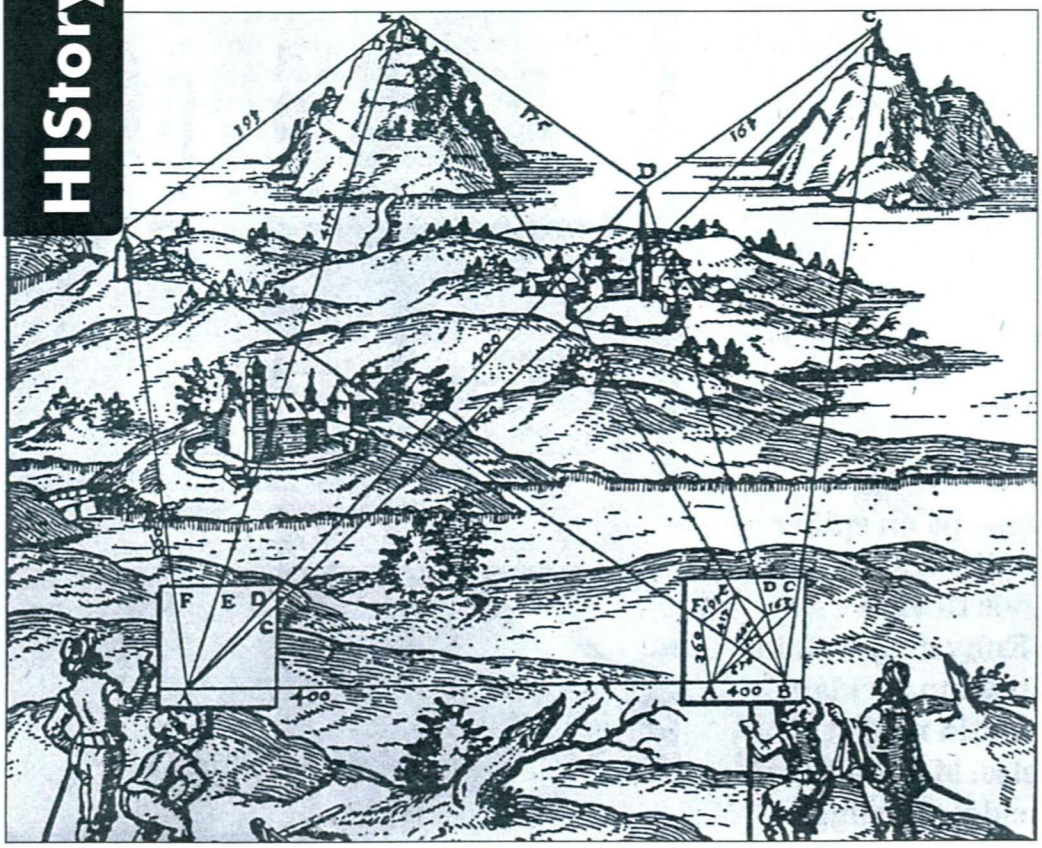
HIStory

100 Years in the Forests:

A personal route-choice through Orienteering history



The principles of the measuring table are shown in a Swiss copper-print from 1601.

Chapter 1:

Orienteering Prehistory (From time unknown until 1896)

All over the world, and throughout history, different games and sports have been played by various peoples. Sometimes these games have had religious significance; often they have been part of military training; but, usually, they have been played just for the fun of it.

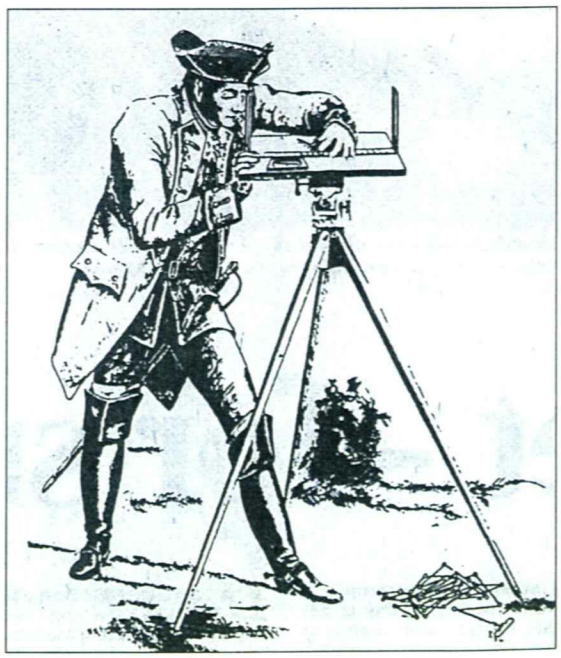
Whenever their living standard has risen above the level of bare survival, people have let their extra energy out through sports and competitions. In the times when most people spent all of their lives in the same village, sports were local, with races staged down the main street or around the local meadow. There were no written rules; in fact, there was no need for written rules ... sportsmen rarely competed with other sportsmen from outside of their village. As society became more industrialized and transportation became easier and faster (particularly in the 19th century), sportsmen from different parts of a country (and later from *different* countries) met to compete. The need for fixed-and-universal rules arose. During this period, the rules for many sports were agreed upon. Sometimes the original sport acquired several sets of rules, and different sports effectively arose from what had earlier been local variations on one sport. That British public schools like Rugby and Eton gave rise to the sports of rugby and the football association are pair of famous examples. The divide between Greco-Roman and free-style wrestling is another.

Before about 1850, it was not possible to talk about "sports" in our modern sense of the word. There were many games with common "themes" ... but with different local rules. Popular "themes" were fighting (in the form of boxing and wrestling), running (usually short and medium distances), weight lifting, and ball games. Orienteering cannot be found among these early "themes," and it could not have been. Orienteering is loosely defined as "finding your way in unknown terrain with the aid of a map." In the days when "sports" were confined to a local area, there was nothing like an "unknown terrain." Orienteering is a sport that requires participants to leave their well-known surroundings, in order to make competition possible.

Around 1850, the growing "tourist movement" reached Norway, where it became popular to travel into the wilderness. To do so required knowledge of how to employ a map and a compass. A growing number of people acquired a basic knowledge of these tools and their uses.

Orienteering requires maps, and maps have been around for a long time. The oldest known "maps" are from Assyria, dating back nearly five thousand years, and some forms of "maps" from Egypt are even 1,000 years older. For the ancient Egyptians, this was partly facilitated by their study of geometry and by surveying. The yearly flooding of the Nile removed many landmarks, requiring areas to be resurveyed every year, including maps for private property. The Romans had their own *agrimensores*, specially trained surveyors who followed their ever-moving armies. Since the Romans made maps for practical purposes, there was little need for developments in mapping as such. The same old methods and instruments were used by the Romans to build roads, and to fortify and distribute properties in the lands they conquered. In fact, the same instruments, with only slight modifications, were used for practical mapping until the late-1700s. Although better instruments for higher geodesy had been invented, they were not in common use because there was no industry that could mass produce these precision tools.

By the end of the 18th century, "triangulation" had become a common method for mapmaking. At that time, a more systematic mapping of Europe began. Militaries were an important driving force behind such mappings. For the large-scale campaigns that ➤



A Norwegian officer with measuring equipment, circa 1774.

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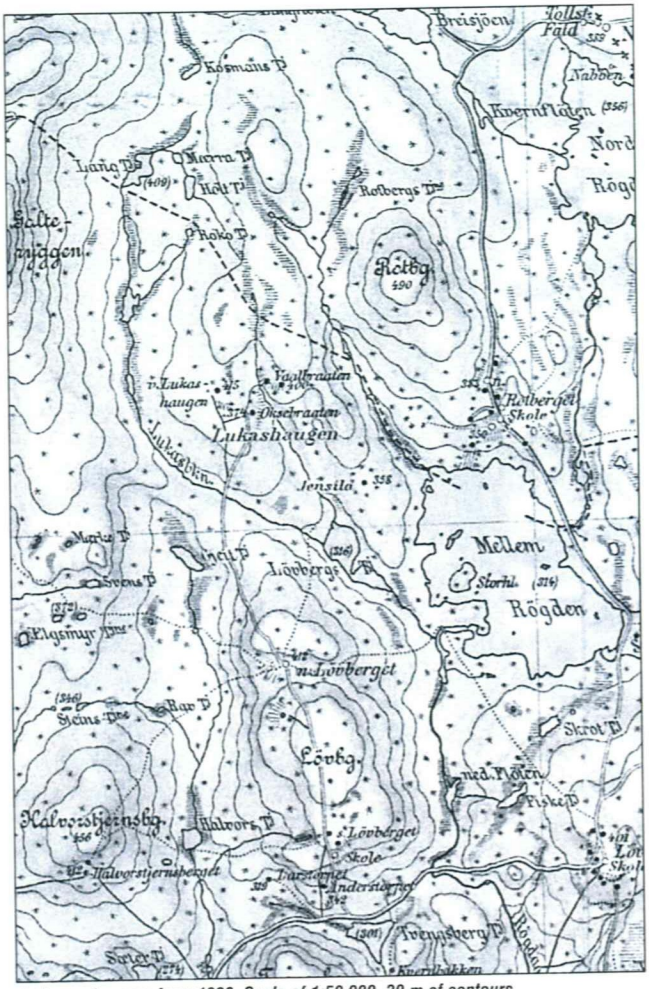


A Norwegian map from 1890. Scale of 1:50,000, 30 m of contours.

Military maps were usually in a scale of 1:100,000 or 1:50,000.

The military importance of maps also led to most large-scale maps being regarded as "government secrets." Until 1857, 1:100,000-scale maps in Sweden and Norway were used exclusively by the military. After that, they became available for other uses and users.

If Orienteering had been invented *today* - instead of in the past - especially with our accurate maps, I am not sure that compasses would be needed or even allowed as part of the equipment; but, with the types of maps which existed in the middle of the 19th century, compasses were a necessity.

Magnetism and the use of the magnetic needle have been known for nearly 6,000 years. The Mexican Olmec culture - then, 2,000 years later, the Chinese - used magnetism to establish direction. By the year 700, the Arabs had begun using magnetism for sea navigation; and, less than 200 years later, the Vikings were doing the same, which was necessary since they often left sight of land while jaunting about the Atlantic.

In 1320, an unknown inventor from the city of Amalfi placed the wind-rose on the compass needle. The compass was invented. However, early compass-makers faced one risk: their compasses did not always point to "true north," and the craftsmen were often accused of sloppy workmanship. In 1942, Columbus crossed the Atlantic on his famous voyage to "discover" America. During that trip, he also discovered "declination." He realized that the further west he traveled, the further his compass pointed away from "true north." Although compasses had been used for navigation for centuries, how it worked remained a continual mystery. That is, until 1600, when William Gilbert explained the workings of the compass by assuming that the earth itself acted as a giant magnet.

The compasses used onboard ships were large and heavy, hence were unsuitable for land navigation. Smaller hand-held compasses appeared around 1750, and were probably first used by surveyors.

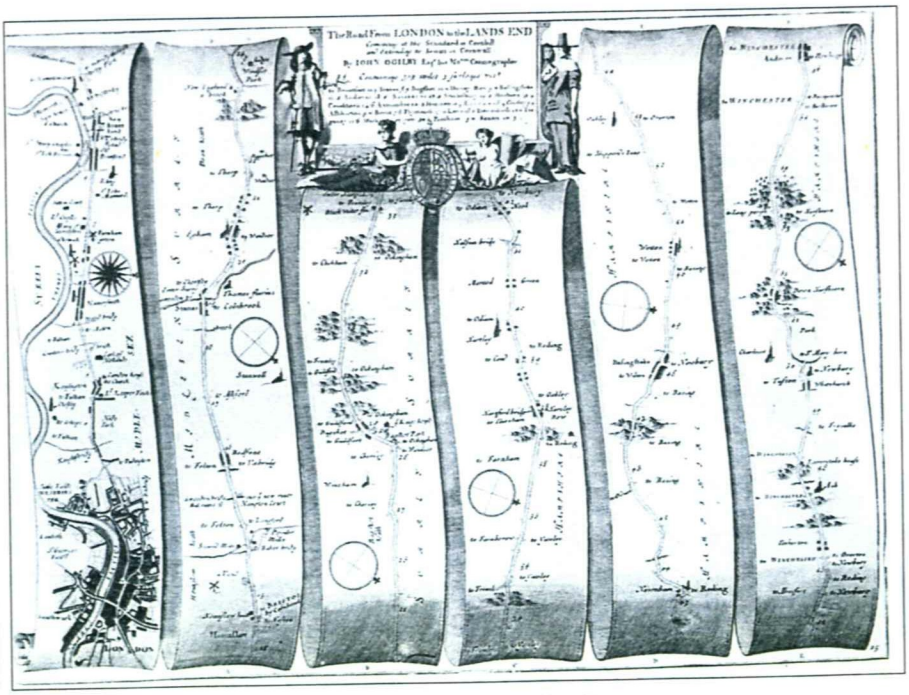
From the early-to-mid-1800s, all the necessary requirements for Orienteering were available. Fairly accurate maps existed; hand-held compasses to aid navigation were available; and at least a part of the population was affluent enough to travel and to do sports. The different ingredients were also brought together.

In 1817, Johann Christian Friedrich Guts Muths of Germany published his book *Turnbuch für die Söhne des Vaterlandes*, in which he described several exercises using maps and a protractor. It was not Orienteering exactly, but it can be seen as a distant cousin. At that time, similar path-finding games were already in use as military exercises.

In Britain, the Thames "Hare and Hounds" was founded by Walter Rye in 1868. Hare-and-hound games (also known as "paper chases") had one runner (*the hare*) who started before the others, marking the course he took by small signs or scraps of paper. The other runners (*the hounds*) tried to catch the hare. Although these races took place over rugged and ➤

One of the world's oldest maps. This is a 4,000-year-old clay-tablet from Babylonia - portable, but probably not very useful while running at high speeds ☺

became common during the Napoleonic Wars, plenty of maps were needed for planning. Besides this, long-range guns needed accurate maps for aiming at targets that were often hidden behind hills. A detailed knowledge of the terrain also required large scales, to show all of the important information.



A strip-map from about 1670, which shows the route from London to Bury St. Edmunds (by the mapmaker John Ogilby).

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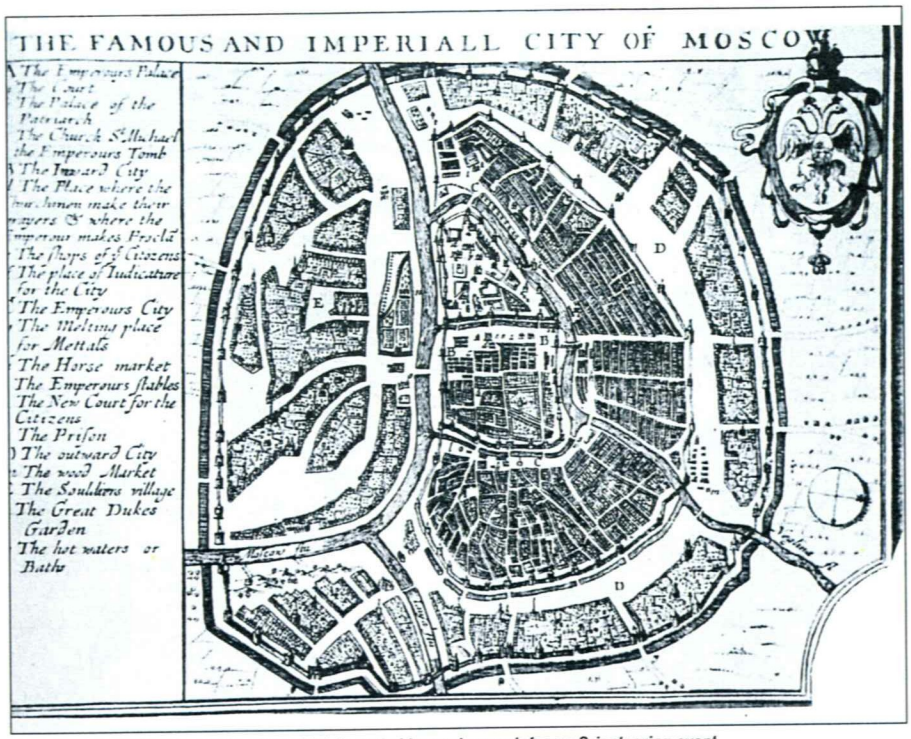


John Speed's 1676 map of Moscow, which is probably good enough for an Orienteering event.

unknown terrain, they did not have any of the navigational challenges that Orienteering has. These hare-and-hound races spread from Britain. In 1883, such a race was reported to have been held just outside of Stockholm. The first such Norwegian competition was held in 1887. What is most significant is the fact that the sports-club Tjalve organized "paper chases" in 1892, 1894, and 1895. In 1897, this club was the first to organize a civilian Orienteering event.

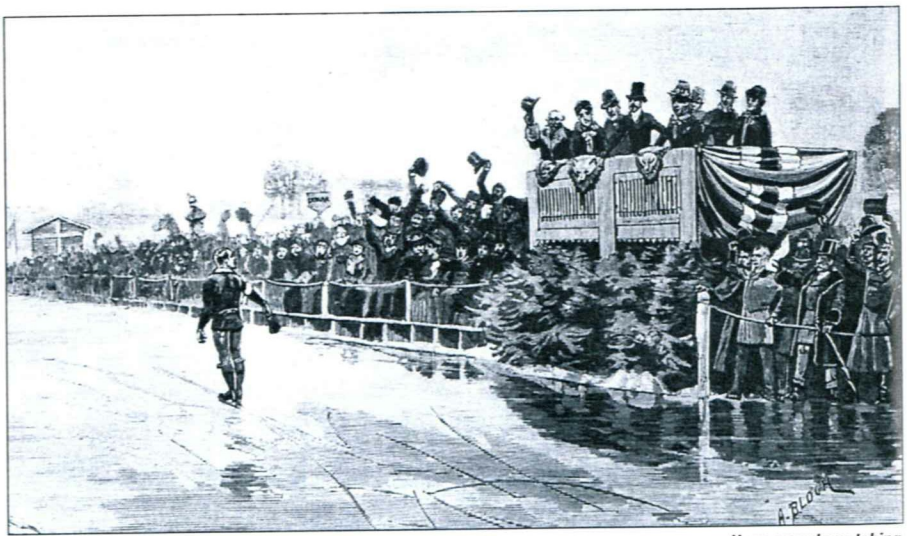
According to the 1840 regulations of the Swedish Military Academy, cadets had to study distance calculating, leveling, surveying, and map-sketching. But, not until 1886 was map-reading and outdoor Orienteering introduced into the curriculum of the Academy, which it subsequently was in both Stockholm and Oslo. The word "Orienteering" (in its Swedish form *Orientering*) is found for the first time, in 1886, in the description of these exercises. A few years later, an interest in cross-country running and map-reading were combined into the sport "orienteringslöpning" (literally *orienteering running*), and the first-recorded sports event (as opposed to military training) took place on 28 May 1893, part of the Stockholm garrison's yearly sports games. Two years late, Orienteering also became part of the military multi-sport event. From this time onwards, there are many reports of military Orienteering events taking place, in Norway/Sweden and Britain. At its beginnings, the runners were allowed to study the map before they started … later they brought simple sketches with them … and finally "real" maps were used. The Norwegian events from this period are well documented: in 1895, there was one battalion holding an event; in 1896, seven; in 1897, nine; and, in 1898, twelve.

In parallel with military map-exercises, there was also a civilian interest in cross-country racing, often over long and unmarked courses. This is probably closest to what we would today call "fell running." Such civilian events are known to have taken place in Britain by 1868; Denmark in 1890; and Bergen, Norway in 1897. The last event gained much fame. In newspaper reports of the event, it was called an "Orienteering event"; and, for many years, this was regarded as the first civilian Orienteering event. However, it now seems absolutely clear that the runners did not use any map or compass, but completed the course solely from oral instructions and from their knowledge of the terrain.

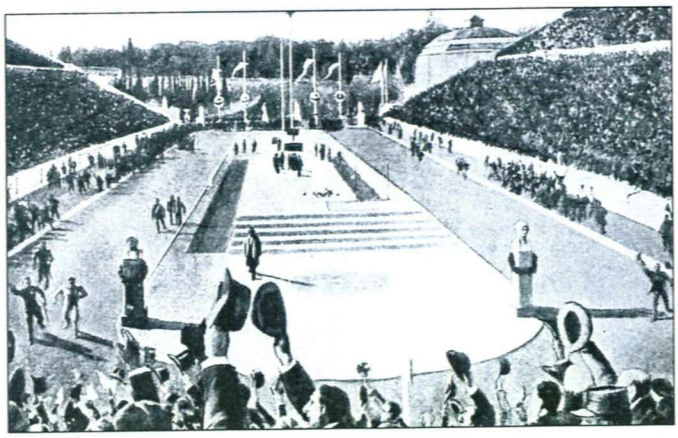
We see that, at the end of the 19th century, all the requisites for Orienteering as a sport were present. There was a good portion of the population with the means and the time to take part in sports. There was a "Back to Nature" movement (clearly evident from a score of Romantic paintings from the period). There was a general interest in running sports, as well as equipment available, including compasses. The required maps were fairly detailed and available to a broader public. Last, but not least, there were many military officers who had already become exposed to this sport as part of their military training. Many of the military men also became sports leaders; and no doubt many of them saw a healthy, sporting interest among the populace as an advantage to the military as well.

As we can see, all of these factors were available both on the British Isles and on the Scandinavian Peninsula, though several of these factors were in Britain before they were in Norway/Sweden. The main factor that determined that the sport arose in Scandinavia and not in Britain is probably the *Open Air Act*. In Scandinavia, with its vast expanses of forests and mountains, there had always been a tradition of "free travel for free men." Uncultivated land was open for everyone to travel in and to use for recreation. With this last factor in place, the Scandinavian Peninsula in the 1890s was ripe for Orienteering as a favorite sport.

Bernt O. Myrvold O-sport



Huge crowds watching speed-skating, as shown in this Norwegian picture from 1895.



The Olympic stadium, at the end of the marathon race in Athens, 1896. In 1896, a renewed interest in sports led to the revival of the ancient Olympic Games. The ancient stadium in Athens, as it appears today.

Chapter 2-Dawn (1897 - 1906)

As we saw in Chapter 1, by the mid 1890s there was an interest in organised sports. There was also an interest in long races over unknown ground. In fact these races were sometimes called orienteering races. Where 'orientering' should be taken in its Scandinavian meaning – 'to find ones way or direction'. In military circles, the use of maps during these exercises also became more and more common.

In 1890 Idrætsforeningen (Sports Club) Tjalve was formed in Oslo (or Kristiania as the city was called at that time) as the first track and field club in Norway. The purpose of the club was to promote running on foot. The name was taken from the Old Norwegian Thjalvi, who was Thors companion on his travels to Utgard. Thjalvi was an accomplished runner who once raced Hugi - the thought - but lost that race. Two years after it was formed, the club organised a hound and hare race. Although all the hounds lost track of the hare, the race was deemed a success. The club also held hound and hare races in 1894 and 1895. The club members utilised the forest as their arena.

In 1897 they wanted to try something new. In Norsk Idrætsblad (Norwegian Sports Weekly) 14 October 1897, an invitation was found which read: "Orienteering event to be held by Tjalve in Nordmarka: The other athletic clubs in Kristiania are invited to take part. The start will be from Grøttum in Sørkedalen at 10 a.m. Map and compass are allowed. Centralforeningen (the sports Norwegian council) will donate prizes." The invitation is for an orienteering event, without any explanation of the event, except that maps and compass are allowed. The sport thus seems to be familiar, at least to the running part of the population.

Maps and compass were allowed. But were they in fact used? Unfortunately no record of the event is kept to prove this or the opposite. After carefully weighing up of the evidence, Bertil Nordenfeldt concluded that it probably was impossible to finish the course in the time the best runners did without using a map. There were also four maps available for the runners to choose from.

– A rectangle map in the scale 1:100,000 from 1872, but based on older measurements.
– A region map from 1885-7 based on measurement from 1880 with a 10 metre contour interval and 1:25,000 scale; unfortunately two adjacent maps were needed to cover the whole course.
– A skiing map at 1:30,000 with a 20 metre contour interval. A good map and regarded by Kristoffer Staver as the most likely map used.
– A skiing map of 1:60,000 with a 100 feet contour interval from 1895. This was the newest map, but based on a weak base map.

Just getting to the first competition was a major undertaking with the communications available at the time. Most participants probably walked or ran the 20 kilometres out to the Grøttum farm. The farm was a popular assembly place for many sports men in Oslo at the time and with the start as early as 10 a.m., most runners would have stayed overnight at Grøttum before the race. But Axel Andersen walked all the way in the morning before the race, and still managed fifth place. Another runner used a bike to reach Grøttum on the morning of the event.

The runners were given 30 minutes to study the course before they started, but the organisers recommended that this time should be shortened at later races. The race had three controls at Finnerud, Slaktern and Bjørnholt; all three were farms in the forests north of Oslo. The start and finish were at Grøttum. The course was 10.5 km. The winning time was as good as 1.41.07. Less than 10 minutes per kilometre is certainly a respectable time over hilly, rough terrain, with the equipment available at the time.

Only eight runners took part in the race, but still the interest seems to have been great. The Chairman of the Norwegian Central Council for Sports, Colonel Sylow, was at the start together with Captain Wettre of the Cavalry. Sylow expressed the belief that "the sport would win a large following, because such events are both educational and useful." Before the event, Aftenposten (one of Norway's major news papers) wrote in the same sentiment. "... this is, from both a sports and military point of view, a very interesting branch of Norwegian sports, and we hope that many of our athletes will take the opportunity to participate."

Why should the start of a new sport gain the interest and active support of several leaders of the society?

Colonel O. C. W. Sylow head of the Norwegian Sports Council, like nearly all his predecessors he was a military man. He was present when eight runners started in the first civilian orienteering event.

One, or even the main, reason for the interest can be found in the political situation at the time. In 1814, after the Napoleonic Wars, Denmark had to give away Norway and all Norwegian lands to Sweden as a reward for Swedish help in the fight against Napoleon. After a few weeks as an independent nation, a union between Norway and Sweden was formed. However, during its brief independence, Norway had got its own constitution, and also throughout the union, Norway had it's own parliament and government. But Norway did not have its own Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the nineteenth century, Norwegian shipping grew and the lack of foreign policy became a problem. Norway was also traditionally oriented towards the west and Britain, while Sweden looked more to Germany and the Baltic area. Tension between the two parts of the union grew over the organisation of foreign affairs. On several occasions, the Norwegian parliament decided to have their own consular representation abroad, but the joint Swedish-Norwegian King refused to sanction the bill. In 1885, the Swedes, although unofficially, threatened war if Norway went forward without the King's approval. In Norway there was thus a strong interest in strengthening the military, both because of the immediate threat and to avoid a similar situation in the future. It should not be possible for the Swedes, by threatening military action, to override the Norwegian parliament. In this situation we see that a military important sport such as orienteering can gain a lot of support. The same was true for sports like rifle shooting and skiing. In Bergen, Aftenblad, issue no. 5975, the journalist ends his description of the event on June 20th thus: "It is our hope, that this first orienteering event must be the beginning of a succession of similar events, for the benefit and joy of our youth, and for the strength of the Father land." Although this particular event cannot be considered as an orienteering event by modern definition, the sentiment of the time is clear.

The Central Council for Sports certainly shared this sentiment. In their application for money from the Norwegian Government in 1894 they wrote: "The Central Council will promote exclusively the sports that are of use to the army." The Secretary General of the Central Council for Sports (1893-1919) Lieutenant-colonel Franz Gustav Seeberg was very interested in orienteering as a means of developing military skills. Time after time he repeated this in the records of the Central Council. According to Norsk Idretts Historie, the Central Council actively promoted this form of sport. Norsk Idrætsblad issue #41 in 1900, states: "Orienteering in the wilderness in the summer is such a healthy and exciting sport, while at the same time it is the sport with the most practical use with regard to our army, that it is only fair that the Central Council supports the sport as much as possible..."

Olav Christensen has also documented in Skiidrett før Sondre how skiing as a sport was promoted to unite Norway as a nation, and set it apart from the neighbouring countries. Considering Norway, for all its written history, had been united with either Denmark (1380-1814), or Sweden (1814-1905), or both (1397); with the King residing outside the country,

The headline from a Norwegian sports newspaper 1905. Orienteering is regarded as a part of track and field.

it was quite a task to forge a sense of 'one nation' into the Norwegian population. Up until then, all major (and minor) literary works had been written in Danish. There were few major works of art or architecture, and little typical Norwegian culture. The leaders of the nationalist movement from 1750 and onward looked in other directions to define who was a typical Norwegian. They used the sport of skiing as one aspect, the Norwegian countryside as another. It seems rather obvious that a group that had already defined the countryside as something that set Norway apart, would also embrace a new sport invented in Norway and using the countryside as its arena. Thus orienteering was probably not promoted just for military usefulness, but also in order to unite the people into one nation.

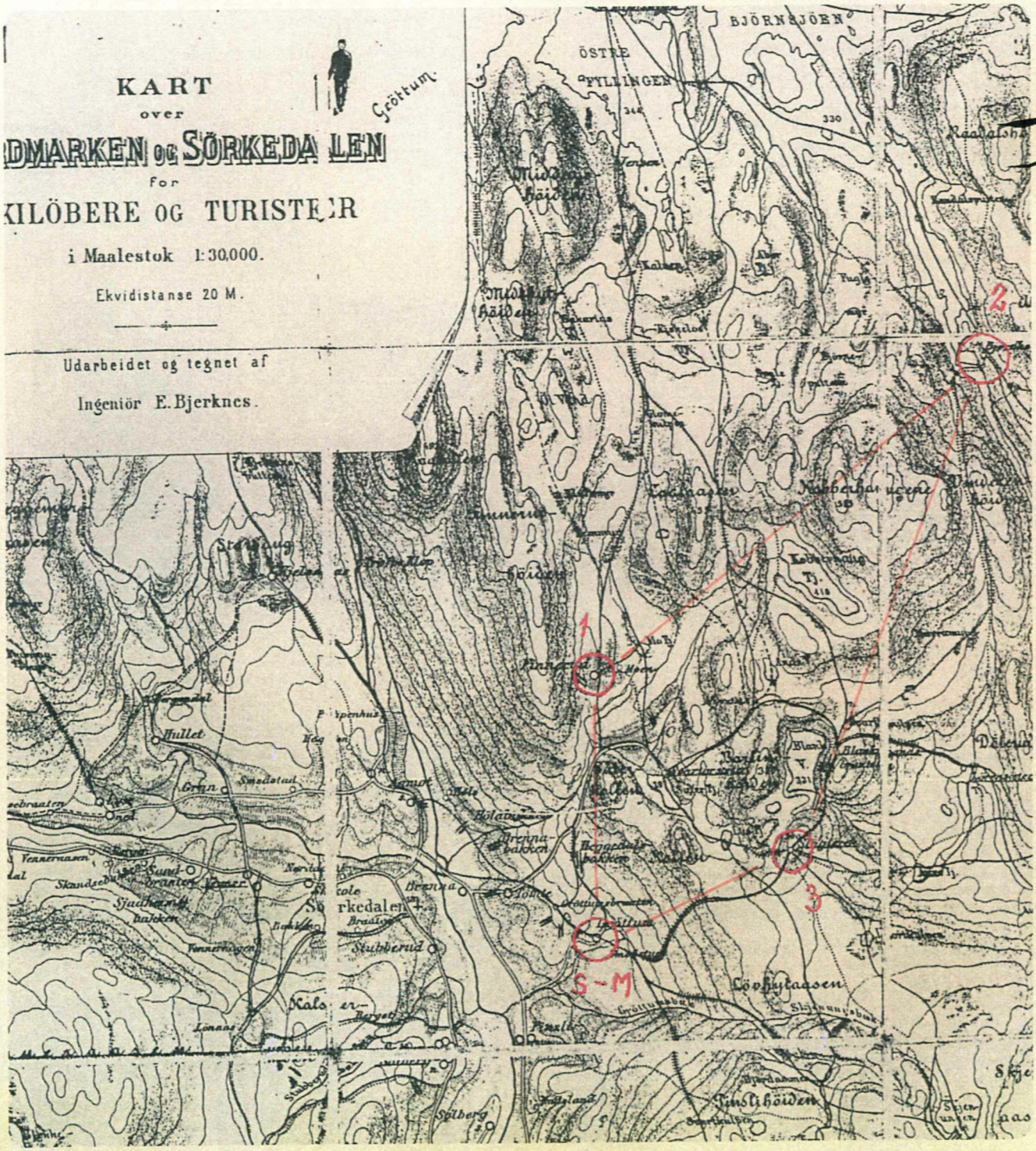
The military and historical situation probably explains why the civilian interest in the sport arose in Norway before Sweden. It can also explain, as Bertil Nordenfeldt notes, why the Norwegian events are so much better documented in contemporary newspapers than the Swedish events.

Tjalve organised a second event on 2nd October 1898, but none of the runners reached the finish within 5 ½ hours. The club tried again on 16th October, and that time 10 out of 11 participants finished.

In 1899 the club invited athletes to what they called their yearly orienteering event on 15 October. In 1899, a starting fee of 1 NOK was required, the first time such a fee is mentioned. (Could this fee be to cover the cost of maps? This would then be the first time the organisers provided the maps.) 24 runners entered the race, and 19 started. The course was 10 km and the winning time as fast as 1.26.40 by premier lieutenant Jens S. Hertzberg. The same year other clubs organised orienteering events, too; both Kristiania IF in Oslo and Bærums Verk IF just west of Oslo. The events began to spread further away from Oslo, with two events in Telemark.

From then on the sport spread. First to western Norway with Bergen as the centre and later northward to Ålesund and Trondheim and also to the rest of eastern Norway.

From the Table we can see that most of the events took place in the autumn, often quite late in autumn. Many of the runners in these events



The most probable map used for the first orienteering event. The course is shown. The drawing on the map shows Grøttum farm, the start of the first orienteering event.

were also accomplished track runners. The orienteering events take place after the track season had finished, but before the snow had fallen. Further north in Norway, it is ski-orienteering that became popular. In Trondheim ski-orienteering was introduced before the foot version.

In the autumn of 1900 the 24-year-old Swedish engineer and sports leader Sigge Stenberg went on a business trip to Oslo. Here he encountered the new sport of orienteering. He liked what he saw, and back in Sweden he wrote enthusiastically in the magazine Nordisk Idrottslif about the sport. Sigge Stenberg also saw the military importance of the sport. In one of his articles he ends with these words: "The sport should be for the joy, refreshment and development of the body and soul for each individual; the sports clubs should, at the same time, work for the inclusion of practical sports in their programs and thus make useful men from their members, so that the father land, in troubled times, can make use of them. First, when this happens, can we really call our sport ideal, but then we can also with good consciousness say: Sport for the Father Land." His words were read, and 17 March 1901 the first civilian Swedish event was organised by Sundbybergs IF; a few weeks later Stenber's own club Almänna IK also held an orienteering event according to the Norwegian model. However, the new sport did not really catch on in Sweden. Most of the events were club events. There seems to have been only one attempt in 1903 to spread orienteering outside the Stockholm area, by inviting runners from other districts to Stockholm.

Almänna IK's invitation to their event puts the rules of orienteering in writing. "The purpose of the event is to let the competitors navigate via the shortest route to reach the indicated places, to let local knowledge and orienteering ability together with physical ability decide the competition.

The Suggestions

1. The race is on foot with the start and finish at Idrottsparken (the sports ground) in Stockholm. Except from this, the direction and length of the course is secret.
2. There will be an individual start.
3. Five minutes before the first start the competitors will be given a map with the first control station indicated. After arriving there the controller will indicate the next control, and also stamp the control card of the competitor.
4. The competitors shall run on foot, without the help of other means of transport or communication.
5. The in-coming runners shall leave their control card with the organisers. Those who do not do this will be disqualified, the same will happen to competitors who loose their control card between the start and finish.
6. The course will be minimum 15, maximum 25 kilometres.
7. The competitor who, after visiting all controls, finishes in the shortest time is the winner.

These rules describe orienteering as Stenberg learned the sport in Norway, and the rules probably describe orienteering at that time well. One rule that Stenberg did not mention, but which was sometimes used in Norway, was to check the pulse rate of the competitors after the competition. If two runners had the same time, he who had the lowest pulse rate was declared the winner. This problem might have been smaller in Sweden as the organisers apparently very soon began to record the time to one fifth of a second, which was the accuracy of stop watches at the time.

Ski-orienteering was started in Sweden in 1900, too, and seems to start independently of Sigge Stenbergs writings.

Orienteering also spread from Norway to Denmark. In 1898 the first events were held, but maps and compasses were not used. There was a joint mass start, and the finish was given verbally. No controls between the start and finish were used for this first event in Denmark. Also later events did not use maps. In 1906 the first event with a map was held in Denmark. Here the Danes have a real first; the map used for the event was made by the organisers. The map is certainly primitive by today's standard, and probably also by the standard of 1906, but it clearly shows that the general maps available might not be the best for the new sport.

In Finland ski-orienteering was organised in 1904. Whether the inspiration for this event came from Norway or Sweden is not known. In the following years there were some ski-orienteering events, many of them over considerable distance. One relay was 100 km, for several of the legs. The total time was 137h 20 min.

By the end of the period we are considering here, orienteering and/or ski-orienteering were established in all Scandinavian countries. The format of the events varied somewhat, but it became more and more common for the organisers to provide the map, which was used by all participants. In most places the events started as small local affairs, often with just a handful of runners from the local club, but by the end of the period, some of the Norwegian organisers managed to assemble fields of nearly a hundred runners. As there was only one class, this should probably be compared to the M21 class today and must certainly be considered as major sports events. Considering that public transportation was scarce and private cars non-existent, the turnout for some of these events must be considered amazing.

In 1905, Norway gained its independence from Sweden without bloodshed, and the military situation loosens up. At the same time orienteering more or less vanishes.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold

Another possible map with the course.

Chapter 3 - A dying flame (1907 - 1918)

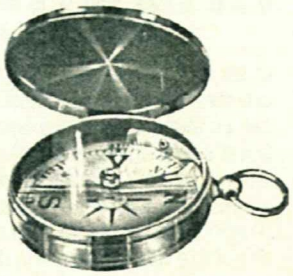
A week before their event in 1907, IF Tjalve announced that their orienteering event was cancelled due to the weather conditions. This seems to be symptomatic for the development over the next ten years in Norway. IF Tjalve was also to hold an event the year after, but no report from this event exists, and it seems likely the event was cancelled, too.

The number of events diminished and after 1914, it is difficult to find any reports of events in Norway at all. In Denmark the situation was the same. Although all the Scandinavian countries stayed out of World War 1, orienteering all but disappeared as a civilian sport. The exception was Sweden, where the Stockholm Amateur Association organised one or two events a year.

The reason for the decline in orienteering activity can, to a large degree, be explained by the political situation. In 1905 Norway gained it's independence from Sweden without a shot fired. As we saw in Chapter 2, the military preparedness was a major contributing factor in the growth and popularity of orienteering in Norway. When this became less important, orienteering declined. The growth of the Olympic Games, also lead to an increased popularity in track events. This was certainly important in Sweden, which hosted the 1912 Olympic Games, and became the best nation (before USA and Great Britain). In Norway there was a clear change in the way newspapers covered sports. In general, more emphasis was placed on the elite level and particularly the Olympic sports. Whether the newspapers changed public opinion or just reflected it, is immaterial for us, but certainly much more emphasis is placed on the entertainment side of sports and less on the public health side. The focus on the elite also meant a change in training methods and taking part in several different sports became less common.

The start of an early orienteering event. There are both military and civilian organisers. The runners with hat and jackets could not be distinguished from the organisers if they did not wear a number bib.

In Sweden one man worked tiredlessly to promote orienteering. In 1908 Lieutenant Ernst Killander took part in several smaller orienteering events in and around Stockholm. The same year he was elected to the board of the Stockholm Sports Federation, where he served until 1935, the last 18 years as the Chairman. In 1913 he put before his fellow board members a proposition to organise a large orienteering event. The whole issue was postponed. One of the arguments against this, was that "orienteering is a military athletic training, far too advanced to arouse any interest outside military circles."The first World War broke out in 1914. We would expect the war to increase interest in orienteering again. This is certainly the case. In Sweden, the Crown Prince established a 'Wandering Cup' to increase the interest amongst the officers. Despite not taking part in the war, the Scandinavian countries had a high level of preparedness. Reserve officers were called to duty and regular officers faced a more demanding job. Since reserve officers and regular officers were often among the leaders of the sports movement, there was thus a lack of leaders and organisers. This seems to have hit orienteering harder than many other sports.



A popular compass type produced from 1914 to 1935 and available to early orienteers.

The peaceful times weakened interest in orienteering as a civilian sport. The war killed the activity, although, as we shall see in Chapter 4, the interest grew.

Ski-orienteering fared a little better than the summer activity. In Sweden, ski-orienteering came under the auspices of the Ski-Federation (and still is today). In 1910 the first Swedish Championships in ski-o-relay was held, and this event has been organised every year since then.

From the number of events reported, it seems like ski-orienteering in Norway lingered on a little longer than foot-o. There were a number of events in the Trondheim area each winter and many of the same clubs organised every winter. The events were often held late in winter, when warm days and cold nights made for an icy crust on the snow. It was then possible to ski everywhere. In other words this is more like orienteering with skis on, rather than ski-orienteering as we understand it today.

The Magelsen brothers at a Norwegian ski-o event from 1911.

On November 11, 1918 the first World War ended. Reserve officers were discharged, and enlisted officers got more time. On 8thDecember, Sven Lindhagen from Hellas and Harald Nilsson from Fremåt organised orienteering events for their respective clubs. The finish area was common for the two events, but the courses were separate. The two organisers were comrades from the Göta Life Guards, where Ernst Killander also served. They had become enthusiastic about orienteering during their military service. Later in December 1918 a third Swedish club, IK Linnea, also organised an event. All these events were small with just a handful of runners from one club.

The father of modern orienteering: Ernst Killander (1882-1958). A visionary and enthusiast, in official Swedish history he is called "the prophet".

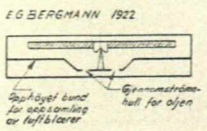
Ernst Killander in his twenties.

Chapter 4 - Revival (1907 - 1918)

Lieutenant Ernst Killander took part in several smaller orienteering events in and around Stockholm in 1908. In 1908 he was also elected to the Board of the Stockholm Sport Federation. Five years later he unsuccessfully motioned to have a large orienteering event. In 1917 Ernst Killander became Chairman of the Board of Stockholm Sport Federation. In such a position he carried a greater authority than before and early in 1919 he put forward his old motion to organise a big publicity orienteering event. This time the decision to proceed was made unanimously and without discussion. It was also decided to proceed the same spring. Killander himself was to lead the task group.

The event was to be held on 25th March. 217 runners entered the competition and 155 of those actually came to the start at Igelboda, close to Saltsjöbaden. Even if orienteering was regarded as an important part of the military training, only 27 service men started albeit in a separate military category. The rest of the runners were from all walks of life: carpenters, students, masons, journalists, bakers, bankers, and clerks. The athletic background varied too: many good skiers, Olympic medallists in high jump and a few that had run orienteering previously. The equipment was as varied as the participants themselves. Long trousers, or shorts with leg wrappings or stockings to add protection.

A compass from L'Abbe-Lunds Uhrkompass, 1921.



E. G. Bergmann's Norwegian patent from 1922 showing an oil-filled compass.

Gunnar Tillanders hand made prototype from 1926. This led to the founding of Silva - a company, which is the worlds largest producer of compasses.

The conditions for the event were far from ideal in Stockholm so early in the spring. There was still snow in the wood and even newly fallen snow the day before the event. The organisers wondered whether there would be tracks from start to finish. The worry proved unfounded, the best athletes won, despite the conditions.

The media interest in the event was great, too. The Swedish Idrottsbladet (a sports news paper) devoted its full front page to the event, with the map, pictures, route choice analysis and commentary. The journalist was Sven Lindhagen (organiser of a small event a few months earlier), who had served with Ernst Killander during World War 1.

The new sport spread quickly in Sweden. From around 1925 there were district championships in all Swedish districts. In 1926 the newspaper Dagens Nyheter organised a championships match for all the district champions. The match was held in Stockholm, and Folke Thörn, who was the Stockholm champion, won by 50 minutes. This was a far too comfortable a margin and delayed the introduction of a Swedish Championship. As the knowledgeable editor of Idrottsbladet Torsten Tegnér, wrote: "the local terrain can never give fairness to a Swedish Championship."

The quick growth of the sport is probably very much the result of a back to nature movement sweeping across Europe in the 1920's. The "Wandervogel" movement was on the rise in Germany, the boy scouts were increasing in numbers and youth hostels were spreading quickly. The population was also getting more spare time. In 1919 Sweden passed a law that limited the working day to 8 hours.

For nearly the first 30 years the sport had been for men only, but in 1925 the first event for women was held in Gothenburg. In 1926 a motion for district championships for women was stopped by the Swedish Sports Federation, despite their committee for Women in Sports being in favour. "... the time for such a championships is not ripe." Two years later the same motion was passed.

At the end of the twenties there were about 5000 people that were considered active orienteers in Sweden. The sport grew so rapidly that it was considered a threat to some other established sports. Orienteering events were ususally organised in the autumn, but in 1928 Sportsklubben in Gothenburg held an event on 18th March. This was regarded as a threat to classic cross-country running. The case was tested before the Swedish Sports Federation, which regarded this as a "serious infringement". Nevertheless another event was held in Stockholm a couple of months later.

During the twenties orienteering found a form that would stay for a long time. The time for experimentation was over. The basic principles governing the types of courses, controls, age groups and organisation were all laid down. Relays were introduced by SoIK Hellas in 1921 and from 1927 there were district championships in this discipline all over Sweden. Night orienteering was introduced on 2nd December 1922 by the Stockholm Athletic Association and must have been quite an adventure with the maps and equipment available at that time.

A runner finishing this Swedish event from the 20's. It is difficult to tell whether the rest are genuine spectators or runners that have finished. They are all dressed the same.

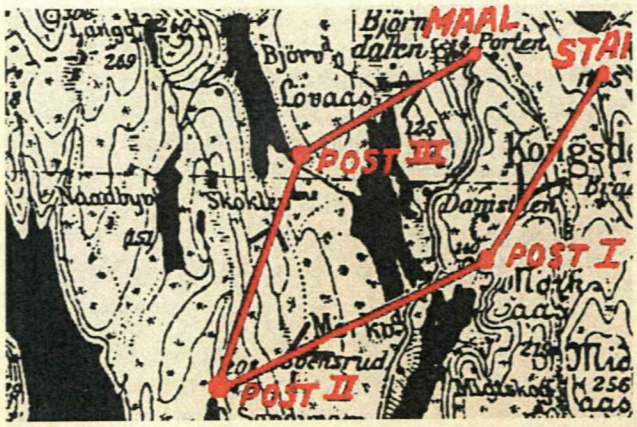
Ingenious course planners also improved the standard of courses and put more interesting technical challenges before the runners. The orienteers also organised themselves. The first orienteering club, Goterna, was formed in 1928.

The Swedish athletic instructor Gösse Holmér and the Finnish leader Leo Löf introduced orienteering to Finland in 1923. This was the first time an orienteer had gone abroad to promote the sport. When orienteering first spread from Norway to Sweden it was a Swede visiting Norway who brought the sport back home with him.

Norwegian sports journalists picked up the new Swedish sport and started publishing accounts of the Swedish events in Norway. They also did more than that. In 1925 the sports journalists P. Chr. Andersen, Nils Dahl, Jacob Vaage and Trygve Gulbranssen organised the first modern event in Norway. Nils Dahl had been in Sweden and studied the organisation of an orienteering event. The trip was sponsored by the Norwegian Sports Council. Trygve Gulbranssen gave a glowing report of the event in Idrettsliv #88 (1925). Even by the standards of the time, when journalism was

An orienteering event in Finland in 1924. Military organisers, but the participant is dressed in civilian clothes.

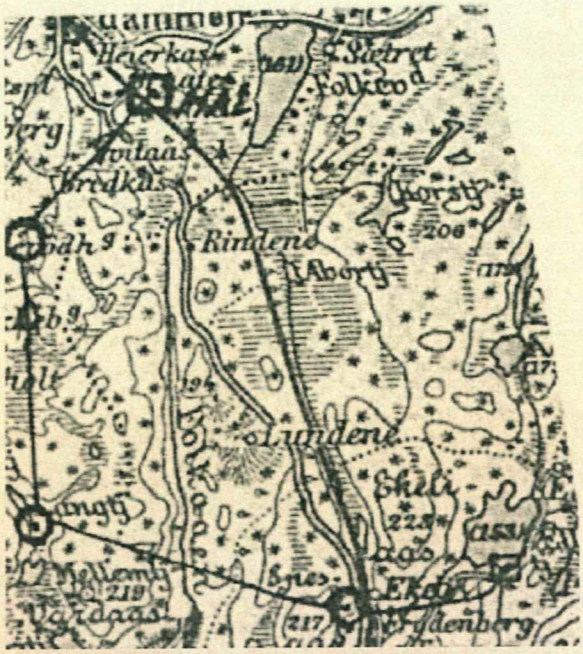
about writing and not pictures and headlines, the account is amazing. Gulbranssen also later became an accomplished author who has had his work translated into 30 languages. The title of the newspaper story is "Premieren" (the premier) clearly showing that the organisers knew that they were making history. Unfortunately his account of the first orienteering race is not available in English.



"Hurumløpet" the revival of orienteering in Norway.

The same four men also organised events in the following years. Orienteering also spread to other Norwegian districts outside Oslo, but the new sport was slow to catch on compared to in Sweden. There were few events and they were small. One reason for the slow growth might be the time of the year the events were organised. Most of them took place in the late autumn, after what we today would consider the end of the orienteering season, usually from the middle of October and later in the year. In several instances the events were plagued by snow. Orienteering in Norway was not so much a sport as training before the ski season, or a pass time after the cross-country season. In 1925 there were two events in Norway; five years later there were still only ten events.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold



Strong and well-known Halden Skiklubb started orienteering early. Here is the course from their event in 1927.

100 years in the forests - a personal route choice through the history of orienteering

Chapter 5 - Growth (1931 - 1939)

The thirties was a period of unrest in Scandinavia, as well as in the rest of Europe. After Black Monday in October 1929 there was a grave economical crisis, which in Norway lasted from 1930 to 1933. At times as much as 40% of trade union members were unemployed. There was also unrest, with strikes and lockouts. Society was more polarised than at any other time in history. The workers tried to build their own organisations as a contrast to the more bourgeois ones that existed. Thus, Norway and Finland had two parallel sports organisations. In Norway there was also Norsk Folkehjelp (Norwegian People Aid) founded in 1939 as opposed to the Red Cross, Framfylkingen (founded 1934) as opposed to the Scouting movement; and Arbeidernes Jeger og Fiskerforbund (1932) as opposed to Norges Jeger of Fisker Forbund. Locally, many arbeideridrettsklubber (workers sports clubs) were formed.

In continental Europe, the conflicts were even more serious, but this is no place to recount the growth of Nazism and fascism in Germany and other countries. Despite the unrest it was also a time when interest in sport grew and participation in mass sports increased dramatically.

Start of a Swedish event in 1931.

In Sweden, orienteering was large and well developed. However, the question of having a Swedish Championship was repeatedly voted down in the Swedish sports federation. Both in 1931, 1932 and 1933 the motion was put forward, but refused. The orienteers persisted, and in 1934 the motion was finally passed, but with the reservation that this should only be tried for three years and with a limited number of participants. One reason for opposing a Swedish Championships is that only a few trials with national elite competitions that had been organised. Already in 1922 there had been a champion's meet for all the district champions in Stockholm and the Stockholm runner won by 50 minutes. Another trial of a national championship in the district of Dalarna in 1931 was also completely dominated by locals.

The first Swedish Championship on September 29, 1935, was organised in the area near Skinnskatteberg. The first winner was Arvid Kjellström. He completed the 13 kms with six controls in 1.56:40.

In the beginning of the thirties, orienteering in Sweden was organised through the Track and Field Federation. This caused some friction between the orienteers and the rest of the Federation. In some places orienteering was seen as a threat to cross country running and motions to prevent orienteering on the same day as major cross-country events were put forward. There was also the question of whether an athlete that took part in several sports had to represent the same club e.g. both in orienteering and track events. The orienteers often felt that the sports administrators did not understand the particular requirements of orienteering. On the other hand, many sports leaders took a keen interest in the relatively young sport.

On the night of 15th December 1930, 26 specially invited men meet in the snowy forests of Nacka. The purpose was to build a simple, yet strong organisation for orienteers. This aim was never fulfilled, but the organisation still lives as the Skogkarenes Klubb. The organisation acts as a support organisation for orienteering in all the Nordic countries. The club rapidly spread to all Swedish districts and also outside Sweden (Finland in 1934, Denmark in 1947, and Norway in 1958). The organisation has still kept much of the exclusiveness it had from the start and membership is by invitation only.

Map and course from Swedish Championships in 1937.

In the beginning, Skogkarlarna promoted orienteering by trying to raise the profile of the sport. The local club in Stockholm was especially active. They initiated district matches between Stockholm and various other Swedish districts and also an unofficial Swedish championship in both 1933 and 1934. The activities were also coordinated between the different local clubs, thus different districts motioned for an official Swedish Championship each year. In 1935, the first official Swedish championship became a reality.

By 1933, orienteering was the largest activity in the Track and Field Federation and a motion for an independent Orienteering Federation was put forward. The motion was rejected and a long and tough battle for an independent orienteering association in Sweden started. In the book written for the 50th anniversary of SOFT, Bertil Nordenfeldt recounts the fight in which he was an important part.

The Swedish sports federation would not allow an orienteering federation, but in 1934 a halfway solution was introduced by forming the Swedish Sports Federations Committee for Orienteering (SIKO). There was, however, soon to be a major break between the active orienteers and SIKO. In 1935 the first Swedish Championships took place. A few weeks later a motion was put forward to the Track and Field Federation to have official district championships for juniors (under 17 year old boys). An overwhelming majority of the district associations (19 out of 22) supported the motion, but the board rejected the new championships. The orienteers were infuriated, particularly when the chairman of SIKO delivered the decisive argument about how dangerous it was for the 16-17 year olds to run alone in the forest. To make the situation worse, it was in the same board meeting that they decided to continue district championships in 5000 metre track running for juniors and also to introduce a new 3000 metre cross-country championship for juniors.

The orienteers felt that something should be done. On 18th March 1936, six leading orienteers met in Stockholm - at the royal castle where Ernst Killander worked. The other men present were: Björn Kjellström, Bertil Nordenfeldt, Arvid Sundlöf, Torsten Tegnér and Folke Thörn. Arvid Sundlöf had been secretary of SIKO, but after the infamous meeting the autumn before, he had left the committee. The group decided to call for a meeting of everybody interested in orienteering.

Already on 26th March, the meeting convened. Even at such short notice, 53 delegates from 5 different districts met and about 30 additional orienteers came as observers. The meeting decided to form an orienteering federation and an interim committee was appointed. The day after the meeting the Federation already had got its own letterhead on the papers and a letter was sent to the Swedish Track and Field Federation requesting that all matters relating to orienteering be transferred to the new Federation. The Track and Field Federation declined and, correctly, pointed out that this was a matter for the general assembly, which would meet in the autumn. The Track and Field Federation also sent a letter to the Swedish Sports Federation to stop the initiative. Ernst Killander who was a member of the board of the Swedish Sports Federation and the newly formed Orienteering Federation did not take part when the letter was discussed. The Sports Federation was opposed to the new federation.

The orienteers did not stop though. A new meeting convened on 3rd May, this time with representatives from half the districts and one third of the clubs. The new federation elected its first official board of directors. Attempts were made to get somebody from SIKO on the board of the new federation, but this was not successful. Instead there was a meeting between SOFT and SIKO

nearly half a year later. The orienteers had prepared well. The plans and budgets were impressive and the meeting was a very positive for the orienteers. It issued a joint statement that "the well thought through programme is worth realising". SIKO wanted a democratic process and required that all orienteering clubs should have the opportunity to vote. SOFT of course agreed. It was decided to let the orienteering clubs decide by a mail vote. However, SIKO was overrun by the Track and Field Federation. The letter was sent to all 2000 clubs of the federation, not just those that had orienteering on their program. The clubs were given just one week to respond. The results were not clear. Of the clubs voting 200 were in favour of a new SOFT, while 235 opposed the new federation. On the other hand, when only orienteering clubs were counted (as the original agreement stated), the results were 192 in favour and 153 opposed.

The general assembly in the Track and Field Federation was handling the case on 25th November. Orienteers across the country had worked hard to get as many delegates to the meeting as possible. The final vote was 45 opposed to the new federation and 42 in favour. The Track and Field Federation asked the rebels to join SIKO, but would not promise more economical support or freedom of organisation. The rebels rejected, but promised to help SIKO in all reasonable manners.

The situation was certainly not productive and the year after, the Swedish Sports Federation formed a "neutral" committee to look into the problem of how to organise orienteering. This committee requested the Track and Field Federation to have yet another poll. At a meeting on 22nd September, it was disclosed that the vote was overwhelmingly in favour of status quo. But again the final numbers were less clear. Among the district federations, 10 were in favour of an independent SOFT and 9 opposed, while 4 were of no opinion. Among the clubs with active orienteers 158 were in favour and 148 opposed.

The orienteers would still not give up however. Yet another motion to the general assembly of the Track and Field Federation was put forward to form an independent orienteering Federation. The discussions during the meeting were tough. But when it was revealed that the decision from the board of the Track and Field Federation was as close as 7 to 6, the wind started blowing the way of the rebels. The final vote was as clear as 64 in favour of removing orienteering from the program of the Track and Field Federation, while 28 opposed.

The next general assembly of the Swedish Sports Federation confirmed the decision.

In the other Nordic countries the question of organisation was much simpler. Finland got an orienteering section under their Sports Federation in 1935. Sometimes it has been stated that the Finnish Orienteering Federation was founded in 1935, which thus would make it the oldest orienteering federation, but that seems to be a misunderstanding. The official establishment of both the Finnish and the Finnish-Swedish Orienteering Federations took place in 1945. The latter looks after the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland.

In Norway, the orienteering committee under the Track and Field Federation was formed in 1933. As in Sweden, the orienteers felt that the Federation interfered too much in their business, but the confrontation was never as strong as in the neighbouring country. There seem to be two reasons for this. First orienteering was a much smaller sport in Norway and thus orienteering carried much less weight in any confrontation. Secondly, orienteers in Norway seem to have been given much more freedom. The orienteering committee (known as the Hovedkomite) also gave rise to several district committees. These district committees in several cases later formed district associations. Thus in 1939 there were both an Orienteering Association and a Track and Field Association in the Oslo area, and both associations were associated with the Track and Field Federation. When a motion to form a separate orienteering federation was put forward in 1939, the Greater Oslo Orienteering Association was actually opposed to it: "It is obvious that a separate Federation, from a sports point of view, is justified even today, but there are important economical arguments against it. Furthermore the Orienteering Committee is working so well together with the Track and Field Federation and given so much freedom that, ----"

Orienteering was reintroduced in Norway in 1925, but although a small and dedicated group of organisers worked hard, the sport did not really grow. The needed kick came in 1932. The journalist Jørgen Juve was interested in orienteering and decided that the best Norwegian runners ought to test themselves against the Swedes. He got his newspaper, Dagbladet, to cooperate with the sport club Gamlebyens IF and the Swedes were invited to the first international match. The Swedes had selection races and sent their best runners. The Norwegians might have entertained some hope that their familiarity with the kind of terrain and maps should give them some advantages. On the other hand the Swedes clearly had better equipment. They brought the new oil filled Silva compass, while the Norwegians still had air filled compass houses without a base plate. The Swedes also had light running gear, with specially made studded boots. The event proved to be an evenly fought match. The Norwegian Einar Judén won the senior class, but the Swede Albin Lindholm won the veterans class in a time three minutes faster. The event was a great success with good press coverage in both Sweden and Norway. The competition was also an economical success for the organising club. After the event, Gamlebyens IF went to Dagbladet and explained that they did not need the newspapers money after all.

Early compass from the Kjellström brothers, both successful orienteers who formed the Silva company.

Orienteering in Norway grew rapidly after that event. As described above, an Orienteering Committee was formed in 1933 and placed in the Track and Field Federation. In 1937, the committee felt that the sport had grown so big that a Norwegian Championships was justified that year. In fact, 1937 saw not one, but two Norwegian Champions. Both the Orienteering Committee and the Workers Sports Federation organised their own Norwegian Championships. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there were both a Workers Sports Federation and a "bourgeois" Sports Federation in Norway from 1924. In 1935 the Ministry of Social Affairs felt that the situation was unsatisfactory and initiated talks to join the two federations. The orienteers of the two federations did co-operate to a certain extent and from 1938 they competed in events organised by clubs belonging to the other federation. However, this did not prevent the two competing organisations holding separate Norwegian Championships in 1937, 1938 and 1939.

After the success of their international event in 1932, Gamlebyen IF repeated the event the year after. The best Norwegian runners also visited Sweden the same autumn. There were many visits over the border over the next few years.

Finland and Sweden met for their first match in 1935. Again it was the Swedes who travelled. The first three-nation competition was held in 1938 near Kathrineholm in Sweden. This was centrally placed and minimised the travelling for all the teams. A three-country match in 1939 was reduced to a match between Norway and Sweden as the outbreak of World War II prevented the Finns from travelling.

Orienteering also spread in Europe. In 1933 orienteering was introduced in Switzerland. On 19th March, a team event was held near Zürich. During the rest of the decade, only a few events were held, but all of them involved teams.

In 1935 the "Friends of Nature" in Hungary started orienteering. There have been reports of orienteering events in the Soviet Union in 1939. There seems to be some confusion as to whether this was in the Russian Republic or in one of the then independent Baltic States.

There are also some hints about orienteering events in Britain and Spain during the thirties, however, they do not seem to have caught on. Also in Poland, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Germany, there was some orienteering activity in this decade. Little is known about these activities, but at least in Germany it was part of the exercises in the para-military youth organisations.

Orienteering in the Central European countries seems to have developed fairly independently of the Nordic countries. The sport thus took somewhat different forms. In Switzerland in the main and for many years only, focus was on team competitions. In Eastern Europe, the sport developed into a more tourist version, where other activities other than running speed over unknown ground were considered for the final results.

Orienteering was reintroduced into Denmark at the end of this decade. Copenhagen Ski Club held their first event on 5th November 1939 in the well-known Grib Skov, north of Copenhagen. In Denmark it was the skiers who first saw the possibilities in this new sport. They needed to find their way in the mountain wilderness. As the climate in Denmark is not very productive for skiing they also needed some other activity for their general fitness training. Later cross-country runners and rowers also found that the sport was excellent training. The rowers probably came via skiing, as both rowing and skiing requires the same combination of arm, back and leg strength, and compliments each other nicely in training.

On the technical side of orienteering, not much happened during the 30's. A fluid damped compass was produced from 1930. The Silva model produced from 1933 came with a transparent base plate.

In 1932, the Swedes produced the first handbook for organisers of orienteering events called 'Regler för Orientering med Råd och Anvisninger' (Rules for Orienteering with Advice and Instructions). There was also a lot of activity in teaching both new orienteers and officials the basics of the sport. The magazine 'Friluftsliv' held the first theoretical course planning competition in 1936 and three years later the first course-planning manual was printed. Olle Ekbom, a well-known course planner, wrote the book. The first edition was printed in 5000 copies, but already after three years, a new edition was printed. Another bestseller from the same year was 'ABC i Orientering', which over the next 18 years was printed in 45.000 copies.

In Norway, Tønsberg Turnforening drew the first orienteering map in 1936. The map was based on existing maps and apparently no new information was added to the map. Nevertheless, the map was traced again specially for the orienteering event and the scale was larger than the existing rectangle map. The same year, Swedish orienteers tried score orienteering for the first time. This event never caught on in Scandinavia, but later became popular in Great Britain.

Olle Ekbom's course setting manual from 1939. His ideas and principles are still followed today.

As orienteering grew there were also concerns about the environment. There had early been voices that opposed any orienteering events in the springtime, during the breeding season for most of the birds and animals. From 1938, the Swedish Orientering Federation started consultations with the Svenska Jägare Förbundet (Swedish Hunters Association). In Norway, too, there were concerns about the effect orienteering during springtime had on wildlife, as the sport grew from 200-300 runners in 1932 to about 5000 in 1940.

At the end of this period, orienteering had grown to such a major sport that it nearly made it into the XII Olympic Games. In 1940 Japan celebrated the 2600-year anniversary for their present royal dynasty. It was felt that the Olympic Games would be a suitable backdrop for the celebration. Several new stadiums in and around Tokyo were planned and IOC's president count Baillet-Latour had inspected the sites. During the Olympic Games in 1936, Tokyo was awarded the 1940 games with 37 votes, while Helsinki in Finland got 26 votes. In 1937 Japan started war against China. The Japanese Olympic Committee felt that they could not organise the games under the circumstances and thus declined the honour on July 29th 1938. As the runner up in the last vote Helsinki was then awarded the summer games. Helsinki already had most of the stadiums that were needed and on 19th October 1938, the official invitation to the XII Olympic Games was posted.

The program for the Games included more events than ever before. In a book from 1945 Axel Holland states that orienteering, too, was suggested for the games. Later sources seem to indicate that orienteering should be included as a demonstration sport. The planning was so far advanced that the courses were probably set. However, once again the political situation created problems for the organisers. 1st September 1939, the Second World War started in Europe. On 10th October the Finish organising committee declared that it continued the preparations for the games and would invite athletes from all nations not at war. Three weeks later Finland was invaded by the Soviet Union. In January 1940 the organising committee sent out a message to all nations that, "it depends on the athletes of the entire world whether this message shall be the last, or not".

It was the last!

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold

100 years in the forests - a personal route choice through the history of orienteering.

Chapter 6 - War (1940 - 1945)

By the end of the thirties, orienteering was a major sport in Sweden and also firmly established in Finland and Norway (where orienteering federations were on the brink of forming). Orienteering activities were also taking place in other European countries. 1st September 1939 is usually considered as the start of World War II with the German attack on Poland. Italy had of course already long been fighting in North Africa and Japan in the Far East. The winter of '39-40 was a quiet one and the attack on Denmark and Norway on 9th April 1940 marks the start of continuous fighting in Europe. Americans on the other hand might regard 6th December 1941 as the start of World War II and from this time, countries around the globe were engaged in war.

The three Nordic countries, which are of major interest in this treatise, fared quite differently during the war. In September 1939, all three of them declared their neutrality. This did not help Finland much. In October the same year the Soviet Union demanded land. The Finns refused. USSR then renounced the non-aggression treaty and attacked on 30th November. This is known as the Winter War. The Finns dug in and fought bravely. The cold winter made the war an even worse ordeal. By shear manpower the Soviets won the war (casualty ratios of 10 USSR soldiers to 1 Finn have been quoted). In the middle of March 1940 the fighting ended. Finland had to give up 35,000 sq.km and 450,000 people from a total population of 3.5 million had to be moved from some of the best agricultural land.

On 22nd July, operation Barbarossa started and Nazi-Germany attacked the Soviet Union. Three days later Finland did the same. The attack seems to have been met with understanding from the allied forces, including Great Britain, which were technically allied with the USSR against Germany. However, when Finland passed the pre-war borders, Britain declared war on 6th December 1941. The fighting continued for the next two years, before peace negotiations started. In April 1944 Finland quitted the peace negotiations, USA then broke all diplomatic ties with Finland, but still did not declare war.

German forces left Finland the same autumn and used scorched earth tactics in Northern Finland. At the same time the Soviet troops advanced. The armistice started on 19th September 1944.

Norway also declared its neutrality at the outbreak of the war. On 9th April 1940, Nazi-Germany attacked. The battle ship Blücher was sunk in the Oslo fjord and most of the elite forces on board perished. This allowed the royal family and government time to leave Oslo. The parliament also left Oslo and in a last sitting gave the government the "power to take care of Norway's interest until the parliament can reconvene." The battles in southern Norway were delaying, but not stopping, the German forces. In northern Norway the fighting lasted longer. The Germans took Narvik, but a joint operation by British, French, Polish and Norwegian forces regained the city, which was thus the first area the German forces lost during WW2.

When the German forces attacked France, all French, British and Polish forces were pulled out of Narvik. On 7th June, the government, King and Crown Prince left Norway to settle in Great Britain - while the rest of the royal family lived in USA. Quisling (one of the few Norwegians to make his name internationally famous) tried to claim power in Norway. However, the German occupation forces were not satisfied and a council of commissaries was appointed on 25th September and from the same date, all political parties were abandoned.

The active fighting in Norway was over by the summer of 1940, but there was an active resistance movement. 44,000 joined the resistance known as "gutta på skauen" (literally "the boys in the forest"). A large and sparsely populated country was well suited for a guerrilla movement.

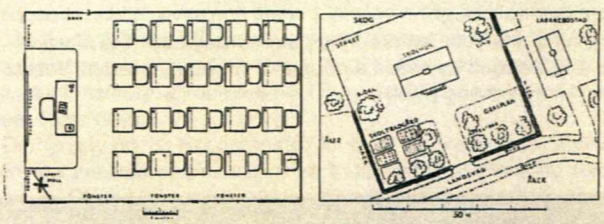
46,000 Norwegians crossed the border to neutral Sweden during the war; 13,000 of those joined the police forces. Neutral Sweden could, of course, not allow Norwegian military forces to train on their soil - the police was something completely different. 46,000 Norwegians also left for other countries, many of those crossing the North Sea in small vessels to Britain.

During most of the war there was some measure of normality. The resistance to a large extent consisted of reporting on the movements of the German forces to the British High Command. A large proportion of the radio operators lost their lives. Active sabotage mostly started in 1944. The allies wanted to make sure that the 300,000 German soldiers stationed in Norway would stay there and not be moved to France to strengthen the defence during D-Day. Thus the Norwegian resistance started to blow up railway lines and harbours.

When the Second World War started, Sweden was military relatively weak and had to make some concessions to the German forces. The government let German troops pass through northern Sweden. This was not popular by large groups of the population and many newspapers criticised the government's policy strongly. This did not change the policy, but lead to the introduction of press censorship. The Swedes did strengthen their military forces during the war. By 1943, the military was strong and at the same time the Germans started to fight a loosing battle. From then on there were no more concessions to Nazi-Germany.

At the outbreak of the war, orienteering was well developed in Sweden. During the war the sport grew immensely. With most of the world in flames, the ability to defend their own country became all-important. This certainly contributed to the interest in sports in general. In the years 1940 – 1946, a Riksorientering took place. Over the seven years, 378,497 certificates were awarded. Even if many took the certificate several years this means that at least 55,000 people tried orienteering. The number of active orienteers grew and by 1943 there were 30.000 active orienteers in Sweden, 10% of those were women. Between 1940 and 1945, the number of orienteering clubs in Sweden grew from just over 600 to nearly 1500. Orienteering was also considered so important that compulsory orienteering education was introduced in Swedish schools in 1942.

Att det behövs kraftigare förminskning för att på samma pappersyta passa in hela skoltomten (t. h.) än då man bara ritar av klassrummet (t v.), är ganska självklart även för barn.



Simple school maps for the young are nothing new. Here are Swedish examples from 1945.

The growth also meant that new groups were attracted to orienteering. In 1940, the number of runners was found sufficient to start district championships for juniors and an unofficial national championship for women. The year after the women's championship became official. The original decision was for a three-year test period, but the success was so great that there was never any talk about stopping the women again.

In 1942, another district championship was officially introduced, this time for veterans. In 1943, district night-o championship was added to the list. Finally, a relay championship for women was added in 1945. This shows that so many women now were taking part in orienteering that clubs could field complete teams. The interest among men was also great, and the first weekend of May 1945, 66 ten-man teams gathered for the first Tio-mila relay. The news report of this event was pushed aside, though, as the event also coincided with the capitulation of Nazi-Germany. Nevertheless, the idea of many leg relays (as opposed to the normal three) caught on and several were organised that autumn in Sweden. In 1947, Finland came along with their Jukolan Viesti for seven man teams.

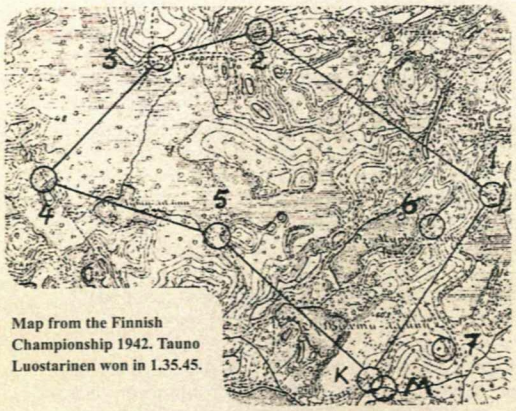
During the war, much literature about orienteering was produced, both for active orienteers, course planners and organisers, for the general public and for teachers. Probably the literature made people interested in orienteering, but on the other hand, the market was also big enough for commercial publishers to make books about orienteering.

A prize from an illegal event in 1941. The prize includes the victory sign and the monogram of the king, a combination much used by the resistance movement.

Even though Sweden stayed out of the war, there were some problems for orienteering, too. The sales of maps were stopped in 1940, but after negotiations, reprints of maps for sanctioned orienteering events were allowed. Still the organisers were not allowed to make any corrections or additions to the maps. This minor problem was circumvented by making some very detailed control descriptions with sketches.

In 1943, Sweden introduced shoe rationing, which meant that a license was needed to buy orienteering shoes. Despite small practical problems, orienteering grew and prospered in Sweden during World War II. The growth was probably even greater than it would have been without the war, because of the general interests in fitness and military preparedness.

Finland was engaged in battles more or less for the duration of the war. Despite this it seems from Suuni Suunisteosi like orienteering continued at about the same level as before the war, or may even have grown. There were many military events. A school championship was introduced in 1943, to attract younger runners. Some soldiers also got leave to take part in civilian orienteering championships.



Map from the Finnish Championship 1942. Tauno Luostarinen won in 1.35.45.

In Norway, the situation was more complex. While Sweden and Finland were in control of their own territory, German forces occupied Norway. The leader of the Norwegian Nazi party, Vidkun Quisling, tried to seize power through a coup just hours after the invasion. It was soon clear to the German forces that he was unsatisfactory as a leader. During the whole summer of 1940 there was a battle for power. This did not influence the sports much. On 29th January 1940, the Sports Council had recommended sportsmen to improve their orienteering skills. "The season of 1940 went on as normal" Ludvik Steff-Pedersen states a few years later. Petrol rationing did, however, make it more difficult to get to orienteering events.

The power struggle ended with the German Commissioner Terboven in charge of Norway. A strong 'nazification' of society began. In November, the Norwegian Sports Council and the Workers Sport Association were both dissolved, to form a new politically loyal sports federation. Sports Associations, district associations and clubs all went on strike and all organised sports were stopped. Many clubs resigned from the new sports federation. Although many local sports leaders did not see the dangers and wanted to continue, as before, "not mixing sport and politics"; the central sports leaders were quite aware of the dangers. They saw that the rulers might use the sport.

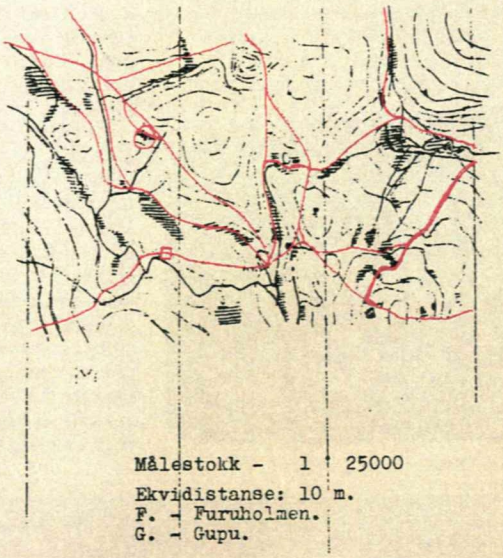
The Nazi commissaries tried to force the sports movement into line by disqualifying the former leader of the Norwegian Sports Council, Carl Christiansen and seven athletes for life. They were: Lars Bergendahl -skiing; Bjørn Cook – wrestling; Harry Haraldsen - speed skating; Georg Krog - speed skating; Birger Ruud – skiing; Egil Solsvik – wrestling; Ivar Stokke – wrestling. The disqualifications backfired and if anything, the opposition to the new sports federation was strengthened.

Despite the sport being officially stopped, there were many illegal sports events. Orienteering is simpler to hide away than many other sports and thus was less hampered. Still, many of the illegal sports events were nearly officially sanctioned; even the Nazi newspapers brought the results from illegal football matches. The Nazi government viewed orienteering as military training for the resistance movement and orienteers risked arrest. A few orienteers were also arrested.

In May 1942, the orienteer Arthur Møller was riding his bike to reach a small training event. Just outside Grini prison camp, an armed German soldier stopped him. Møller tried to explain that he was just out to pick lilies-of-the-valley. The soldier did not quite believe the story and took him for further interrogations. When some food and spare clothes were discovered, the interrogators were sure he was there to help prisoners escape from the camp. In the end he managed to convince them that running gear and extra cloths were the normal equipment for picking flowers. Three long weeks later he was released.

Trygve Christensen tells how in June 1944, another event was organised near the German prison camp Grini. One runner nearly fell over a German soldier having fun with his mistress in the woods. The orienteer was taken at gunpoint to the prison camp and interrogated. Patrols, some with dogs, were sent into the forests and two more orienteers were arrested. Luckily, the organisers, Thor and Tullik Wold, happened to spot a group of German soldiers with machine guns ready. Quickly, the start list, maps and other equipment were hidden away. One runner that had already finished was sent to the last control to stop the rest of the runners. A few days later, Gestapo knocked on the door of the organisers. Thor Wold jumped out of the window and escaped.

Also, other events had to be stopped when German soldiers appeared too close to the event. However, in the other cases all runners managed to escape, sometimes leaving all their equipment behind and travelling home in dirty running gear.



Kristoffer Staver's map from 1941 is arguably the first orienteering map. The paths along with the start and first control were drawn in red. The rest of the controls the runners had to copy themselves as was usual at that time.

In Norway, most illegal orienteering events during the war were held close to the major cities, Oslo, Drammen, Halden, Kongsvinger, Kristiansand and Trondheim. Travelling restrictions during the war meant that it was difficult to assemble runners far from the city. It would probably also be difficult to hide a few hundred people in a small village. Orienteering became so popular that it was a problem for the organisers. The size of the events had to be restricted. In Oslo, the clubs organised two or three events on the same date, to limit the size of each event. In Oslo, the district championship had to limit the number of runners starting by selection races. Despite the problems, a district champion was decided each year.

There were also technical problems for the organisers. Sale of maps was stopped in 1941. This led Kristoffer Staver to produce the first orienteering map in 1941. Though, he himself tends to play down his role. But the fact is that for Tanum IL's illegal night orienteering event in Gupumarka (20 km west of Oslo) in 1941, he made a sort of orienteering map at the scale of 1:25,000.

Kristoffer Staver explains: "My father had some copies of a few forestry maps that Oslo City had made over Vestmarka. When we were organising our traditional night event, which was sometime during the war, I decided to surprise the participants. I took a couple of hikes in the terrain, added a few details and got it copied in some way or other. The map was very well received and Mary Sørensen made a similar map over Grønland in Vestmarka in 1950." Whether this was the first map 'made by orienteers, for orienteers' Kristoffer Staver would not say too much. He looked upon this more as a curiosity than an accident.

In other parts of Norway, orienteers had similar solutions to the problem of a lack of maps. Per Wang from Drammen remembers: "It was Hitler that made me an orienteer andmap maker and improved Norwegian orienteering - the only good thing he ever did. My first attempts to compete with NGO took place in the years 1941 - 1945, but except for tracing, this was restricted to correcting obvious mistakes from my knowledge of the area."

Besides the unofficial orienteering events, there were also a small number of official orienteering events under the auspices of the official Sports Federation. This sport has been largely neglected by writers of orienteering history and the number of participants underestimated. In 1951, L. Steff-Pedersen wrote "while we [e.g. the illegal orienteers] had to restrict the number of runners in our events, the Nazis had great trouble in getting more than 10 runners for their so called Norwegian Championships". In 1941 there were only 15 participants in the "legal" Norwegian

Championships. Also, as this part of orienteering grew. "Orienteringsidretten i Norge gjennom 90 år" states that the "legal" Norwegian championship in 1943 had 140 starters. Interestingly enough, the "legal" orienteering also had a class for women. Despite the policy of "Kinder und Küche" the Nazis actually let the women have their championships before the rest of the sport did.

In "Norges Orienteringsforbund 1945-1970" nothing about the official sport is mentioned at all. When "Orienteringsidretten i Norge gjennom 90 år" was written, one half page was devoted to the "legal" part of the sport, out of the total 10 pages devoted to the war years. As one older member of the editorial board said, "That is more than enough".

The suppression of part of the history shows the strong feelings left by the war in many of the older generation. In one way it can also be justified when the history is written. The "legal" orienteering was a dead end in the development of orienteering. The runners who took part in the "legal" events played at best, a minor role before the war. Sportsmen taking part in sanctioned Nazi events during the war times were excluded from all sports for 1 to 10 years after the war. Although the number of formal exclusions was low, many of the athletes knew the sentiment and left their sport. It is also noticeable that the Swedish yearbook which includes news from the neighbouring countries does not cover the "legal" orienteering in Norway.

At the finish of an illegal orienteering event in Norway. There are quite a lot of runners to hide away.

There was also a third form of Norwegian orienteering. This took place among Norwegian refugees in Sweden. Since there was a boycott of the official sport in Norway, Norwegian runners could not take part in sports abroad either. The many Norwegian refugees did thus not take part in Swedish orienteering events, if there was any chance that the results might appear in the newspapers. Instead, events exclusively for Norwegian orienteers were organised. Due to their secretive nature, very little is known about these events. The Swedish clubs were also recommended to contact Norwegian and Danish orienteers who "were in Sweden for well- known reasons" and invite those to their club activities.

'Skärmen' for 1945 states that 4000 copies of "Orienteering in a nutshell" were supplied from SOFT to the Norwegian refugee office sports department, in addition to maps and compasses.

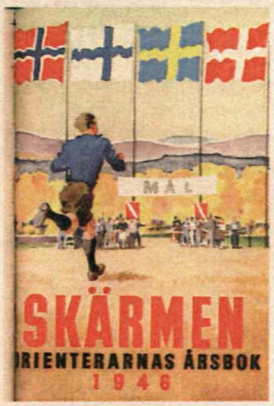
Despite most of Europe being at war, orienteering also spread to new countries. German forces occupied Denmark on 9th April 1940. The Danish government surrendered after a few hours. As a result of this, Denmark was guaranteed political independence and territorial integrity. Thus life continued more or less as normal for some time. This also meant that orienteering grew. A "modern" club event was organised in 1939. On 25th October 1940, an open orienteering event was held in Jægersborg Hegn. This event has later been regarded as the start of orienteering in Denmark. The sport developed quickly. Many clubs organised events and even district championships were organised within the first year. In 1941, the Danish Sports Federation made the first rules for orienteering events, to make sure that all events were up to the same standard. There were some discussions about where to place the new sport in the organisation. A board meeting of the Danish Sports Federation on 28th September 1942 decided that orienteering should be under the Danish Ski Federation. The Ski Federation thus changed name to Danish Ski- and Orienteering Federation. Two and a half weeks later the federation organised the first Danish Championships. In Denmark, good official maps at the scale of 1:20,000 or 1:40,000 existed and were used for the first events. However, the navigation was deemed to be too easy and a scale of 1:100,000 was chosen as the only one for real orienteering. This is probably influenced by Swedish orienteering, as there was frequent contact between Danish and Swedish orienteers during the first years of the war.

The Danish government was under pressure from both sides. The Danish Nazi party wanted a 'nazification' of the society and organised demonstrations. On the other hand, giving in to German forces also met opposition and from 1942, a resistance movement (partly trained by the British) gained ground. Sabotage against the German forces grew and in the summer of 1943, the Germans demanded that the Danish government stopped the sabotage. Large popular demonstrations with the opposite demand forced the government not to give in. On 29th August, the German occupation forces attacked and conquered all Danish military camps. All Danish naval vessels were sunk by their own crews to make sure that they did not fall into German hands. As the Germans now ruled Denmark, a stop was put to orienteering. It was seen as a military activity. For the last year and a half of the war there was no orienteering activity in Denmark.

Hungary joined Germany in the attack on the USSR, but after loosing the battle of Voronesj, the forces were pulled back in January 1943 and President Horthy tried to negotiate a peace with the allies. This was not successful and in March 1944, German forces occupied Hungary. In October, the USSR troops were at the border and Horthy declared that Hungary be pulled out of the war. He was then abducted by the German forces and a fascist puppet regime was installed. A brutal reign of terror started. In the parts of Hungary conquered by the Soviet troops, a communist puppet government was installed, which declared war on Germany. Despite this rather chaotic political and military situation, there are still reports of orienteering events in Hungary in 1944. It has been claimed that the first event took place in 1944, but there are reports about other events well before the war.

Switzerland stayed out of the war. Despite being surrounded by axis forces on all sides (Germany, Austria, Italy and occupied France), the food and supply situation was acceptable. Most of the population also leaned more towards the allies than the Axis forces. In a situation like this, military preparedness was important and the interest in sports and orienteering grew. In 1942, Züricher Kantonale managed to assemble 500 teams of four runners. All orienteering in Switzerland during this period was in teams and in 1944, the first championship for teams was held.

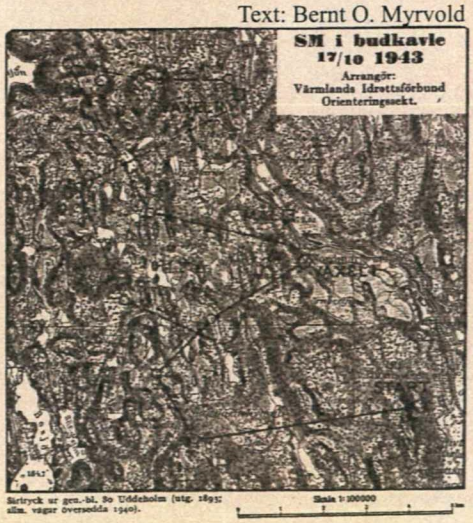
Norwegian military troops in Scotland also had some orienteering activity during the war. But this activity does not seem to have spilt over to the civilian population at all.



The front page of Skärmen 1946. Notice how bright, colourful and optimistic this is compared to two years earlier.

The front page of Skärmen 1944, covering the year 1943, showing a night event.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold



Swedish Relay Championships 1943. Notice that the map is already 50 years old, with roads corrected only three years before the competition.

Chapter 7 - Slow growth (1946 - 1959) in numbers

Part 1/2

Orienteering as a sport emerged, strengthened, after WWII, but in many ways the sport was not able to keep the momentum. This was due to several factors. One is purely practical. There was a lack of equipment. In Norway there was a shortage of both running shoes and compasses. In the rebuilding after WWII, these were not items given a high priority. The sport in Denmark also suffered from a lack of compasses. To help their neighbouring countries, Swedish orienteers collected 4500 SEK as a gift to the other three Federations; most of the money was to be used for compasses.

Another important factor was the poor quality of the maps. The home advantage was great. This meant that each terrain was used once or only a few times. Thus orienteering (at least in Norway) had to rapidly move away from the cities and the forests close by the cities. This meant longer travelling times to events at a time when most families did not have a car. Practically and economically it became difficult to get to orienteering events. Orienteering pulled away from the cities and the limelight. At the same time, other sports also got organised and took away some of the sports popularity.

The map from the Nordic Match in 1947. The contour interval is 30 metres. "This means that hills of 25-29 metres might disappear between the contours. As the Swedish, Finish and Danish participants also did" to cite Skärmen.

There was hardly any growth in numbers of orienteers as a whole.

Country	Orienteers 1946	Orienteers 1959
Sweden	32,000	25,665
Finland	10,000	10,600
Norway	8,000	11,232
Denmark	1,500	3,153
Total	***51,500***	***51,850***

Although a few nations tried some form of orienteering, the number of orienteers stayed nearly constant for the first 15 years after the war. There are some important facts that are hidden in these gross numbers, though. Orienteering attracted more and more young people (particularly boys). This is reflected in a steady increase in the classes for the younger runners. In Norway for instance, the youngest age for competitors was 18 years until 1949, when it was lowered to 16 by the inclusion of two junior classes, 16-18 for both boys and girls. Four years later the age was lowered further to 14 years, and finally in 1959, to 12 years. Many of the youngsters introduced to the sport in this period became important leaders in the following periods. Already in 1947, the time was ripe for a junior Championship in Sweden. In 1955, the first international match for juniors took place between Norway and Sweden. The winner was Jørgen Løken, who later became famous as a mapper.

The number of orienteers in Sweden declined strongly in the post-war years. Sweden also lost some of the hegemony in elite competitions. Most international matches were decided on the basis of the total time for a team of ten runners. The depth of the field amongst the Swedish orienteers meant that they were able to win most international matches on that basis. However, the best runners in most of these matches tended to come from Finland or Norway. The big star at the end of this period was Magne Lystad, one of the best orienteers ever. In 1952 he won the Norwegian Junior Championships. In 1954 he won the senior Championships in Norway, a win he repeated in 1955, 1956, 1957, 1959 and 1960 with a silver medal in 1961. He also anchored his club team to win the relays in the Norwegian Championships in 1956, 1957, 1958, and 1961. Internationally he was the best runner at the international matches in 1956, 1958 and 1960, while also winning the Nordic Championships in 1957 and 1959, and coming third in 1961; crowning his career with a win in the first European Championships in 1962. As late as 1965, he was bronze medallist in the Nordic Championships. The length of his career at the top of international orienteering has never been repeated [sic]. Magne Lystad's career spans the time when modern orienteering maps were developed. Not only did he master the different terrains in the four Nordic countries, but also the very different mapping standards as well, with official maps varying in scale from 1:20,000 to 1:100,000. When modern orienteering maps appeared he mastered them as well.

Magne Lystad, den første o-kongen, 7 NM gull, 5 NM gull stafett, EM gull 1962

Magne Lystad, possibly the best orienteer ever. During his long career he mastered all the different terrains and maps found in Scandinavia. When the Norwegian Federation made a deck of cards, he was the obvious ace of spades.

Technical improvements in the sport were no longer a realm of the Swedes either. The mapping revolution started in Norway shortly after the war and it was not until 1965 that Swedish orienteering realised what was going on.

The war in Norway forced the Workers Sports Federation and the Norwegian Sports Council to work together. When the war ended, the decision to merge the two Federations was easy. For orienteers, this was no problem at all. The two Federations had already had a joint Norwegian Championships in 1940. In the autumn of 1945, there was one Norwegian Championships. The day after the Championships there was a general assembly to decide whether to form a Norwegian Orienteering Federation or not. To save money on travelling expenses the best runners also represented their clubs at the general assembly. The meeting apparently was rather chaotic. As one contemporary report states: "the representatives had their strength in the forest, not in the debates". Nevertheless, it was decided to form an Orienteering Federation.

In Finland both the Finnish Orienteering Federation (SSL) and an Orienteering Federation for the Swedish-speaking minority (FSO) were formed in 1945, as well as an orienteering section of the Workers Sports Federation (SAV).

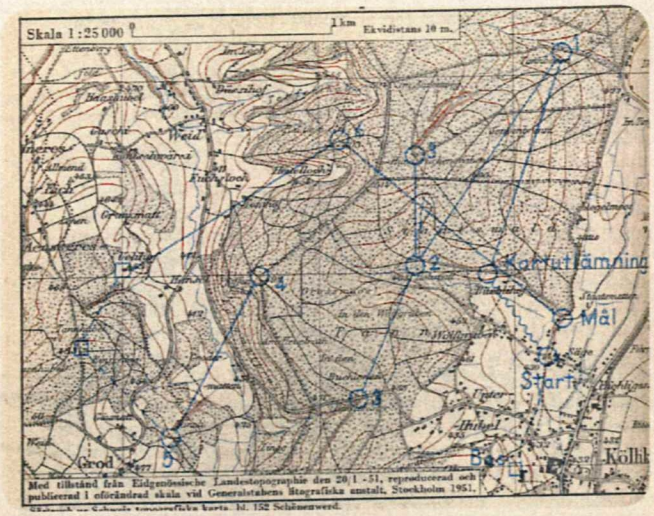
When the war ended the contact between the Nordic Federations was re-started and a council known as NORD (Nordisk Orienterings Råd) was formed, to coordinate some of the activities of the different Federations.

The contact between the different countries grew and a Nordic Student Championships was introduced in 1948. In 1952, the time was ripe for the women to have their international meets too and the first official women's match between Norway and Sweden took place. The event was near Kathrineholm in Sweden and the Swedish team won, with Swede Maud Wirstam as the fastest runner.

In 1955, the first International Championships was started, the Nordic Championships, which took place on 9th October in Norrköping, Sweden. An important change in this Championship from the previous international matches was that Individual Champions were selected, not just winning teams. Two years later, the Nordic Championships was a de facto World Championships as Switzerland was specially invited to take part in the second Nordic Championships in Trondheim, Norway. Switzerland was also invited to the next two Nordic Championships in Aalborg, Denmark and Längemäki, Finland.

Up to 1948, all Swiss events had been team competitions, but that

year, Switzerland too, started with individual orienteering events. The year after, they had their first Individual Championships. However, for the next four years, the individual and team competitions were held on the same day. In 1951, the Swiss also added a Relay Championship. Still it is the team competitions that were really popular in Switzerland. In 1956, the "Züricher Kantonale" filled a whole train with its 8100 participants - the 500 organisers filled a couple of wagons, too. By 1959, orienteering in Switzerland was so big that the SIOL "Schweitzerischen Interessengemeinschaft der OL-Gruppen" was formed.



The Swiss Championships 1950.

It has often been stated that mapping for orienteering started in Norway because of the poor quality of the official maps. First, the mapping projects were just to improve the obvious mistakes of the official maps. In parts of Norway, this amounted to redrawing the whole map. By re-reading the documents from that time again, maybe a more important reason for the mapping emerges. The Norwegian geographical survey (NGO) could not supply enough maps.

In O-Boka for 1949, the board of NOF states that: "the cooperation with NGO has been excellent and the Survey has done everything to meet the requirements from our organisers." 41 special prints in addition to many reprints from older maps had been made that year.

In the next issue of O-Boka (1950-51) there seems to be some problems. "The cooperation with NGO has been good, even if it is no longer easy for NGO to meet the demands from organisers of orienteering events with respect to special prints. In several instances, the organisers are required to use blue copies [an assembly of field notes before the final drawing] only.

From all districts, with few exceptions, it is reported that the lack of maps is slowing the development of our sport. We can only apologise for this fact. NGO can not promise any improvement soon." In fact the situation got worse. In a long letter from NGO to NOF dated 19th August 1951, it stated that: "We are today forced to inform you that the clubs from now on can not expect special maps over new areas...."

We understand and sympathise with, the orienteering sports' wish to get these maps - and also over the years the possibility [of making special prints] has existed, making a good selection of such maps. Those will be delivered as before. But with all the duties NGO has today - in addition to lack of funds, lack of personnel, etc., - it is absolutely impossible, at least at the moment, to continue this service to such a large extent. The clubs have to try planning so they can use the available special maps - or, as before - use the maps that exist for sale already."

NOF also encouraged the clubs to try to find other maps. In large parts of eastern Norway, many orienteering events in the beginning of the fifties were held on forest or commons maps. The origins of these maps were often unclear. Most of them were made in connection with forest valuation and the quality varied a lot. Some corrections were probably also added to these maps, without improving the quality much.

It is also interesting to note that the production of special maps did not start in the districts with the poorest maps. The mapping started in districts like Oslo, Nedre Buskerud and Østfold where no complaints about the maps can be found in O-Boka. In fact in O-Boka from 1947, remarks can be found that the maps of Nordmarka, just outside Oslo, are the envy of the rest of Norway. The Swedish "Skogssport" also reports from an international women's match near Oslo the same year that: " The competition was on a very good 1:50,000 map, on which everywhere agreed well with the terrain." In 1949 the yearly report from Stor-Oslo to O-Boka also notes the good, official, maps available in Sørkedalen. The students at the Technical University in Trondheim started with large-scale corrections that amounted to complete redrawing of the existing maps in 1947. O-Boka 1949 tells how the students found that the same mountain was shown on two neighbouring sheets of the official 1:50,000 maps (approximately 2 km apart). The task of redrawing the map was not made easier by large deposits of iron ore in the ground affecting their compasses. Still, the mapping project was not regarded as anything, but a correction of the existing maps. For many years the reports from the district associations note the extensive corrections needed to make the official maps useful for orienteering; but nothing about new maps or special maps is mentioned.

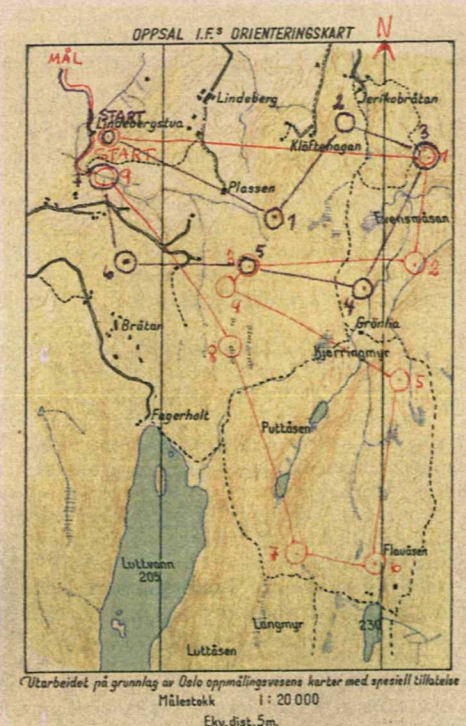
The mapping project of Per Wang in 1948 was different. He tells in Orienteringsidretten i Norge gjennom 90 år: "The first years after the Second World War we organised orienteering events on public maps, usually with a 30 metre contour interval and only the most obvious errors corrected. My first true orienteering map I made in 1948 (Nordbykollen). Today I know that others were doing the same thing at about the same time, but then that was unknown to me.

The base for the map was an aerial photograph together with parts of a map with the contours north of the power line. During the surveying the situation was corrected first. Paths and streams were drawn by triangulation with cross bearings for individual points. After that, the areas between the paths were surveyed, very roughly, and the contours made by judgement. (It is obvious that a control description such as re-entrant did not exist at the time). The map was drawn on tracing paper and photocopied. We may laugh at the result today, but compared to what this map replaced, I regard it as a great improvement." When I spoke with Per Wang a few years ago, the lack of good official maps was not mentioned as a reason for making the map, neither the problems of getting hold of maps. The main reason was for the fun of it - the challenge of trying to make a better map.

Every district had their own mapmakers and this person taught his arts to aspiring map specialists. In Trøndelag there was Leif Karset and others. In Buskerud, Per Wang was a pioneer and Østfold had Osvald Klemsdal. In Oslo, Knut Valstad was the big name in mapping. His maps changed the whole nature of orienteering. From the available documents, it is also quite clear that this was his purpose, he wanted the emphasise to be on precise map reading.

30th April 1950, Oppsal IF invited orienteers to a national event - the invitation made it completely clear that this event would be something extraordinary:

"With this event we want to test some of the different experiences we have had in Denmark, Finland and Sweden. Thus the whole affair will be somewhat different from our usual competitions. The controls will be placed on features that normally are not shown on our maps. The control markers will be placed as they usually are in Denmark. The maps will have a scale which is usual in Finland. We believe this competition will be a good training for international competitions as well as a fun and educational change in the sport of orienteering."



The world's first real orienteering map. Knut Valstad's map changed the sport of orienteering.

In the instructions to the runners, this was expressed even more explicitly: "The whole thing is based on fine navigation, the control (control marker) will be found by the ability to navigate, not by luck or searching."

What Knut Valstad and Oppsal IF invited people to here, was one of the first orienteering events on a specially drawn and printed orienteering map and was a bold experiment to change orienteering from a compass game to a map reading sport. The map was at the scale

of 1:20,000, based on Oslo district surveyors' maps and was printed in four colours.

With experience from international matches in both orienteering and military sports, Knut Valstad had tried the official maps in all the Nordic countries. He worked as a reproducer at NGO and thus also had first hand knowledge about the whole process of making maps.

Unfortunately base maps of the quality used by Knut Valstad were not available in most parts of Norway. The mappers needed a better method for determining the contour lines. The working method was the same as before, but during the fieldwork, a pocket barometer was used to note altitudes everywhere - as a base for drawing contour lines. The fieldwork also became more systematic and careful. The idea of specialised orienteering maps made by orienteers for orienteers caught on quickly. In 1951, Heming IL in Oslo made a black and white map based on a forest map. In 1952, four more maps came. Oppsal IF made their second map based on Oslo district surveyors' maps. IL Heming used the same base maps and came with a less surveyed map in three colours. Kamp/Vestheim used the surrounding area maps as the base map for an orienteering map over part of Nordmarka. For Myrvoll IL, Roald Aanerud drew a map that looked very much like the official NGO maps (he also worked for NGO), but the scale and content were consistent with Knut Valstad's maps.

For the rest of the fifties there was a steady flow of four or five new maps a year. "Orienteringsidretten i Norge gjennom 90 år" tells about the high esteem given to the early mappers and the quality of their maps. Little of this is found in the Norwegian yearbooks from that time. In the year book of 1954, the official report from the Federation states: "It is a question whether future organisers should more often have the courage to use the standard 1:100,000 rectangle maps, even if they are frequently inaccurate." The reports from the District Associations are similar. Østfold, the same year, reports of an improved calculation method for times, a new punching card, but nothing of Ostwald Klemsdalen's maps. The only District Association that mentions the improved maps at all is Nedre Buskerud (also in 1954); but here both the vice president (Knut Berglia) and secretary (Randi Wang) were active mappers, too. Randi, married to the pioneer mapper Per Wang. So, although the runners enjoyed the new and better maps, the sport leaders at that time did not see this was the way forward. Indeed it seems like the leaders rather stressed the importance of using the existing maps, the ones that would be used for other purposes, too. But maps "by an orienteer, for orienteers" as Kjell Staxrud wrote in 1954 were here to stay.

The base maps varied considerably, each individual mapper tried to find the best possible base map available. Stereographs already existed before WWII, but in Norway, aerial photogrammetry was not used seriously in any mapping until the fifties. The orienteers were impatient in their search for better maps.

Knut Berglia tells: "When we should organise the Norwegian Championships for Juniors in Eiker in 1954, we pondered how to get a good map. There was nothing but the old rectangle maps in the District.

We thus contacted Widerøe [a mapping company], who had bought a stereo plotter. But the price for a base map over the area in question was estimated to NOK 7000 - an incredible amount at that time. Instead we plotted a base map by hand with the aid of aerial photographs and a pocket stereoscope. As a check, we had a copy of an NGO map at 1:25,000."

For the Norwegian Championships in Skedsmo in 1955, Knut Valstad presented a map at the scale of 1:20,000 with a 5 metre contour interval. On the map was printed: "The map is made for orienteering events by Oslo Turnforening. Base map aerial photographs made 11.6.1950. The base map is used with the permission from Skedsmo council." The map used in 1955 was the first Norwegian Championship map printed in several colours. Black and white maps were, however, in use for several years to follow. Colour printing was expensive, so well into the 1960s, coloured pencils were an important tool for orienteers.

In the winter of 1954-55, the stereo operator Svein Sjønnesen made the first specially plotted base map for orienteering for Ski IL, over an area around lake Bukkesti, south of Oslo. He later moved and started running for Nydalens SK where he continued working with maps, and was also responsible for Nydalens SK, making several maps in the Follo region. At the same time, Brynjulf Engen, who was Head of Department at the surveying company Fjellanger Widerøe, made sure that Oslo-Ørn got photogrammetric base maps for some of their maps. The look and lay out of the maps varied quite a lot. There was no common norm for orienteering maps. The mappers that had a background in NGO usually made maps that looked much like the NGO maps, both in layout and content, but increased the scale and reduced the contour interval. The contours also contained much more information. Others tried out different colours and symbols. The inspiration seems to have been varied, amongst others coming from forest maps, surrounding area maps and the official maps of the neighbouring countries.

Most of the maps made during the fifties were used for several events, often also by several clubs. The number of orienteering events using special maps thus increased much faster than the number of maps. It is also worth noticing that the clubs that still used NGO maps added many more corrections than before. The demands from the runners were clearly rising. More and more clubs also started using District Surveyors' maps at 1:10,000 for orienteering events, a relatively new series of maps in most districts at that time.

In Sweden, the first attempts at special orienteering maps were also made in this period, but the idea did not catch on the way it did in Norway. It also seems like most of the efforts concentrated on making something similar to the official maps, but more up-to-date and correct, and not making a new type of maps. In Finland (Peruskarttaa at 1:20,000) and Denmark (Målebordsblader 1:20,000) the official maps were so good that special orienteering maps were not needed. However, in large parts of Finland the maps were of poorer quality, called Russian maps at the scales of 1:21000 or 1:42,000. Thus, several special maps were made from 1940 and onwards. But also for the Finnish mapmakers, the aim seems to have been a correct and up-to-date version of the official maps. In Switzerland, good official maps at 1:25,000 were available. In Denmark, Switzerland and much of Finland, the official maps were accurate, available, and affordable, thus it is easy to understand why orienteers in those countries would not want the expenses and work of making their own maps. But why did Swedish orienteers, who had frequent contact with Norwegian orienteers, not make their own maps (except for a few attempts)? It is difficult to answer so long after, but could it be a case of the big brother complex. Sweden had been, and in many respects still was, the leading country in the orienteering world. Could they learn from their little brother? Could it also be that the sports leaders in Sweden shared the same sentiment as their Norwegian counterparts, that real orienteering should be on official maps? Much of the contact between Swedish and Norwegian orienteers were, understandably enough, in the areas close to the border between the two countries. These areas were not the first in Norway to be mapped. So even if there was frequent contact between orienteers from the two countries, most of the Swedish orienteers have not necessarily tried the new Norwegian orienteering maps. It is also interesting to note that when the new maps were used for international matches, the Swedish commentaries ran from "OK" to "amateurish".

Orienteers also felt the need to be in contact with each other. Several orienteering magazines were started on separate private initiatives. Some of them were short lived; others lasted for a few years. Later, the Federations realised the need to inform and several official magazines appeared. The oldest, is Skogssport, whose first issue appeared in 1947. Shortly after having their own Federation, the Danish orienteers also launched their own magazine O-Posten in 1950. The Swiss OL-Commission formed in 1950 and in 1956, the magazine OL appeared for the first time. The Norwegian Federation was comparatively late with NOF-Posten in 1959, although there had been several private initiatives before that.

In 1950 there were 2500 orienteers in Denmark in 50 clubs. The activity was so big that a need for an Orienteering Federation was felt. Without any hard feeling, the orienteers left the Danish Ski- and Orienteering Federation to form the Danish Orienteering Federation. Despite the number of orienteers declining in Sweden, the first formal agreement between the Swedish Orienteering Federation and the Swedish Hunters Association was made in 1947. The use of the forests during the breeding season was restricted.

In 1949, the Swedes tried bicycle orienteering for the first time. The popularity was great for a while, but the enthusiasm waned after the sport was delegated to the Cycle Federation.

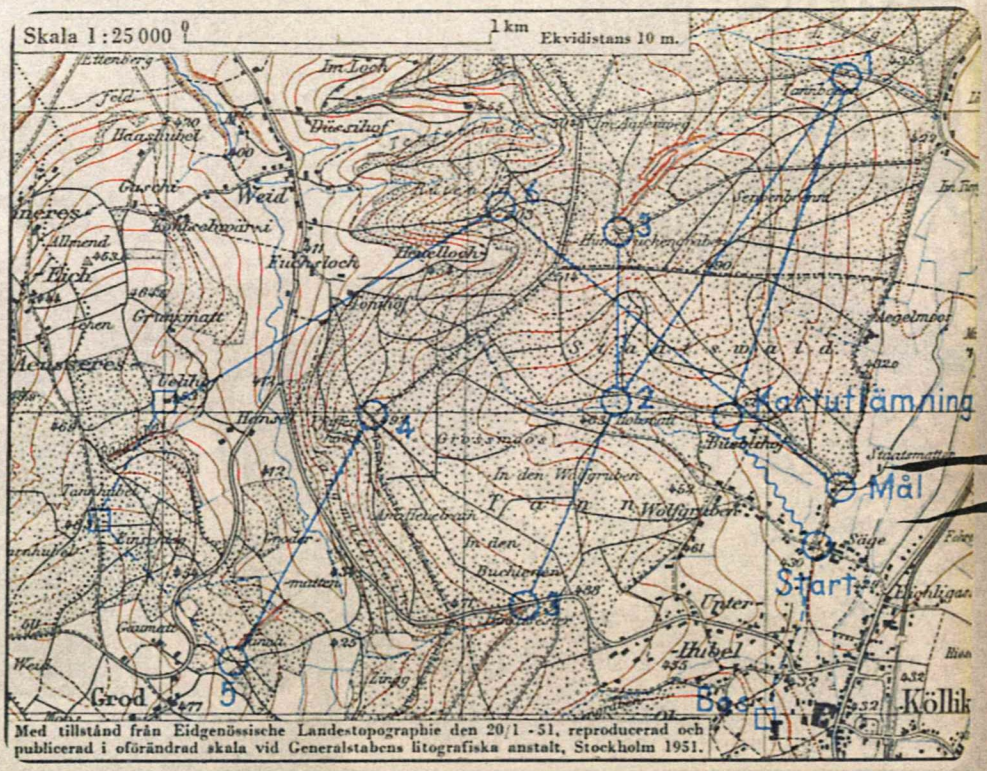
Orienteering with a bike is an older sport than most people are aware of.

Text: Bernt O.Myrvold

International growth
Chapter 7 (1946 - 1959)

Part 2/2

Already in the late 30'ties, Swedish orienteers and Bertil Nordenfelt in particular, envisioned orienteering as an international sport. According to Swedish sources it was the Swedish Federation that convinced the 1940 Olympic Committee to include orienteering as a demonstration sport. The war stopped the international exchange, but afterwards efforts started again. The Swedish Federation supported the other newly formed Nordic Federations economically just after the war. In the first few years it was also normally the Swedes that travelled to international matches. The economic situation in the other Federations was poor. In Finland, the Federation had to borrow 50,000 marks, a considerable amount, from their treasurer.



The Swiss Championships 1950.

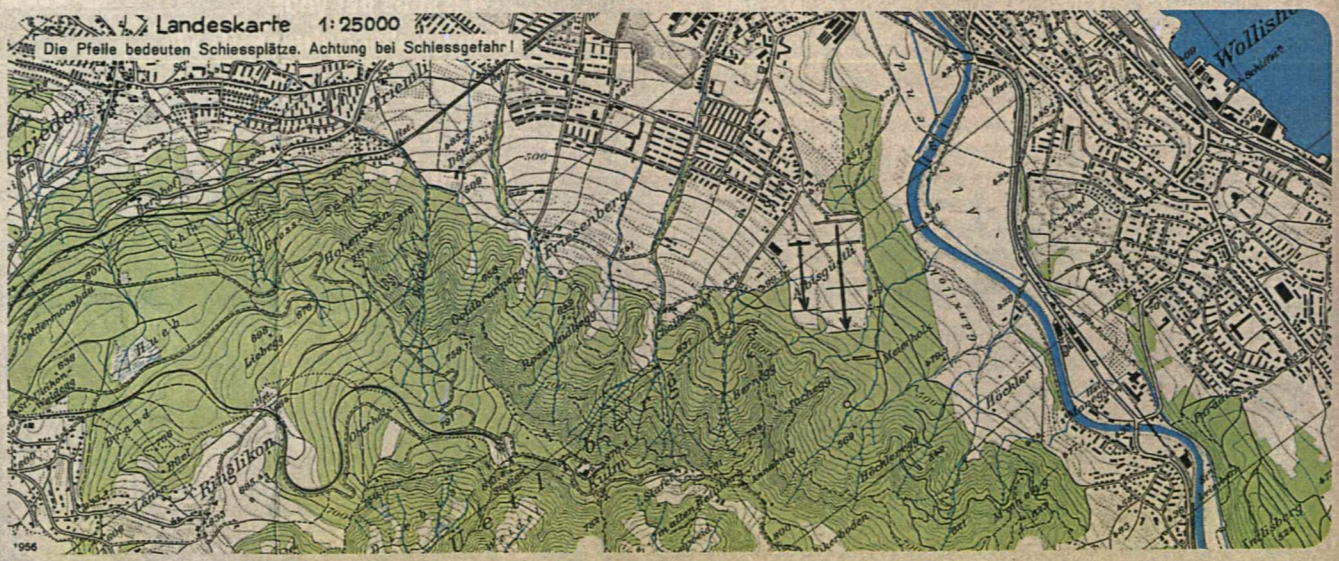
Internationally, there were many attempts to introduce orienteering in more countries. Björn Kjellström introduced orienteering to the USA in 1946. At the same time, he also wrote the book "Be an expert with map and compass" and coined the word orienteering by adding an extra "e" to the Swedish "orientering". "To foresee the future of this new brother in our forest sport is impossible and we can only hope that it should not take too long before the Americans show the same class as the Nordic trio", Ernst Killander wrote in 1948. Even if American boy scouts tried orienteering in Sweden in 1951 and 1952, the wanted development did not take place.

Two years later Björn Kjellström also introduced orienteering to Canada and the same year some orienteering-like contest was tried in Australia.

In 1949, 70 French sports teachers were taught orienteering in Sweden, but this does not seem to have given rise to any activity in France. The same year there was also a conference organised by the Swedish Federation with 11 nations taking part. There was formal contact between the Swedish Federation and The Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, USA and Canada. As a result, 13 Swedish orienteers went to Switzerland the year after. In 1957, there was an international match between Sweden and Switzerland. Both men and women took part in this.

In 1951 the first orienteering event was run in Italy, and in 1953 in neighbouring Yugoslavia. A Swedish group demonstrated orienteering in Germany (BRD) in 1958, and even got television coverage. Unfortunately the time was not ripe and none of these efforts produced any lasting orienteering activity. Later on, the sport was reintroduced with more success.

The Central Council of Physical Recreation in England contacted the Swedish Orienteering Federation and in 1952 a group under Gösta "Rak" Lagerfelt demonstrated the sport there. This event does not appear to have made much impact, but contact with England continued for the rest of the decade. There had also been Norwegian attempts to introduce orienteering in Britain. The Swedish coach complained to his British colleague Geoff Dyson that Swedish middle distance running was 'ruined' by the sport of orienteering. Dyson relayed this information to John Disley. During athletics training with the British team in Bosön, Stockholm in 1953, Disley had the



Part of the official Swiss 1:25000 series used for orienteering.

opportunity to try the sport. Despite being beaten by 20 women he fell in love with the sport. Two years later he organised two events at Plas y Brenin National Outdoor Centre in Wales. His next attempt was in 1964. To gain publicity for the event several famous British runners were invited. Unknown to John Disley, Chris Brasher had tried night orienteering in Norway already in 1954 and was also hooked on the sport.

Both Disley and Brasher were both accomplished 3000 steeplechase runners. John Disley, won bronze in the 1952 Olympics, Chris Brasher won gold in the 1956 Olympics and was pace keeper for the first sub-4 mile run. They were also good organisers and many years later co-founded the London Marathon. John Disley was Vice Chairman of the UK Sports Council for 12 years. Chris Brasher was a sports journalist for the Observer and possibly made the first mention of orienteering, or "orientation" as he wrote, in a British newspaper. He later became Head of General Features at the BBC. These two both had a burning zeal for orienteering, the organisational abilities and the PR skills needed. Altogether, this was a most fortunate combination for the new sport.

In Switzerland, the first orienteering clubs formed in 1955 and in the same year their orienteering magazine was launched.

In Eastern Europe, orienteering developed more or less independently of what happened on the other side of the iron curtain. Although there were some contacts with Finnish orienteers, particularly from the Workers Sports Federation, orienteering in Eastern Europe took the form of 'touristik'. Touristik is a more leisurely form of orienteering, which also includes other tests than just speed through the terrain. Camping, staying outdoors overnight, ideal times instead of the fastest time and forced rests were part of the touristik form of orienteering.

In Romania, orienteering thus started in 1947 and in Poland the year after. In Czechoslovakia, the touristik movement amalgamated orienteering in 1949 and the year after the orienteering Federation was formed. A visit from the Swedish orienteer Bergfors seems to have been the motivating force behind the first event. DDR tried the touristik form of orienteering in 1953, while Bulgaria organised touristik orienteering events in 1954 and had its first National Championship the year after. The inspiration in Bulgaria came from neighbouring Romania and Czechoslovakia. But a visit from the Swedish orienteer Nisse Öst (very appropriately named as his family name means east) in 1956 directed the development more towards the Nordic type of orienteering. In DDR the first National Championship was not held until 1956. In 1959 there were orienteering events in the Soviet Union and the first championships in the Estonian republic. There were also exchanges between the different east block countries. A group of Czechoslovakian orienteers who visited DDR in 1956 might have been the first.

A Bulgarian orienteering badge from the early fifties. Notice the important tent.

A quite separate development took part in Australia. Estonian Lembed Jarver had tried orienteering as a kid. After the war he emigrated to Australia and in 1952 took up a job as an athletics coach. In 1954 he introduced orienteering to the group and in 1956 the South Australian Orienteering Club was formed. The club seems to have been active for four or five years before it died away.

By the end of the decade, orienteering as we know it today was firmly established in the Nordic countries, while a similar sport in the form of 'touristik' orienteering existed in Eastern Europe. In 1958 the Nordic countries saw the time fit to do something about this. A meeting of several Orienteering Federations was held in 1959, which eventually led to the formation of the IOF. This is a story for the next chapter.

Orienteering also nearly made it to the Olympic Games again. In 1949 ski-orienteering was recognised as an Olympic sport. In 1940, Helsinki should have organised the Olympic Games and orienteering was to be demonstrated there, but the Second World War intervened and the whole Olympic Games was cancelled. In 1952, Helsinki was awarded the Olympic summer games again. It was suggested to include orienteering into the program. The suggestion was forwarded to the International Olympic Committee. Already then there were too many sports in the Olympic Games,

Sponsored by Silva (from r. to l) Ed Ray Wiseman, Charles Bower and Bill Tarrant meets the Swedish king during their two-week long stay in Sweden.

(it could be interesting to know how many more events have been added since 1952 to a program that was already then too full to include orienteering). Someone came up with the bright idea to include ski-orienteering in the 1952 winter games in Oslo instead. Unfortunately ski-orienteering was virtually unknown in Norway at the time. There were one or two smaller events in the Oslo area every winter, but that was all. The chairman of the Norwegian orienteering Federation Johan Christian Schønheyder (later president of the Norwegian Olympic Committee) was also opposed to ski-orienteering. Ski-o did not make it to the Olympic program this time, either.

The dream of an international sport is clearly seen from this front page of the Swedish yearbook.

Outside orienteering, an important technological development took place. The Rank Xerox Company had launched its 914 plain paper office copier in 1959 and the first desk-top model in 1963. Suddenly reproducing maps became easy. It became much less work to put on an event.

Touristik - the orienteering sport that disappeared.

The rules for the sport varied between the countries. In Bulgaria the courses for seniors were 30-40 km, and a team of 3 or 4 (depending on the competition) carried in total 70 kg. Usually the team had to carry one of their members for 1 or 2 kilometres. In two days competitions there was an obligatory over night stay in tent.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold

An international organisation is built
Chapter 8 (1960 - 1965)

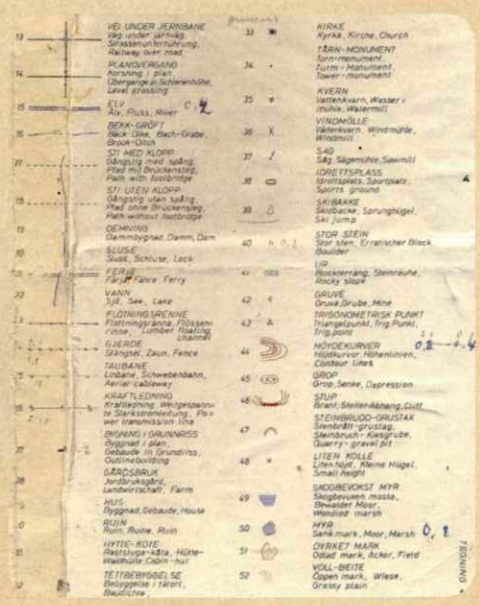
Part 2/2

The most important event of this period was of course the formation of IOF - the international orienteering federation. During the fifties orienteering developed along two different paths. Individual, timed competitions in the Nordic countries, and touristik team competitions with different additional exercises in Eastern Europe. The Finns, and especially their Workers Sports Federation, had good connections in Eastern Europe. In 1958 they got the news that Hungary wanted to invite to a touristik conference.This might well lead to the formation of an international federation. The Nordic countries then decided that it was time to spread the Nordic form of orienteering. At the NORD (Nordic Orienteering Council) meeting in 1958 it was decided to call for a meeting of orienteers. Representatives from Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, BRD, DDR, Hungary Yugoslavia, and Switzerland were invited to Sweden. During Whitsun 1959 they met at Sandviken in Sweden. Here the Nordic form of orienteering was presented, and the meeting was a great success. No federation was formed at this meeting, but it was decided that NORD should look into the possibility to form an international federation.

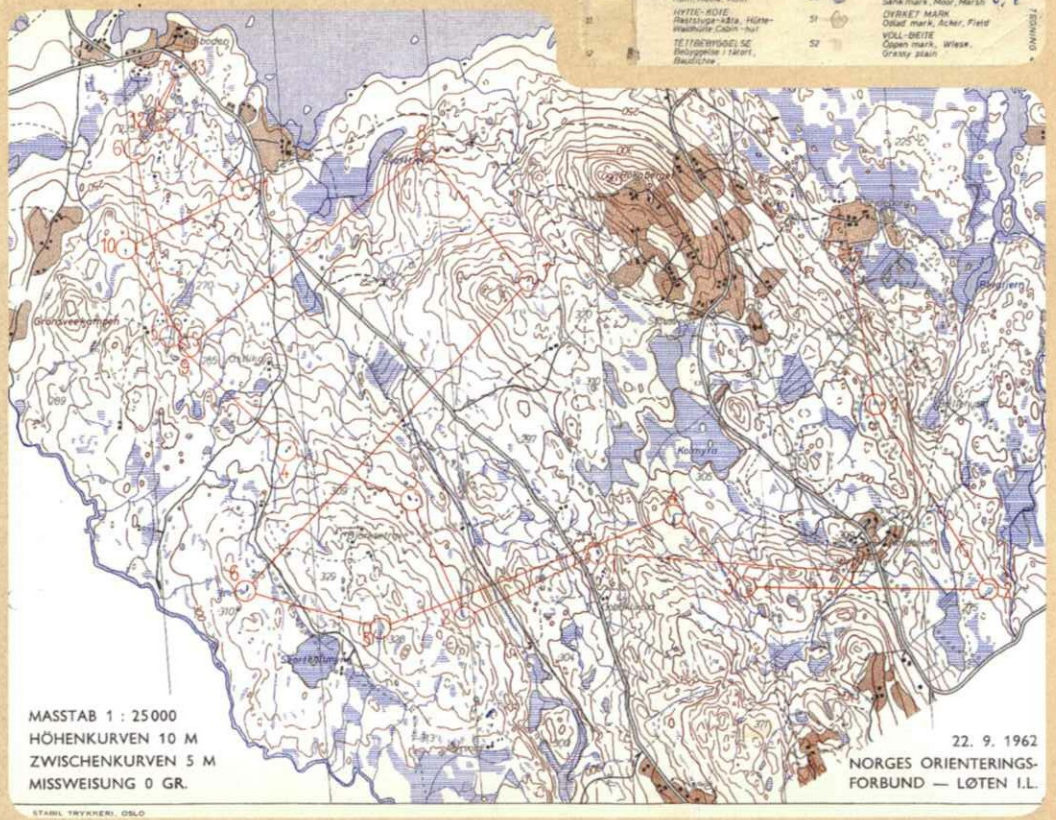
At the NORD meeting at Reistad in Lier just outside Oslo in 1960 the Finns put forward a motion to form an international federation immediately. This was also done. According to Skärmen, the Swedish year book, the fee for each member federation should be 100 swedish kroner. The first president was Erik Tobé (Sweden), 1st vice president was Olaf Andersen (Denmark) 2nd vice president was Birger Lönnberg (Finland) with Ludvig Steff-Pedersen (Norway) as board member. The last three places on the board were left open, so other federations could also be represented. Switzerland became an IOF member during the autumn. It was then realised that the decision to form IOF by a small group of countries could be tactically bad, and all interested countries were invited to the constitutional meeting in Copenhagen in 1961. All interested countries should have the feeling to have been there from the start. In Copenhagen representatives from Bulgaria, BRD, Czechoslovakia, DDR, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland met. Austria and Yugoslavia were absent among the countries present two years earlier. The international federation was formed without much discussion. The confusion about the formation of IOF is evident, though. In the program for the European Championships in 1962 the text is in Norwegian and German. The Norwegian text states that: "The formation of the international federation IOF in 1960 was the direct consequence of this [the 1959 Sandviken conference]. The German text on the other hand is less clear: "The initiative to form the international federation was taken on the NORD meeting near Oslo during Whitsun 1960, and during Whitsun 1961 representatives from 10 countries assembled for the first IOF meeting in Copenhagen. In 1991, I spoke with Inga Löwdin, the first secretary general of IOF (from 1960). According to her the delegates in 1960 were quite certain that they had formed a new international federation. IOF regards 1961 as the year the organisation was formed. In 1957, 1959 and 1961 the Swiss had been invited to, and taken part in, the Nordic Championships. With the introduction of the European (and later World) Championships, NOC again became a purely Nordic affair.

At the meeting in 1961 Norway surprised the other countries with a suggestion that there should be a European championship, and Norway was also willing to host the championship already the year after. An important, but unofficial, reason for this speed was the possibility of honouring Magne Lystad with the first European Championship title. Magne Lystad was the greatest orienteer of his time, and very probably of all times, however, in 1961 he was at the end of his career. It was quite clear that a championship had to be soon if he should have the possibility to win. At the same time securing the championship for Norway would make sure that both terrain and maps suited him. This does of course not reflect any cheating or hanky-panky, but was a consequence of the widely varying mapping standards in the different countries at the time, and the limited time and funds to travel and familiarise with foreign terrain.

As a preparation for the championship the Norwegian Mapping Norm was translated into German and sent to all IOF members. The time for preparation of the event in Norway was short. Mapping fell behind schedule and more mappers had to be brought in. The map was certainly not up to the standards of the best Norwegian maps at the time, but none of the foreigners complained.

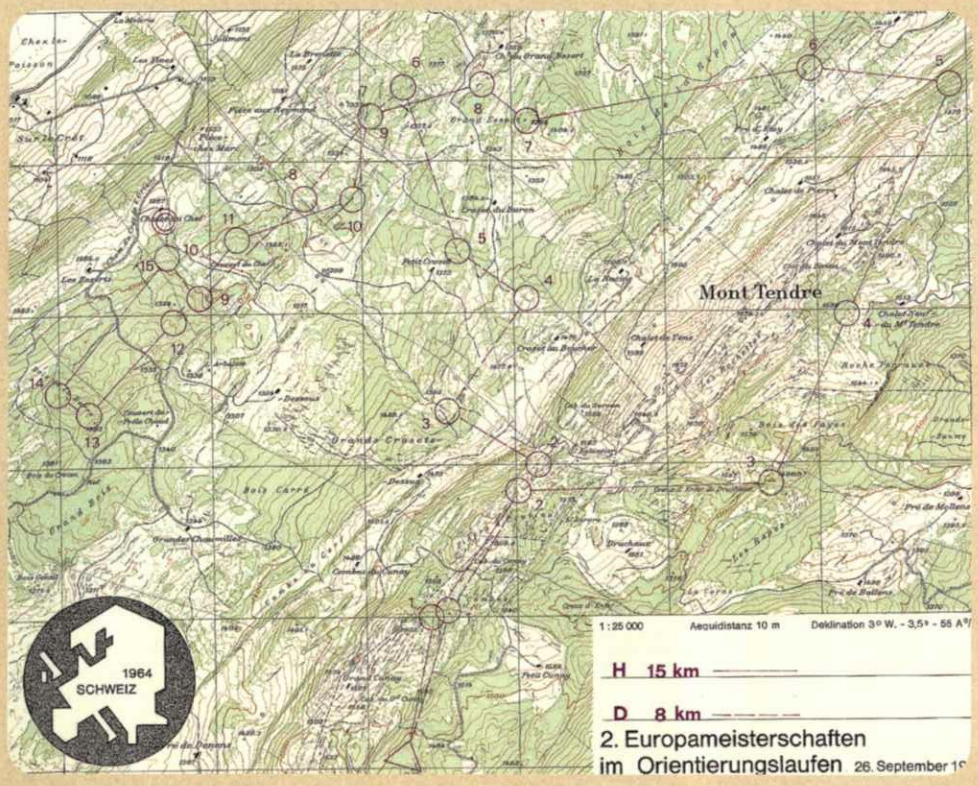


The first international "norm" for orienteering maps. Before the European Championships in 1962 the Norwegian Federation translated their mapping norm into German, English and Swedish.



The map for the European Orienteering Championship in 1962.

The geo-political situation also intervened in the event. Soviet forces blockaded West-Berlin. As a result the Norwegian government refused entry visa for the runners from DDR. A requisite for hosting the championship was of course that all members of IOF would be allowed entry. However, the orienteering federation of DDR saw it more important that the event was held than their participation in it. They did not press the matter, and the event went on without any runners from DDR in it.



The maps for the second European Championships.

The event that more than any is connected with mass participation - O-ringen 5-Days - was started in 1965. Rather modestly with 167 participants, though. The event was the brain child of PeO Bengtsson and Sivar Nordström. The idea was to show what orienteering at the elite level should be like. The organisers could only find two maps that, in their opinion, were good enough in Skåne. Thus the first event took place in Denmark, and the last one in Blekinge, while one of the maps was used for two events.

Independently of this a Norwegian multi-day event had started the year before. In 1964 it was known as Nordsjøkarusellen (The North Sea Caroussel) and moved along the Norwegian coast from Arendal to Haugesund. In 1965 it changed name to Sørlandsgaloppen, and the events were restricted to a much smaller part of the Norwegian south coast.

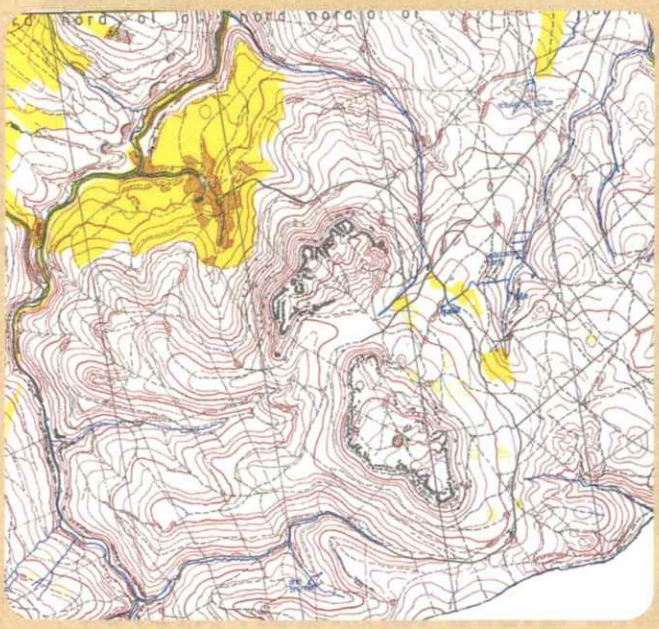
Another important creation came in 1965 with the first permanent course in Norway. During the fifties there had been some training courses in Oslo where the controls had been out for a week at the time so the runners could train at a time that suited them. The same had also been the case in Sweden. But in 1965, on the initiative of Jan Martin Larsen, Asker Skiklubb opened the first permanent course. The controls would stay out for many weeks or months, and the maps were sold to the general public.

Around 1960 many Swedish orienteers started developing jaundice, a sign of hepatitis. The numbers became so high that suspicion was aroused. Investigations were started in both Sweden and Norway. In Norway 65 orienteers had suffered from jaundice over the last 10 years, half of them over the last two years. Six out of 1000 orienteers had relatively recently suffered from the disease. In Sweden the situation was even graver. Here 178 runners got the disease in 1961, or 7 out of 1000 orienteers got the disease in that year alone. The year after 80% of all cases of hepatitis in Sweden were among the 25.000 orienteers, who amounted to only 0.3% of the population. The situation was dramatic, and clearly something had to be done. In the spring of 1962 orienteering was prohibited in Sweden. In Norway runners were required to use gaiters or other protection of their lower legs. The number of incidents sank, but not much. In Sweden full body cover was required in 1963, and no new cases of jaundice were reported. The full body cover was also required for the next two years, and still no new cases of jaundice were found. The danger looked like it had passed. In 1965 the clothing rules were relaxed. In Sweden this immediately gave 40 new cases of the contagious disease. In Norway 21 new cases appeared the same year - 12 of those in one club. From March 1966 both federations required full body cover. The rules of sanitary precautions by the organisers also became much stricter. After that the appearance of jaundice among orienteers has been the same as in the population as a whole. It took several years from jaundice was discovered until the relevant measures were taken, one of the reasons for this is that the first few cases appeared spread out. Different doctors treated different patients and the first sign of an epidemic were not discovered. The situation was also made more difficult since also cases appeared during the winter, not during the orienteering season. The particular form of hepatitis that hit orienteers had an incubation period of 80-120 days. Despite all the people that were ill with the disease only one orienteer actually died from hepatitis, but many suffered grave side effects for many years.

In both Austria and Scotland there were orienteering events in the beginning of this period, in Scotland an orienteering federation was formed in 1962. Three years later and English federation was formed. In 1963 there was the first national championship in the USSR. In Ukraine there was the first republic championship.

IOF grew during these five years. Austria joined in 1963. Another international championship was also added in 1965, the first CISM or military world championship. The event took place in Sweden. The year before the Swedes sent a representative to Mexico in the hope of the Mexicans would take part in championship.

After negotiations with their mapping authorities, which had no objections, but were sceptical, Swiss orienteers also started making their own maps in 1965. An important push here was probably the report from the course planners at the 2nd European Championship, who found that the official maps had too few details to be useful. Maybe more surprisingly, the authorities in DDR appear to have had little objections, either, and the first mapping project started in 1964.



The first orienteering map in DDR.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold

Correction: In Chapter 7 I wrote that Skogssport was the oldest existing orienteering magazine. Managing Director Mikko Salonen of the Finnish Orienteering Federation has kindly pointed out that the Finnish Suunistaja celebrated their 60th anniversary last year. Suunistaja is thus two years older.

The mapping revolution
Chapter 9 (1960 - 1970)

From the early fifties many Norwegian clubs and individuals experimented with mapping. A large number of maps were made of varying standard. Many of the people involved were professional map makers.

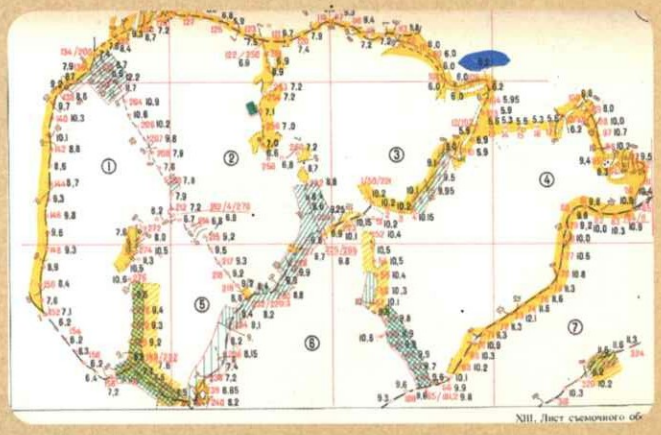
The real mapping revolution started in 1962. In early summer that year, Kongsberg IF hosted the Norwegian relay championships. The map Kongsberg IF presented was amazing. The map had a 5 meter contour interval, and the contours were incredibly detailed, which created completely new possibilities for control sites. In addition the map distinguished between open and forested marshes, which in Norwegian terrain can make quite a difference to running speed.

The map was first and foremost the work of Jørgen Løken. He was an excellent orienteer, winning, among other competitions, one Norwegian junior championship, and placing fourth in the Nordic championship in 1961. Løken was fascinated by the possibilities of stereo photogrammetry. He travelled on his own to the Netherlands, and got an education in that subject at the University of Delft.

In 1962 the mapping committee published a mapping manual with a norm for mapping symbols. On the basis of this book many courses in mapping were conducted across the country. In 1962 80% of all orienteering events in Norway were on specially made orienteering maps. The Greater Oslo Orienteering Association got its first mapping committee the same year, and also here it was obvious that the technical side of map production was emphasised. The members were Kjell Rasmussen (from Stabil Trykkerier - a printing shop), Brynjulf Engen (from Fjellanger Widerøe - a photogrammetry company) and Odd Dyran (from Repro-Foto - a reprographic company). The same people continued to serve on the committee through the sixties and contributed much advices and teaching. Stabil Trykkeri also printed most of the orienteering maps in the Oslo area well into the seventies.

In 1963 mapping was considered to be so important that NOF hired its first mapping consultant. Jan Martin Larsen was the first specialist consultant in the Norwegian Orienteering Federation. To cover the cost of this position the general assembly of the Norwegian Federation decided to put a levy on all runners starting in orienteering events.

The equipment for drawing maps in pre-computer days. Photo from Robin Harvey's Mapmaking for Orienteers

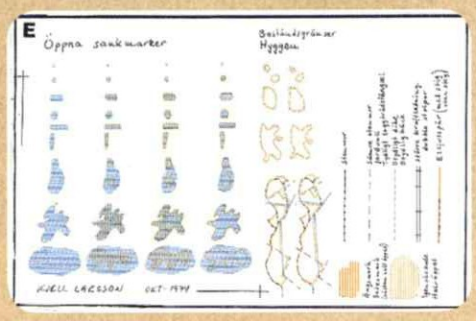


V. M. Aleshin shows how to go systematically through the terrain when you have no base map.

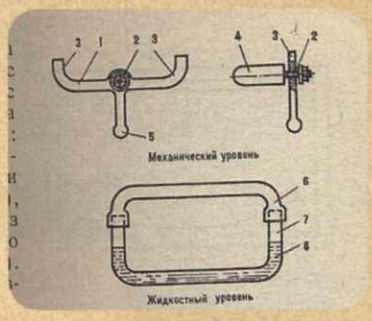
Filled with enthusiasm he returned to Norway. He obtained a stereo plotter and started work. The Norwegian championship map of Gamlegrendåsen outside Kongsberg was one of the first he plotted, and over the following years a steady stream of new base maps came from Jørgen's stereo plotter. Svein Sjønnesen who had experience in stereo plotting from one of the major mapping companies, and had plotted his first orienteering base map in 1954-55, also continued delivering base maps through the sixties and seventies.

As we saw in the last chapter, the Norwegian federation was reluctant to embrace the new maps at first. In 1961 NOF consider mapping activity to be sufficiently important tto set up a mapping committee. Knut and Tullik Valstad from Oppsal IF and Asker SK's Jan Martin Larsen were the founding members. This Oslo dominance on the first committee was mostly due to economical considerations; travel expenses were to be kept to a minimum. NOF wanted al the committee members to live within 1 hour from the centre of Oslo. The most important tasks for the first committee were teaching and guidance. Particularly drawing and the technical side of the mapping process were emphasised. Field surveying was less important in the beginning, but the first steps were taken towards standardisation. By1961 the first international conference with the objective of creating an international mapping norm was held at Haraldheim Youth Hostel in Oslo. The year after the Norwegian norm was translated into German for the first European Championships in Løten.

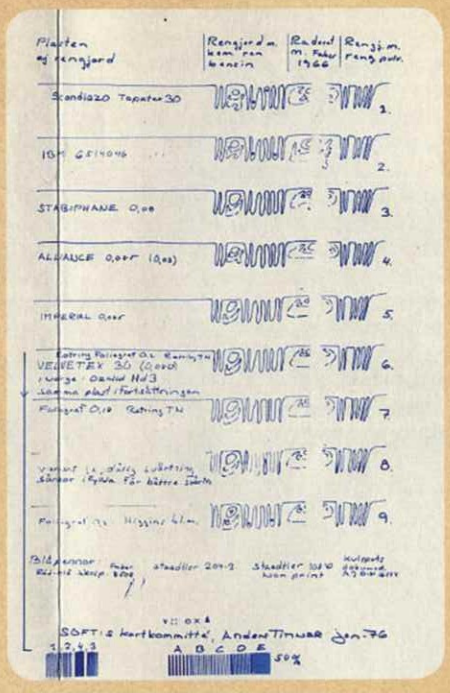
Jan Martin Larsen was keener on orienteering maps than most people. As a boy he had drawn several maps in Asker, and later undertook studies in that field. While most of the pioneers in mapping for orienteering were professionally involved in mapping before they started making orienteering maps, Larsen started as an orienteer and later became a mapper and ended up as director of Norway's Geographical survey. More than most people he became the international pioneer in mapping for orienteering. He quickly realised the need for international co-ordination and co-operation.



Kjell Larsson had ideas about how open areas should be marked.



Experiment with different pens and cleaning fluids by Anders Timner of Sweden.



Equipment for levelling of contour lines, from a Russian text book of mapmaking.

At the time Norwegian orienteers were proud and boastful about their form of orienteering. Two letters to NOF-Posten December 1963 illustrate this well. First Henrik Hvoslef:

... The European Championships, the International Match at Lillehammer, or the Nordic Championships in Trøndelag. Can any of these events demonstrate to foreigners what we mean by orienteering? None. Will these countries realise what rapid development there has been here in Norway? Our maps are far better than any neighbouring countries can offer, just ask the participants at this year's Nordic Championships [in Sweden]. Who is presenting our case, our view of modern orienteering? Why should we just go along with the big ones? Aren't we strong enough, confident enough, and have belief in our ideals, to demand a new look at what orienteering should be like? If we can not do this, the development here has been in vain. Then we have to turn the clock back 10-15 years."

On the same page the signature Stig (probably elite runner Stig Berge) wrote:

Our maps are without any doubt the best, and our courses require better orienteering than in other countries. The rules here require that as little as possible of the course should be "free" running on fields, roads, paths and so on. Catching features should be avoided as far as possible, and it should be possible to "read" into the control.

It is not like this in e.g. Sweden. The legs are usually simple, both navigationally (assuming that the maps are correct) and running..... Norwegian runners want to run the Norwegian form of orienteering, not just because we are more used to it, but because we believe it is the fairest, the best, and - not least - the most fun.

The Swedish elite orienteers largely agreed. When O-ringen was formed as a Swedish elite runners association, one of their demands was better maps, "4. The maps. If we are to compete with our neighbouring countries in the forest we ought to compete on better, more detailed maps at 1:25,000". Another demand was for better courses, "6. The placement of control markers. We must copy Norway".

In the autumn of 1963 NOF asked the IOF to consider the problems of special maps for orienteering. The IOF board suggested that a mapping committee would be useful, but did nothing about it. In connection with the second European Championships in Switzerland in 1964 the IOF asked the Norwegian federation to conduct a survey of the need for orienteering maps, and the existence of orienteering maps in the different IOF countries, and also the possibility for making orienteering maps. The last was by no means the least important, as the authorities in many countries were sceptical of anybody wanting to improve on the official maps.

In 1964 NORD appointed its first mapping committee. The chairman was Jan Martin Larsen, with Torkil Laursen from Denmark, Osmo Niemelä, Finland, and Christer Palm, Sweden, as members. The committee was of little importance though, as the IOF appointed their mapping committee the year after.

The third IOF congress met in Kamtschia, Bulgaria, in June 1965. The Norwegian delegation had five objectives. In a report from the congress in NOF-Posten August 1965 one of the representatives, Kjell Staxrud, wrote: "This was Norway's congress!"

The mapping norm, as proposed by Norway was accepted for World Championships, and Jan Martin Larsen became the first chairman of the mapping committee. Other members were Christer Palm, an accomplished map maker from Sweden, and Ernst Spiess, a professor of cartography from Switzerland. They very quickly issued suggestions for an international norm for orienteering maps, which was more or less followed until 1975 when the IOF decided on a new mapping norm. Despite a new mapping norm being agreed upon, there was also much experimentation among map makers to improve the orienteering maps.

In other areas the Norwegian view also prevailed. Kjell Staxrud became a member of the technical committee that was to devise rules for the coming championships.

The real international breakthrough for the Norwegian view of orienteering, and thus for what orienteering maps should look like, came a little later the same year during the Nordic championships in Eiker. For the first time in an international championship the participants got a map that accurately represented the terrain. The runners hardly needed to use their compasses, but could read their way by contour lines and other details. In the Swedish year book "Skärmen" from 1966 Bertil Nordenfeldt wrote:

It is with fright that one considers today the old fashioned hachure maps that our foreign friends are forced to use here in Sweden. In Norway the conditions are different; there they have managed to prepare such excellent maps, particularly with regard to the contours, the like of which are not to be found in the whole orienteering world. They is the kind of maps that now set the international standards. This map was the Norwegians home map. They had gotten used to this kind of map in a completely different way from what the participants from the other countries had been able to, during their short Norwegian training weeks earlier the same year. Nevertheless the guests found so many surprising details on the map that they stopped to check the terrain instead of just coolly running on, and thus lost valuable seconds without realising it themselves. Over many kilometres this added up to minutes; enough to create a critical margin of loss among athletes of otherwise comparable standard....

With slight exaggeration, our Norwegian friends themselves claim to be five years ahead in the development of the field of mapping. In the end the truth is that only the best is good enough for international exchanges in orienteering. The IOF congress in Bulgaria last year also adopted the new Norwegian maps as the standard for the next world championship maps, and as the goal for future attempts to internationalise our competition maps. The boss of the working group that shall be looking into this - Jan Martin Larsen.

The Norwegian maps must be the norm even for us.

Every cloud has a silver lining. In this case our defeat at the Nordic Championships in 1965 can indeed be the start of a new and brighter future for Swedish orienteering."

The Swedes appointed their first mapping committee in 1965.

The good maps now available made orienteering much easier. What you saw in the forest could mostly be found on the map, and what you found on the map could certainly be recognised in the forest. The orienteers were no longer required to read between the lines as they had been. The whole sport in some ways became simpler, and the first learning step certainly became much smaller. Good modern orienteering maps were undoubtedly a strong reason for the formidable growth in the number of orienteers over the next few years.

After negotiations with their mapping authorities, which had no objections, but were sceptical, Swiss orienteers also started making their own maps in 1965. An important push here was probably the report from the course planners at the 2nd European Championship, who found that the official maps had too few details to be useful.

In Eastern Europe the orienteers eagerly embraced the possibilities of making their own maps. In DDR, Hungary and Czeckoslovakia the first orienteering maps were made in 1964. In Czeckoslovakia there were high quality maps available. However, these were regarded as military secrets. Most orienteering was thus on much poorer maps at 1:75 000. These maps were good enough for the "touristik" version of orienteering, but better maps were needed for the more modern form of orienteering. From 1963 military five colour maps at 1:25,000 were used for orienteering events. These maps (or parts of them) were only borrowed for the event. There was careful accounting to make sure that all maps were handed back to the Geodézie company or Military Geographical Institute (VZÚ) after the events. Individual training was almost impossible under these conditions.

Some organisers tried to circumvent the problem by retouching the secret information and making black and white photocopies. Not a good solution from a technical point of view, and not a "fully legal status of the copies" as the mapper Zdenek Lenhart commented many years later. There were thus several experiments in the early sixties to make their own maps. From 1966 there was an agreement with VZÚ, which printed parts of the 1:25,000 maps free of charge. It was even possible to change the map. Some organisers removed roads and other features to make the navigation more difficult, turning the heavily worked forests of central Europe into the technically demanding wilderness of Scandinavia. Others added extra details (e.g. marshes) to make the maps more accurate. More than 200,000 maps were printed, covering some 200 areas.

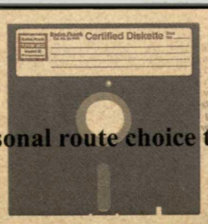
In 1971 the agreement was changed and now VZÚ also printed completely new maps at the cost of 1 crown per copy. High quality maps were still regarded as military secrets. There was a tedious procedure to apply for permission to map a particular area. Permission was often declined after months of waiting; so many more areas were applied for. Even for the areas they were allowed to map, there were restrictions to limit the military usefulness. No local names were allowed, no location maps to show where the terrain was were allowed, nor were coordinates or altitude data permitted.

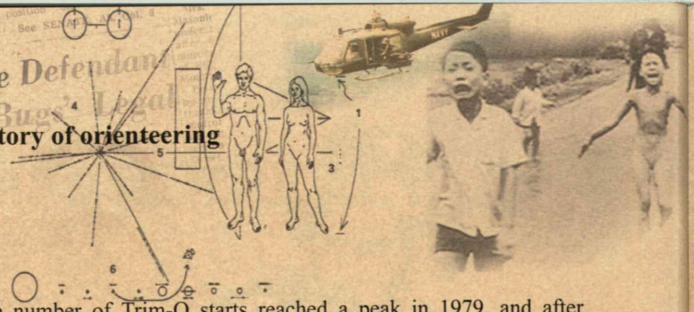
These restrictions seem to have been applied in all the eastern block countries, as can be seen on maps from before 1990. On the other hand, such limits on the content were of little concern to orienteers.

In some countries the official maps were so good, and easily available, that mapping was considered of less importance. When the first Danish special orienteering map was made for the Nordic Championships in 1967, the 3 metre contour interval was based on 100 year old maps with 1,5 m contours. In the strong orienteering nation of Finland, the first orienteering maps were made in the early 1970's. By that time even Japan had made it's first orienteering map (1966).

In 1969 the IOF had prepared the first truly international map norm for four colour maps. This was not considered good enough for continental terrain. The Danes made a five colour norm in 1971, with the stronger continental nations and Finland following suit in 1972. By this time the tremendous development in orienteering maps was more or less at its end. In 1974 the IOF chose the five colour norm. This norm has undergone several revisions, but the basic principles remain the same.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold





100 years in the forests – a personal route choice through the history of orienteering

Explosion
Chapter 10 (1966 - 1975)

For a relatively short time around 1970 there was a tremendous growth in the number of orienteers. From 1963 to 1977 the number of orienteers in Sweden tripled. In Norway the number of orienteers more than doubled in the same period, while the number of starts quadrupled. Not only were there many more orienteers, they were also running many more events.

In addition to the runners taking part in competitions, a more leisurely form of orienteering was also growing tremendously. From a modest start with one organiser and 300 participants in 1966 the numbers in Norway grew to 250 organisers and nearly 50.000 participants a decade later. The Norwegian "Tur-orientering" with permanent controls staying out in the forests for a long period of time was started by Asker Skiklubb in 1966. The initiator in the club was Jan Martin Larsen. At that time he was employed by the Norwegian Orienteering Federation as a mapping consultant, and a few years later he became president of the federation. In other countries the same phenomenon went under the name of "Trim Orienteering".

The increase in numbers was strong among young runners, and particularly among women. While women made up about one tenth of all orienteers in Sweden at the beginning of the period, they accounted for one third at the end.

The growth of the Norwegian orienteering federation is illustrated by the numbers below.

	Norway			Sweden		IOF
Year	Members	Starts	Trim-O	Members	O-ringen starts	Members
1963	12,118	28,381		25,000		11
1964	10,773	31,957				11
1965	10,786	30,644		31,000	167	11
1966	10,504	26,900	700		700	11
1967	11,000	36,273	2,500	38,000	2,100	13
1968	11,900	38,786	8,200		3,600	13
1969	14,401	47,610	11,100	45,000	5,000	16
1970	17,486	47,961	18,546		7,100	16
1971	16,000	63,041	24,686	50,000	9,200	17
1972	19,772	65,282	33,551		8,900	17
1973	21,624	83,443	45,874	72,000	11,200	21
1974	21,011	97,169	49,114		11,000	21
1975	22,651	111,799	48,942	77,000	10,000	23
1976	23,988	116,386	49,103		14,900	23
1977	23,312	121,133	45,156	81,000		23

The number of Trim-O starts reached a peak in 1979, and after that showed a weak decline. The Norwegian Federation membership continued to grow until 1985, while the number of starts peaked three years earlier.

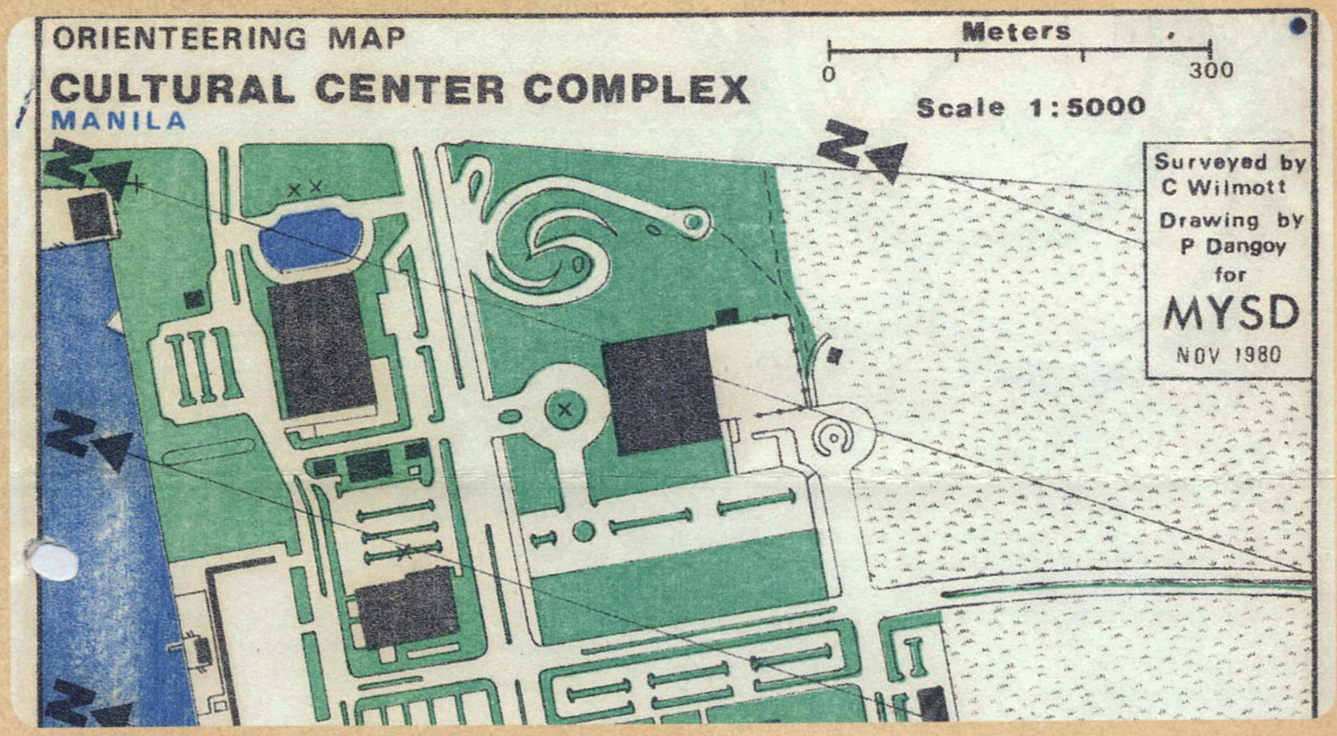
The Swedish Orienteering Federation showed even stronger growth, as shown in the Table.
After 1977 the Swedish numbers show a small decline.

There has been much speculation about what caused such spectacular growth. The hope has of course been that by understanding the causes a similar period of growth could be initiated. This author noted in "Orienteringsidretten i Norge gjennom 90 år" that the growth coincided with a general increase in environmental awareness.

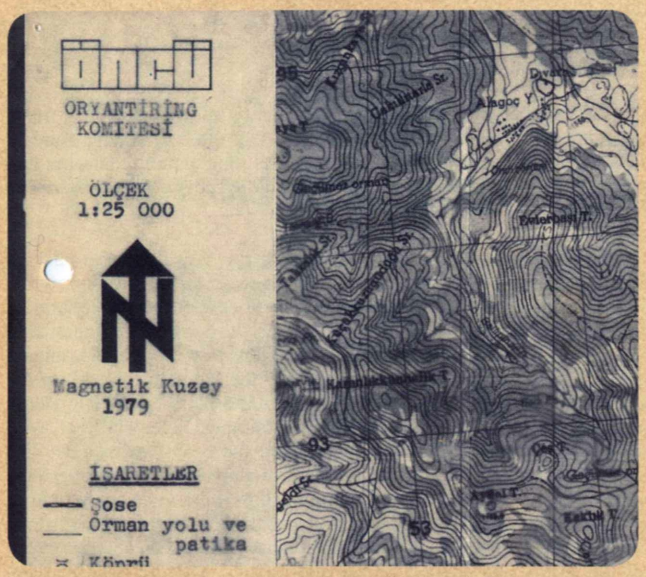
The UN declared 1970 the year of the environment and in 1972 established UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme). The Norwegian Environmental Protection Act was passed in 1970, and the Ministry of the Environment was established in 1972. In other countries similar developments occurred around this period. At the same time as people in Europe had a higher living standard than ever before, and more time to pursue sports, there was also a strong "back to nature" movement. Orienteering proved to be a very successful blend of the "sport for fitness" and "back to nature" booms.

The time was ripe, but orienteering leaders were also quick to see the opportunity. Trim-Orienteering with permanent courses proved to be one of - if not the most - successful fitness activities in Norway. Many different sports federations tried to adjust their sport to suit those that were more interested in general fitness and wellbeing than fierce competition. No other sport was as successful as orienteering. It has later been said that "When the Norwegian Orienteering Federation was tired of being a small federation they invented trim orienteering". Many orienteers were initiated into the sport at a very young age as trim-orienteers together with their families, and later became active competitors.

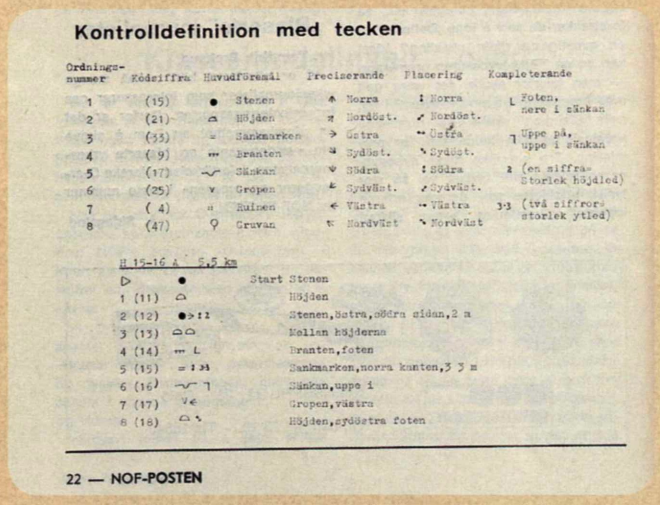
Trim orienteering also spread to other countries. Most noticeably in Japan, where trim-orienteering in the form of 100 km COMPE was started in 1966, before there were even any active competitors, and at the same time as "tur-orientering" in Norway. In the 100 km COMPE orienteers took part in groups, and were not allowed to run. After several events the full 100 km would be covered and the participants would obtain a diploma. The ambitious goal of the Japanese OL Committee in 1970 was to have ten maps for 100 km COMPE around every Japanese city with more than 500,000 inhabitants. This goal was probably never



Philippines map: Possibly the first colour copied map was produced in the Philippines in 1980.



Turkey: Boy scout leaders organised orienteering on existing maps in Turkey.



Kontrolldefinition med tecken

Ordnings-nummer	Kodsiffra	Huvudföremål	Preciserande	Placering	Kompleterande
1	(15)	Stenen	Norra	Norra	Foten, nere i sänkan
2	(21)	Höjden	Nordöst.	Nordöst.	
3	(33)	Sänkmarken	Östra	Östra	Uppe på, uppe i sänkan
4	(9)	Branten	Sydöst.	Sydöst.	
5	(17)	Sänkan	Södra	Södra	2 (en siffra= Storlek höjdled)
6	(25)	Gropen	Sydväst.	Sydväst.	
7	(4)	Ruinen	Västra	Västra	3-3 (två siffror= storlek ytled)
8	(47)	Gruvan	Nordväst	Nordväst	

H 15-16 A 5,5 km

▷	●	Start Stenen
1 (11)	⌓	Höjden
2 (12)	●>11	Stenen,östra,södra sidan,2 m
3 (13)	⌓⌓	Mellan höjderna
4 (14)	⎓ ⌊	Branten,foten
5 (15)	=11	Sänkmarken,norra kanten,3 ½ m
6 (16)	⌒ ⌉	Sänkan,uppe i
7 (17)	V<	Gropen,västra
8 (18)	⌓ ⌞	Höjden,sydöstra foten

22 — NOF-POSTEN

Kjell Larson: *The ditch, the fork has* a certain haiku like quality, but Kjell Larsson's idea of a pictorial control description is more suited for international competitions. This is his presentation of the ideas in the Norwegian orienteering magazine NOF-Posten.

reached as individual competitions gained popularity quite quickly. By 1968 the first individual event was organised in Japan. The first maps used for the 100 km COMPE were simple black and white maps, with more colours on the reverse side (explaining the sport) than on the map itself. Soon blue was introduced for the water system and a little later brown for the contours, which are plentiful in Japan.

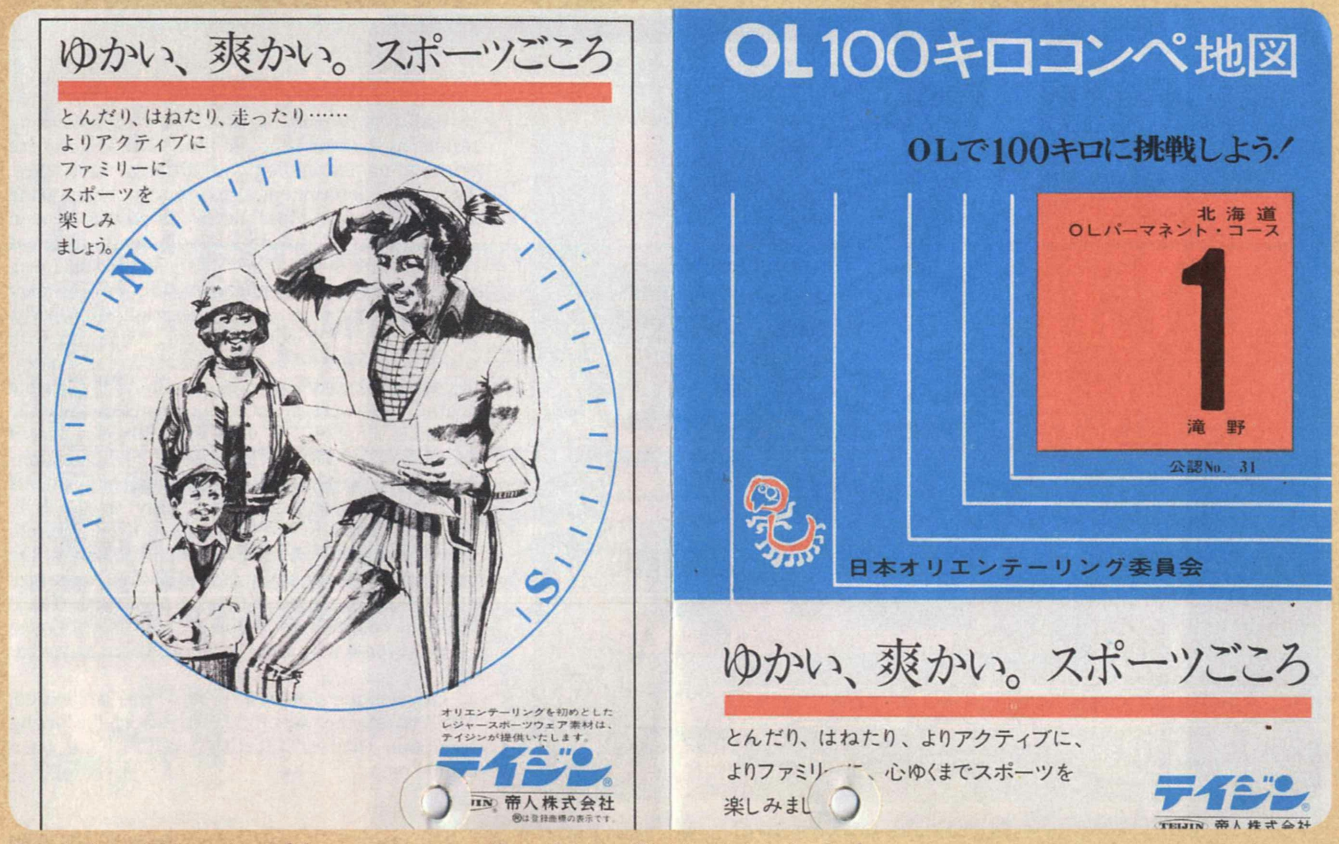
In Hungary there was a "run yourself healthy" movement which was largely organised by orienteers.

Trim orienteering with permanent controls was most successful in Scandinavia. Partly this is due to the open air act, which makes it very easy to organise this kind of event, and partly it is due to the strong tradition of strolling and walking in the forests as a recreational activity. The Norwegian name "Tur-orienteering" is a combination of the words "tur" meaning a leisurely walk and "orientering" - which does not need any translation in this forum.

The foundations for the growth were also firmly laid down at the beginning of the sixties. With the old, and often inaccurate, maps long experience and knowledge of mapping were necessary to be able to "read between the lines" of the map. With the new accurate orienteering maps such experience was no longer necessary. It was much easier to introduce newcomers to the sport. Finding controls successfully was a much more frequent experience than previously. The number of classes was also increased to cater for an increasing number of younger orienteers. And, maybe most importantly, the course planners started to set courses that catered for the less experienced. While the courses in the junior classes had often been shortened versions of the elite courses they now became courses with simpler orienteering. The courses for the younger runners were to provide interesting competitions for boys and girls and also gradually teach them orienteering.

But not only did the number of orienteers grow rapidly in the countries were the sport was already established, it also spread rapidly to new countries. Often the spread was due to Swedish or other Scandinavian orienteers moving abroad for a longer or shorter period. But as the sport became established in more locations also Swiss, British and Eastern European orienteers contributed to further spreading the gospel. Mapping for orienteering also spread, often with the help of Scandinavian orienteers, but the locals also got involved.

Orienteering maps were produced in Japan (1966), Great Britain (1968), Yugoslavia (1968), USA (1968), Spain (1972), Italy (1973), New Zealand (1973), and Tunisia (1975). In Japan orienteering grew after this, and in Britain the sport was already firmly established. These early attempts at mapping did not lead to any lasting activity in the cases were the mappers were just brought in from abroad.



OLMap1: The family is happy although father seems to have some problems with the map. This is from the back of the first Japanese map.

Other countries started orienteering activities on the existing maps, e.g. France (1965), Canada (1966), Israel (1966), USA (1967), Belgium (1967), Ireland (1967), Australia (1969), New Zealand (1969), Cameroon (1970), Syria (1971), Rwanda (1971), Cuba (1973), Turkey (~1974) and the Philippines (1975). Apart from the two attempts in Africa, all these attempts were successful, and the sport flourished, although the activities in the Philippines seem to have ceased in the 80's when the founder died. After the bloodless military coup in Turkey the sport also seems to have disappeared there. In many of these countries the Silva company was an active player, and supported the young orienteering movement. Particularly in the English speaking countries like USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Silva played an important role. In Japan the whole sport seems to have been introduced by a lucky combination of Silva's desire to sell compasses, and the government's need for some suitable physical activity for large groups.

As the sport spread, new federations were established. Again the English speaking countries seem to have been the quickest: Canada (1968), Australia (1970), USA (1971), and New Zealand (1973). Also in many European countries the active orienteers got organised. The Austrian Orienteering Federation was formed in 1966, both the French and Hungarian federations were formed in 1970, and the same year there an orienteering section was established in the Polish Tourist Federation. Israel was also early, with an orienteering federation as early as 1967.

With the formation of all these new federations the IOF grew steadily as shown in the Table.

1967 The Scottish and English federations merged, British Orienteering Federation became member of IOF. Poland also became member of IOF.
1969 Japan, Canada, and Belgium joined IOF
1970 France and Australia became associated members of IOF.
1971 France became member of IOF.
1973 USA, Australia, New Zealand and Israel joined IOF.
1975 Ireland and Luxembourg joined IOF.

The growth of orienteering, particularly outside Europe, made communication more difficult and in 1970 English was suggested as the second official language of the IOF. As long as the federation had been dominated by Scandinavians and middle Europeans German was the only official language.

The European Championships became the World Championships from 1966. The first world championship was held in Finland, while the second was held in Sweden in 1968. The Scandinavian countries dominated both these championships. The third world championship was held in DDR (East Germany) in 1970. The best Norwegian runners spent some time in DDR the year before the competition to become acquainted with the terrain. This paid off and Norwegian Stig Berge won, but the two Swiss runners Karl John and Dieter Hulliger, who were used to continental terrain, grabbed the next two medals. The Swedish runners were somewhat under prepared and did not perform very well. In 1972 the World Championships were once again held in continental terrain. This time, it was in the labyrinthine sanstone cliffs of the Bohemian Paradise, in Czechoslovakia. Before this championship all the teams had trained in relevant terrain, and the Scandinavian dominance was restored in the men's class. In the women's the victory went to Sarolta Monspart from Hungary.

In 1974 the World Championships were held in Denmark. The host country's Mona Nørgaard won a popular victory.

All over Europe the living standard increased, people got more spare time and money to spend on their holidays. An important creation of this period was the summer holiday competitions, which grew tremendously in popularity. The number of participants grew rapidly. O-ringen 5-days in Sweden became the Mecca for orienteers from all over the world.

Summer competitions also started up in other countries; eg: Sørlandsgaloppen (Norway, 1965), Swiss 5-Days (1969),Ostseepokal (DDR 1967), JK Trophy (Great Britain, 1967). The latter was named after Jan Kjellström who did much to promote orienteering in Great Britain, but died young in a car accident earlier that year. Over the next few years many more multi-day events appeared. This lead to what Sarolta Monspart in 1971 called "the orienteering gypsies", fanatical orienteers that spent their summer vacation taking part in one multi day event after the other all over Europe.

Multi day events lead to linguistic problems. Control descriptions had to be translated into several different languages, often with fascinating results, as the translator had little knowledge of the orienteering terminology in different languages. The control descriptions also caused problems at the Nordic Championships. The Swedish dialect spoken in small parts of Finland was sufficiently different from standard Swedish to cause misunderstandings, and several Swedish runners lost time when they did not interpret the control description properly. In 1974 Kjell Larsson of Sweden came up with a solution to this. He suggested pictorial control descriptions. The idea was simple. All possible control sites were given a symbol resembling the IOF map symbol, but with the restriction that it should be reproduced in black and white. Directions were given with arrows. With minor adjustments the idea was adopted very quickly by the IOF, not least thanks to the enthusiastic Kjell Staxrud. The Norwegian Federation ordered so many of the new brochures the IOF planned in five languages that IOF could actually afford to print them. These symbolic control descriptions are now used for most events, even if only local participants are expected.

Orienteering for new groups was also tried. The first attempt was in Japan where the young federation tried orienteering for the blind on a Braille map.

Poster Jicin: The summer multiday events started to compete for runners. This lead to many fancy posters. Can you spot the one flag that does not belong to an IOF member at the time.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold

100 years in the forests
- a personal route choice through the history of orienteering

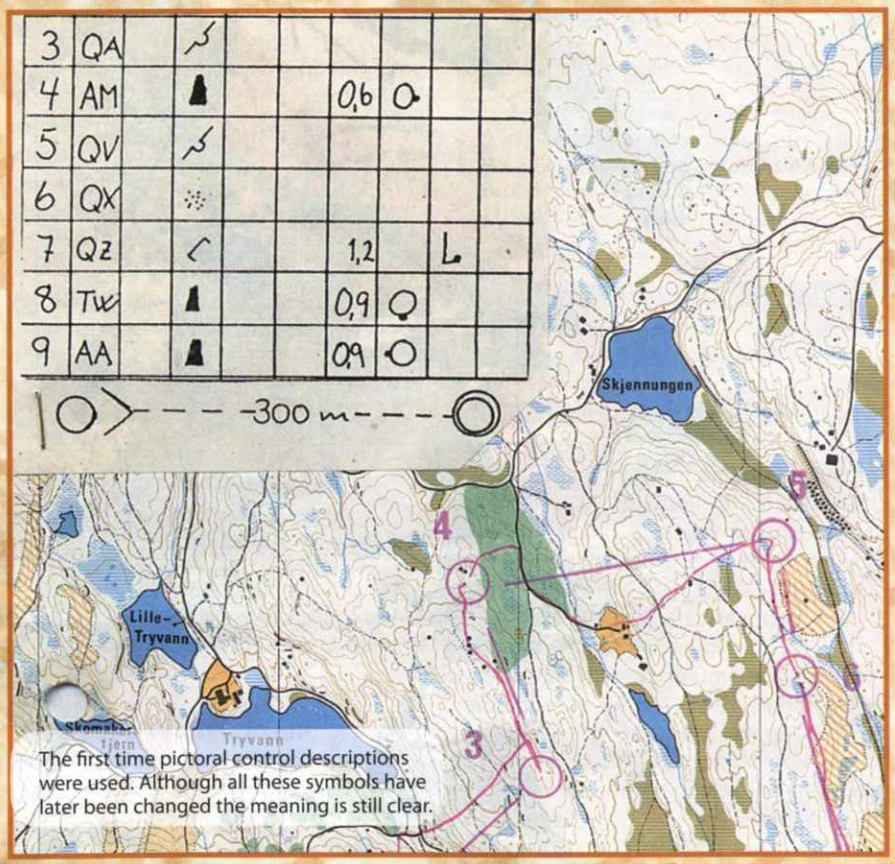
Further expansion
(1976 - 1985)

Orienteering had become one of the major sports in three of the four Nordic countries, but during this period the growth stopped. In all the Nordic countries all districts of the countries had good orienteering maps and active clubs within a relatively short distance. The press coverage of major events was there, and most pupils were exposed to orienteering during the school curriculum. In other words, everybody that could be interested in the sport had ample opportunity to try it.

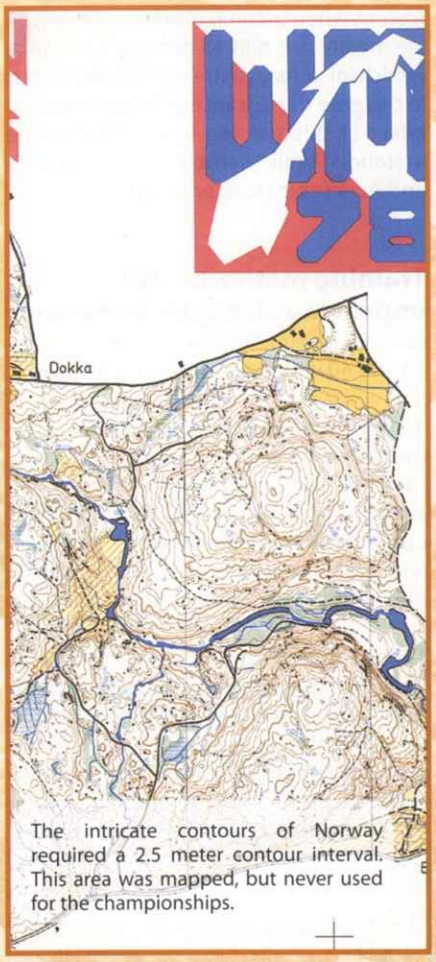
Internationally the sport was still growing. The 1976 World Championships were held in Britain. For the first time the championships were held outside the founding members of IOF. Another first was usage of the 1:15,000 map scale for an international championship. The terrain in Scotland was among the most Scandinavian-like in Britain, and certainly gave no home advantage. The dominant runners in the championship were still the Scandinavians. But the real winner was British orienteering. Already in April 1977 the national magazine "The Orienteer" reported a 50% increase in participation in events; to a large extent due to the publicity from the World Championships. A few issues later it was lamenting parking problems and queues at registration due to the increasing number of runners.

During the late seventies and early eighties there were many attempts to further spread orienteering internationally. Visiting orienteers made maps in Iceland (1976), Singapore (1977), Hong Kong (1977), Tunisia (1979), and India (1982). Events were held in Italy (1976), Singapore (1977), Bangladesh (1977), Turkey (1979), South Africa (1981), Thailand (1981), Taiwan (1982), and China (1983). In Turkey the orienteering was organised by Scout leaders from Turkey and not by orienteers from abroad. There were event attempts to make orienteering maps according to the IOF norm.

Introducing orienteering could be difficult. When the Austrian orienteer Vladimír Pácl organised the first event in Italy he was stopped by the police. The red and white orienteering markers looked suspiciously like the Austrian flag, and the police suspected him of actively fuelling the political movement in South Tyrolia that wanted to be reunited with Austria.



The first time pictoral control descriptions were used. Although all these symbols have later been changed the meaning is still clear.



The intricate contours of Norway required a 2.5 meter contour interval. This area was mapped, but never used for the championships.

In many other countries where the sport was already established, orienteers organised themselves into separate federations. This happened in the Soviet Union (1977), Cuba (1977), Korea (1978), Switzerland (1979), India (1979), and the Philippines (1979). This led to the growth of the IOF. In 1982 Hong Kong and Yugoslavia became IOF members, while Spain became an associate member. India changed its status from a full member to an associated member of IOF. In 1984 two more countries joined IOF as associated members; Cuba and the Netherlands, while the Philippines followed India's example and changed its status to an associated member of IOF. Israel became a full member of IOF the same year.

Contact between orienteers also improved in several countries. Czechoslovakian orienteers got their magazine "Orientachni beh" in 1977. The Swiss federation was formed in 1979 and two years later "OL Fachschrift" became the official magazine, although it had been published regularly since 1956. British orienteers got a second orienteering magazine "CompassSport" in 1980. This was later merged with the federation's official magazine "The Orienteer".

The technical side of orienteering was improved considerably with the introduction of symbolic control descriptions. These were suggested by Kjell Larsson in 1974, and IOF acted on the idea rapidly. Some of the symbols were slightly altered and a few more were added. The symbols were used for the first time in a major event in 1976, at Solo-stafetten near Oslo. In 1985 the Swiss for the first time demonstrated an electronic punching system. However, the system was too expensive and never won much acceptance. Ten years later another cheaper system was introduced.

New competitions were also added, both nationally and internationally. The first Nordic Veterans Championship was organised in 1977. The year after both Britain and Norway had their first night-o championships. Italy held its first national championship in 1976. In 1979 Swedish orienteers on the Höst-Öst Tour initiated the first Venice street event. This event has grown to well over 2000 participants, and is quite unlike anything else among orienteering events. In 1977 IOF started discussions about a World Cup for the elite orienteers. Nothing much happened, and in 1983 the Norwegian federation went ahead and started an unofficial World Cup. The initiative was accepted by the other federations, and all the stronger orienteering nations sent their best teams.

The never-resting PeO Bengtsson wanted more publicity for orienteering, and suggested World Championships in Short distance, Long distance and Night orienteering, in 1983. The short distance was introduced into the World Championships in 1991. The other two suggestions have yet to be implemented. There was also a brief attempt to introduce a World Meeting in night orienteering. A few events were held, but the whole idea faltered.

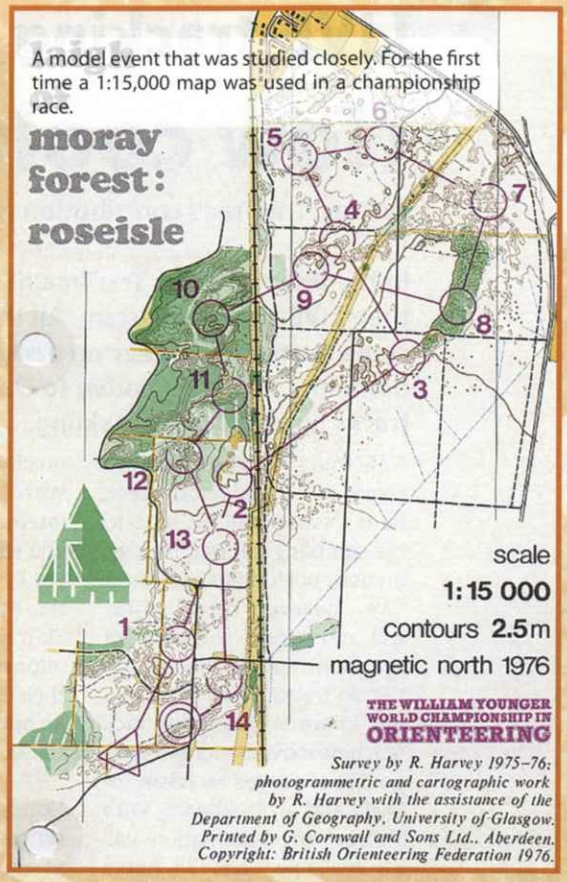
The 1978 World Championships were held in Norway. The terrain selected was more runnable than most Norwegian terrain, so the home runners would not be too strongly favoured. The technical controller felt that the Norwegian terrain was so intricate that too much had to be read between the (contour) lines. Thus a 2.5 meter contour interval was requested, so non-Scandinavians should also be able to interpret the map. In addition a liberal amount of form lines were used (sometimes even two between the normal contours). The organisers introduced an open race between the individual and relay championships. For the first time, and probably, unique among any sport, the audience could also take part at the same arena as the world class athletes.

At it's 1979 session in Prague the International Olympic Committee accepted orienteering as an recognised sport. This is a small first step on the way to inclusion in the Olympics. IOF decided to change the world championships to odd years, this avoided collision with the Olympic Games or the soccer World Cup. Thus 1979 became a year for world championships. Finnish orienteers organised the event, which was the start of an unprecedented Norwegian dominance. In the men's class the Norwegians took all three medals. They repeated this feat in 1981 in Switzerland, and in 1983 in Hungary where the fourth place was also taken by a Norwegian runner. In 1979 Norway was only sixth in the relay, while they won all relays throughout the eighties. The Swedish women had an even better winning streak. In the period 1970 – 1985 they failed to take the gold medal only once: when the Finns won 1979, in Finland.

January 1980 the orienteering world was shaken. Three ambitious, young, Swedish orienteers all joined the Örebro club Almby IK. The club had managed to get good enough sponsorship to allow Jörgen Mårtenssson, Kjell Lauri, and Stefan Brandt to work half time, and spend the rest of their time training, and preparing for the orienteering races. Although the money involved was little compared to many professional sports, this was something completely new in orienteering. In fact, just prior to this a strategy commission in the Swedish orienteering federation had concluded that cash sponsorship was, and would remain, all but unavailable to orienteering. Their conclusion was that "Those that want economic advantages - and compensation for lost income in work is an economic advantage - should look for other sports". Kjell Lauri remarked to Skogssport that the club changes could be seen as a reply to the commission. A few months later the annual general assembly of the Swedish orienteering federation made the rather woolly decision that "We will attempt to keep the sport free of economic advantages for individuals".

In 1985 the first World Orienteering Championships outside Europe was held. With the championships in Bendigo in Australia orienteering had become a truly global sport.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold



A model event that was studied closely. For the first time a 1:15,000 map was used in a championship race.


Örebro-klubb gör JÄTTEKAP — värvar landslagstrio I ORIENTERING

STORSATSNING bara början, jättesatsning ORIENTERING

Almby — nya stjärnklubben i orientering

värvar Sveriges två bästa

GRABBARNA SOM BRÖT AMATÖR-VALLEN

ALMBY IK ÖREBRO

Three runners that tried to make a living form orienteering. One of them is still trying. Also shown are some of the headlines they caused. From left, club leader Rolf Gunnarsson, Kjell Lauri, Jörgen Mårtensson and Stefan Brandt.

Från vision till verklighet?

The dream of following the runners trough the forest has been there for a long time. Here is a sketch from Skogssport 1988 that shows in principle the system, which was planned to be ready for the World Championships the following year.

100 years in the forests
- a personal route choice through the history of orienteering

Professionalisation
(1986 – 1996)

I remember arriving at Spring Cup 1992. The parking lot outside the school was filled with old, shabby looking diesel busses; few of them passed the safety or emission standards in Denmark at that time. The busses were filled with orienteers, young and old, from all parts of the former Eastern block. This image captures many of the changes that were taking place during this period. The organisers of Spring Cup professionally set out to build a large elite event. One of their ploys was to promise all participants from Eastern Europe a free start, and free lodging. Outside the control of the organisers, greater events were happening. The Berlin Wall and most of the other borders in Europe fell. Suddenly there were hundreds of orienteers wanting to travel.

The changing political systems created great opportunities and challenges for orienteers in many countries. Travel became easier, at least with respect to the paper work. Stronger teams could be sent to the championships, as the team selection could be closer to the actual event. It was no longer necessary to wait months for visa applications. Ordinary runners could also travel abroad and experience different terrains, as they did for Spring Cup. On the other hand, the economic realities limited the amount travels.

Many of the East European states had strong orienteers. Although the Soviet Union only joined the IOF as late as 1986 the sport was well developed. The subsequent break up of the Soviet Union gave many more runners the chance to represent their country. The Baltic States and Russia became some of the stronger orienteering nations; and Ukraine has also produced runners among the world's

best. Many runners used the opportunity to improve their lot, and started running for Scandinavian clubs. The number of members of IOF grew rapidly. In 1992, 11 new countries became members,

Adjusting to a market economy also created problems. Government support for sports dropped. People had less time for voluntary work in their clubs. The same was seen in Scandinavia, and for most sports. People had less time, or were less interested, in working for their clubs. One of the solutions was to hire people to do the work. In Norway each sports federation was promised one employee per 50 clubs from the central sports federation. Norwegian Orienteering had over 500 clubs that gave 11 new employees to work in the districts. Most districts thus got a person half time to administer the sport. The same was the case in Sweden where 22 out of 23 districts had professional administration by 1985.

IInternationally the level of the competitors increased in many countries. In the European Junior Championships (later to become the World championships) in 1988 there were no runners from the Nordic countries on the podium in the individual competitions. Three years later the continental runners also dominated the World championships. However, the most important news from this championship was probably the many disqualifications due to poor punching. Norwegians Per Aage Stokseth and Per Svendsen decided to do something about the problem. The next autumn they had a working prototype. The problem was that it failed in contact with sweat or rain, but it worked in principle. A new prototype was developed. There were two years of testing, but by 1996, 65% of all starts in Norway used the system.

There was a rapid development in the electronics and computer industry. The technology opened new possibilities. In 1985 the IOF organised a competition for the best uses of new technology for orienteering. One of the entries was a simple program for drawing orienteering maps. OCAD was born. This program has continuously been updated and improved, and is now used for almost all orienteering mapping. In 1994 some of the stereography companies started delivering base maps in the OCAD format, it also became easy to scan old drawing film into the program. At the beginning of this period there were several experiments with other existing programs for drawing maps, and even competing custom made programs. At the moment Illustrator seems to be the only distant competitor to OCAD.

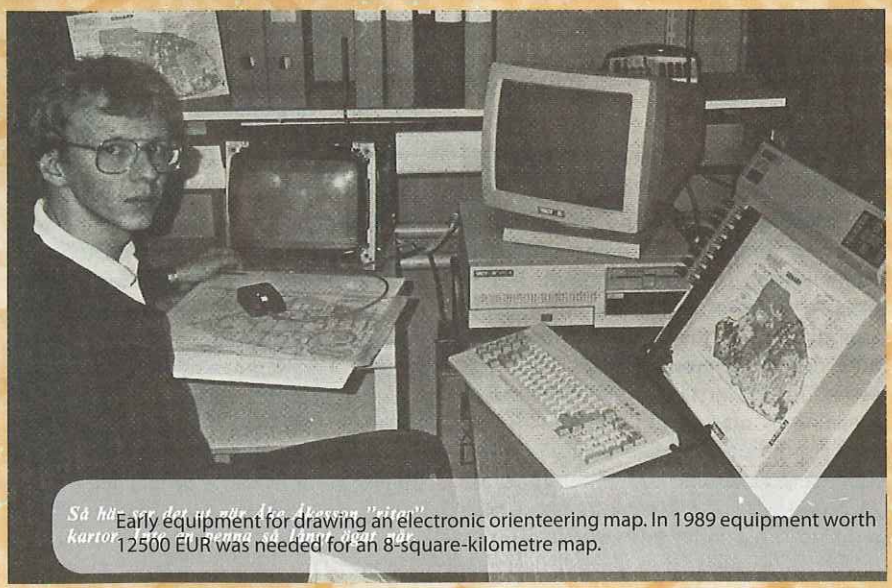
The European Junior Championships 1988. Jana Cieslarová (Czechoslovakia) , Vroni König (Switzerland) and Katalin Olah (Hungary). All of them have had many good result as seniors as well.

With the maps in electronic format clubs began to print digitally as well. It became much easier to print or copy small runs of maps. This has certainly revolutionised club training, not least the technical training. It is now easy to modify the maps as the long running series in *Orienteering Today* has shown.

At the end of the period we cover there was also a revolution in how information is disseminated. In May 1995 the Norwegian Orienteering Federation formed a small task force that looked into the possibility of having a home page on the world wide web. The first pages were written and a somewhat larger group got access to the home page via a password. With the in-put from this group the page was improved and the following year it was launched to the public. Now nearly all Federations and clubs have their own home page. In just ten years this has become an indispensable tool for orienteers who want to know where or when there are events.

Text: Bernt O. Myrvold

However, the time was not ready for the tracking system. The electronics still weighed in at half a kilo.



Early equipment for drawing an electronic orienteering map. In 1989 equipment worth 12500 EUR was needed for an 8-square-kilometre map.

A stop watch with split times. Race analysis was suddenly much easier when each runner could get their own split times.