

Talent Camp 2016 – Daniel Spencer

This year I was lucky enough to be invited to British Orienteering's talent camp which was held at Swansea university in conjunction with the Welsh 5 days. The first day of the camp was based on physical fitness. In the morning we all completed a 3 kilometre time trial on the track, this was a bit daunting having never run a 3k on the track before. Then in the afternoon we learned new drills to use in a warm-up before completing a model track training session with target times based on our 3k times.

The second day was a technical training day based at Kenfig dunes, the same area that the Welsh 5 days was using. This was based on direction one key aspect of British Orienteering's coaching idea of "Plan Direction Picture". The first exercise involved using a blank map and compass to find controls around the dunes. The next one was a pairs exercise where one of you took a bearing then gave the compass to the other person with a description of the control feature and the rough distance, it was funny how accurate it was possible to be.

The third day was split between more general training at Kenfig, then a sprint at Swansea Uni. This was weird as it was last used in 2014 for the JK so I recognised the area or parts of it like the park. The sprint was ok but sprint isn't really my favourite discipline and somebody shut a gate which really threw me, however it was still an enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

The final day was a race at the Welsh 5. I knew that the squad would be watching the result closely and we were being GPS tracked. This meant that I focus on having a clean rather than fast one. I carried this plan into the race and was pleased with the process, if maybe a little disappointed with the result but on reflection this is down to being tired due to a large training volume over the week and missing one obvious route choice which lost me a minute.

Overall the camp was extremely useful and I would like to thank the coaches who ran it and everyone else who supported me to allow me to participate in this wonderful experience.