



My name is Ellie Simmonds and this year I was lucky enough to get the opportunity to be selected for Lagganlia orienteering training camp. I went into the week quite unprepared as I had just come back from a trip to Germany. None of my close friends were going and I felt a bit anxious. When the first day of training started I felt like the weak link. I thought that everyone else was better than me and I wasn't good enough to be there. I felt really homesick. It didn't take me long to realise that I have my strengths and weaknesses and everyone has their own too.

As the week went on I made new friends, strengthened others, and it made the whole experience so much better. The week had a similar structure of warming up, briefing, morning activities in coaching groups, break, afternoon race, coaching group debrief. Every night you would talk to your coaches about the day before and anything you wanted to work on the next day. So the next morning after the brief you would talk to your coaches again to see what techniques we would work on in the next exercises. Then in the afternoon we would do a score or peg race, just something fun but competitive to use the skills we had just learnt and put them into a race environment. It was great to be in small groups of 4 with a coach and a junior coach for each group.



I learnt so much from the week about general orienteering, distraction methods, pre-race preparation etc. I thought that the evening talks were very helpful especially the talk from the junior coaches who competed at Junior World Orienteering Champions about how they got selected, their preparation and how to cope with the pressure. They spoke about motivation, how they weren't the best at our age but to give our orienteering time and hard work and we will improve.



I came away from the week having learnt a lot. It was an amazing week with amazing friends. It gave me the motivation I needed to get fitter. To really focus on improving and work on my weaknesses to achieve the results I am working towards.

I would like to give a massive thank you to everyone who has helped with the funding to get there, the organisers, the coaches at Lagganlia, Pip and Lesley for the catering and all the other children who made the week so enjoyable.