

Albanian Orienteering Days 2015 Final Report

As one big step in the project „Introducing Orienteering in Albania“ the first international orienteering event took place in Northalbania from 1st to 2nd Juni 2015.

The event was prepared since about one year, from the idea of adding two events in Albania to Montenegro Adriatic Open (see: <http://www.mao-orienteering.me/>) until realization by the project leader Inge Bosina.

As the orienteering map is the basis of orienteering sport, the first task was to find suitable terrains to present Albania as a new country in the orienteering world with interesting maps. With the help of a local inhabitant of Blinisht and support of the community we were able to find a wonderful terrain at Fishta. For the sprint we enlarged the existing map of the city of Shkodra.

Next step was to engage experienced mappers from Bulgaria to draw good maps according to international standards.

A website was created and many efforts made in different ways of distribution (flyers at international events, event calendars,...) to promote the event.

Finally about 140 participants from 20 countries in 3 continents registered and came to the event. Unfortunately a group of Russian people could not come from Montenegro to Albania due to unclear visa information.

Most of the participants took the occasion of joining the two events, participating first in Montenegro Adriatic Open, where they enjoyed three days Orienteering at Sveti Stefan beach and in Lovcen National Park.

Sunday 31st May: Possibility of training on the map near Rozafa.

Monday 1st June: The first race took place on the map „Fishta“ in the commune of Blinisht. Event center and finish was at Restaurant Mrizi Zanave. Thanks to the family Brunga and the restaurant team all runners were supplied with water- very important on this hot day. The race was planned as Middle distance, but due to the difficult terrain and the hot weather, it took more time than expected to finish the races.



They were very content with the map, the terrain and the food. Some took the occasion of a menu in the famous slow food restaurant, for the others Zef Brunga from Zefs Trattoria and bar prepared barbecue.

Tuesday 2nd June: Sprint in Shkodra center

As there was already an existing map of Shkodra center, we enlarged and updated this map to make it a real city sprint. With support of the Municipality we could use the entrance of the townhall and facilities for the participants. The police helped to make the race in the city safe.



The finish at Sheshi Nënë Teresa made the event visible for all citizens and visitors of Shkodra.

There were also teams from Albanian press and television to report from the event.

Here some examples:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nExWZwJ5i_U&feature=youtu.be

<http://www.starplus-tv.com/sport/item/5946-ditet-e-orientimit-marrin-pjese-garues-nga-e-gjithe-bota>

Participants reported also in their countries.

<http://ol-psv-dd.de/blog/im-land-der-skipetaren-der-erste-ol-wettkampf-in-albanien/>

Most important for the event was the technical support of Zoran Milovanovic and his team from MAO, the organisational support of Arlind Subashi (at the moment the only Albanian orienteer of international level), his family and friends from Tirana, further medical assistance of the Malteser.



Every participating club or group got a welcome package with start bib, information about the event and training map in a beautiful bag of „Authentic Albania“, offered by the Albanian Tourist Association and brochures about Albania offered by the Albanian Ministry of Tourism. Some bags were also used for prizes to the winners.



Thanks to all that supported the event!

Next years Albanian Orienteering Days will take place from 29th April to 1st of May 2016 in the Tirana region.

They will be organised by the new founded „Orienteering Club Albania“ and Inge Bosina.

We hope that also Albanians will take the occasion to participate, as we plan to make it the first Open Albanian Championships.

All kind of support to this event is welcome!

