



Yukon Orienteering Association Newsletter

November 2014

President's Note *from Afan Jones*

2014 was another successful year of local meets and competition at outside events. YOA hosted 12 events this past summer, including three championship events, with similar numbers of participants as in recent seasons. Our busiest event was May 7 at Pumphouse Pond (War Eagle map) with 81 participants. We ended the season with the night "O" event by zig-zagging through the Wolf Creek Campground. Thank you to all the meet organizers.

Our membership total was down slightly at 223 compared to last year's 235. YOA ran youth squads coordinated by Jennifer MacKeighan and assistant Trevor Bray. Colin Abbott devised year 1 of a three manual for youth squads. The mixed age red squad was coached by Brent Langbakk and myself.

We prepared to host the upcoming Western Canadian Orienteering Championships by employing two Czech mappers for a brand new map at the research forest and updating other map areas. We also hired Meghan Rance to make a new map of Takhini neighbourhood for the WCOC sprint. Our thanks to Barbara Scheck for the extraordinary amount of work required to hire overseas mappers and to Ross Burnett and Violet Van Hees for hosting the Radim and Ludek. Our thanks to Barbara also for organizing and teaching the annual "Learn to O" clinic in May.

Yukon orienteers participated at a variety of championships outside including British Columbia, Western Canadian, Canadian, and North American Junior World Championships. Many also took in a sprint camp in Vancouver last February. Congratulations to our young orienteers, Pia Blake and Trevor Bray who represented Canada at the Junior World Orienteering Championships (JWOC). Kerstin Burnett competed in two World Cup races in Spain in April, and trained with the National Team in Italy and Scotland in June and July, including 3 World Ranking Events in Italy plus the Tio Mila. There were nine medal winners honoured at the annual Yukon sport awards night Thursday, November 20 at Coast Hi-Country Inn.

We recently heard about our successful application to the Arctic Winter Games Sport Legacy fund. A grant of \$11,000 will allow us to upgrade and expand our basic equipment with 25 new markers, control stands, SI units, generator, public address system, digital start clock and finger sticks.

Your executive is now preparing for next season and various projects to maintain the quality of our events and host the 2015 Western Canadian Orienteering Championships July 3, 4 and 5. See the website for details:

<http://www.yukonorienteering.ca/wcoc2015/index.html>

Afan Jones
President, YOA

Sport Yukon Awards of Distinction - Congratulations to our members on their achievements and enthusiasm!

Female athlete of the year: Kerstin Burnett

Volunteer of the year: Barbara Scheck

Orienteer of the year: Charlene Desjarlais

Junior athlete of the year: Micah Hildes

Yukon Awards of Excellence - Congratulations to the following YOA members for medals received at various national and international events.

Pia Blake

Trevor Bray

Kerstin Burnett

Savannah Cash

Brent Langbakk

Nesta Leduc

Caelen McLean

Sara Nielsen

Barbara Scheck

Programs 2014: Yukon Orienteering Junior Programs and Kids Running Wild

The program numbers were lower this year, with eight in Kids Running Wild, six in yellow squad and 4 in orange squad. The YOA Exec is seeking suggestions from parents regarding these programs, as we would like to provide attractive opportunities for kids to improve skills and join in the WCOCs here in Yukon in early July 2014.

North American Orienteering Championships (NAOC)

By Leif Blake



After having run on a training map on Friday, and attended a rather chilly opening ceremony, we were ready to dive head first into the middle distance on Saturday. From the banquet hall, where we enjoyed an all-you-can-eat buffet style breakfast, it was a half-hour bus ride to the arena on the Hidden Meadow map. Here, the masses of orienteers gathered before heading off to the start, about a 1km walk from the finish. The map we would be running on was actually just North of the old map from the COC's in 2010. The old and new arenas were, in fact, only a couple hundred meters apart.

The map on the North side was, however, quite different from the South. In the place of fine detail and tight contours was a mostly flat and featureless forest, plastered with green forest and indistinct marshes, cut straight up through the middle by a massive power line. The 2.5 meter contours made for relatively small hills compared to what was shown on the map, making them easy to miss. The precious seconds it took to check your bearing or check off distinct features as you passed them were well worth it, as small errors could account for big losses in time spent relocating. As we neared the finish, we got a glimpse of what was to

come in Sunday's long: a return to the intricate maze of hills and trails in the map's southern section.

In 2010, I was racing in the M13-14 category, so my memories of the Hidden Meadow map were nothing more than the rather dull experience of thundering down a trail, and occasionally popping into the woods to get a control. Now running up in the M17-20 category, I was thrust into the heart of the Long distance's Contour-Jungle. The tightly compacted brown lines along with the thin, mostly indistinct trails made for a very hard to read map. Sometimes it was difficult to tell uphill from downhill. In reality, the trails proved to be confusing and inconsistent, while the small hills were indistinct but precise. Combine all that with the 1:15000 map scale and the 2.5 meter contours, and you've got yourself a recipe for errors. Although I did lose time in the southern portion of the map, the main bulk of my errors came from the first half of my course in the North. Our start was not too far from yesterday's, so when I dived back into the terrain, I thought myself at least somewhat prepared for what lay ahead. The Long, however, posed one major challenge that set it aside from the middle: long legs. Now of course, this was to be expected. After all, it was a Long course, and that's what long courses do. But when you're faced with relatively featureless terrain, and have few major features for relocation, the difficulties that these long legs impose are amplified. In my discussions with other orienteers, I found that, almost consistently, the slower, safer route choices proved to be the best.

Monday's sprint was held in downtown Arnprior, which made for some fairly typical North-American city sprinting. There were few traps, so error was mostly founded in poor route choice: it was often difficult to discern which way around the near grid-shaped blocks was fastest. The sprint ended in a few short loops around a small park by the river. The layout of the controls was tight, and had us going back and forth, constantly changing direction. I didn't find it too difficult, however, to keep a steady pace throughout the park, as all of the controls could be come at straight on, with only the occasional deviation in my course.

After the sprint was an exciting Elite relay for the Seniors as well as the Juniors, pitting the US against Canada. It was a tight race, but the US managed to win in both the Junior and Senior categories.

I look forward to future NAOC events.

YOA Events of 2014

A BIG THANKS to organizers of the Wednesday evening meets: Ross Burnett, Bruce McLean, Karen McKenna, Afan Jones, Sabine Schweiger, Barbara Scheck, Colin Abbott, Darren Holcombe, Craig Brooks, Jim, Beth & Lee Hawkings, Bob Sagar, and Forest Pearson.

For results of the 2014 Yukon Orienteering Championships go to the YOA website at <http://www.yukonorienteering.ca/>

A BIG THANKS TO ALL OF THE VOLUNTEERS

The YOA would not be able to run meets and other events without the numerous volunteers who plan courses, set and collect controls, register participants, run the start and finish lines, operate the timing devices, and keep track of equipment. A BIG THANKS to everyone who has helped out over the past year. The YOA is always looking for volunteers to assist with events and activities, especially for the WCOC here in 2015. If you are interested in volunteering, please let us know at info@yukonorienteering

The Annual General Meeting will be held on January 28, 2015 at 7:00pm at Sport Yukon. The AGM is open to all members.

Current Executive:

President: Afan Jones

Vice-President: Bob Sager

Treasurer: Ross Burnett

Secretary: Lorna Hutchinson

Director of Communications: Wendy Nixon

Director of Programs: Sabine Schweiger

Director at Large: Forest Pearson

Contributors to this Newsletter:

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