

Japan's second team won a close victory over Hong Kong in the sprint relay



Text and photo: Mårten Lång

The first ever Asian Junior and Youth Orienteering Championships took place in Hong Kong December 25th–27th 2015. The events included sprint relay, middle distance and sprint.

The races were preceded by a training camp where athletes from seven Asian IOF member federations, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, North Korea and Chinese Taipei, took part, alongside participants from Macao and Estonia.

"We hope and believe that these Championships will come to mean a great deal for Asian orienteering. From now on we plan to arrange these Regional Championships annually, with the senior championships and the junior and youth championships occurring alternate years. The championships for our young orienteers are particularly important for the development of orienteering in Asia," says Dominic Yue, chairman of the Orienteer-

ing Association of Hong Kong and member of the IOF Council.

One hundred and fifty athletes took part in the championships, which involved some very exciting races. The most even race was the very first, where Japan's second team won a close victory over Hong Kong in the sprint relay.

"It was a very technical course, which suits us Japanese very well. Our strength lies in our orienteering technique. To become the first ever Asian Champions means a lot to us. 2016 marks the 50th anniversary of orienteering in Japan, so this is an excellent way to start off the celebrations", says Kousuke Tachibana, who made up the winning team together with Naomi Suzuki, Kenya Takano and Wakana Miyamoto.

In the younger class, the winning team came from Hong Kong, and was notably made up of two pairs of siblings; Wong Yi Shan, Chu Yay Man, Wong Cheuk Wang and Chu Ying Yau.

