

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By the time you read this, the year is a quarter gone, the sun is setting earlier, and there are some autumn colours appearing. The temperatures are not really reflective of the season yet.

Ian Holden

We received the sad news that our beloved, gentle club member and 'human gazelle' Ian Holden has died, on the brink of his 93th birthday. Our sincere condolences go out to his three daughters, his grand children and his great-grandchildren. He truly created orienteering history

Summer Sprint Series

Thankyou to all the Planners and Controllers for putting on the events that made up the Summer Sprint Series: without your efforts the club , and these fun, high-speed events would not exist. In addition, recently Steve and Katie Malthus put on a very good first OY event, up at St Arnaud, Nelson Lakes - more about this event in the next newsletter.

Long term

The Committee are working in the background on a few long term projects. In collaboration with Marlborough Orienteering Club, we are hosting the South Island Championships at Labour Weekend this year, 24 - 26 October. Looking to 2028, NOC is hosting the King's Birthday competition. An event early in 2029 hosting an Oceania Sprint Series is also in the early stages.

NZOC2026 - Wairarapa

April is a bit quiet on the local calendar but then events pick up again in May and June. All the best to NOC members travelling to the Wairarapa over Easter for the Club Nationals.

Richard Dunn,
 President Nelson Orienteering Club



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- Do you want to know how to renew your NOC membership or how to become a member? - see page 2
- What is an 'exit strategy' in the context of orienteering? When is a good time to start practising this, and how does 'speed' influence this practice? More information on page 6
- For the chocoholics out there - win a family size bar by thinking 'outside the map' - see page 7 for more information



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 have been be mailed out: if you didn't receive yours, please contact NOC on the email address below.

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) please 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 2

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
Fri-Mon, 3-6/4	Orienteering Nationals	Wairarapa	WOC event	
Sat-Mon, 25-27/4	Tūāraiki-Northern Regional Championships	Woodhill, Auckland	NWOC event	
Sun, 3/4	Club Event	Whakapuaka	10 AM	1.30PM
Sun, 10 May	OY2	Bastion, Blenheim	MOC event	
Sat-Sun, 16-17/5	NZ MTBO Championship	Rotorua		
Sat 23/5	Club Event (Orange / Red)	Teetotal - East, St. Arnaud	10 AM	3 PM
Sun 24/5	OY3	Big bush, St. Arnaud	10 AM	3 PM
Sat-Mon, 30/5-1/6	Triple crown King's Birthday	Woodhill / Avondale College (Auckland)	AOC event	
Sun, 7/6	Autumn Muster Rogaine	tbc	MOC event	
Wed, 10/6	NOcturnal 1	Marsden Valley	6 PM	8 PM

EVENT TIMING

During an orienteering event, the total time a participant takes to complete the course is recorded, and the fastest participant is declared the winner. Since the introduction of SportIdent (SI) cards, a small device worn on a participant's finger, time recording has been increasingly automated.

O-Lynx timing software

Nelson Orienteering Club uses the user-friendly O-Lynx software for all its events, with the exception of urban NOCturnals. Recently, eleven (!) NOC volunteers participated in a one-night training to use the software, followed up by hands-on experience during the recent Summer Sprint Series and the first OY for the season. These 22 extra hands have made a huge difference for the overall running of an orienteering event, while giving all volunteers more than enough time to compete themselves – thank you!



First Olynx training session for 2026

If you'd like to learn to use the timing software, please register your name with [Katie Malthus](#), our NOC secretary, for a training session later in 2026.



Using the SI hardware and Olynx software during the Summer Sprint Series

Orienteering Competition - age categories

Classes juniors

In formal orienteering competitions, competitors are grouped into classes based on their gender and age. Participants aged 20 or under are allowed to compete in each category until the end of the calendar year in which they reach that age. They may compete in older classes up to and including 21.

Classes seniors

Competitors aged 21 or older are eligible to compete in each class starting from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the specified age. They are also entitled to compete in younger classes down to and including 21. Classes at NZOC include: 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 20, 21 (Open Class), 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90.

Other A-level events

For other A-level events, 10-year age groups may be used for adult classes (21+). These classes can be further divided by skill:

- E (Elite, for 20 and 21 age groups only)
- A classes
- B classes

This indicate varying levels of difficulty.

M90 Category

The 2023 South Island Champs was the first A-level event Ian planned to enter when he qualified as M90, but this category was unavailable as an option during registration. Ian ensured the organisers were informed of this minor oversight, and he registered within the day once this administrative error was corrected.

For the Nationals, a new M90A trophy was created for him that same year, donated by Hawke's Bay Orienteering Club.



Ian won this cup three times, and the cup is from now on known as the 'Ian Holden Cup'.

Alister Metherell, from PAPO:
"Having known Ian from when he first joined the Dunedin Orienteering Club 43 years ago, his athletic and orienteering ability for someone of his age have always been inspirational. He will be greatly missed. May memories of Ian inspire someone else to keep competing and claim that M90A trophy!"

IN MEMORY OF IAN HOLDEN

Just shy of his 93rd birthday, the stopwatch has run out for our beloved club member, active, gentle, Ian Miles Holden, known in the orienteering world as a very accomplished runner, passionate orienteer & 'human gazelle'.

Less known, probably, was his involvement as 'Tuatara' volunteer track builder, stonemason & gardener of The Brook Waimarama Sanctuary, Mr Fix-It of the Nelson Toy Library, and an avid & generous gardener, booklover & 'code-cracker'. In his working life, Ian worked as an electrician for NCC, on hydro-dam builds and as an X-ray technician for Dunedin Hospital.

'Instantly hooked'

Ian came to orienteering later in life, aided by one of his daughters, who participated in a school-based orienteering event, and thought her dad might like this sport. Together they went to an event organised by Dunedin Orienteering Club. In his own words: "We did a White course together, followed by a Yellow course – I was instantly hooked".

Ian competed regionally, nationally and internationally from as early back as 1983 to his last event in December 2025. From 2003 to 2025, Ian won a National title at every New Zealand Orienteering Champs.



Ian Holden in the Finish chute of the 'Long' event during NZOC2024 - Rotorua

Dunedin Orienteering Club

Ian was a member of Dunedin Orienteering Club for 22 years, with ten years on the committee. He was a planner for many Long events, including the Long as organised by Dunedin as part of the National Orienteering Championships. During those 22 years, he won 14 National titles, spanning age grades from M60A to M70A: five Long Distance Champs, seven Short-O Champs and two Middle Distance Champs. His first title was in the M60A Long Distance hosted by North West Orienteering Club on the Kaipara Knolls map in Woodhill Forest. Ian won the course by 8 minutes ahead of the likes of Athol Lonsdale of Taupo, Andrew Brewis of Counties, Phil Mellsop of North West, Colin Dahm of PAPO, and Svend Pedersen of Southland.

IN MEMORY OF IAN HOLDEN (2)

Nelson Orienteering Club

After moving to Nelson in 2006, Ian got involved with the local club and planned a total of nine events. He represented Nelson Orienteering Club and won 45 National titles, spanning age grades from M70A to M90A: seventeen Long Distance Champs, thirteen Sprint Distance and fifteen Middle Distance titles.

Ian's final National title was the M90A Long Distance title in 2025, when he finished his course in 1 hour, 52 minutes and 36 seconds in the pouring rain on physically demanding terrain at Mount Cass, north of Christchurch. The photo on the right shows his finish, with Dale McDonald (NOC) and Karen Woods (AOC).

"Ian Holden is still running at M90 like the Human Gazelle he's always been. Amazing performer!"
- Gavin Scott



Orienteering friendships



He used to grumble when he was near the older end of his five-year age class about all these youngsters who were moving up to compete with him. He would travel to Nationals in later years with good friends Pat Ehrhardt from Dunedin and Ann Scott from Southland. For many years, Ian and good friend Don Fraser would be regulars at Nelson Club events, arriving together in Don's car.

"Ian was truly an inspiration to orienteers across the country. He got the biggest standing ovation at the 2024 nationals prize giving - you could feel the admiration of the whole hall for Ian, his lovely self and his orienteering achievements."
- Sarah O'Sullivan, chair ONZ

Nimble runner

Michael Croxford recalls his first interaction with Ian when they planned and controlled an OY event at the Maitai, Nelson in May 2009. For those of you who have run there during autumn, you will know that it is not

for the faint of heart, with dense vegetation and slippery slides of fallen leaves. Ian, then in his mid-70s, nimbly traversed the slopes, checking on every control site and providing a guiding hand as controller.

Ian was always interested in others in the club and was greatly loved and respected by our members, especially at Nationals, where he could be relied on to represent Nelson on the podium. He was deeply loved and will be sorely missed.

At the same time, his quiet determination to participate and compete, and his passion for the sport will be a continued inspiration for everybody who had the pleasure to compete with him.



EVALUATING RECENT SPRINT ORIENTEERING

The first Term of 2026 saw the traditional NOC summer Sprint Series (SSS), with record-breaking crowds, and really good compliance with the pre-registration regime.

The events highlighted two aspects for general improvement:

- **‘out of bounds’** areas: already discussed in the previous newsletter. Any olive-green areas on an orienteering map can not be crossed, or ‘jumped’ over: you have to go around it!
- Having an **‘exit strategy’**.

Exit strategy

Many recent SSS-participants are fit, fast runners. As soon as they spot their next control, they accelerate towards it, punch, come to a complete stop, and *then* start planning for the next leg.

A more efficient approach would be to use the time between spotting the control and reaching it to begin planning the next leg. In orienteering terms, this is known as developing an ‘exit strategy’.

Forward planning

This forward planning might simply involve already moving towards the next control, away from your current one. Once you know your exit route, you can pass through a control smoothly, minimising stops and ideally avoiding stopping altogether.

Planning how to ‘exit’ the control in advance requires confidence and training, as some legs of the race being much easier to ‘plan ahead’ for than others. Perhaps you can move smoothly through some controls, while with others you will need to slow down significantly and look more carefully – there’s no point in moving quickly through a control only to jeopardise the next route choice.

Getting into the ‘exit’ habit

One way to ‘get into the habit’ of practising the exit strategy of running through the control might be as follows: after you see the control, stop before reaching it, do your planning, get your bearing, then run into the control, check the code, punch, and



Keshia running towards the control (out of sight on her left, past the mounds), while already knowing, by reading ‘ahead’ on the map, she then needs to exit to her right:

no pausing, no stopping!

immediately head off in the direction of the next control. After some practice, you will be able to eliminate the stopping, and do this on the move; if not a fast run, then at least with a steady jog.

Etiquette

There is another reason not to stop immediately after punching a control: orienteering etiquette.

By lingering near a control, you are unwillingly assisting runners around you by providing a often colourful beacon indicating where an otherwise well-placed control flag may be.



Determining route choice during SSS-2, Nelson College

SUMMER SPRINT SERIES 2026 - IN PHOTOS & QUIZ FORMAT



Match each photo-number with the correct SSS event in 2026, and email your results to the editor (noc.promotion@gmail.com).

A randomly drawn lucky winner receives a family-size chocolate bar.

Drawn 15/4/2026.



MAPPING

A couple of weeks ago, Michael Croxford was overheard saying that a specific Woodhill map ideally should have had two different scales in one map: one for the forest, one for the dunes. This suggestion brings up a fundamental question: how to truly represent a 3D reality into a 2D map. The website www.betterorienteering.com (topic advanced strategies) says the following on this subject.



Every map is wrong and orienteering maps are amazing

Mapping and cartography necessarily involve a lot of subjective judgement. It is simply not possible to produce a map that translates 3-dimensional reality into a 2-dimensional form that will work perfectly when moved through in any direction and that will always match your oxygen starved perception of what is there on the ground. Vegetation varies with the seasons and grows and develops. True contours from Lidar will not match perceived contours on the ground and the mapper will often tweak a contour to show the shape better.

The mapper was not in oxygen debt when mapping, but you are when running!

So, the question is one of how to handle the perceived certainty of different types of features. As a strategy to deal with these issues it is helpful to always bear in mind a hierarchy of which features are most likely to be perceived as “correct” when you encounter them.

More certain features	Less certain features
Roads and tracks	Vegetation boundaries
Buildings	Thickets
Rivers, lakes	Clearings
Large contour features and overall shape of the land	Marshes
	Pits/small depressions
	Boulders when in terrain with many boulders

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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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