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## Whitehorse Daily Star (/)

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### Langbakk maps out new role with Orienteering Canada

Local orienteer Brent Langbakk is Orienteering Canada's new high performance director.

By **Marcel Vander Wier** on **September 25, 2014**

Local orienteer Brent Langbakk is Orienteering Canada's new high performance director.

The 41-year-old has a history with Orienteering Canada, representing the country five times at the World Orienteering Championships and serving as the coach of the junior national team from 2009 to 2012.

Langbakk was also the first athletes' representative on the national group's board of directors and AthletesCAN – the association of national team athletes.

He also helped establish the high performance program.

"I was kind of on their radar from that," Langbakk told the Star.

"Orienteering in Canada is a small sport. They're moving forward so this is a big step to have a paid person doing this job. They immediately thought of me ... that I would be a good fit."

The role will partner nicely with his current job as a part-time English instructor at Yukon College.

"It's a nice fit that allows me to be flexible with my son and my job at the college," he said.

Four Yukoners are currently on the high performance roster: Pia Blake, Trevor Bray, Caelan McLean and Kerstin Burnett.

The high performance program is designed specifically to support athletes who wish to achieve excellence in international orienteering.

The program offers coaching support, training opportunities, and other benefits that assist athletes in achieving their goals.

"What I'm doing is providing support for the coaches," Langbakk explained. "What I'll be doing initially is reviewing the overall structure of the high performance program and revising that a little bit."

While he expects the job will involve some travelling, Langbakk said the majority of his work can be completed out of Whitehorse.

“It’s really nice,” he said. “I’m really excited because this will allow me to work in an area that I am really passionate about.

“This is a big step for Orienteering Canada to be moving forward and I think that the work that I do in the next little bit will help us progress, so that’s always exciting.”

The position marks a new beginning for the national orienteering body.

“Having a part-time high performance director is an important step forward for Orienteering Canada,” communications and development director Charlotte MacNaughton explained in a statement.

“Brent will play a key role in developing a greater coaching culture in Canadian orienteering.”

MacNaughton said Langbakk will also provide the country’s top orienteers a stronger training support network that fits the organization’s long-term athlete development model.

“Brent is a great fit with this position because of his extensive coaching background and his in-depth understanding of athlete development in orienteering,” she said.

Langbakk started relatively late on the orienteering scene at the age of 29.

He was a member of the national team from 2002 to 2008.

Alongside orienteering, Langbakk also enjoys cross-country skiing, mountain biking and badminton.

In 2010, he was named Coach of the Year by Sport Yukon after he led the Yukon Orienteering Association to a record 27 medals at the national championships.

Last month, he was part of the Yukon team that won 20 medals at nationals followed by nine more at westerns. Both competitions were held in B.C.

Living in the territory is conducive to the sport of orienteering, Langbakk said.

“It’s just where we are,” he said. “We’ve got amazing, world class terrain right out our back door. We’re so lucky.

“It’s just as easy to go to orienteering practice as it is to go to soccer practice. That’s not the case (everywhere). We also have a long legacy of really good maps and experts in the community, and that just gets passed on. We’re lucky that way too.”

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The final orienteering event of the Yukon season will take place tomorrow evening at Wolf Creek Campground at 8.

The night meet will see athletes tackle a new sprint map.

