

Dear BAOC,

Attached is my write up for the Summer Orienteering Training Trip.

Europe 2015 Orienteering Trip

The first week we spent training in Switzerland. The orienteering there was amazing! The sprint maps were very different from what I am used to. It was difficult choosing the fastest route because there were a lot of small side roads that were hard to see on the map. I started the first training slowly and throughout the week really improved. I think the sprint training there will help me pay attention to smaller details on the sprint maps back here in America. The forest training in Switzerland was actually somewhat like orienteering in Tahoe. The forest looked really similar, however in Switzerland there were a lot of sticks on the ground which made it difficult to run. For one of our training days we took a ski lift up to the top of a mountain in the Alps, which had a beautiful view, then orienteered down to a lodge. That was really different because there was basically no climb at all. The running here was also not that easy because it was very rugged. When we weren't orienteering we had fun swimming in a freezing cold river, playing volleyball in the dark and competing with each other in card games.

The second week we spent in Sweden competing at O-Ringen. Since I was sick the day before the first race I didn't look at any sample maps, so I was very surprised when I turned over the map and saw marshes everywhere. I decided I was going to go very slowly to get used to the map, but still ended up making a big mistake on the long leg of the race. Then I tried to be very careful for the rest of the run and pay attention to detail. It was very muddy and really hard to run in the marshes. Day two didn't start off that great considering I woke up late and missed my start time (they start your time even if you aren't there). I arrived 8 minutes late so my split to #1 was 8 minutes longer than it really was. I learned to set two alarms! Besides from that, the course went really well. I made better route choices than Day 1 and was ready for the marshes. The next day was a rest day so we went and watched a sprint race that Ethan Childs and Tori Borish were competing in. It was really cool seeing the best orienteers in the world run to the finish. They were so fast! The next day was the third race. This was probably my best day. I was getting more and more use to the swamps each day which made my running a lot faster. The fourth day I did really well all the way until the second to last control. I wasn't paying close enough attention and punched a control that had a similar number to the one I was looking for. So that pretty much messed up my race for the day. However, I definitely learned to be more careful and to not get distracted at the end of a race. On the fifth and final race day I was pretty tired from the whole week of racing and didn't run as fast as I usually do, but except for one control, most of my race was pretty smooth. I found out after my race that I was running into the finish the same time as Simon Niggli and was on Swedish TV!

It was such an amazing week of racing. I could see a huge improvement in my orienteering skills from the first day to the last day. I got much better at reading the maps and the terrain. It was so much fun spending time with the awesome people on the team and meeting people from all over the world. This whole experience has been one of the best and I am grateful I was able to do this. I learned so much from these two weeks and I know that it has helped me become a better orienteer. Thank you again for giving me this amazing opportunity.

-Katie Petersen