

Deeside 2018 – Lucy Gibson

To Cumbria Schools Orienteering Association (CSOA):

This summer I was selected to go to Deeside, which I was very surprised by. Thank you for your generous grant and without it I don't think I would have been able to go. Deeside helped me to develop my orienteering skills and to learn new ones and I also had a laugh along the way.

At first I was very nervous about going because I didn't know many people who were going and unlike many of the others I hadn't been on a tour before. When we first arrived we did an obstacle course which was a great icebreaker after that we were introduced to our coaches and the other people in our teams. Everyone was lovely and I settled in very well.

In the evening we had a brief of what the week would be like, we were told that we would be focusing on PDP (plan, picture, direction). I found the first day quite challenging as the area wasn't very nice and was covered in dense forest with small open areas filled with gorse bushes (I still don't think my legs have recovered yet). I think that my favorite day was Monday because the training was held in sand dunes, that day we focused on picturing which was very helpful as the area was very easy to picture due to all the intricate contours. As well as training there was also many tour champs, there was: Sprint champs, night-o champs and a regular tour champs. All through the tour I thought I was the worse there but I realised that the tour wasn't there to point out who was good and who wasn't, tours are there to help people with there skills and to help athletes progress to make them better.

Deeside did help me with my orienteering skills but I think the best thing I learnt from Deeside was to be more confident in myself and to trust my skills. All through the week there was a positive attitude throughout, and I think the coaches expressed this the most. The coaching team was excellent and very supportive, you could go to them with any problem but also they were mainly up for a good laugh. Deeside helped me make new friends and meet new people. I think the week at Deeside was the best week of my life.

Once again I am very grateful for your support and this tour taught me many things that will help me with my orienteering in the future.

Thank you, Lucy Gibson