



“WHO runs the country”

Dharug Country — March 2026



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Thanks James, Emmanuelle and Vivien for contributing articles. Send any articles for future newsletter to [Vivien](#).
Photos above: Wai Man Wong at Christmas 5 Days

From the President

Don’t mention the war!!

Oops, not a good start. However, it’s tumultuous times like this that actually give us an opportunity to reflect and realise how lucky we are that we can immerse ourselves in an activity that challenges us both physically and mentally.

The NSW State League is just about to start and I’m excited to be heading back to Gumble , just past Orange. My feelings are equally split between anticipation and trepidation! There are big rocks out that way! But that’s the point. A proper challenge. You can check out Livelox if you want to see how I fare. And closer to home in April, we have the NSW Sprint Championships. WHO are hosting this event at WSU Rydalmere, so it is super accessible for everyone. It’s only a few kilometres from my house and has an adjacent light rail station. A small team has been working away preparing for this event. Barry, Janet and Nerise have done a fresh map to current IOF specifications and Josh, Jacinta and Sheralee have been working on the courses and organisation. Thank you all. Entries will open very

soon.

I want to announce a NEW event that WHO will be hosting in July. A few weeks after the Turkey Trot, we will hold the NSW Relay Champs at Wianamatta. This will be a 2 person relay. The exact classes are yet to be determined but it promises to be plenty of fun with a healthy level of inter-club competition. Teams with both members from the same club will contribute points for their club in the Club Relay competition. Let’s see if we can claim that trophy for WHO!

And just as we are thinking more about the bush events, it obviously means that our summer and more urban events are drawing to a close. I’ve really enjoyed the offerings we have had over Summer, although not so impressed with my fitness levels! My pick for SSS course of the year is Vivien’s at Meadowbank. If you agree (or have another favourite), remember to make your vote count for [the best SSS course](#).



Meet WHO's Newest Life Member: Ian Miller



At the 2025 AGM, Ian Miller was elevated to Life Membership. We would like to thank him for all the work that he has done for the club and that he is still doing. He is always there to help with events, showing newbies how orienteering works and always with a smile. Congratulations Ian! Here is a bit of background on our new life member.

Ian played a lot of sport as a teenager such as basketball (not surprising considering how tall he is!), cricket and was part of a running club. The running club would meet at 2pm on Saturdays, run for an hour and then have a big afternoon tea. Basketball usually finished with milkshakes. Ian says "I see now that the social side and food was always part of my enjoyment of exercise" (*I can only agree with you Ian. Editor*).

He got into orienteering in Canberra when one of the project team he worked with invited them to an event. They went orienteering in the morning, had a BBQ lunch after the event (food again!) and went

back to someone's house for the late afternoon and evening. Somehow that took care of Sunday's. The earliest recorded results that could be found was on the 8th August 1976.

He was recruited to join WHO by Owen Sharpe and Chis Crane during Hills District Orange Blossom Festival in 1988. Ian has been heavily involved with the club; being the Treasurer from 2000 to 2002 and again 2008 to 2011, Vice-President in 2015 and 2016, President in 2016 to 2018 and Newsletter editor from 2007 to 2013. He was also Turkey Trot planner from 2007 to 2013. He has set and controlled countless numbers of events. Not only has he been helping the club but he also took on the role of planning director for ONSW between 2011 and 2014 and is now part of the urban orienteering working group.

Ian impresses visitors to Sydney by his knowledge of obscure scenic lookouts usually adding the phrase "and I have run through here".

Fun fact, he is a "Sydney Summer Series (SSS) original" by having attended one event in the first year of the SSS in 1992! He has currently completed 494 and counting and received SSS special award for the 2024-2025 season.

His aims are to make it to the start of the M100 class and win the Chris Crane cup! He is a social orienteer who is becoming more and more urban each year and thinks that orienteering is a fun lifetime sport where 40 minutes of exercise can lead to 3 hours of discussion on how you could have done better.



Course setting 101

Without courses, there is no orienteering. Without course setters, there is no course.

It can feel daunting to consider setting a course. We may think we don't have the experience to do it or don't know where to start. The following are a few tips that I gathered while setting courses in the last few years. They range from 45-minute urban Summer Series to 29-hour NavShield in remote bush-land. Yet it is only recently that I started setting line courses and this has helped me improve my score courses.

A great thing with orienteering in general and our club in particular is that for each event, besides a course setter/planner, there is also an event controller who is a sort of mentor or buddy who helps setters. Less experienced course setters can rely on their controllers for advice and encouragement.

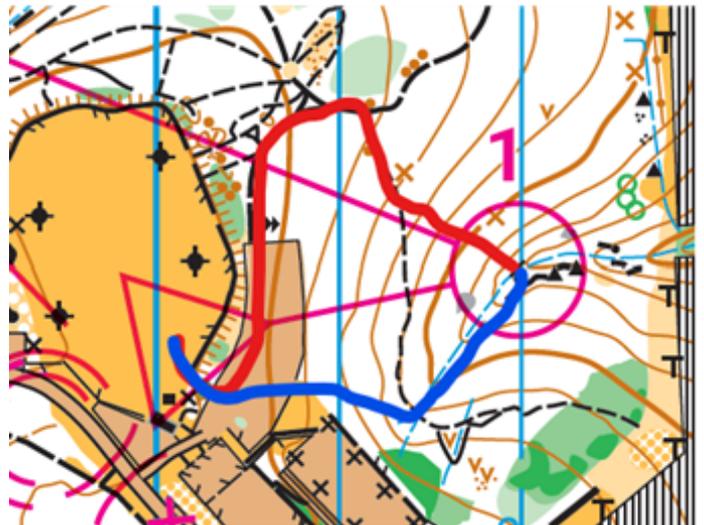
There are also many level of orienteering to consider and first-time course setters usually start with setting a score course at Wednesday summer series or a local event such as one of the Sunday Western series.

Setting a score course requires a slightly different approach to setting a line course.

Where to start?

Line courses are usually given a distance and/or time to complete. Then it is up to the setter looking at a blank map to decide where to place their controls at features shown on the map and linked them to create courses of the distance or time required. The basis of which is reasonably easy. Making the course interesting is where it gets more difficult.

It is good that for any given leg between two controls, there are route choices that provide options to do that leg. An example is below from the WHO Cup 2023. Red route was faster than blue by only 2 seconds. Both routes used line features: tracks and watercourses and although red is longer in distance, moving along a track is faster than through the



bush. This is a particularly good example as this leg is not overly long and it is usually easier to provide route choices on longer legs. They might even lead to multiple decision points along the leg such as this one at Turkey Trot 2025 when runners considered 4 ways to exit controls #12 on the long course and then found even more ways to run the rest of that leg. It was Emmanuelle first time setting a line course.



Micaela, setting for the first time ever, did a similarly great job with the WHO cup last December. Good control placement in a small area ensured most legs offered route choices. As the area was small, Micaela used a map flip and map exchange which allows to set longer courses over small areas.



Other aspects worth considering when setting a course are the amount and steepness of climbing, accessibility of controls and ease of doing each leg particularly for the courses that will likely be chosen by younger or older orienteers.

What about score courses?

Here we'll focus on Summer Series course that last 45 minutes. It is somewhat easier to set a score course: just scatter the number of controls needed over your map making sure the distance to link them all is 9 to 11 km and let people decide on what they want to do. Making it an interesting course however needs a bit more work.

As for line courses, controls should be set at features shown on the map. This can be simple road intersections in urban setting.

When setting a score course I like:

- A good spread of controls, similar distance to each other. Some people use a grid pattern. A good spread makes planning a route hard and challenging.
- To balance score over the whole course. I try dividing the course in halves, third or quarters around the start and make sure each portion has similar point value. Playing with scores can help rectify a geographical unbalance of con-

trol locations: the rate points/km should be similar regardless of the direction travelled at least near the start. Some setters try to set groups of three controls with each possible score: a ten-pointer, twenty-pointer and thirty-pointer. The combination of control spread and score can make orienteers question whether or not to go for any given extra control: it keeps them on their toes so to speak.

- To set for everyone from 8 years old to 90 years old. Everyone should be able to collect a good number of controls and points. Controls need to be easy to reach by all: not needing to go through rough terrain or set so high for shorter people cannot reach them.
- To avoid tempting runners to go Out of Bond areas (OOB) or a dangerous way by setting controls where it allows easy navigation around OOB, busy roads or cliffs...
- If possible, provide route choices between controls: play with their locations to provide two or more options of equal distance. I use website/apps such as au.mapometer.com, onthegomap.com or mapmyrun.com... You can measure distances between controls and try setting controls so that several ways to link them will result in a similar running distance or time similar to what I would do for a line course.
- Note changes in map and communicate to club mapper or make change yourself. If doing myself, I use the freeware Open Orienteering Mapper and send the updated map to our club mappers.

An additional personal rule is that I would not set two controls on the same street unless very far apart and not an obvious route choice: bring a bit of navigation by forcing participants to make a decision of turning down a street, a track or a park even if it is the most basic "next right/left" decision.

The following map shows the recent Meadowbank Summer Series as an example. There are three options to start toward #7, #10 or #6. legs 24-15, 20-

Christmas 5 Days and Other News

A number of WHO members made the trip to the Central Coast and Hunter Valley for the traditional Christmas 5 days carnival.

Besides the competition and good time navigating our way along rare summer bush courses, this is also a time that ONSW reveals the name of award recipients.

Saffron received the much deserved President Award for the countless hours in supporting junior athletes within our sport. Saffron's commitment and leadership have made a significant impact on both the school and the broader junior community. For several years, she has served as the school's team manager, overseeing all aspects of team coordination for the Australian Schools Championships: the results of the team speak for Saffron's great work. Saffron has also taken charge of coordinating the junior teams' catering efforts during our State League events. This is both a successful fundraiser for the Juniors and brings a great social side and food to State League events. Let's not forget that in 2025, Saffron also organized and coordinated the National Junior Camp held at Heathcote Scout Camp.

On the orienteering side of things, there were some good results individually in the overall classification with Nathan taking first place in Men G, Justine third in Women C and Tiffany second in Women D.

We can add some notable performances on some of the days with Matt taking third at the final sprint in Men B and Marcus winning it. Shay was second in Men C on Day 2 and Savanna took second place in Women A on the final day.

The biggest achievement was a collective one and the result of a full year of great orienteering as the club was awarded Club of the year 2025!

WHO demonstrated outstanding performances in the MetrO League, securing victory in three out of six divisions across 2024 and 2025. This success is underpinned by the club's substantial investment in nurturing junior talent and its collaborative efforts with Bold Horizons in the Saturday Orienteering Series (SOS). WHO has also achieved second place in the club point score in the State League. The club continues to support and develop a talented group of junior members, many of whom represented NSW at the Australian Orienteering Championships (AOC) and Youth Championships

WHO has successfully organised State League, MetrO League, and Summer Series events. The club maintains a strong membership base and has an active presence on social media platforms. The club is proactive in developing new maps and updating existing ones, ensuring ongoing support for its members and the broader orienteering community.



Event Calendar

There are many events all around Australia or even all around our own state of NSW. Rather than listing them all here, we'll focus on our local events as well as State League events. For more check [Eventor](#).

Summer Series

Only three events left. The Castle Hill event is organized by WHO.

Start anytime between 4.30pm and 6.45pm and try to score as many of the 600 points on offer over 30 controls.

| | | |
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| 11 Mar 26 | Fireclay Gully | Wyatt Reserve, Belrose |
| 18 Mar 26 | Rogans Hill | Castle Hill Heritage Reserve, Castle Hill (WHO event) |
| 25 Mar 26 | Chatswood West | Chatswood Golf Club, Chatswood |

Saturday Orienteering Series (SOS)

Organised on Saturday mornings during school term by the Bold Horizons team including some of WHO's juniors.

Check Eventor and Bold Horizons website at the start of term 2.

NSW State League 2026 Program

State League events are the best bush orienteering in the state as well as a reason to travel to new places.

| Date | Map | Event Format | Town / Locality |
|--------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 21 March | Gumble Pinnacles | Middle distance | Molong |
| 22 March | Gumble Pinnacles | Long distance | Molong |
| 18 April | Western Sydney Uni (WHO event) | NSW Sprint Champs | Rydalmere |
| 19 April | Soapy Flat | TBC | Southern Highlands |
| 16 May | Split Rock | Middle distance | Cootamundra |
| 16 May | | Long distance | Cootamundra |
| 6-8 June | King's Birthday | Middle, Long, Sprint | Lithgow |
| 19 July | Mitchell Park | Middle distance | Sydney /Maraylya |
| 15 August | NSW School champ | Middle distance | Orange |
| 16 August | NSW School Champ | Sprint | Orange |
| 12 September | Tuckland SF | NSW Middle Champ | Dunedoo |
| 13 September | Tuckland SF | NSW Long Champ | Dunedoo |