

# Coaches Conference 2023

## Report FINLAND

Today the presentations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> coaches conference started with Finland represented by

- Petteri Kähäri, sports manager
- Miia Niittynen, sports coordinator
- Thierry Gueorgiou, headcoach

First, Petteri Kähäri gave us a general overview of the finish orienteering situation. The amount of the orienteers in Finland is amazing. About 60.000 people are practicing orienteering and of those there are about 10.000 licensed orienteers splitted up over 300 clubs. In addition to that, every year a big amount of competitions in all areas of Finland are held.

The financial aspect is a really important point, because the Finnish Orienteering Federation (FOF) gets a lot of support from different sources. Even from the National Olympic Committee. The athletes themselves also get an individual support of the Ministry of Education, depending on their performances (Foot-O and SKI-O). For sure that makes it easier for the FOF to finance a bigger team around athletes.

Finland is really successful in all 3 disciplines of orienteering: Foot-O, SKI-O and MTBO. For that it is essential to organize the role of the coaches that are divided into employees and part-time employed ones. But even they are successful in all parts, their biggest focus is on Foot Orienteering. They are convinced that when they want to be the best nation, they have to spend the most resources on Foot-O.

A central point of the FOF is that „Quality means everything “ to them. That should be shown in all work and everybody should give 105 %. Petteri told us that also in club work or club trainings the level is really high.

In the Finnish team almost every athlete has his/her own personal coach. But he mentioned that this is more a physical coaching than an O-technique coaching. This personal coach should be also the one with whom the athlete evaluates, makes a plan and discusses everything that is important (ex. mental aspects, nutrition, recovery, health...). Club coaches on the other side organize trainings and national coaches are 100 % hired by the FOF and they are only supporting the best.

In relation to the gender question, Petteri mentioned the importance that on camps or competitions the gender should be equal. At least there should be a minimum amount of women.

To the Austrian situation he thinks that we will have a big work for recruiting young orienteers, because then we would have more potential to succeed in elite. He also gave the advice to evaluate all our results from the EYOC up to the WOC.

The next presentation was held by Miia Niittynen. She is part employed in the FOF and works there as a project manager. First, she mentioned the coach education system in Finland and then she gave us information about her work. She tries to find out what could be possible guidelines for trainings on becoming a top orienteer. Because it is hardly

possible to find a solution alone (as there is almost no actual research on the internet) she asked for help from the other coaches to collect analyses, results or general information and bring that together.

Thierry Gueorgiou was the last lecturer from the Finnish Team. His philosophies are

- trying to integrate the physical training into a technical session as much as possible
- the more the coach invests, the commitment from the athlete gets often higher
- make the best of what you have and try to make the best on the terrain you have
- make the best out of small areas

He ends the Finish presentation with a short videoclip about a special training, he once did with the Swedish Team.