

WOC News No 2



World Top Runners Coming As Soon As April

An offer of test events in terrains similar to those which are to see medal contests is an obvious part of any WOC. In October 2007, the first official training camp was held at Zlaté Hory, i.e. in a mountain area with characteristics corresponding namely to the middle-distance race. In the middle of April already - before the second training camp takes place - competitors from all over the world will meet in the Czech Republic again, on the occasion of Moravian Champs. For further information, we asked **Dušan**

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Vystavil, the events' chief organizer.

Hello Dušan, so, what is actually on programme of the competitors ?

Four races will wait for them on 10th - 13th April, focused on training of three disciplines.

(cont. on page 4)

I'm not afraid to win

During short stopover between training camps in Latvia and the Czech Republic, **Minna Kauppi** found a couple of minutes to answer a few questions...

It might be considered to be too early to talk about your feelings towards WOC, since nominations will be sure much later, but noone doubts to see you there, including you, I believe. So, what's your current shape now. You mention your "stupid knee" on your website, isn't it anything serious I hope?

Well, it has been quite serious. This „jumper's knee“ has disturbed my training the whole winter. Luckily, it is a bit better at the moment so I hope I'll be able to run full speed trainings in Czech too...

(cont. on page 2)

Really fast legs will be needed

Since the WOC is held in the Czech Republic, we must ask also Czech top runners about their feelings and methods, they have chosen to get themselves prepared in the best possible way. Here, **Tomáš Dlabaj** answered our questions focused at this topic. A runner, who reached sixth place at sprint last year at Kyiv and earned thus a little bit the label of specialist for this discipline.

How does your specific training look like, if you are preparing for these two short events?

The physical one is simple. If you take a look at the maps of Prostějov (note - location of sprint qual.) and Olomouc (location of sprint final), it is clear that you will need really fast legs ... **(cont. on page 3)**

Press conference with world champion(es)

Presence of many top runners at Moravian Champs will be utilized to unusually quality casting at the press conference, which will be held just before the first event, at Tennis Club hotel in Prostějov on 10 April, 14.00 h. Further to Michal Smola, the currently most successful Czech O-runner, also **Minna Kauppi** and **Heli Jukkola** accepted the invitation to come. Last year, they proved their presence in the top elite group by their overall World Cup position (Heli second, Minna third) and also during WOC at Ukraine. You surely remember the exciting long distance race, which they both did in the very same time of 80'17", what in the end was the very best time, making them both the best... Moreover, they managed to beat the magic Simone Niggli, who reached bronze „only“ at that time. Since this Swiss O-queen will miss WOC 2008, both Finns can surely be considered favourites.





I'm not afraid to win (cont. from page 1)

... Before, it has been very difficult, in the downhills especially.

In 2006/07 training year, you reached around 600 hours of training in total - what is your plan for 2007/08, or at least what is the reality so far comparing to the previous year?

I have to admit that I've been training a lot, but as the knee has been so bad. There have been a couple of months that I haven't run at all, just cycled, and of course the pace has been lower too in order to heel the knee. So I haven't really been able to make up any plans for my training just taken it day by day and month by month.

Since you are also good runner without map (at your website you write, that you started orienteering at age of 18), it might be interesting to know your best time on 5 km on athletic track? And do you remember for example your time when you were 15 (just on 3 km probably)?

Actually I started to orienteer

in the age of 8, not 18, and it was before the age of 14 I ran more. At those times, it was merely cross-country running and 800 meters that I ran. I remember that my time on 800m was around 2'30" at the age of 13 or so. My best 5 000 m is unofficially run and that was about two years ago. I suppose it was 17'01" or something.

Did you include something special in your training, to get prepared for Czech terrains?

No, as I haven't been able to, but I would have done more uphill running.

How many times have you visited Czech forests since, let's say, early 2007?

This is the second time now.

No matter of answer to the previous question, I believe that you know, what you can await of Czech terrains. We here consider Nordic terrains much more difficult and the ours easier. But maybe this can be told just in general and not in some details - so is there something in Czech terrains you are afraid of?

The small points in the large hills without any big curves. It is sometimes so hard to estimate the distances, especially in the downhills.

And is there something in the Czech Republic, you are afraid of :)?

I hope not :)

Who do you think, that will belong to the most serious favourites in women's competitions at WOC?

I'm not afraid to win.

And between men :)?

Well, that you have to ask someone else.

The most important question in the end - how many chocolate eggs have you eaten this Easter?

Well, several little ones and maybe 4 bigger ones.

(don't understand...? So visit www.minnakauppi.com)

Questions by Petr Kadeřávek

Competitors tracked by TracTrac

Negotiations with Danish suppliers of the TracTrac system concerning its employment were completed successfully and a contract with Chris Terkelsen's team is ready for signature. During WOC 2008, it will be applied to long distance finals and to the last leg of relay. As an item of the most advanced technology, which cannot be avoided neither by orienteering, it makes the sport even more attractive for spectators. Current position of the competitor is determined by means of the unit worn under dress and can be displayed within the map on a screen. Spectators then can see - real-time - his movement, route choices and problems in controls finding. Monitoring a relay event is perhaps the most rewarding as the discipline consists in direct matching of the competitors. So the displayed runners' positions reveal their current order and anyone can directly follow the battlefield. Like during the Danish WOC 2006 (see samples reprinted from the Czech O-magazine *Orientační běh*), this possibility will be open for spectators at the event centre, on TV as well as on the internet.



Really fast legs will be needed

(cont. from page 1)

... and to be as fast as possible on the flat and hard surface. So my training is focused on the best time possible on the 5 km distance. But don't expect it already the next week in Prostějov, the WOC is taking place in July. And what about my preparation for the relay? I'm expecting 60 minutes in our hilly Moravian terrain. And then it is also necessary to get ready mentally, which may be even harder. But the Czech team is trying to fix this problem as well. For example, the trainings at the last camp in France were

composed with this purpose.

What should we imagine as a mental preparation? Some map teasers, or a kind of occultism and mystical practice?

To be honest, I have not started with my mental preparation for the WOC yet. So far, I was only thinking over the tactical aspects, course setting and so on. But the point is that you have to prepare and experience all the situations and incidents which will certainly happen or which may possibly occur. Just one example: The sprint final starts, you are coming to the podium facing the crowds of fans, hearing your name and rumours about

your chances to win everywhere...

It is simply an amazing atmosphere to which you must not surrender and which must not take even a bit of your concentration. But by living it in your head several times in advance you can cut down the risk of failure.

Do you think that the sprint race in Prostějov and Olomouc will be a kind of specific one, or it will be really only about fast run?

Fast legs are only a half of the success, map reading is the second one. If the old maps of the areas had not been made, I would have been expecting a great number of interesting and challenging tasks. In this way it will be a bit easier, even when the qualification races tend to be not so precise at the championships. But I believe that the course setter Jaroslav Kačmarčík will make the best of the terrain. And if the speed blows your head off in the centre of Olomouc, you will pay for it.

What about the Czech runners? Can they take advantage of the home terrain? Or are the chances equal for all?

Compared with the other disciplines, the Czechs will have no advantage in sprint. The situation will be quite opposite: They can have it more difficult because of the spectators, television and the home atmosphere. But on the other hand, can you imagine a better place to celebrate the eventual success than among the Czech fans?

And who do you tip to win the sprint?

I guess that it will be someone from the Swiss team.

Questions by Jiří Krejčík

More about training and O-life of Tomáš Dlabaja can be found at www.dlabaja.com



World Top Runners Coming As Soon As April (cont. from page 1)

The first and the second involve elite competitors only whereas the weekend races form part of the Moravian Champs. The latter are open to anyone who wants to come and enjoy a competition. The international event thus starts with the prologue, starting at the velodrome in Prostějov on Thursday. Before the race itself, a press conference will be held, concerned primarily with the WOC. A sprint event with the centre at Brodek u Přerova sportground is prepared for Friday. The daily programme will start with an opening ceremony and, besides the race and prizegiving, it will comprise a show with brass-band, dance-band and majorettes. On Saturday, Ptení and the forests around will witness long distance WRE. Aside from elite competitors, further 800 athletes will take part in the National Cup B-classes. As the last race of the series, relay event will take place around Bouzov castle.

So relay event will be an exceptional chance for every Czech runner in the main class to try to compete with the very best. Spectators, however, can enjoy the event as well - what would you recommend them most?

The relay event will be definitely the most attractive for spectators. You can combine orienteering with visit to the castle (see photo below), Mladeč caves or other points of interest around.

From the entry list on the event site (ob.

skprostejov.cz) we can learn that athletes from 20 countries are to come. Is it possible that in some cases the entire national teams can come?

A number of countries will be represented on a high level, e.g. Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Great Britain and, in particular, high-quality teams from the North - Finland, Norway, Sweden. Representatives of other continents, namely from Canada and Australia, will come as well and even total novices in orienteering - two athletes from Somalia - should arrive.

Which most renowned names can be then found in the start lists?

There are many of them; out of the top ten of the World Ranking, more than a half will be present, headed by aces like (in women) Finnish Minna Kauppi and Heli Jukkola, Swedish Helena Jansson, Lena Eliasson and Emma Engstrand or Czech Dana Brožková. In men class, Swedish Emil Wingsted and David Andersson, Norwegian Anders Nordberg and Øystein Kvaal Østerbø or Finnish Mats Haldin could have the best chance to be among the winners. But let's see, there are also lot of other quality runners to come. And we should not forget the Russian team which is not numerous but involves last year's medal winners Valentin Novikov and Andrej Chramov. Erik Rost - the winner of the last season's ski-o World Cup - will also come. Czech competitors, most probably Michal Smola and Tomáš Dlabaja, or Slovak Marián Dávidík and



Lukáš Barták will also pretend to take some of the top places. Six young competitors from the Olomouc region headed by Vojtěch Král, the Junior World Champion, will be given the chance to compete with the World elite, too.

So, besides medal pretenders, some competitors are going to come who take orienteering abroad rather as an enjoyment. Isn't it then better to verify whether those entered from e.g. Somalia are really orienteers and not poor people just seeking visa?

Considering all the time spent, effort made and fees paid to arrange for their visas, I can only trust they are real orienteers who want to undertake a World-level orienteering. When they first contacted us (btw. thereafter they replied promptly to all e-mails and calls), I verified on IOF website that one of them is the head of their O-Federation and that he wants to come with two athletes and their trainer to get experience. It's quite peculiar that they all work or study in Iran - so our participants' list will be completed by the last continent - Asia.

To conclude: everyone is kindly invited whether just to see or to try orienteering!

Questions by Petr Kadeřávek

