK BORG

The new format TempO is the key to getting more orienteers to take part in trail orienteering and attracting more interest for the sport among both spectators and media.

– TempO measures the speed of decision making in map reading and it's an intense, short and exciting form of trail orienteering. It will recruit new competitors, including juniors and it will be easily understandable for spectators and media, says Sari Salomaa-Niemi. The 47-year-old Finn is the new person in charge of the Trail Orienteering Commission in IOF. She lives in Tampere and works as Coordinator of Special Education in the city.

Making trail orienteering more attractive

It's important to make trail orienteering more attractive to foot orienteers.

– We want to have more of them as athletes and we also need their orienteering knowledge and maps. TempO, the new format of trail orienteering, is one way to get more of them eager to try trail orienteering, she says. Together with getting more athletes, it's our objective to get more participants who are willing to organise international competitions.

More nations

In the 2009 World Trail Orienteering Championships in Hungary, athletes from 18 nations took part. In all there are about 20 active nations.

– We want to increase the number of countries with activity and teams in the World Championships. I think it's realistic to believe to have about one new country every year. I hope the number of countries will be 25 in the 2013 World Championships in Finland. A few weeks ago I got a message from Portugal. They have just created the "Trail Orienteering Commission", a consulting body for the Portuguese Orienteering Federation. Hopefully they will take part in the 2010 World Trail Orienteering

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TempO measures the speed of decision making in map reading.

Championships in Norway, she says.

TempO – an official World Championship format?

Sari also hopes that TempO will be an official format in the in the World Championships in Finland.

– There will be TempO at the World Trail Orienteering Championships in Trondheim, and the competition title will probably be The World TempO Trophy, she says. The official rules are not finalised yet for TempO, but the idea is that the competitors have to follow a taped course or a course marked on a map. Along the course there will be a number of timed control stations. The total number of timed controls in TempO should be between 12 and 30.



PHOTO: PAULA LEHTOMÄKI

The maximum time for each time control should be between 30 and 60 seconds. The results calculation is the total used time for giving an answer at the timed controls. For each wrong answer a penalty time is added.

The TempO competition at the World Championships will have a qualification and final. The top 10–15 in the qualification event will be placed in the final, which will consist of 10 timed controls. The times in the qualification and the final will be added together.

Ten years' experience

Sari has been working with trail orienteering for 10 years now, first as an active participant, but mostly with organising and administration.

– Trail orienteering is almost the only sport in which you can compete or take part equally regardless of age, sex or mobility, and that's why I find it very fascinating, she says.

Why have you accepted to lead the IOF Trail Orienteering Commission?

– The discipline is still developing and it has potential to grow in many ways. It is very challenging to lead that kind of great work.

Sari Salomaa-Niemi is leading the work to make Trail orienteering more popular and believes that the new format TempO can give growth to the sport.