

O-Teaching Aids and Texts - a review

□ GREG SACK, OCIN

We all want to inspire the desire in our young people. There is a lot more to learning than memorization of facts and figures. As educators, it is important to educate the whole person. And for us, the desire to inspire is to help them develop intellectually and physically.

As orienteers, we are aware that our sport is uniquely designed to do just that. The big question is how to present it in such a way as to inspire.

This column has previously dealt with developing interdisciplinary ties (see Teaming, Sept. '01.) This article is a review of some of the best teaching books and aids. The list of the few items noted in this article is by no means exhaustive. In fact, it would be helpful if you, the reader, would share your insights on your favorite methods, texts and aids.

It is without any prejudice that I would still recommend **Orienteering and Map Games for Teachers** by Mary E. Garrett, published by USOF in 1996, as the first book for any teacher. It is easy to use with clear instructions. Even if you have taught orienteering for a while, it is good to review the basics. The biggest thing missing from this book is any mention of Trail-Orienteering.

Trail Orienteering: an Outdoor Activity for Young People With Disabilities by Anne Braggins, published by Harveys in 1993, also makes a good introduction to teaching orienteering. A bit more complex, it also covers the skills necessary to start off all future orienteers right. Games, lessons, course designs and map production are presented with a true "all persons" outlook.

The book doesn't get Trail-O specific until about halfway through it. The considerations in the last half of the book can school us in becoming better course setters in any situation. What it lacks in curricular considerations, it makes up for in human considerations.

Also published by Harveys in 1998 is **Teaching Orienteering—Second Edition**, by Carol McNeill, Jean Cory-Wright

and Tom Renfrew. This is also strictly an orienteering book with no attention given to interdisciplinary considerations. It is, however, the most complete text I am aware of for teaching and training in our sport.

This book utilizes some of the same games, lesson plans and even some of the illustrations from Trail Orienteering. Unfortunately, it pares down the "Orienteering for People With Disabilities" chapter a little too much. Still, it belongs in any teacher's library if they are experienced orienteers.

If you are teaching orienteering as part of a multi-day event,



say a field trip or at camp, **Creative Outdoor Work With Young People** by Alan Smith, published by Russell House in 1994, is worth having for the planning and safety tips alone. It is instructive to see how the author links outdoor education to Britain's National P.E. and Geography curricula.

The book integrates orienteering as part of a complete outdoor program. This is also one of those books that you could leave out on the classroom reading shelf.

Written as group work, the **M.A.P.S.: Map Activities for Primary Students**

books, written by Robby and Bonnie Risby and published by Dandy Lion Publications in 1994, may actually make nice shelf or enrichment work. These are excellent introductory map reading lessons for early primary students.

Imaginative stories and reproducible maps and worksheets introduce cardinal and intermediate directions in Book 1. Book 2 provides a good link to math and measuring while introducing map symbols and legends.

To introduce orienteering as a sport to a class, it might be good to consider using a video. Reading Rainbow's **The Secret Shortcut**, aired last year on PBS, is nicely geared to elementary school aged kids. It stars LeVar Burton and Chris Cassone. Contact PBS directly on the web at <http://gpn.unl.edu/> and click on the Reading Rainbow logo to order "The Secret Shortcut".

A little dated and also starring Chris Cassone is **Orienteering—All Welcome** created in 1985. This video is better suited for the post-elementary school aged audience.

If you are looking for great shelf/enrichment work for Jr. & Sr. high school geography, try the **Orienteering** computer game put out by Suunto Oy in 1997. It makes for great bad weather training of the nonphysical aspects of the sport. It is definitely self-motivating work.

Whether you are coaching a team or just yourself at an intermediate to advanced level, my favorite is still **Orienteering Skills and Strategies** by Ron Lowry and Ken Sidney, published by Orienteering Ontario and updated in 2000. It is straightforward and easy to read with clear illustrations and maps, good practice exercises, tips and summaries. This book has been selected as the official JROTC training textbook. My copy is quite dog-eared from personal use.

An expanded review is included in the O-In-Schools Newsletter. This newsletter is offered free of charge through the good graces of USOF to any Educator interested in bringing Orienteering into a school's curriculum. Share your experiences and insights, ask questions, find new resources and ideas. Just send your affiliation to education and request to be on the list to: Greg Sack 5523 Whetsel Av, Cinti., Oh 45227 — or e-mail to — raphic@fuse.net for quicker results.



The **High Road to Adventure** Series by Karen Robinson, published by A & E Orienteering in 1998, makes for a really nice way to have the students share their historical counterparts' experiences. If you are studying Peary, Buffalo Soldiers, the Oregon Trail, or themes close enough to utilize them, you can take the class outside and into history while simultaneously teaching pacing and direction. These are kits that require the teacher to supply the compasses and other, more easily attainable, materials.

Not everything was as good as it looks at first glance. Sunnto Oy put out **Map and Compass: Discover the Excitement** by Erkka Laininen in 1996. This one is meant for the teacher's eyes only! It has a nice chart that deals with age appropriate topics. There are some ready made lesson plans. And it has the most extensive material covering the compass that I have seen. But students would find it boring. I did too.

If you are looking for lesson plans you might try **Lesson Plans: Games and Exercises** published by Orienteering Service of Australia. There is no curricular cross-over, but it might be good for the coaches' shelf.

Last, but not least, there is the **Orienteering Coach Certification Manual Level 1**. I am going to save the review on this one for a later article. Suffice it to say that any serious trainer or coach in the sport should have this. It is free for team coaches and only \$12 (plus \$2.50 shipping and handling) directly from USOF. You can call (404)363-2110 or e-mail rshannonhouse@mindspring.com for more information.

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