

## Norway: Orienteering

Organisation: *Norges Orienteringsforbund* (NOF) is organised by county associations (*kretser*) which provide a means of interclub co-operation and hold their own championships in much the same way as the UK. Apart from local training, events are fixed during the winter for the whole summer season and the complete fixture list (*terminliste*) is published online early in the year.

*Norges Orienteringsforbund*, Sognsvn 75L, N-0840 Oslo (T: 21 02 90 00, fax: 21 02 95 11) <<http://www.orientering.no>> <[nof@orientering.no](mailto:nof@orientering.no)> for county association websites and club websites.

Clubs (*klubber, lag*): These are usually based on municipalities (*kommuner*) with subsidy from the local authority and sponsorship from local businesses. They cater for other sports besides orienteering. Some independent orienteering-only clubs exist. Many clubs own buildings in the countryside with showers, training and cooking facilities; some have simple accommodation. Entries to events are made by the club on behalf of its members.

The orienteering section of sports site <<http://www.speaker.no>> has links to events.

Events: The season runs from April to September. Major events include the 4-day *Midnattsolgaloppen* in Arctic Norway at end June/beginning July in odd years <<http://www.mg-norway.no>>, *Drammen 3-dagers* in early July, the long running *Sørlandsgaloppen* on the south coast in early July <<http://www.sorlandsgaloppen.no>> (its format is the basis of the Scottish 6-day event, but it is now a 3- or 4-day event preceded by coaching days and other activities for under 21s), 4-day *Nordvest-galoppen* in the fjord area in late July, *Modum 2-dagers* in late August. There are several 2-day weekend events. Large events are sponsored by local businesses. Besides events with courses based on age class, smaller events offer a limited number of courses of different lengths. *Tur-O* or *O-trim* is similar to our permanent courses; at the beginning of each summer, a large number of controls is set out and overprinted maps can be bought at sports shops, petrol stations, tourist offices etc. In the autumn, certificates are presented to those who find all controls.

Age Classes (*klasser*) & Courses (*løyper*): These differ slightly from the UK; competitors do not run out of age class. H=Men (*Herrer*), D=Women (*Damer*), L=Long (*Lang*), K=Short (*Kort*); there are A, B, C and Novice classes. There may be a *småtroll* course for young children. Large events typically offer:

A		B		C		N	
						D/H -12N	
						H10N	D10N
						H11-12N	D11-12N
H10-12A	D10-12A						
H13A	D13A						
H14A	D14A	H13-14B	D13-14B				
H15A	D15A						
H16A	D16A	H15-16B	D15-16B			H13-16N	D13-16N
H17-20AK	D17-20AK			H17C	D17C	H17N	D17N
H17-18AL	D17-18AL						
H19-20AL	D19-20AL						
H21AL and K	D21AL and K						
H35AL and K	D35AL and K						
H40AL and K	D40AL			H40C	D40C		
H45AL and K	D45						
H50	D50						
H55	D55						
H60	D60						
H65	D65						
H70							
H75							

Course length (*lengde*) is from 2.0 to 12.5km and varies little for any one class between events; climb is not given as terrain is nearly always similar with small rocky hills. The A courses for adults are technically difficult (UK's TD5), junior A courses are roughly TD4, B, C and N courses are TD3 or less.

Event details usually quote distance from a major road junction and the route is signed from there to the event; map references are not given. There is usually a car parking fee (*avgift*); for large events; bus transport from a town car park to the forest may be compulsory. Event facilities include first aid (*førstehjelp*), drink at the finish or on return to the assembly area (*møtested*); at large events, there may be a crèche (*barneparkering*), refreshments (drinks and waffles — not like Wilf's), and a stall with orienteering clothing and equipment (*O-utstyr*) which are much more expensive than the UK. If the event is based at a school or sports centre, toilets (*toaletter*) and showers (*dusj*) will be available; in the forest, there may be temporary toilets and showers.

Entry form (*påmeldingsblankett*): The norm is for clubs to enter their members by postal form or online; if entering from the UK, you are making a club entry. Entry closing date is normally 6 days before the event; for major events it may be up to 6 weeks before with a later closing date (50% surcharge). Non-competitive courses may be available for entry on the day (*direkte påmelding*). The adult entry fee (*startavgift*) applies to those 17 years and older; junior entry fees are for those 16 years or younger. For major events, you can pay for camping or other accommodation at the same time. You can get an international draft in NOK from your bank to post with the entry form. Alternatively, your bank can transfer funds directly to the organising club's bank account, but this may be difficult if you have only the club's bank giro number (sufficient in Norway) because UK banks usually require the name and address of both the payee and the bank in Norway to prevent money laundering. Contact the event organiser (*arrangør*) for these details. Bank charges can be expensive – check with your bank for the cheapest method.

Online entries: There are links from club websites for major event online entry pages but the entry is not valid until the entry fee is received; online credit card payment is generally not offered, except for some large events.

Terrain (*terregn*) & Vegetation (*vegetasjon*): Terrain is usually rough but runnable (*løpbar*) with small hills and rocky outcrops; contours are usually complex. Vegetation described as broken woodland (*skog*) is discontinuous with indistinct vegetation boundaries; tree cover is usually naturally seeded conifers and birch, rarely plantation (*plantefelt*), with dense (*tett*) patches of birch scrub; there are many marshes, usually runnable, which have distinct vegetation. Ground vegetation is bilberry, small ferns and heather; in the south, some nettles and bracken may occur. Upland areas have fewer trees and more heather. There may be a path network in areas near towns; elsewhere there are few paths but marshes often provide distinct navigational handrails. Spurs usually have less ground vegetation and are faster than re-entrants that tend to be wet with more luxuriant growth. Much of the terrain looks the same; it is essential to maintain contact with the map, counting paces and continually checking compass direction. When lost, relocating may be very difficult.

Map (*kart*) & Control Descriptions (*beskrivelser*): Maps are IOF standard, scale (*målestokk*) 1:10000 (more usual) and 1:15000 with 5m contour interval (*ekvidistans*); there is rarely a legend on the map. Significant large boulders and crags will be on the map, but the many small ones and other relatively insignificant features won't be. The brown dot knoll symbol is used to mark the location of the highest point (*høydepunkt*) on a small hill or spur rather than the distinct small knoll we expect in the UK; in Norway, such small knolls are insignificant. Maps in unsealed polybags, pre-printed with courses, are picked up at the start line. Control descriptions with IOF pictorial symbols are usually printed on the map, but available separately before starting. At small events, descriptions may be Norwegian

text; ask for a translation before you start.

Controls (*poster*): These are marked by the same banners as in the UK. Small events may use control cards (*klippekort*) and pin or ticket punches; larger events use electronic punching with Emit cards which you can hire (pay with your entry fee).

Results: These are displayed at the event and posted online. For larger events, a printed copy may be available if ordered at the time of entry; at major events, the local newspaper usually publishes results in full the next day.

Safety: Full arm and leg cover is compulsory. Ticks are present, particularly in thicker vegetation, so take precautions by using a repellent. Inspect clothing and skin thoroughly for ticks after running – that's what close friends are for! Remove any attached ticks by lifting the head with tweezers, do not squeeze the body. Seek medical attention promptly if bitten.

The terrain is usually rough and rocky underfoot. It's advisable to tape your ankles as a precaution against sprains. Instructions at <<http://www.sportsinjuryclinic.net/strapping-and-taping.php>>

In hot sunny weather, there are risks of sunburn and dehydration. Use UV blockers. Most large events provide drink stations.

If electronic punching is not used, team managers (*laglederer*) are responsible for checking that all their club members have returned from the forest.