



Nelson Orienteering Club

NOC Newsletter

31 January 2026

Issue 1



Photo by Steve Malthus

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Nelson Orienteering Club has had a successful year thanks to the hard work of its committee members across finance, administration, event management, training, and communications. At the December AGM, all committee members were re-elected, with the exception of Fleur Murray who stepped down after many years of service to the NOC committee.

In 2025, the club has performed strongly at regional, national, and international championships. Notable achievements include Zefa Fa’avae's top-10 relay finish and 22nd place in the Long event at the World Championships in Finland.

Other highlights include appearances at the World Cup in Sweden, the World Games in China, and various youth competitions across Europe. Club members also excelled at the Oceania and Australian Championships, securing multiple top finishes.

The Malthus family made a generous donation of an AED and new trophies for younger members.

Looking ahead, the club will co-host the Southern Champs (22-24 October) and host high-performance and junior camps at the end 2026.

Looking forward to another year of great orienteering,

Richard Dunn

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- Want to know what an attack point is in an orienteering environment? Likewise for your exit strategy or the meaning of the words ‘catching feature’ - see page 4
- What is O-Lynx, and why would it be a good idea if many NOC members know how to use it - see page 6
- Did you miss the ‘Golden Bay Revisited’ weekend - see pages 7-9 for a photo impressions

PELORUS CHALLENGE

Throughout the year, Nelson Orienteering Club hosts a number of different events.

The OY-series (OY = Orienteer of the Year) is a competition contested by members from both the Marlborough and the Nelson Orienteering clubs, and consists of 5-6 events each year.

To qualify you must run in the same grade throughout the year.

Each grade winner at each event gets 25 points, other competitors points are based on their time proportional to the winners, down to a minimum of 5 points.

There are a number of events on offer this year. Each event will accumulate points towards your final total. Your worst event score will be deleted.



The score at the end of the year determines the allocation of trophies during prize-giving at the end of each year.

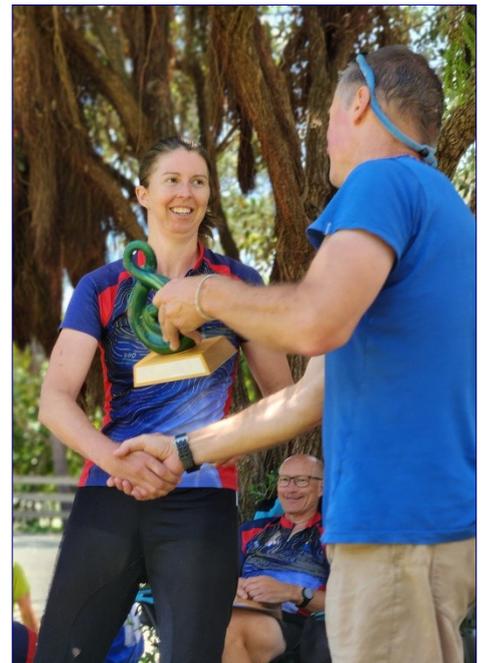
2025 PRIZE-GIVING

Directly following the AGM, newly re-elected president Richard Dunn handed out the trophies to the winners of the inter-club Pelorus Challenge. If you won a trophy but were unable to come to this event, please contact [Richard](#) to arrange collection.

AWARDS

The following awards were handed out, based on the outcome of the Pelorus Challenge:

M10 (White) - Huxley Ross (MOC), W10 - Willa Ross
M12 (Yellow) - Nelson Molloy, W12 - Laila Buunk
M14 (Orange) - Thomas Genet, W14 - Mia Ashmore
M16 / W16 (Red) - not allocated
M20 (Medium Red) - Micah Dunn, W20 - Lani Murray
OM Social (Orange) - Craig Hellyer, OW - Wendy Ford
M60 (Short Red) - Mondo Kopua (MOC)/Jan Jager
W60 (Short Red) - Val Rogers
M40 (Medium Red) - Neil Murray, W40 - Rebecca Smith
OM (Long Red) - Patrick Higgins, OW - Megan Carter



From left to right: Patrick Higgins receiving his Open Men category trophy, and Megan Carter receiving her Open Women category trophy, out of the hands of Richard Dunn, NOC president



WAVENEY BOLWELL TROPHY

The Waveney Bolwell Trophy for an outstanding family contribution to the Nelson Orienteering Club was awarded to the Ashmore-family, for their continued and very effective efforts in providing orienteering training for NOC members in 2025.

In the absence of Rebecca, Darren and Mia accepted the trophy.



NOC MEMBERSHIP 2026

We invite new members to join Nelson Orienteering Club and for existing members to renew their membership. Membership runs from 1 January to 31 December annually. Membership invoices for 2026 will be mailed out in the coming two weeks.

COSTS

Membership remains the same as last year:

- \$90 for a family
- \$45 for a senior and
- \$30 for a junior.

When renewing your membership, please remember to include the "MR" number when paying online as it makes it a lot easier to reconcile. If you do not receive an invoice, check your spam folder. Otherwise it is possible you were not a financial member last year.

If you have been a member in the past few years (of NOC or another orienteering club in NZ) email Richard Dunn at president.noc@gmail.com to reinstate your membership and receive an invoice.

INTENDING TO JOIN?

If you are new to orienteering and want to join Nelson Orienteering Club, please go online, and follow the online registration process steps at <https://www.revolutionise.com.au/nelsonoc/registration/>.

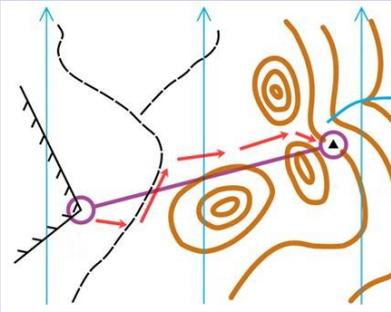
2026 NOC EVENTS' CALENDAR, TERM 1

The most up-to-date [calendar](#) can be found on the NOC website, including links to events organised by other clubs.

Date	Event	Location	Start Window	Course Closure
Wed, 11/2	Training: o-timing	Waimea College, Richmond	6:30pm	8:30pm
Wed, 18/2	Summer Sprint Series - 1	Waimea Schools, Richmond	5:45pm	7:30pm
Wed, 25/2	Summer Sprint Series - 2	Nelson College, Nelson	5:45pm	7:30pm
Sun, 8/3	Summer Sprint Series - 3/4	Saltwater Baths/Sanctuary Ponds, Motueka	10:00am	1:30pm
Wed, 11/3	Summer Sprint Series - 5	Nayland Schools, Stoke	5:45pm	7:30pm
Wed, 18/3	Summer Sprint Series - 6	Motueka Schools, Motueka	5:45pm	7:30pm
Sat-Sun, 21/22/3	Canterbury Champs	Mt Cass, north of Christchurch	(PAPO event)	
Sun, 22/3	OY-1	Teetotal - East, St. Arnaud	10:00am	2:30pm
Fri-Mon, 3-6/4	Orienteering Nationals	Wairarapa	(WOC event)	
Sat-Mon, 25-27/4	Tūāraki-Northern Regional Championships	Woodhill, Auckland	(NWOC event)	

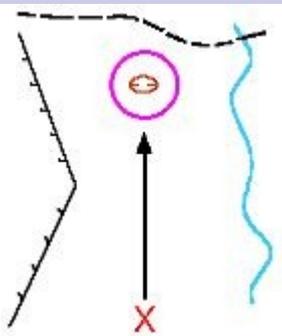
ORIENTEERING TERMS

Attack Points: Identify a clear, precise feature near the control (for example a building corner, a hill, an intersection) to aim for.



In the example above: leave the control going to the road, follow the road north, go east past the base of the first hill, then in between the two hills, before turning SE towards the next control.

Catching Features: Identify an obvious feature just beyond the control to warn you if you have gone too far. In the example below, there is a catching feature (fence) on the west, and the road towards the north.



Exit Strategy: Before reaching your next control, already start planning your exit direction from that control, to avoid errors.

TRAINING: ORIENTEERING BASICS

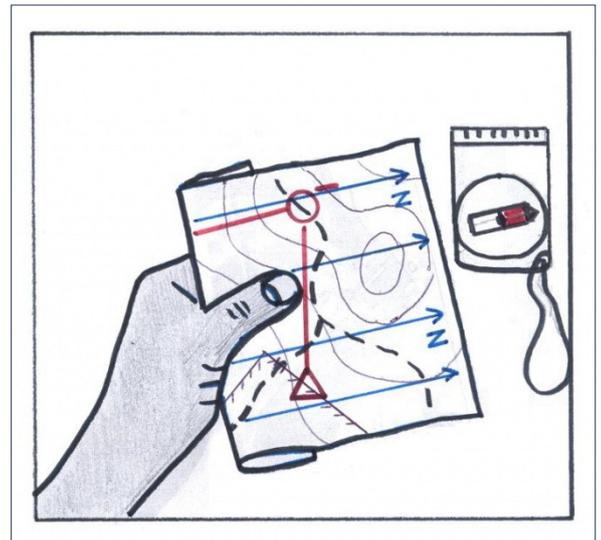
It doesn't matter if you run a 'Long' event or a sprint, the orienteering basics should always be the same, and become automatic habits:

Orientating the map.

This means you hold the map so that it matches what is in front of you. Good orienteers have their map correctly orientated 100% of the time while competing. Making this your main habit is essential because you *will* make mistakes, especially when you are tired. There are two ways to achieve this: either orient the map with north facing north or match it to the features around you. In a Sprint event, you will probably not be carrying a compass, so it is usually easier to pick a couple of distinctive buildings or flowerbeds, and use them to orientate yourself, right from the Start.

Thumbing the map.

Fold and keep re-folding your map as you run so that only useful parts are visible and you are not distracted by the rest. Hold your map in your hand with your thumbnail on the last spot where you knew where you were, and pointing the way you want to go.



Example of the combination of "orientating the map", "thumbing/folding the map", and "planning ahead".

As you reach your next known point, simply move your

thumb up a bit. This technique is as simple as it sounds and will stop you losing your place on the map, which is very easy to do on a detailed map when you are moving along. If you thumb the map, your eyes move straight to the relevant section of the map, saving you from taking too long staring at the map and resulting in tripping over an obstacle or running into a tree.

Planning ahead.

It is better to be moving confidently to a recognisable feature than reacting to surprises. The better navigators will pick an obvious feature on the map, identify it on the ground and then run to it. Less-experienced people (or experienced orienteers who become flustered) will be identifying features as they pass them, which leaves them one step behind and unable to run with any speed. You will find that spending a few seconds making sure you are confident where you are headed will save you time in the end, hare-and-tortoise style. You will thank us the first time you find yourself passed repeatedly in the same race by a faster runner who is having to backtrack and correct at every control!

SPECIFICS OF SPRINT ORIENTEERING

The first Term of 2026 traditionally brings the Summer Sprint Series (SSS). What makes sprint orienteering different from the more traditional Middle and Long distances?

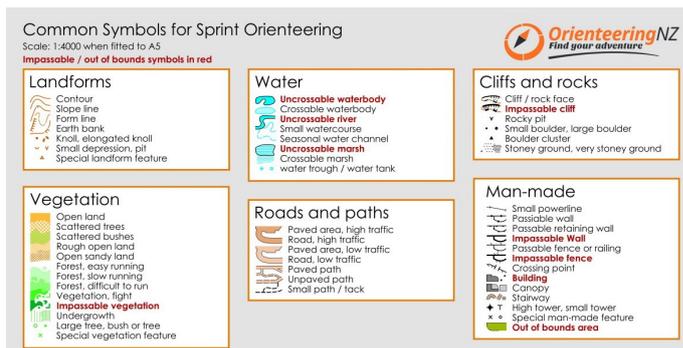
SPRINT: LEARNING THE BASICS

Sprint orienteering is shorter and faster than forest/farm orienteering, with courses from 1.5km to 5km and typically completion times between 10 and 30 minutes. Sprint orienteering is a great way to enter the sport and learn the basics, because the maps are easier to understand and it is very hard to get lost in small urban environments, with many other participants in the vicinity. Since courses are short, concentration, urgency and running speed help to produce a good result.

HIGH-SPEED DECISION-MAKING

Sprint orienteering requires high-speed decision-making, with constant map contact in terrain that offers plenty of opportunities to move fast on pavement and grass. There are plenty of obstacles to navigate, including buildings, fences, and gardens. The best route between checkpoints might be very wide, while some areas may be more maze-like.

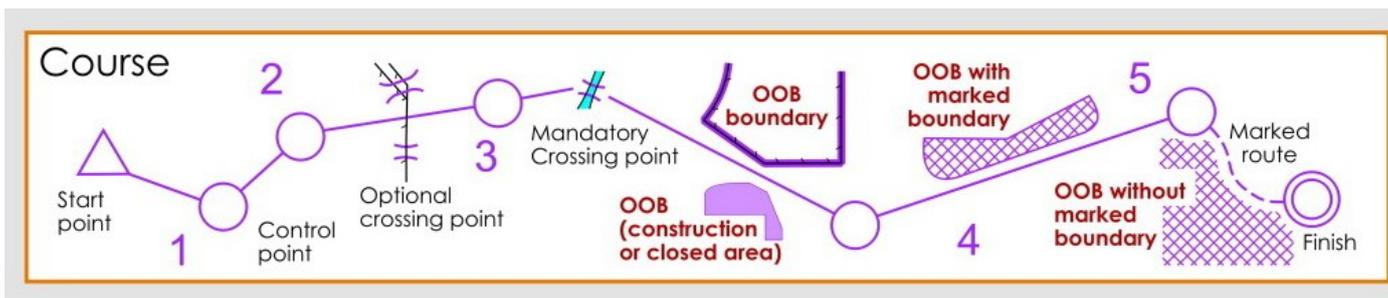
Sprint orienteering maps use slightly different symbols and colours from those on forest/farm orienteering maps.



ONZ common symbols overview for Sprint Orienteering, which can be downloaded from the [ONZ website](#)

OOB, “Out of Bounds”:

- outside the part of a sports field or court in which play is conducted (general);
 - outside the limits of where one is permitted to be (orienteering specific).
- Synonyms are ‘banned’, ‘not allowed’, ‘forbidden’ or ‘not permitted’.



“OUT OF BOUNDS”

Some symbols and colours on sprint orienteering maps indicate “out of bounds” (OOB). Even if you *could* physically cross these obstacles, *doing so* should result in disqualification.

On a sprint map, objects commonly mapped as “out of bounds” are marked in purple for safety (e.g. busy roads, active construction) *or* out of respect for the property (gardens, private property, culturally sensitive sites).

- Passable wall
- Passable retaining wall
- Impassable Wall**
- Passable fence or railing
- Impassable fence**
- Crossing point
- Out of bounds area**

A common colour to show an area on the map is “out of bounds” is the colour olive-green. On a sprint map used during the Summer Sprint Series, this is used for formal gardens, vegetable gardens and surrounding properties.

To the left some more examples of passable and impassable features.

TIMING SOFTWARE

During an orienteering event, the total time a participant takes to complete the course is recorded, and the fastest participant is declared the winner.

In earlier times, this process was manual: your start time was recorded on paper, each control was punched on the same sheet, and upon reaching the Finish, an official noted the finish time, verified that all controls were visited in the correct order, calculated the course time, and compiled a list of participants by course, ordered by overall time. As you can imagine, this process was very time-consuming, and results could take days to be published.

Since the introduction of SportIdent (SI) cards, a small device worn on a participant's finger, time recording has been increasingly automated, initially using European-based OE software.

O-LYNX

Phillip Herries (Hawkes Bay Orienteering Club) had a background in software and electronics, which proved helpful when his club was looking to create a more atmospheric experience for the 2011 Nationals. For this A-level event, Phillip designed the first orienteering radio controls and start clocks, which have since become a feature of major orienteering events in New Zealand.

To make good use of the live punch data the radios provided, he also developed software (O-Lynx), not only providing the event commentators with real-time information but also laying the groundwork for spectator TV results at events. Phillip continued developing O-Lynx's capabilities, and thanks to its user-friendly features and appreciative club timing operators, the software enjoys widespread adoption amongst clubs in New Zealand.

In 2022, he received the ONZ Innovation award for the development of the O-Lynx software and hardware.

NOC TIMING VOLUNTEERS

Nelson Orienteering Club uses the user-friendly O-Lynx software for all its events, with the exception of urban NOCturnals. Within the club, there are a limited number of volunteers trained to use the software, and 2026 is the year when we hope this volunteer bottleneck is resolved.

O-TIMING TRAINING - 11/2/26

To this end, NOC organises a two hour, hands-on O-Lynx training at Waimea College, Wednesday 11 February, from 18.30 - 20.30. If you are interested, please register (free!) via the website. If you are interested, but unable to make it that night, please also register, so a second night and/or one-on-one training can be organised.

Knowing that 'theory' only is not an effective way of learning, we'd like to encourage participants to put all this new knowledge into practice, starting with the upcoming Summer Sprint Series on Wednesdays (and 'Motueka Sunday') – and there will always be somebody experienced at hand to help in the unlikely event you get stuck.

O TIMING-EQUIPMENT

From a participant's point of view, there are a few pieces of equipment needed to time a race.



SI CARD

An SI card is a small device on your finger, which communicates with SI boxes via a 'punch'.

SI BOXES

An SI Box communicates with an SI card, and gets assigned one specific function, like a checkpoint on the course in the photo below, a Start- or Finish box, or as a Clear or Check box.



DOWNLOAD BOX

After an event, the SI-CARD is 'read' by a download box connected to a computer system. The collected punches are copied into timing software, checking if all controls have been visited in the right order, the resulting time, and the overall ranking.

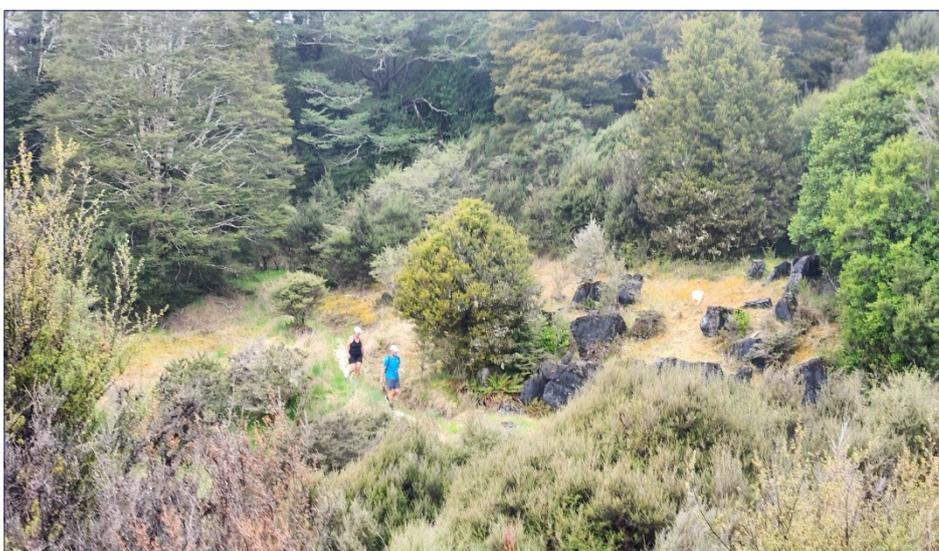


GOLDEN BAY REVISITED - IN PHOTOS



"Thank you volunteers and land owners, this was truly a very beautiful place for an orienteering course."

Christer Casselsjö



OY 5/6, 2025

OY5, CANAAN DOWNS

The 'Golden Bay Revisited' weekend got off to a great start at Canaan Downs on Saturday. Planner Richard Greatrex and controller Katie Malthus had created courses fully embracing this unique terrain. Special feature was a roped-course on White and Yellow, so even our very young or newcomers to orienteering could experience this spectacular terrain.

OY6, KAIHOKA LAKES

After a fantastic start at Canaan Downs, the 'Golden Bay Revisited' weekend concluded on a high note in the stunning karst and dune landscape of Kaihoka Lakes at Golden Bay's West Coast. Planner and controller Fleur and Neil Murray, assisted by their daughters Anya and Lani, also designed courses that fully embraced the unique terrain.

A special feature today was the river crossing, or should we say river swimming?

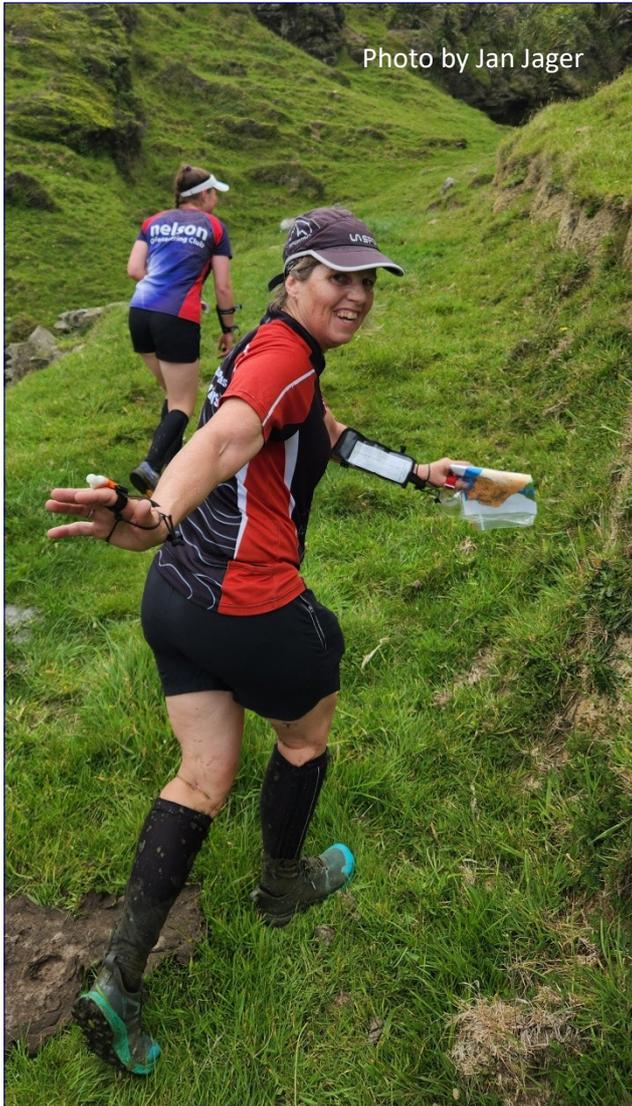


Riley Croxford demonstrating the shortest route between two points.
Photo by Neil Murray

GOLDEN BAY REVISITED (2)



GOLDEN BAY REVISITED (3)



"Thank you to all who were involved in the organising and volunteering. It was a magnificent course. I finished suitably tired, and buzzing from the scenery and fun." - Jessica Carroll



Next time to access this amazing terrain? Please keep the weekend of 28/29 November '26 available!



VAMPIRE-O, 30/10/25

Thank you to everybody who made Vampire-O at Rabbit Island such a fun event, with lots of excitement, especially around the Finish area! Massive thanks to Steve and Katie Malthus for organising it all, creating the rogaine, doing all of the set-up, and also collecting all the gear the next day. We had a blast!



Nelson Orienteering Club, noc.org.nz
Secretary Katie Malthus
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This NOC newsletter appears bi-monthly,
on / near the last day of the month,
starting in January

If you'd like to contribute, have photos to share,
or would like to respond,
please get in contact with the editor via
noc.promotion@gmail.com
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