

Newcastle Orienteering Club

PRESIDENTS REPORT

MARCH 2009

"A quote, a quote, my kingdom for a quote". I'm convinced I must continue this silly ritual of utilising a quote as an opening device for my report, regardless of how irrelevant it actually is and to heighten this irrelevance I've chosen to quote our ongoing head of state.

"Football's a difficult business and aren't they prima donnas?"
Queen Elizabeth II

Well obviously our orienteering loving royal doesn't have a lot of time for the round ball code but I'll bet she's pleased to be associated with one of our major orienteering events this year, an event where there's nary a prima donna in sight.

The Newcastle Club will be hosting the Queens Birthday 3-Day event right here in our local area, so actually this year at least, she is fairly relevant to us. I'd like to think we could make this a great weekend not only for visitors but also for our club members as well. Far too often our "regulars" drop out and do not enter our big event for the year. Whilst it is more expensive it is also a fun way to gauge yourself against fellow orienteers from around NSW and even other parts of Australia and maybe even make new friends.

Want another quote from the lady herself? "Yes" I pretend to hear you say.

"It's all to do with the training: you can do a lot if you're properly trained." Queen Elizabeth II

I think Lizzy has hit the nail on the head here. While the club has many talented and competent people, we need to see that learned orienteering skills both administrative and in the field are being passed on to the interested newcomers to our sport. To this end we developed the "Event Mentoring Scheme" (which may have a name change to the "Volunteer Implementation Program" or "VIP") but haven't had a lot of success

yet. It was a rather half hearted and late implementation (on my behalf) and as such didn't really have a chance yet to prosper. To assist in this area it is planned to have some special information seminars (e.g. course setters sessions) throughout the year, most likely to be held on a weeknight. This is still in the embryonic stages but I feel it is a positive and necessary step to ensure that the work load is spread fairly throughout the club membership and that our events can be offered at the consistently high standard we are used to.

2008 NOY series

Men: Josh Blatchford
Women: Karen Blatchford

08/09 Summer Street Series:

Men: Stu Adams
Women: Nicole Haigh
Rookie: Richard Roxin

2008 Newcastle Park Tour :

Men: Josh Blatchford
Women: Karen Blatchford

2008 Newcastle Schools Champ

Boys: Josh Blatchford
Girls: Tamara Orr

So what's happened in the last 12 months? Once again we have had a monstrous year with many events of differing types and styles run by our club members. Thanks to all the course setters, veters and desk sitters and control collectors that made these events possible. Also a big thank you to Denis Lyons, Ian Dempsey, Russell Rigby, Geoff Todkill that have been out mapping and re-mapping and to the numerous street map makers that have either drawn new or revamped older versions this season. It's quite a workload and it is much appreciated by all competitors.

As you know the club is run on a voluntary, non-profit basis and we try to keep our entry fees as low as possible. In a time of economic uncertain-

ties we know for sure that there is great pressure for us to increase our fees. Whilst our map printing costs have come down, our access fees, which were once non-existent, have continued to increase. The Government's "user pays" system ensures that we as an organised group trying to do something healthy and constructive are penalised by an entry fee while other users enter National Parks etc for free. This fee has doubled to \$2.20 per person this year. Often there are no facilities so I'm really unsure what we are paying for. OANSW is talking to National Parks regarding this issue but if this fails I think we might need to look at some sort of lobbying.

We are also having to jump through many more hoops as well to gain this access. Mostly related to safety and risk management. For some events we are required to name first aid personnel, so we need to know which members have first aid qualifications and are willing to be listed at particular events.

That's about it for now, I hope you have enjoyed the years events and I hope our trend of increased numbers continues again this year as it has the last few.

A final royal quote perhaps.

"When a man opens the car door for his wife, it's either a new car or a new wife."
Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh

Not relevant and un-PC but truthfully observed nonetheless.

Geoff Peel

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