Newcastle Orienteering Club

PRESIDENTS REPORT
MARCH 2008

Now that the tradition of commencing this report with some obscure quote is firmly entrenched in everybody’s expectations, I might as well continue to do so as this practice usually helps me fill this currently almost blank page.

“Not until we are lost do we begin to understand ourselves.”
Henry David Thoreau American Poet and Philosopher, (1817-1862)

What’s my orienteering biased interpretation on that one? Well it looks to me that we must have a lot of (self) understanding in the club. (Might explain how I’ve managed to hang on to this job for so long.) What about another one I imagine you saying, especially since I am struggling to come up with something a little more sensible to write.

“Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it.”
Henry David Thoreau American Poet and Philosopher, (1817-1862)

Did you notice it’s the same Mr Thoreau from the first quote? Well if so don’t go believing I’m a card carrying member of the H. D. Thoreau fan club, it’s just that I’m lazy and it happens to be on the same web page I was researching. I’d like to use this quote in reference to the club and it’s members. Have they been busy? Bloody oath! By my calculation our members have been involved in over 50 events during the 2007 calendar year. That’s averaging one a week and I’m not talking about merely competing, referring to the more time consuming undertakings of planning, organising and vetting events of all description. I wouldn’t like to calculate the man-hours (or should that be person-hours) involved carrying out these tasks.

These events included including coaching, training, NOY, schools, junior squad, maze-O, Hunter Community College courses, MTBO, Street & Park events. Added to this already impressive list was the NSW Champs at Dundee. Club members also set events for the Western Plains Challenge and took on official duties at the “World Junior Orienteering Champs (JWOC) at Dubbo, with Robert Vincent in particular taking on the important role of carnival controller. Our year was rounded off with the club running a very popular Christmas 5-day series in the local area and I was particularly pleased to see younger club members helping out especially Steven Todkill (he’s still young), Josh Roberts and Josh Blatchford who set/vet a couple of these events.

So it certainly seems like we were (and still are) busy but were we successful, I suppose it comes down to how you measure success. Many would argue it’s about competition results in the forest. While these have a degree of importance, I prefer to look at how successful we have been in providing good quality orienteering events. My preference is not due to poor race performances from club members. On the contrary, the club has many successful orienteers within it’s ranks, it’s just that the sport lives or dies on the quality of events. If courses are well set and fair on well mapped areas and the event is well organised then we should have no trouble in attracting competitors back. This also contributes to the club gaining a reputation for doing things right and our competitor numbers should continue to rise steadily due to word of mouth. This is happening and our participation numbers are still gradually rising, which is not the experience of many other clubs.

2008 see’s another big year for OANSW and our club when we return to Dubbo for the running of the Easter 3-Days. We are set down to oversee the starts on all days so will be looking for lots of club members to assist. Don’t worry, 2009 is also certain to be another big year as OANSW has stuck up it’s collective hand to take on another enormous undertaking in the form of the “Orienteering World Masters” somewhere out near Lithgow. Let’s hope our officials don’t blow a gasket.

If you feel there is any way we can even improve on our good track record (yes there maybe little bugs that sometimes occur at our well run events) then feel free to come along to a club meeting or approach any of the club executive at an event.

Newcastle Orienteer of the year
Men: Robert Vincent
Women: Joy Guy

Summer Street Series:
Men: Josh Blatchford
Women: Karen Blatchford

Easter 3-Days Champions
M10 Scott Charlton
M16A Joshua Blatchford
M45A Robert Vincent
W-12A Nicola Blatchford
W55+A Carolyn Rigby

Australian Championship
M21AS Steven Todkill

Newcastle Schools Champ
Boys: Josh Blatchford
Girls: Robyn Charlton

That’s about it for now. Thanks to everybody that participated (in any way or at any level) at one of our club orienteering events. We look forward to your continued participation and enjoyment of our unique sport.

Geoff Peel
Club President
Newcastle Orienteering Club