

Coast Mountain Sports Sprint Series 2019 – Final Results

The Coast Mountain Sprint Series offered Yukon Orienteers a new challenge early in the season. Five urban sprint events were held over 6 weeks from mid-April, culminating on World Orienteering Day, May 16th. Competitors collected points for each race that they entered, and were able to drop their lowest score – best 4 of 5 races were used to tally the overall points.

At each event, only one course was offered, with results divided by age category. This allowed everyone to compete within their age category, and compare their times with the elite athletes. The winner in each category was awarded 1,000 points, and everyone else received points based on how far behind the winner they were. Two additional calculations were computed – the time needed to run from the last control to the finish line on each course (the “sprint leg”), and the time required to run the longest leg of each course. Again, best 4 of 5 races counted towards the aggregate Female and Male scores.

It was exciting to see good representation from young runners 12 and under. Some were able to tackle the course on their own, while others worked in pairs or with an adult helper. Over the 5 events, these youngsters improved their orienteering skills and came back with enthusiasm and energy. This series was more challenging for these young orienteers than many of the regular Wednesday night meets, as there were decision points along the entire course. They should feel proud of their accomplishments, and we look forward to seeing them progress in orienteering.

The competition in many categories was tight and undecided right up until the final race, as many competitors missed one of the first 4 events.

For the final race on May 9, forty-nine competitors came out. We had a few newcomers, but most runners had been out for previous Sprints. The skies looked threatening, but we received no rain. The course was a long narrow run between 2nd Ave and the Yukon River, with runners having to flip their map over north of the library before having to return back to the finish at Rotary Park. Despite the novelty of this arrangement for some, and the confusion of many tightly-spaced controls, we had very few mis-punches.

Stian Langbakk placed first in the 12 and under category, followed by Micah McConnell and Kieran Horton. Colin Abbott managed a perfect score of 4,000 points in the men’s elite, while Leif Blake managed a second-place win over Caelan McLean with a mere 23-point spread. In the woman’s elite, Pia Blake squeaked into first place over newcomer Jane Hollenberg with a 37-point lead, while Jennifer McKeigan came in third. Forest Person also had a perfect record in the men’s 35+ category, with Benoît Turcotte (a recent transplant from the Vancouver orienteering scene) placing second. The race for third place was tight, with Darren Holcomb edging out Dave Hildes. In the women’s 35+ Lara Melnik had a solid first place, with Judith van Gulick and Rima Khouri placing second and third. The men’s 55+ category saw Bruce McLean in first place, Bob Sagar in second and Afan Jones in third. Jones had the disadvantage of missing one race, and then mis-punching in another race, reducing his score to include only his top three perfect-score races. Barbara Scheck (women 55+) was the third competitor in the series with a perfect score of 4,000 points, earning her first place. Deb Kiemele had good, consistent results to place second, and Nesta Leduc took third place. It is always a pleasure to see Nesta out orienteering, who is in a category of her own at 85+!

In the team/group category, The Little Red Running Shorts (Emily Kralisch-Seguin and Natalja Hendricks) and the Salix Madsen Team exchanged wins throughout the series. In the end, the Little Red Running Shorts managed an overall lead of just 47 points. Selena and Scott captured third place. A

big shout out to Coconut and Olives (Coco Madsen and Oliver Kralisch-Seguin), the youngest team to complete all 5 races, and place 4th in the team category.

Overall, on the longest leg, Jane Hollenberg was first, followed by Pia Blake and Jennifer McKeigan. Caelan McLean beat out Colin Abbott and Forest Pearson.

On the sprint leg, Pia Blake, Jane Hollenberg and Jennifer McKeigan took the top three places, while for the men, the same three finishers prevailed - Caelan McLean followed by Colin Abbott and Forest Pearson.

The Yukon Orienteering Association would like to extend a great thank you to Coast Mountain Sports for sponsoring this race - Thank You!

Coast Mountain Sports donated three draw prizes for competitors that completed 4 or 5 of the races in the series. Orienteering Canada and Yukon Orienteering Association donated draw prizes for competitors competing on May 16th, World Orienteering Day. This event in Whitehorse was one of 439 events being hosted in 48 countries around the world.

The regular Wednesday night meets continue throughout the summer. Check www.yukonorienteeing.ca for the schedule and locations.